Victim and Household Characteristics: Reporting Violence to the Police.
Illinois Crime Victimization Survey 2002 Data Analysis

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Illinois Criminal Justice Information Authority

Author:
Dr. Callie Rennison
University of Missouri – St. Louis
Department of Criminology and Criminal Justice
One University Boulevard
St. Louis, MO 63121

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Executive Summary

One of the most important decisions following a violent victimization is whether to report the incident to the police. Failure to report violence to the police has significant consequences. First, the victim may be ineligible to receive victim assistance services. Second, failure to report threatens the deterrent ability of the criminal justice system since authorities are less able to apprehend and/or punish the offender. And third, failure to report violent victimization alters the police mandate resulting in the misallocation of scarce police resources. The negative consequences resulting from a lack of police reporting are exacerbated when it is concentrated among a particular group of individuals such as the young, blacks, or the poor. If any group is denied access to the benefits of the criminal justice system, equality – the cornerstone of the system – is endangered. The purpose of this report is to investigate whether any group of individuals is less likely to report violent victimization to the police. To assess this, binary logistic regression models examining the influence of individual and household characteristics on the likelihood of police reporting were estimated.

Analyses were conducted using 2002 Illinois Crime Victimization Survey (ICVS) data provided by the Illinois Criminal Justice Information Authority (ICJIA). The purpose of the ICVS is to ascertain the nature and extent of statewide and regional crime victimization in Illinois. In order to estimate models, the data file was modified into a "victimization" file resulting in an unweighted sample size of 380 violent victimizations. All data modifications and analyses were conducted using Statistical Software for the Social Sciences (SPSS).

While 44% of violence against Illinois residents was brought to the attention of the police in 2002, findings reveal that some groups of individuals are relatively less likely to contact the police following a violent victimization. Key findings regarding significant individual and household characteristics are as follows:

- *Non-Hispanic blacks.* Violent crimes against non-Hispanic blacks were less likely to be reported to the police compared to the same violence against non-Hispanic whites.

- *Unemployed.* Violence sustained by unemployed individuals was less likely to be reported to the police compared to the similar violence experienced by full-time workers.

- *Part-time workers.* Violent victimizations perpetrated against individuals employed on a part-time basis were less likely to be reported to the police compared to similar violence against full-time workers.

- *Household Tenure < 1 year.* Violence against people who have lived at their current residence for less than one year was less likely to be reported to the police compared to victims who have lived in their homes for more than one year.

The analyses controlled for theoretically relevant offender and incident characteristics. Though not the primary purpose of this work, several findings regarding control variables are worth note.

- *Older offenders.* When violence was committed by a perpetrator perceived by the victim to be age 30 years of age or older, the police were less likely to be contacted than when the offender was thought to be less than 18 years of age.

- *Weapon presence.* Victimizations in which a weapon was present (versus victimizations without weapons) were more likely to be reported to the police.

- *Injured victim.* Violence resulting in an injured victim was more likely to come to the attention of the police compared to violence in which no injuries were sustained.

These findings offer valuable information to policy makers. The findings show differential reporting among groups of victims suggesting that some groups are not accessing the benefits offered by the criminal justice system. While additional research is needed to determine whether this lack of reporting stems from an unwillingness, and/or and inability to contact the police, this information can be used immediately to improve outreach to these groups.

1. INTRODUCTION

One of the most important decisions following violence is whether to report the violent incident to the police (e.g., Greenberg et al., 1982; Hindelang & Gottfredson, 1976; Reiss, 1971; Skogan, 1984). Failure to report violence to the police has serious consequences. First, the victim may be ineligible to receive victim assistance services (Gottfredson & Gottfredson, 1988; Skogan, 1984). Second, failure to report threatens the deterrent ability of the criminal justice system since authorities are less able to apprehend and/or punish the offender. Third, an offender who goes free is able to stay in the community and victimize others. Fourth, failure to report victimization alters the police mandate, resulting in the misallocation of scarce police resources to areas based on an inaccurate assessment of the true levels of violent activity (Skogan, 1977; 1984).

The negative consequences resulting from a lack of police reporting are exacerbated when failure to report is concentrated among a particular group of individuals such as the young, Hispanics, urbanites, or the poor. If any group fails to report to the police in a systematic way, they are denied access to the criminal justice, they are not privy to the benefits of the system, and as a result, equality in the criminal justice system is endangered (Gottfredson & Gottfredson, 1980; Sampson & Lauritsen, 1994; Skogan, 1984).

Though the consequences of non-reporting are far-reaching, violence, even very severe violence, is infrequently reported to the police (e.g., Hart & Rennison, 2003; Hindelang, 1976; Rennison & Rand, 2003; Rennison, 2002). In 2002, only 49% of violent victimizations were reported to the police nationally (Rennison & Rand, 2003).

Similar rates characterize Illinois. Forty-six percent of victims of personal crime in Illinois reported the incident to the police in 2002 (Hiselman, 2005). The degree to which reporting violence to the police occurs differs across victim groups. Violence against females is more likely to come to the attention of the police, blacks are more likely to report than are whites, and older victims are more likely to seek police than are younger victims (see e.g., Baumer, 2002; Hart & Rennison, 2003).

Reporting violence to the police has an extensive research history (e.g., Bachman, 1998; Baumer, 2002; Block & Block, 1980; Felson et al., 2002; Gottfredson & Gottfredson, 1980; Gottfredson & Hindelang, 1979; Hart & Rennison, 2003; Laub, 1981; Singer, 1988; Skogan, 1981; 1984). However, to date, no investigation has examined the influence of victim and household characteristics on reporting of violence in the state of Illinois. Such an investigation is the purpose of this research. Understanding if and how contacting the police differs across victim groups has practical importance. By identifying individuals who are less likely to contact the police, more effective outreach policies may be designed. In doing so, greater equity in accessing the benefits available in the Illinois criminal justice system is possible.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

Research has identified many correlates of reporting violence to the police. Descriptive work at the national level demonstrates that violence against females compared to males is more likely to be reported to the police (Hart & Rennison, 2003; Baumer, 2002; Rennison, 1999; Skogan, 1984). Further, violence against blacks, and violence against American Indians (compared to whites) is more likely to be reported to the police (Hart & Rennison, 2003; Baumer, 2002; Rennison, 1999; Skogan, 1984).

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Though there are many cultural and historical reasons to suspect violence against

Hispanics to go unreported (Davis & Erez, 1998; Walker et al., 2004), findings on

reporting and Hispanic origin is mixed. Evidence is mounting that the degree of reporting

appears contingent on the type of violence considered (Hart & Rennison, 2003; Rennison

2007). Rennison (2007) finds that the more severe the violence, the less likely Hispanics

are to contact the police (when compared to non-Hispanic whites). Older victims of

violence are more likely to contact the police than are younger victims (Hart & Rennison,

2003; Baumer, 2002; Rennison, 1999; Skogan, 1984). And greater police reporting is

associated with violence against more highly educated persons and those who are married

versus those with less education and those who are not currently married (Baumer, 2002;

Hart & Rennison, 2003).

Characteristics of the victim's household are related to the likelihood that the

police will be notified as well. Evidence shows that violence against suburbanites is

reported to police at rates lower than violence against urbanites (Hart & Rennison, 2003),

though work by Baumer (2002) shows that this relationship is contingent on the type of

violence. Likewise, findings are mixed as to whether violence against persons residing in

wealthier households is more likely to be reported. Some work research supports this

relationship while other works suggests that it is contingent on the type of crime

(Baumer, 2002; Hart & Rennison, 2003). A victim who owns their home is more likely to

contact the police versus a victim who rents or lives with others (Baumer, 2002).

Findings on the influence of offender characteristics on police reporting are

mixed. With the exception of simple assault, analyses show that when the offender is

black (versus white), the police are more likely to be contacted. When a simple assault

occurs, white offenders (versus black offenders) are more likely to lead to police contact (Hart & Rennison, 2003). Other multivariate research fails to find a relationship between offenders' race and reporting (Baumer, 2002). Offender's age is also relevant. The older the offender, the more likely the police will be contacted (Hart & Rennison, 2003; Baumer 2002). The relationship between victim and offender relationship and reporting is not clear. In some cases, violence is more likely to come to the attention of the police when the offender is an intimate partner or a stranger (Hart & Rennison, 2003). Other work finds that when the offender is a family member, the police are more likely to be called (Baumer, 2002).

Incident characteristics are highly related to the likelihood that the police are contacted. Severity of violence is one of the most widely agreed upon predictors of whether the police are contacted: the more severe the violence, the more likely the police will be called (Gottfredson & Gottfredson, 1980; Baumer, 2002; Gottfredson & Hindelang, 1979; Laub, 1981; Skogan, 1976; 1984). An exception to this is that rape, considered by most to be the most severe non-fatal violence, is reported only about one-third of the time nationally (Rennison, 2002). A similar exception is noted in Illinois, where sex crimes were the least likely to come to the attention of the police (Hiselman, 2005). The severity of violence can be measured in ways other than type of crime. For instance, weapon presence is another measure of severity of violence. When a weapon especially a firearm, is brandished or used, police contact is more likely (Hart & Rennison, 2003; Baumer, 2002; Skogan, 1984; Block & Block 1980). A third measure of severity of violence – victim injury – is also related to reporting. When a victim is

injured, the police are more likely to be called (Hart & Rennison, 2003; Baumer, 2002; Skogan, 1984; Block & Block, 1980).

Previous research identifies many relevant correlates of reporting violence though it is not always clear as to how the correlates influence police reporting. What is clear is that these correlates should be included in the analyses. Failure to include relevant correlates means that the influence attributed to variables included in the model actually represents the combined influence of included *and* excluded variables (Hanushek & Jackson, 1977). This type of model misspecification can lead to misleading findings and conclusions.

3. DATA AND METHODS

The 2002 Illinois Crime Victimization Survey (ICVS) was fielded to investigate the role of victim and household characteristics on the likelihood of reporting violence to the police. The ICVS collects data on the nature and extent of statewide and regional crime victimization in Illinois. In addition it gathers information about the public's awareness of, and utilization of victim services. The ICVS sample was selected from lists of names and addresses of driver's license and identification card holders maintained by the Illinois Secretary of the State. Duplicate records (i.e., those with both driver's licenses and identification cards), persons under age 18 and institutionalized persons were removed from the list prior to the sample being drawn.[1] In total, 7,498 individuals were randomly selected to participate in the ICVS.

Those selected for participation received up to five pieces of mail over a three month period (January to March 2003). First, an introductory postcard was sent to all selected persons. Some cards were returned as bad addresses and those individuals were

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[1] For more information regarding the research methods used for the ICVS, see Hiselman (2005).

removed from the selected respondent list. Additional mailings included the survey instrument (including a cover letter), a reminder or a thank-you postcard, a second survey instrument and cover letter (if needed), and a final reminder or thank-you postcard (Hiselman, 2005). The response rate for the ICVS was 28 percent resulting in 1,602 completed surveys (Hiselman, 2005).

The ICVS was based on the National Crime Victimization Survey (NCVS) and collects similar information.[2] The ICVS elicits information on respondent demographics (e.g., gender, age, education, marital status) and household characteristics (e.g., annual income, owned versus rented). The survey instrument includes a screener section in which respondents are questioned about any personal, violent or property victimization they experienced during 2002. If a victimization was detected, an incident reported with additional questions regarding details of the incident (e.g., police reporting, victim/offender relationship, location, nature of violence), and information about the offender (e.g., age, race, gender) is completed. The ICVS collected information on several forms of victimization that occurred during 2002. Pertinent to this proposal is the collection of detailed information on the crimes of rape, sexual assault, robbery, aggravated assault, and simple assault.

Limitations of the ICVS include that it does not collect information for persons under the age of 18. This limitation is an important one to consider because national data shows that violent victimization is more common among younger persons (Rennison & Rand, 2003). A second limitation of the ICVS is that it does not include information from persons who do not possess a driver's license or identification card. And because the list

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[2] Though an important measure of crime, the NCVS cannot be used to estimate crime in the state of Illinois because it does not offer state level estimates of crime. For a full description of the NCVS, see Rennison & Rand (2007) and Rand and Rennison (2002).

of people who possess a driver's license or an identification card changes constantly due to relocation, those who move and have not updated these records may be underrepresented in the data. This is an important consideration given that households that experience high rates of victimization are more likely to move. The ICVS is necessarily limited in the scope of victimizations it measures. For instance, no information on violence such as stalking, kidnapping or homicide is collected. A final limitation in the data stems from its low response rate. Of the approximately 5,700 persons receiving the survey, only 28% responded. A low response rate is not necessarily a problem if those who participate do not differ in meaningful ways from those who fail to participate. Fortunately this low response rate may be of little concern since a comparison of ICVS data to corresponding Census data shows that "demographic characteristics between respondents of the IL-CVS final sample and Illinois' population were fairly similar…" (Hiselman, 2005: p 96).

The original ICVS data file contained 1,602 respondents. In order to address the research question, the data file was altered using Statistical Software for the Social Sciences (SPSS). These changes are outlined below.

- Because the analyses focus on reporting violence to the police, only cases where a respondent experienced a violent victimization were retained in the data.

- The file was changed from a 'victim' file to a 'victimization' file. In the original data file, each data row contains information on a victim, their household, and up to four victimizations they sustained. In other words, the unit of analysis is the individual. Because the analyses focus on reporting of violent victimizations, the data file was altered to reflect victimization as the unit of analysis. Each row in

the converted file contains information on a victim, their household characteristics, and incident characteristics – including reporting to the police – for a single victimization. If a respondent identified two victimizations in the survey, there would be two lines – one line devoted for each victimization - of data reflecting that.

- The purpose of the ICVS is to ascertain the nature and extent of statewide and regional crime victimization *in Illinois*. Therefore, victimizations that occurred outside the state were removed from the data. [3]

- Three victim age problems were noted in the data. Perusal of the data file uncovered alleged victimizations of a three year old, a five year old and a seven year old occurred. Because only persons age 18 or older were eligible for the ICVS, it was deemed that these three cases involved erroneous age entries. They were subsequently removed from the data. The three cases of victimization however remained in the data file.

Following these changes, the final data file contained 380 violent victimizations occurring to individual victims.

4. MEASURES

4.1 Dependent Variable

The dependent variable - reporting violence to the police – includes all violent victimizations reported to the police. A victimization is deemed reported regardless of whether the victim or someone else reported it. Defining reporting to police to include reporting by any party (i.e., not just the victim) is warranted. With few exceptions, this definition and subsequent measurement is found in research using the NCVS. Exceptions

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[3] This is standard protocol used for other victimization analyses including the NCVS.

include Avakame et al., (1999) and Baumer (2002). Avakame et al. (1999) defined

reported violence as that which comes to the attention of police by the victim only.

Baumer (2002) defined "reporting to police" as contacts made to the police by the victim

and the victim's family. Limiting reporting to the victim or to the victim and immediate

family discards a large portion of victimizations. Nationally, limiting reporting to the

victim only discards over 50% of all total violence, 31% of rapes, 40% of robberies, 52%

of aggravated assaults and 46% of simple assaults (Hart & Rennison, 2003). Further,

restricting reporting to police to include only that reported by the victim and family

members excludes 35% of all violent victimizations, 24% rapes and sexual assaults, 30%

of robbery, 41% of aggravated assaults and 36% of simple assaults (Hart & Rennison,

2003). These restrictions are problematic because it is suspected that violence reported by

the victim or family members differs from violence reported by others. For example,

violence that results in the incapacitation or severe injury of a victim would likely not be

reported by the victim given their incapacitation. And unless the violence was committed

in the presence of a family member, it is unlikely the family member would report it to

the police. In the following analyses, reporting to the police is operationalized as a

dichotomous variable in which 0 = the violence was *not* reported to the police and 1 = the

violence was reported to the police.[4]

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[4] All variables are described in detail in Appendix A.

4.2 Independent Variables

4.2.1 Victim Characteristics

Gender of the victim is dichotomized (0 = male; 1 = female). Race and Hispanic origin of the victim is measured using a series of four dichotomous variables: *Hispanic, non-Hispanic White, non-Hispanic Black* and *non-Hispanic Other*. *Hispanic* refers to respondents who are Hispanic and include persons of any race. "*Other*" refers to respondents who self-described themselves as American Indian, Aleut, Eskimo, Asian, Pacific Islander, Multi-Racial or other. *Non-Hispanic White* serves as the reference group. *Age* of the victim is measured as a continuous variable ranging from 18 years of age to a maximum of 95 years of age.[5] Marital status is captured using a set of five dichotomous variables: *married, never married, widowed, divorced, and separated*. Marital status is coded based on the respondent's marital status during the majority (six months or more) of 2002. *Married* serves as the excluded reference category. *Educational attainment* describing the highest level of education completed is treated as a continuous variable where 1 = less than high school, 2 = high school graduate or GED earned, 3 = some college completed, 4 = bachelors degree earned, and 5 = post-graduate work. The employment status of the respondent during most of 2002 was captured using three dichotomous variables: *employed full-time, employed part-time* and *not employed*. The *employed full-time* category serves as the excluded reference group. Whether the respondent was a student for most of 2002 is captured using the variable *student* (1 = not a student; 1 = student).

4.2.2 Household Characteristics

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[5] Only those 18 or older were eligible respondents in the ICVS. Persons age 95 or older are included in the "95" category.

Victim household characteristics are important to consider. Whether the household was owned or rented was measured using three dichotomous variables: *Owned, Rented* and *Other*. *Other* refers to situations where the respondent lives somewhere they neither own nor pay rent (e.g., living rent free with a friend or family member). *Owned* serves as the excluded category in the analyses. Another household characteristic describes the type of dwelling in which the respondent resides. This variable, *Dwelling*, distinguishes between a single family home (coded as zero), or any other type of dwelling (coded as a one). Other types of dwellings include apartment buildings, condominiums, duplexes, farms, mobile homes or trailers, or town homes. To account for the number of children under age 18 living in the household during most of the year 2002, the variable *children<18* is utilized. This continuous level measure ranges from 0 = 0 children, 1 = 1 child, 2 = 2 children, 3 = 3 children, 4 = 4 children, to 5 = 5 or 5 or more children). The *tenure* of the residence – that is, how long the respondent has resided at their current residence - is measured using three dichotomous variables: *Less than 1 year, 1 to 5 years*, and *5+ years*. *Less than 1 year* serves as the reference category. Annual household income is measured as a continuous variable based upon seven categories. A variable describing the MSA or urbanicity of the respondent's residence is included via a series of four dichotomous variables: *City, Suburban, Town* and *Rural*. *Urban* is the excluded category.

4.3 Offender Characteristics

As suggested by the literature, several offender characteristics are included in the models as controls. The gender of the offender(s) is measured using four dichotomous variables: *Male, female, group with both* and *do not know gender*. *Male* is the excluded

comparison category. Three dichotomized variables are included to measure offender's race/ethnicity: *white* (reference group), *black,* and *other race/ethnicity*. The age of the offender(s) is measured with five dichotomous variables: *18 or younger, 18 to 29, 30 or older, a mixed age group of offenders*, and *don't know age of offender(s).*[6] *Less than 18* is the reference group. Victim and offender relationship is accounted in the analyses using four dichotomies: *Intimate, family members friend/acquaintance, and stranger. Intimate* violence is the reference category.[7]

5.4 Incident Characteristics

A set of three dichotomous variables describe the presence or absence of a weapon during an incident of violence: *No weapons*, *weapon present*, and *don't know if a weapon was present*. Weapons include items such as firearms, knifes, sharp implements, cutting implements, and blunt objects. No weapon present served as the reference category. Whether the victim was injured as a result of the violence is accounted for with a dichotomous variables (0 = no injury; 1 = injured victim). And finally, three dichotomized variables control for the location of the violence: *In or near the victim's home, within five miles of the victim's home*, and *more than five miles from the victim's home. At or near victim's home* serves as the excluded group in the models.

5. ANALYTIC STRATEGY

The purpose of this research is to investigate the influence of victim and household characteristics on reporting of violent victimization to the police. Because the

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[6] The "mixed age" group of offenders was not utilized in the regression due to a lack of sample in this category.

[7] Offender characteristics are based on victim's perceptions and may be imperfect. Though any error is of concern, the threat of error from victim perceptions is small. Hindelang (1981) compared perceived offender characteristics (race and age) from the National Crime Survey to offender characteristics recorded in police reports and found significant agreement (over 96% for race) between the two sources. Thus while the potential for error in the victim's perceptions exist, it is expected to be minimal.

dependent variable – reporting versus not reporting violence to the police – is a

dichotomous variable, binary logistic regression is utilized. Binary logistic regression is a

flexible and powerful analytic tool which allows one to predict a discrete measure such as

reporting to the police vs. not reporting to the police from a set of predictor variables

(Hosmer & Lemeshow, 2000). Logistic regression makes no assumptions regarding the

distributions (i.e., normal distributions, linearly related, equal variances) of the

independent and control variables (Mertler and Vannatta 2005).

6. FINDINGS

Before examining multivariate results, Appendix B offers descriptives of the

variables used in the analyses. Fewer than half – 44% - of all violent victimizations in

Illinois during 2002 were reported to the police. On average, victimizations in Illinois

involved females (62%), middle age victims (40 years old), non-Hispanic whites (71%),

and married persons (51%). Most victimizations involved victims with some college

education (34%), victims who were employed full-time (65%) and persons who were not

currently students. Victimizations tended to involve offenders described as white (49%),

male (42%), and strangers (68%). Victimizations in Illinois general did not involve a

weapon (62%), did not lead to an injured victim (89%), and occurred at or near the

victim's home (50%).

The primary research question is the influence of individual and household

characteristics on reporting violence to the police in Illinois. Appendix C presents the

results from a binary logistic model evaluating this and reveals several group differences

in reporting.[8] Controlling for all relevant correlates of reporting, violence against non-

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[8] Logistic regression output includes regression coefficients (*b*), standard errors (SE), p-values and Exp(B) or odds ratios. The *b* – the unstandardized regression coefficient - represents the effect of the independent

Hispanic black victims is *less* likely to come to the attention of police compared to the same type of violence against non-Hispanic white victims (b = -1.76, SE = 0.95, p = 0.07).[9] In terms of adjusted odds ratios, the odds that violence against non-Hispanic blacks will be reported to the police are 83% less than similar violence against non-Hispanic whites.

All else being equal, employment status of the victim is related to the likelihood that police will be contacted. Violence against individuals who are not employed (b = -1.82, SE = 0.91, p = 0.05), or those who are employed part-time (b = -1.63, SE = 0.79, p = 0.04) is less likely to be reported to the police than is the same violence perpetrated against a person employed on a full-time basis. Adjusted odds ratios demonstrate that the odds of violence against an unemployed person being reported to the police are 84% less, and the odds of violence against a part-time worker being reported are 80% less than the odds of similar violence against a victim employed full-time being reported to the police.

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variable on the *log odds* of the dependent variable. A position regression coefficient for a significant variable means that the higher the score on the variable, the higher probability of reporting the violence to the police. A negative coefficient suggests that the lower the score on the dependent variable, the higher the probability of reporting the violence to the police. The SE is the standard error of *b*. P-value reflects the probability that the finding was achieved by chance. The p-value serves as the threshold for determining whether a variable is a 'significant' predictor of the dependent variable. Because the regression coefficient are unstandardized (i.e., based on different scales across variables), it is inappropriate to compare regression coefficients across variables. Logistic regression coefficients are not intuitive. For that reason, Exp (b), or Adjusted Odds Ratios are present for all variables in teach model.

An Adjusted Odds Ratio greater than 1.0 describes the increase in the odds of a victimization being reported to the police when the predictor variable increases by one unit. Conversely, an Odds Ratio of less than 1.0 describes the decrease in the odds of a victimization being reported to the police when the predictor variable of interest increases by one unit.

[9] All reported differences in regression coefficients are characterized as having p<0.10. Researchers draw a sample with the express purpose of using results to generalize back to the population. Sampling error in samples is unavoidable. Therefore when a difference in estimates between two groups is noted, one must assess whether this difference reflects a true difference between the two groups, or whether it is a result of unavoidable sampling error or chance. In this report, when it is stated that an estimate is different from another, it means that at most, there is less than a 10% chance that this difference would obtain due to chance alone.

Not only are some victim characteristics associated with reporting violence to the police, several household characteristics matter as well. Victimizations against persons who have lived at their current residence for between one and five years are more likely to be reported to the police compared to victimization against persons who have lived in the residence for less than one years ($b = 2.25$, SE $= 0.88$, p $= 0.01$). This difference in reporting between these two groups is demonstrated by the odds ratio of 9.53 suggesting that the odds of reporting violence against those living in their homes for between one and five years are almost ten times greater than reporting of violence against those who have lived in their residence for less than one year. Similar findings are noted for those who have lived in their homes for more than five years compared to those there less than one year ($b = 2.16$, SE $= 1.00$, p $= 0.03$). The associated adjusted odds ratio of 8.63 shows that the odds that a victim reporting who lived in their home for more than five years is almost nine times greater than are the odds of reporting by residents living in their home for less than one year.

Though not the primary focus of these analyses, several control variables have a significant influence on reporting violence to the police. Police are less likely to be contacted when the offender is perceived to be older (i.e., 30 years of age or more; $b = -1.71$, SE $= 0.89$, p $= 0.06$) compared to younger offenders (i.e., less than 18 years of age). The odds of reporting violence committed by older perpetrator is 82% less than the odds of reporting when the perpetrator is thought to be under age 18.

Both measures of severity of violence are predictors of police reporting. When a weapon is present during a violent victimization, the police are more likely to be contacted ($b = 1.39$, SE $= 0.70$, p $= 0.05$). The odds of police reporting increase about

four times when a weapon is present compared to when no weapon is brandished or used (AOR = 4.01). Violence resulting in an injured victim is associated with a greater likelihood of police reporting ($b = 1.85$, SE = 0.67, p = 0.01). A victimization that results in an injury increases the odds of reporting by more than six times compared to a victimization in which the victim was not injured (AOR = 6.33).

7. CONCLUSION

The purpose of this research was to investigate whether particular groups of victims were less likely to contact the police following a violent victimization. The analyses examined the influence of individual and household characteristics on the likelihood of reporting violence to the police while controlling for relevant correlates. Findings show that some victims of violence are less likely to contact the police than others. First, violent victimization against non-Hispanic blacks (compared to non-Hispanic whites) is less likely to come to the attention of the police. The odds of reporting violence against a non-Hispanic black are 83% less than similar violence against a non-Hispanic white. This finding is distressing given that in general blacks are victimized at rates higher than are whites (28 versus 23 violent victimizations per 1,000, respectively) (Rennison & Rand, 2003).

Second, victims who are not employed full-time are less likely to contact the police following a violent victimization. The odds of a person who is employed part-time or unemployed to contact he police following violence are 80% and 84% less, respectively, than are the odds of reporting by a victim who is employed full-time.

And third, violence against persons who have recently moved is less likely to come to the attention of the police than is violence against those who have resided in the

same location for more than a year. The odds of violence against person living in their homes more than a year to be reported are about nine and ten times higher than are the odds of reporting violence against a person who has resided at their home for less than one year.

What is it about these victims that make them less willing or less able to contact the police following a violent victimization? Are there structural impediments making reporting excessively burdensome to these individuals? Is it a lack of knowledge about how to contact the police? Do they feel a lack of connectedness with the community? Is it fear or distrust of the police? Or perhaps the lower likelihood of contacting the police stems from a combination of these. Further research is necessary to determine the reasons these differences in reporting exist. Until then, policies designed to facilitate police reporting are warranted. And policies are needed that are designed to inform the public that violence against all individuals is important to report to the police. This information could be strategically targeted to these groups. For example, information can be placed in employment offices, bus stations and other locations that job seekers utilize. Pamphlets describing methods to report violence can also be made available in employment agencies, published in want-ad sections of newspapers, and placed on websites used by those seeking employment. Additionally, this information can be made available in real estate offices, apartment complexes, moving companies and other locations frequented by those who have recently moved to the state and those who move frequently within the state. With this knowledge, these groups can access the benefits of the criminal justice system and in doing so make society safer as police are more able to apprehend offenders.

This work is not without limitations. As stated above, one limitation stems from the response rate and resulting small sample size. Because of the small sample size, proposed analyses by specific types of violence was not possible. This is regrettable since the type of violence is a widely agreed upon predictor of whether the police are contacted. In general, the more severe the violence, the more likely the police will be called (Gottfredson & Gottfredson, 1980; Baumer, 2002; Gottfredson & Hindelang, 1979; Laub, 1981; Skogan, 1976; 1984). Additional data collection efforts in the future should enable the minimization of this low sample size issue.

In conclusion, while many groups of residents in Illinois report violence to the police in similar rates, some groups are far less likely to do so. Non-Hispanic blacks, part-time employees, the unemployed and short-term residents are less likely to contact the police following a violent victimization. With this information, policies designed to facilitate reporting of violence sustained by these individuals, and policies designed to encourage reporting among these victims can be efficiently focused. Once all victims of violence are willing and able to report violence to the police, the benefits of the criminal justice system will actually be within reach for all.

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Appendix A. Description of Variables

Dependent Variable

    Reporting violence   A victimization that comes to the attention of the police, regardless of who reported it, is a reported victimization. Reporting violence to the police is coded 0 when the violence was not reported, and 1 when the violence was reported.

Independent Variables

Victim Characteristics

    Gender   A dichotomous variable where 0 = male, and 1 = female.

    Hispanic origin/race   Race/Hispanic origin characteristic is measured with four dichotomous variables: Hispanic of any race, non-Hispanic white, non-Hispanic black, non-Hispanic Other. "Other" refers to respondents who self-described themselves as American Indian, Aleut, Eskimo, Asian, Pacific Islander, Multi-Racial or other. Hispanic refers to individuals who comes from, or whose family comes from a Spanish-speaking country. In the ICVS, this includes self-identification as: Mexican-American, Chicano, Mexican, Puerto Rican, Cuban, Central or South American (Spanish Countries) or some "other" Spanish origin. Non-Hispanic white serves as the reference category.

    Age   Age measured in years and ranges from 18 to of 95 years of age The ICVS does not gather information on persons under age of 18. Persons age 95 or older are included in the "95" category.

Marital status	Marital status is included via five dichotomous variables: Married, Never married, Widowed, Divorced and Separated. Marital status is coded based on the respondent's marital status during the majority (six months or more) of 2002. Married serves as the reference category.
Student	If a respondent was a student for a majority of 2002, they were coded as a one. Otherwise, they were coded as a zero.
Educational attainment	Educational attainment, describing the highest level of education completed, is measured as a continuous variable: 1= less than high school, 2 = high school graduate or GED earned, 3 = some college completed, 4 = bachelors degree earned, and 5 = post-graduate work
Employment status	The employment status of the respondent during at least "most of 2002" was captured using a three dichotomous variables: *employed full time, employed part time* and *not employed. Employed full time* serves as the reference group.

Household characteristics

Annual income	The ICVS uses 7 income categories of unequal width to measure annual household income. These categories are coded from 1 to 7 from lowest to highest and are: Less than $10,000, $10,000 to $19,999, $20,000 to $34,999, $35,000 to $49,999, $50,000 to $74,999, $75,000 to $99,999, and More than $100,000.
Own/Rent	Whether the household in which the victim resides was owned or rented is measured using three dichotomous variables: Owned, Rented and Other. Other refers to situations where the respondent lives somewhere they neither own nor pay no rent (e.g., living rent free with a friend or family member). Owned serves as the excluded category in the analyses.

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MSA/Urbanicity	This characteristic is included with four dichotomous measures: Urban, Suburban, Town and Rural. Urban is the excluded category
Dwelling	This variables distinguishes between a single family home (coded as zero), or any other type of dwelling (coded as a one). Other types of dwellings include apartment buildings, condominiums, duplexes, farms, mobile homes or trailers, or town homes.
Children < 18	To account for the number of children under age 18 living in the household during most of the year 2002, the variable children < 18 is utilized: 0 = 0 children, 1 = 1 child, 2 = 2 children, 3 = 3 children, 4 = 4 children, and 5 = 5 or more children.
Tenure	How long the respondent has resided at their current residence is measured using three dichotomous variables: Less than 1 year, 1 to 5 years, and 5+ years. Less than 1 year serves as the reference category.

Control Variables

Offender characteristics

Gender	The gender of the offender(s) is measured using a set of four dichotomous variables: Male (represents a lone male offender or a group of all male offenders), Female (a lone female offender or a group of all female offenders), Both (a group of male and female offenders) and Don't Know Gender. Male serves as the reference category for offender's race.

Race/ethnicity	The race/ethnicity of the offender(s) is controlled for with four dichotomous variables: White (a lone white offender or a group of all white offenders), Black (a lone black offender or a group of all black offenders), and Other (a lone offender or a group of offenders the respondent describes as neither black nor white). White serves as the reference category.
Age	The age of the offender(s) is gathered using five dichotomous variables: 18 or younger (a lone offender under the age or 18, or a group of offenders who are all less than 18 years old), 18 to 29 (a single offender between 18 and 29, or a group of offenders in this age range), 30 or older (a sole offender, or a group of offenders age 30 or older), Mixed-age group and Don't know ages. Offenders age 18 or younger serve as the comparison group.
Victim/offender relationship	The victim and offender relationship is measured with four dichotomous variables: Intimate partner, other family member, friend/acquaintance, and stranger. Intimates include current and former spouses, boyfriends and girlfriends. Intimate violence serves as the reference group.

Incident Characteristics

Weapon	Presence of weapon is captured using three dichotomous variables: no weapon, weapon present and don't know if a weapon was present. No weapon present serves as the reference category.
Injuries	Injuries resulting from the violence are controlled for using a dichotomous variable in which $0 =$ no injury and $1 =$ injury.
Location	Three dichotomized variables control for the location of the violence. These include: In or near the victim's home, within five miles of the victim's home, and more than five miles from the victim's home. At or near victim's home served as the excluded comparison group.

Descriptives of variables included in analyses (N=380)

	Percent
Dependent variable	
Violence reported to the police?	
No	56.3
Yes	43.7
Missing	0.0
Independent variables	
Victim characteristics	
Gender	
Male	37.4
Female	61.1
Missing	1.6
Age (mean(sd))	40 (14)
Missing = 3.7%	
Race/Hispanic origin	
Non-Hispanic white	70.3
Non-Hispanic black	13.7
Hispanic, any race	10.8
Other	4.5
Missing	0.8
Marital status	
Married	51.1
Widowed	1.6
Divorced	13.7
Separated	1.8
Never married	31.1
Missing	0.8
Educational attainment	
Less than high school	7.9

	Percent
Household characteristics	
Tenure at current address	
Less than one year	13.7
Between 1-5 years	26.8
More than 5 years	59.2
Missing	0.3
No. children <18 in home	
0	48.2
1	17.9
2	24.7
3	6.3
4	1.3
5 or more	0.8
Missing	0.8
Urbanicity/MSA	
City	45.0
Suburb	32.4
Town	15.5
Rural Area	6.1
Missing	1.1
Type dwelling	
Single family home	63.7
Other type home	35.5
Missing	0.8
Home ownership	
Owner	54.2
Renter	28.4
Other	14.2
Missing	3.2

	Percent
Control variables	
Offender characteristics	
Gender	
Male	41.6
Female	7.1
Both	1.6
Don't know gender	48.4
Missing	1.3
Age	
Less than 18	9.7
19 to 29	22.6
30 plus	18.4
Mixed age group	2.6
Don't know age	45.5
Missing	1.1
Race	
White	24.2
Black	15.3
Other	9.7
Missing	50.8
Victim and offender relationship	
Intimate	5.8
Family	3.7
Friend/Acquaintance	21.6
Stranger	66.8
Missing	2.1
Incident characteristics	
Weapon presence	
Yes	14.5

High school diploma	19.7				No	60.3
Some college	33.2	Annual income			Don't know if weapon	22.9
Bachelors degree	16.8	Less than $10,000	12.4		Missing	2.4
Post-grad education	19.2	$10,000 to $19,999	15.8			
Missing	3.2	$20,000 to $34,999	15.0	Injury		
		$35,000 to $49,999	16.3		Not injured	87.1
Employment status		$50,000 to $74,999	16.1		Injured	10.3
Not employed	18.7	$75,000 to $99,999	11.3		Missing	2.6
Employed part time	16.3	$100,000or more	9.7			
Employed full time	63.7	Missing	3.4	Location of incident		
Missing	1.3				At or near home	47.9
					Within 5 miles of home	27.1
Student status					More than 5 miles	20.3
No	80.5				Missing	4.7
Yes	17.9					
Missing	1.6					

Data source: Illinois Criminal Victimization Survey, 2002

Logistic regression predicting reporting violent victimization to the police (N=380)

	b	S.E.	P-value		Lower Exp(b)	Exp(b)	Upper Exp(b)
Independent variables							
Victim characteristics							
Female	0.66	0.65	0.31		0.54	1.93	6.94
Age	0.02	0.03	0.57		0.96	1.02	1.08
Non-Hispanic black	-1.76	0.95	0.07	**	0.03	0.17	1.12
Hispanic	1.10	1.06	0.30		0.38	3.00	23.74
Other race/ethnicity	-2.48	2.05	0.23		0.00	0.08	4.62
Widowed	0.23	1.58	0.88		0.06	1.26	27.95
Divorced	-1.43	0.95	0.13		0.04	0.24	1.53
Separated	1.90	1.40	0.17		0.43	6.69	103.50
NeverMarried	-1.17	0.79	0.14		0.07	0.31	1.48
Educational attainment	0.07	0.26	0.77		0.65	1.08	1.78
Not employed	-1.82	0.91	0.05	**	0.03	0.16	0.96
Employed part time	-1.63	0.79	0.04	*	0.04	0.20	0.92
Student	0.68	0.75	0.36		0.45	1.97	8.56
Household characteristics							
Between 1-5 years	2.25	0.88	0.01	*	1.69	9.53	53.78
More than 5 years	2.16	1.00	0.03	*	1.21	8.63	61.50
No. children <18	0.34	0.26	0.20		0.84	1.40	2.34
Suburb	0.59	0.74	0.43		0.42	1.80	7.72
Town	-0.83	0.74	0.26		0.10	0.43	1.84
Rural Area	0.47	1.51	0.76		0.08	1.60	30.63
Not single family home	0.40	0.75	0.60		0.34	1.49	6.42
Renter	0.67	0.78	0.39		0.43	1.96	9.03
Live with others for free	0.16	0.95	0.87		0.18	1.17	7.61
Annual household income	-0.19	0.20	0.36		0.56	0.83	1.24
Control variables							
Offender characteristics							
Female	0.24	0.70	0.73		0.32	1.27	5.06
Both genders	-0.51	1.71	0.77		0.02	0.60	17.13
Do not know gender	0.93	1.43	0.52		0.15	2.52	41.69
19 to 29	-0.76	0.87	0.38		0.08	0.47	2.59
30 plus	-1.71	0.89	0.06	**	0.03	0.18	1.04
Don't know ages	-3.04	1.87	0.10		0.00	0.05	1.85

Black	0.45	0.75	0.55		0.36	1.57	6.80
Other race/ethnicity	1.22	0.76	0.11		0.76	3.38	15.12
Family member	-1.63	2.37	0.49		0.00	0.20	20.17
Friend/Acquaintance	0.99	0.85	0.25		0.51	2.70	14.37
Stranger	0.70	0.88	0.42		0.36	2.02	11.34
Incident characteristics							
Weapon was present	1.39	0.70	0.05	**	1.01	4.01	15.95
Don't know if weapon	1.03	1.15	0.37		0.30	2.79	26.37
Injured	1.85	0.67	0.01	*	1.72	6.33	23.34
Within 5 miles of home	0.70	0.64	0.28		0.57	2.01	7.04
More than 5 miles	-0.40	0.71	0.57		0.17	0.67	2.68
Constant	-3.73	2.71	0.17			0.02	

Data source: Illinois Criminal Victimization Survey, 2002, N=380
* p< .05; ** p< .10
-2 Log Likelihood = 130.84
Nagelkerke R Square = 0.5165
Note: Mixed age group of offenders was dropped due to small sample size