National Crime Victimization Survey (NCVS)

Survey Redesign Seminar
July 17th, 1-3pm
BLS
NCVS Overview

- Annual estimates of level and changes in household and person criminal victimizations in the U.S.
- Household sample frame
  - Households: ~60,000 interviewed twice a year
  - Persons: ~90,000 persons interviewed twice a year
- Rotating panel design- HHs interviewed up to 7 waves over a 3-year period
- 6-month reference period
- Mixed-mode: TIS 1 in-person, TIS2-7 primarily by phone; Replacement households- in-person
Redesign Motivations

• Survey was flat funded for more than a decade and cuts in sample and quality controls caused a break in series.
• National Academy of Science panel on NCVS
• Initial focus 2008
  – Restoration of sample/reliability
  – Containing costs
• Current focus
  – Restoring core sample and quality
  – Modernization and stakeholder utility/value
  – Costs
  – Handling the unexpected—screening issues
Restoring the Core Design

- Sample re-instatement.
  - Restore precision and reliability
  - Sample is back to 1997 levels for households
- Interviewer training
  - All interviewers have been trained for the first time in a decade.
- Expand interviewer evaluation metrics beyond simply response rates.
- Assessment of the effects of improvements on annual rates.
Fundamental Re-negotiation of Relationship with Census

• Substantially expanded IAA to include more specifics on what is expected from Census.

• NCVS is one of two surveys participating in Census re-organization of field and central office staff.

• Adopted Census implementation team design around internal service providers

• Introduction of paradata analytics to address cost and quality issues.
Changes to infrastructure and process

- Small area focus - vetting process
- Protocol for item and supplement review on a routine basis
- Field management- Census RO restructuring, FR supervision and feedback, paradata
- Fitness for use panel
Research Priorities

• Sub-national estimation program.
• Improving the measurement of rape and sexual assault.
• Exploring long term cost reductions.
• Improving measurement of victimization of juveniles and young children.
Sub-national Estimation

• Generic area estimation
• Direct estimates for largest cities and states
  – Simulations demonstrate feasibility
  – Pilot boost to test assumptions of simulations
• Indirect estimates
  – Models under development
• Blended estimates
  – Low cost mailed screeners being tested
  – Blending methods being developed
Measuring Rape and Sexual Assault

• NCVS is not the optimum design for measuring rape and sexual assault.

• Competing approaches to measuring these events.
  – Public health approach.
  – Criminal justice approach.

• Public health approach does not satisfy the information demands of the criminal justice system

• CNSTAT panel is charged with identifying an optimum design.

• Field test to follow.
Research Conducted

• Sample reinstatement- workload
• Refresher training and monitoring
• Small area research- direct and indirect
• Cost/mode studies (initial efforts 2008)
  – Mode
  – IVR
  – Nonresponse
Final Redesign Model

• Design decisions will be made in 2014 for implementation in 2016.
  – If pilot boost successful, expansion of sub-national estimates to larger number of states and localities.
  – Rape and sexual assault field test will indicate if a separate survey is required for measuring these crimes or changes can be made in NCVS.

• Approval process
  – Sub-national estimation—vetting with constituent groups
  – CNSTAT panel for rape and sexual assault
  – DOJ and OMB as part of the budget process
Redesign Evaluation

• Redesign will be successful if the NCVS core survey is stabilized.
  – Sample size restored
  – Training and quality controls in place
  – Control over field staff and costs

• And if the survey plays a larger role in policy formation and resource allocation.
  – Rape and sexual assault statistics seen as authoritative
  – Sub-national estimates used to guide federal funding
Current Status

• **Timeline for adoption and implementation**
  
  • NAS panel 2008
  
  • Focus on sample restoration, first wave June 2011
  
  • Field quality- refresher training and monitoring 2011-2012
  
  • State-level pilot boost 2013-2015
  
  • State sample implementation/decennial redesign 2016
  
  • Instrument recommendations and redesign efforts present-2016
  
  • New survey in production 2016
Costs

• Current survey annualized costs are ~$27 million
• Approximately $18M spent on Redesign
• The Redesigned NCVS will do more and it will cost more.
Contacts

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