

NATIONAL OPEN UNIVERSITY OF NIGERIA FACULTY OF SOCIAL SCIENCES



NATIONAL OPEN UNIVERSITY OF NIGERIA
DEPARTMENT OF CRIMINOLOGY & SECURITY STUDIES (CSS)
FACULTY OF SOCIAL SCIENCES

COURSE CODE: CSS 830

**COURSE TITLE:
VICTIMOLOGY AND CRIME STATISTICS**

Course Guide

CSS 830: VICTIMOLOGY AND CRIME STATISTICS

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INTRODUCTION

CSS 830Victimology and Crime Statistics is a 3-credit unit course. It is a course for postgraduate students in the field of Criminology and Security Studies of the University. The course is also recommended to any other student(s) particularly those in the Faculty of Social Sciences and other affiliates, who may have interest in the study crime beyond the conventional offenders to the victims, thus the need to be well grounded in the field of Victimology and Crime Statistics. The course can also be taken as an elective or required course by other students whose main field of interest is not in the discipline of Criminology and Security Studies. However the course shall consist of 24 units, which include: Introduction and background to victimology, consequence of victimization, theoretical explanation of victimisation and recurring victimisation, characteristics and risk factors engendering recurring victimisation, measurement and history of crime and crime victimisation, introduction to crime statistics, scope and state of nationally compiled crime statistics with emphasis on uniform crime reporting (UCR) program and national incident-based reporting system (NIBRS), crime statistics: the benefits and risks,*international classification of crime for statistical (ICCS) purposes and principles* among others.

The course has no compulsory prerequisite for it to be registered for. The course guide informs us on what this course is all about, what students should appreciate in each unit, what text materials we shall be using and how we can make the best use of the compiled materials and referral sources. This course guide also emphasises the need for students to take self-assessment exercise seriously. However, necessary information on self-assessment exercise shall be made known to students in a separate file, which will be sent to each of them at the appropriate time. This course is also supported with periodic tutorial classes.

What You Will Learn In This Course

CSS830: Victimology and Crime Statistics as a course in the field of Criminology and Security Studies at the National Open University of Nigeria focuses on a wide range of victimological issues and crime statistics that bother on understanding and incorporating victims perspectives, narratives in the broader aspect in the criminal justice system, knowing quite well that issues upon issues relating to the victim, the offender, crime victim are better understood behaviourally and statistical regarding occurrence, trend and pattern of engagement. The relevance of crime statistics in the form of data generated, analysed, and disseminated for use for research and government agencies for policy making is unrivalled in the 21st century where quantification of behavioural and social events are computerised with the aid of science and technology. In this course we will carefully examine, highlight, analyse and assess some victim-crime nexus, theoretically and in principle vis-à-vis crime statistical issues bordering on international standardisation of crime measurement and categorisation. Issues on victimology and crime statistics are by nature dynamic for which we must keep ourselves abreast with development on and off the field and the radar of criminology and the criminal justice system in general.

Nevertheless, the essence of victimology and crime statistics is at least to provide the students with key issues beyond the traditional emphasis on the offender and the offender alone to the victim as agitated by notable scholars in the field of victimology. It is important to state here that the support by crime statisticians and agencies from which reliable data are derived regarding

cannot be overemphasised in ensuring that data gotten through victim survey and crime reports are understood. The course explores the strategic principles and procedures of gathering reliable statistics and the best way to disaggregate and explain results in the simplest manner possible amidst the complexity, scope, and challenges of crime data gathering. This course covers a wide range of issues often not detailed in criminology texts.

Course Aims

The overall aim of CSS 830: Victimology and Crime Statistics as a course is to introduce you to victimology as “the science of victims and victimity. Or simply put the scientific study of crime victims. Victimity, as used means the general concept, the specific common phenomenon which characterizes all categories of victims, whatever the cause of their situation” Similarly, the need to know the occurrence, nature, trend, patterns, and characteristics of crime (offenders) and victims brought about the second part of this module to capture crime statistics, the progress and development of universal categorisation and usage of crime statistics. Undoubtedly, the way the course draws its references from the analysis of various international standards makes it astounding and thought provoking for students and scholars in the field of criminology and security studies to help engender analytical and critical thinking. The course is also aimed at understanding:

- Victimology
- Key concepts in victim’s role in crime Victim Precipitation, Victim Facilitation, and Victim Provocation
- the Victim Crime
- Consequence of victimization
- Theories of victimisation I (understanding the genesis of crime, and victim crime)
- Theories of victimisation II (understanding the genesis of crime, and victim crime)
- **How to Measure Victimization**
- Recurring Victimization
- Theoretical Explanations of Recurring Victimization
- Extent and consequences of Recurring victimisation
- Characteristics of Recurring Victimization
- Risk Factors for Recurring Victimization
- Measuring Crime and Crime Victimization
- Historical development of methods for Measuring Crime
- Crime Statistics
- Users (and Uses) of Crime Statistics
- Scope and State of Nationally Compiled Crime Statistics: UCR Program and National Incident-Based Reporting System (NIBRS)
- Basic Structure and Crime Coverage of the Base NCVS
- The Wider Field of “Crime” Data
- National Self-Report Surveys of criminal offending
- Statistics: The Benefits and Risks
- Data confidentiality methods for statistical disclosure limitation and methods for assessing privacy

- *International Classification of Crime for Statistical (ICCS) Purposes (An Overview)*
- Principles used in the *International Classification of Crime for Statistical (ICCS) Purposes*

Course Objectives

With utmost desire to achieve the aims set out above, the course has some set of objectives as demonstrated in all the units of the course. Each unit has its own objectives. Objectives are always included at the beginning of every unit to assist the student in appreciation of what he or she will come across in the study of each unit to facilitate his or her better understanding of the course CSS 830: Victimology and Crime Statistics. Students are therefore advised to read these objectives before studying the entire unit(s). Thus, it is helpful to do so. You should always look at the unit objectives after completing a unit. In this way, you can be sure that you have done what was required of you by the unit. Stated below are the wider objectives of this course as a whole. By meeting these objectives, you should have achieved the aims of the course as a whole.

At the end of the course, you should be able to:

- Understand the meaning, nature and scope of victimology
- Discuss the key concepts of victims' precipitation, facilitation and provocation in the analysis of victimization
- Understand Victim Crime and consequence of victimization
- Theoretically engage victimisation and Recurring Victimization
- Examine the Risk Factors for Recurring Victimization
- Explain the historical development of methods for Measuring Crime
- Understand the Scope and State of Nationally Compiled Crime Statistics: UCR Program and National Incident-Based Reporting System (NIBRS)
- Highlight the Basic Structure and Crime Coverage of the Base NCVS
- Examine the National Self-Report Surveys of criminal offending
- Appraise the Principles used in the *International Classification of Crime for Statistical (ICCS) Purposes*

Working through this course

To complete this Course, students are advised to check the study units, read the recommended books as well as other course materials provided by the NOUN. Each unit contains Self-Assessment Exercise (SAE) and Tutor Marked Assignments (TMAS) for assessment purposes. There will be a written examination at the end of the course. The course should take students about 14 weeks to complete. You will find all the components of the course listed below. Students need to allocate time to each unit to finish the course successfully.

Course Materials

Major component of the course include:

1. Course Guide

2. Study Units
3. Textbooks
4. Assignments Files
5. Presentations Schedule

It is incumbent upon every student to get his or her own copy of the course material. You are also advised to contact your tutorial facilitator if you have any difficulty in getting any of the text materials recommended for your further reading.

Study Units

In this course there are twenty-four units, divided into four modules, (five in each module). Below are the units:

MODULE 1

- Unit 1. Introduction and Background to Victimology
- Unit 2. Key concepts in victim's role in crime: Victim Precipitation, Victim Facilitation, and Victim Provocation
- Unit 3. Understanding the Victim Crime
- Unit 4. Consequence of victimization

MODULE 2

- Unit 1: Theories of victimisation I (understanding the genesis of crime, and victim crime)
- Unit 2: Theories of victimisation II (understanding the genesis of crime, and victim crime)
- Unit 3: Measuring Victimization
- Unit 4: Recurring Victimisation

MODULE 3

- Unit 1. Theoretical Explanations of Recurring Victimization
- Unit 2. Extent and consequences of Recurring victimisation
- Unit 3. Characteristics of Recurring Victimization
- Unit 4. Risk Factors for Recurring Victimization

MODULE 4

- Unit 1. Measuring Crime and Crime Victimization
- Unit 2. Historical development of methods for Measuring Crime
- Unit 3. Introduction to Crime Statistics
- Unit 4. Users (and Uses) of Crime Statistics

MODULE 5

- Unit 1. Scope and State of Nationally Compiled Crime Statistics: UCR Program and National Incident-Based Reporting System (NIBRS)
- Unit 2. Basic Structure and Crime Coverage of the Base NCVS
- Unit 3. The Wider Field Of "Crime" Data
- Unit 4. National Self-Report Surveys of criminal offending

MODULE 6

Unit 1. Statistics: The Benefits and Risks

Unit 2. Data confidentiality: methods for statistical disclosure limitation and methods for assessing privacy

Unit 3. *International Classification of Crime for Statistical (ICCS) Purposes (An Overview)*

Unit 4. Principles used in the *International Classification of Crime for Statistical (ICCS) Purposes*

Assignment File

In this file you will find the necessary details of the assignments you must submit to your tutor for assessment. The marks you get from these assignments will form part of your final assessment in this course,

Assessment

There are two aspects to the assessment of the course. First is the tutor-marked assignment; second there is the written examination. In tackling the assignments, you are expected to apply information and knowledge acquired during this course. The assignments must be submitted to your tutor for assessment in accordance with the deadlines stated in the Assignment file. The work you submit to your tutor for assessment will count for 30% of your total course work. At the end of the course, you will need to sit for a final three-hour examination. This will also count for 70% of your total course mark.

TUTOR MARKED ASSIGNMENTS (TMAS)

In this course, you will be required to study fifteen (15) units, and complete tutor marked assignment provided at the end of each unit.

The assignments carry 10% mark each. The best four of your assignments will constitute 30% of your final mark. At the end of the course, you will be required to write a final examination, which counts for 70% of your final mark. The assignments for each unit in this course are contained in your assignment file. You may wish to consult other related materials apart from your course material to complete your assignments. When you complete each assignment, send it together with a tutor marked assignment (TMA) form to your Tutor. Ensure that each assignment reaches your tutor on or before the dead line stipulated in the assignment file. If, for any reason you are unable to complete your assignment in time, contact your tutor before the due date to discuss the possibility of an extension.

Note that extensions will not be granted after the due date for submission unless under exceptional circumstances.

Final examination and grading

The final examination of CSS 830 shall be of three hours duration and have a value of 70% of the total course grade. The examination shall consist of questions which reflect the type of self-testing/Self-Assessment Exercises. Practice exercises you have come across. All areas of the course will be assessed. You are advised to revise the entire course after studying the last unit before you sit for the examination. You will find it useful to review your self-assessment exercises and the comments of your tutor on them before the final examination.

Course Marking Scheme

This table shows how the actual course marking is broken down.

Assessment	Marks
Assignment	Four assignments are to be submitted, out of which the three best shall be considered at 10% each, making 30% of the overall scores
Final Examination	70% of overall course marks
Total	100% of course marks.

Table 1: Course Marking Scheme

Course Overview

The table brings together the entire units contained in this course, the number of weeks you should take to complete them, and the schedule for assignments that follow them.

Course overview and Presentation Schedule

Unit	Title	Week's Activity	Assessment (end of unit)
1.	Introduction and Background to Victimology	1.	
2.	Key concepts in victim's role in crime Victim Precipitation, Victim Facilitation, and Victim Provocation	2.	
3.	Understanding the Victim Crime	3.	
4.	Consequence of victimization	4.	
5.	Theories of victimisation I (understanding the genesis of crime, and victim crime)	5.	
6.	Theories of victimisation II (understanding the genesis of crime, and victim crime)	6.	Assignment 1
7.	Measuring Victimization	7.	
8.	Recurring Victimisation	8.	
9.	Theoretical Explanations of Recurring Victimization	9.	
10.	Extent and consequences of Recurring victimisation	10.	
11.	Characteristics of Recurring Victimization	11.	
12.	Risk Factors for Recurring Victimization	12.	Assignment 2

13.	Measuring Crime and Crime Victimization	13.	
14.	Historical development of methods for Measuring Crime	14.	
15.	Introduction to Crime Statistics	15.	
16.	Users (and Uses) of Crime Statistics	16.	
17.	Scope and State of Nationally Compiled Crime Statistics UCR Program and National Incident-Based Reporting System (NIBRS)	17.	
18.	Basic Structure and Crime Coverage of the Base NCVS	18.	Assignment 3
19.	The Wider Field Of “Crime” Data	19.	
20.	National Self-Report Surveys of criminal offending	20.	
21.	Statistics The Benefits and Risks	21.	
22.	Data confidentiality methods for statistical disclosure limitation and methods for assessing privacy	22.	
23.	<i>International Classification of Crime for Statistical (ICCS) Purposes (An Overview)</i>	23.	
24.	Principles used in the <i>International Classification of Crime for Statistical (ICCS) Purposes</i>	24.	Assignment 4
25.	Total	17weeks	

The presentation schedule included in your course material gives you the important dates for the completion of tutor-marked assignments and attending tutorials. Remember you are required to submit all your assignments by the due date. You should guard against falling behind in your work.

HOW TO GET THE MOST FROM THIS COURSE

In distance learning, your course material replaces the lecturer. The course material has been designed in such a way that you can study on your own with little or no assistance at all. This allows you to work, and study at your place, and at a time and place that best suits you. Think of reading your course material in the same way as listening to the lecturer. However, you are advised to study with your course master in the same way a lecturer might give you some reading to do, the study units give you information on what to read, and these form your text materials. You are provided exercise to do at appropriate points, just as a lecturer might give you an in-class exercise.

Each of the study units follows a common format. The first item is an introduction to the unit, and how a particular unit is integrated with the other units and the course as a whole. Next to this, is a set of learning objectives; these objectives let you know what you are required to know by the time you have completed the unit. These learning objectives are meant to guide your study. The moment a unit is finished, you must go back and check whether you have achieved the objectives. If you make this habit, it will improve your chances of passing the course significantly. The main body of the unit guides you through the required reading from other sources.

This will usually be either from the reference books or from a reading section. The following is a practical strategy for working through the course. If you run into difficulties, telephone your tutor. Remember that your tutor's job is to help you when you need assistance, do not hesitate to call and ask your tutor for help or visit the study centre.

Reading Section

Remember that your tutor's job is to assist you. Whenever you need help, do not hesitate to call and ask your tutor to provide it.

1. Read this Course Guide thoroughly.
2. Organise a Study Schedule. Refer to the 'Course Overview' for more details. Note the time you are expected to spend on each unit and how the assignments related to the units. Whatever method you choose to use, you should decide on and write in your own dates for working on each unit.
3. Once you have created your own study schedule, do everything you can to stick to it. The major reason why students fail is that they get behind with their course work. If you get into difficulties with your schedule, please let your tutor know before it is too late for help.
4. Turn to Unit 1 and read the introduction and the objectives for the unit.
5. Assemble the study materials. Information about what you need for a unit is given in the 'Overview' at the beginning of each unit. You will almost always need both the study unit you are working on and one of your set books on your desk at the same time.
6. Work through the unit. The content of the unit itself has been arranged to provide a sequence for you to follow. As you work through the units you will be instructed to read sections from your set books or other materials. Use the unit to guide your reading.
7. Review the objectives for each study unit to confirm that you have achieved them. If you feel unsure about any of the objectives, review the study materials or consult your tutor.
8. When you are confident that you have achieved a unit's objectives, you can then start on the next unit. Proceed unit by unit through the course and try to pace your study so that you keep yourself on schedule.

9. When you have submitted an assignment to your tutor for marking, do not wait for its return before starting on the next unit. Keep to your schedule. When the assignment is returned pay particular attention to your tutor's comments, both on the tutor-Marked Assignment form and also on what is written on the assignment. Consult your tutor as soon as possible if you have any questions or problems.
10. After completing the last unit, review the course and prepare yourself for the final examination. Check that you have achieved the unit objectives (listed at the beginning of each unit) and the course objectives (listed in this Course-Guide).

TUTORS AND TUTORIALS

There are 15 hours of tutorials provided to support this course. Tutorials are for problem solving and they are optional. You need to get in touch with your tutor to arrange date and time for tutorials if needed. Your tutor will mark and comment on your assignments, keep a close watch on your progress and on any difficulties you might encounter and provide assistance to you during the course. You must submit your tutor-marked assignments to your tutor well before the due date (at least two working days are required). They will be marked by your tutor and returned to you as soon as possible.

Do not hesitate to contact your tutor by telephone, e-mail, or discussion board. The following might be circumstances in which you will find necessary contact your tutor if:

- You do not understand any part of the study units or the designed readings.
- You have difficulties with the exercises.
- You have a question or problem with an assignment, with your tutor's comments on an assignment or with the grading of an assignment.

To gain maximum benefits from this course tutorials, prepare a question list before attending them. You will learn quite a lot from participating in the discussions.

Summary

- CSS: 830 aims to expose you to issues, ideas about victims and victimology, crime and statistics and the nexus between them. Similarly the various international standard, measurement techniques and procedure will further give an insight into the crux and relevance of statistics to both crime and victimisation. As you complete this course, you should be able to answer and discuss reasonably the following:
 - ❖ Key concepts in victimizations debate
 - ❖ Theories of victimisation and recurring victimisation
 - ❖ Modes of Measuring Victimization
 - ❖ Recurring Victimisation
 - ❖ Theoretical Explanations of Recurring Victimization
 - ❖ Historical development of methods for Measuring Crime
 - ❖ Introduction to Crime Statistics
 - ❖ Users (and Uses) of Crime Statistics

- ❖ Scope and State of Nationally Compiled Crime Statistics UCR Program and National Incident-Based Reporting System (NIBRS)
- ❖ The Wider Field Of “Crime” Data
- ❖ National Self-Report Surveys of criminal offending
- ❖ Principles used in the *International Classification of Crime for Statistical Purposes*

Finally, you are advised to read the course material appreciably well in order to prepare fully and not to be caught unprepared by the final examination questions. So, we sincerely wish you success in your academic career as you will find this course, CSS 830 very interesting. You should always avoid examination malpractices! We wish you success with the course and hope you will find it both engaging and practical!

REFERENCES/FURTHER READING

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MODULE 1

Unit 1. Introduction and Background to Victimology

Unit 2. Key concepts in victim's role in crime: Victim Precipitation, Victim Facilitation, and Victim Provocation

Unit 3. Understanding the Victim Crime

Unit 4. Consequence of victimization

Unit 1

INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND TO VICTIMOLOGY

Contents

- 1.0 Introduction
- 2.0 Intended Learning Outcomes (ILOs)
- 3.0 Main Content
- 4.0 Conclusion
- 5.0 Summary
- 6.0 Self-Assessment Exercise
- 7.0 References/Further Reading

1.0 Introduction

Benjamin Mendelsohn, is often referred to as the father of victimology. In 1947, he described victimology as “the science of victims and victimity. Or simply put the scientific study of crime victims. Victimity, as used means the general concept, the specific common phenomenon which characterizes all categories of victims, whatever the cause of their situation” (1976, p. 9). That is the events, people, places, circumstances or anything surrounding/relating to the cause of victimisation. In other words, Mendelsohn continues, “it [victimology] must take into account all

phenomena which *causes* victims, to the extent that society takes an interest in them” (1976, p. 9). Taking into account these statements, victimology is the study of victimization that includes the analysis of the victim-offender relationship as well as the victim’s experiences with the criminal justice system during the administration of justice (Mendelsohn, 1976; van Dijk, 1999; Viano, 1983). Ultimately, the field of victimology includes two overarching goals: (1) to prevent victimization from happening in the first place and (2) to minimize the harm post-victimization (aftermath of victimisation) as well as prevent repeat victimizations (Mendelsohn, 1976).

It is very important to note here that the term *victimology* is not new and that it has always been a subfield of the mother discipline of ‘‘criminology’’, though in recent times it has gradually gained momentum as an independent discipline because historically scholars and the criminal justice system have placed too much emphasis on offenders. Thus the two fields do share much in common. Just as criminology is the study of offenders/criminals—what they do, why they do it, and how the criminal justice system responds to them—victimology is the study of victims. Victimology, then, is the study of the etiology (or causes) of victimization, its consequences, how the criminal justice system accommodates and assists victims, and how other elements of society, such as the media, deal with crime victims. Victimology is a science; victimologists use the scientific method to answer questions about victims. For example, instead of simply wondering or hypothesizing why younger people are more likely to be victims than are older people, victimologists conduct research to attempt to identify the reasons why younger people seem more vulnerable. It is in this regard that Frederick Wertham’s (1949) stated that “One cannot understand the psychology of the murderer if one does not understand the sociology of the victim. What we need is a science of victimology” (as cited in Fattah, 1989).

2.0 Intended Learning Outcomes (ILOs)

This unit aims at giving you a clear understanding of key points in:

- The concept and definition of victimology
- Factors responsible for the emergence of victimology
- Founding fathers’ contributions to victimology

3.0 Main Content

Victimology: An overview

The holistic understanding of victims vis-à-vis victimology as study came to be championed in no other century than at the 20th century (especially from the 1970s). This implies that prior to this time emphasis was more on criminals and the treatment of the offenders than on victims (Mendelsohn, 1976; Schneider, 2001; van Dijk, 1999; Viano, 1983, 1976). Interestingly, as Fattah (2000) notes, some of the earliest works examining crime victims were outside academia and are found in literature and poetry. To understand the state of victimology then, it is important to visit the work of its pioneers, and learn how the field progressed.

Pioneers of Victimology

As earlier mentioned in the introduction, victimology came to be in the middle of the 19th century (precisely coined by Benjamin Mendelsohn, the father of victimology in 1947). Prior to this time crime was, of course, occurring; thus, people were being victimized long before the scientific study of crime victims began (victimology). Even though they were not scientifically studied, victims were recognized as being harmed by crime, and their role in the criminal justice process has evolved over time. Before and throughout the Middle Ages (about the 5th through the 16th century), the burden of the justice system, informal as it was, fell on the victim. When a person or property was harmed, it was up to the victim and the victim's family to seek justice. This was typically achieved via retaliation. The justice system operated under the principle of *lex talionis*, an eye for an eye, a tooth for a tooth (Mosaic Law). A criminal would be punished because he or she deserved it, and the punishment would be equal to the harm caused. Punishment based on these notions is consistent with retribution. During this time, a crime was considered a harm against the victim, not the state. The concepts of restitution and retribution governed action against criminals. Criminals were expected to pay back the victim through restitution. During this time, a criminal who stole a person's cow likely would have to compensate the owner (the victim) by returning the stolen cow and also giving him or her another one. Early criminal codes incorporated these principles. The Code of Hammurabi was the basis for order and certainty in Babylon. In the code, restoration of equity between the offender and victim was stressed. Notice that the early response to crime centred on the victim,

not the state. This focus on the victim continued until the Industrial Revolution, when criminal law shifted to considering crimes violations against the state rather than the victim. Once the victim ceased to be seen as the entity harmed by the crime, the victim became secondary. Although this shift most certainly benefited the state—by allowing it to collect fines and monies from these newly defined harms—the victim did not fare as well. Instead of being the focus, the crime victim was effectively excluded from the formal aspects of the justice system as emphasised by early pioneers of victimology (Benjamin Mendelsohn (1900–1998) Frederick Wertham, Sara Margery Fry (1874–1958) Stephen Schafer (1911–1976) These pioneers in victimology made lasting impacts on the field, and, interestingly, many began their careers in the legal profession.

Benjamin Mendelsohn (1900–1998)

Benjamin Mendelsohn (1900–1998) was an Israeli criminal law scholar (van Dijk, 1999) who coined the term *victimology* in a paper presentation in Bucharest, Romania, in 1947 and used it in a paper entitled “A New Branch of Bio-Psycho-Social Science: Victimology” in 1946 (Mendelsohn, 1963; *The Victimologist*, 1998). As a criminal defense lawyer, Mendelsohn, like many victimologists of the day, was interested in understanding how victims’ actions contributed to criminal activity (van Dijk, 1999; Viano, 1976). Mendelsohn continued to shape the field with his writings until his death in January 1998 (*The Victimologist*, 1998). Indeed, one of his lasting contributions to the field was the creation of a typology (see Table 1.1) delineating the responsibility of the victim versus the offender in criminal events, which ranged from completely innocent to completely guilty.

Table 1.1 *Mendelsohn’s (1956) Victim Culpability Spectrum With Examples*

Level of Victim Culpability	Examples
Completely Innocent	An individual killed while sleeping at home
Victim With Minor Guilt	An individual robbed after displaying money
Victim as Guilty as Offender	An individual killed during a drug transaction
Victim More Guilty than Offender	An individual killed after initiating a physical altercation

Most Guilty Victim	An individual killed while committing a robbery
Imaginary Victim	An individual who pretends that he/she was victimized

(As cited in Schafer, 1977) * for more examples see unit 2

Hans von Hentig (1887–1974)

Hans von Hentig began his career as an academic and scholar with a keen focus on the role of victims in criminal activity (Viano, 1976). In his pursuit to understand the etiology of victimization, von Hentig was especially concerned about the interaction between victims and offenders and the exchanges that led to criminal events (Mendelsohn, 1963). Von Hentig's interest resulted in one of the most influential works in the field, *The Criminal and His Victim* (1948), in which he identified several victim risk factors that were important for understanding the genesis of crime (as shown Table 1.2). His seminal work, along with similar works of other victimologists of the period (e.g., Fattah, *Mendelsohn*)

Table 1.2 Von Hentig's Thirteen (13) Victim Risk Factors

	Victim Characteristics	Proneness to Crime Stems From
1.	The Young	Emotional and Physical Vulnerability
2.	Females	Physical Vulnerability
3.	The Old	Mental and Physical Vulnerability; Access to Wealth
4.	The Mentally Defective or Deranged	Vulnerability From Defect or Through Substance Use
5.	Immigrants	Challenges in Assimilation into a New Culture
6.	Minorities	Discrimination and Prejudice From Inequality
7.	Dull Normal	Lack of Awareness and General Naïvete
8.	The Depressed	Failing to Exercise Due Care
9.	The Acquisitive	Greed and Recklessness
10.	The Wanton	Lack of Appropriate Sensibilities
11.	The Lonesome and Heartbroken	Desire for Companionship and Recklessness
12.	Tormentor An Abusive Environment	That Often Spans Years
13.	The Blocked, Exempted, Fighting	The Inability to Defend Against Attacks

(Von Hentig, 1948; Schafer, 1977)

Ezzat A. Fattah (b. 1929)

Similar to Mendelsohn, and Hentig, Ezzat A. Fattah (b. 1929) began his career as a lawyer. In that capacity he witnessed the inhumane treatment of incarcerated offenders. It was through this position, and the reading of notable works like von Hentig's *The Criminal and His Victim* that Fattah realized that systemic change in terms of crime prevention would occur only after researchers developed a holistic understanding of the origins of criminal activity. This holistic understanding required the consideration of the interactions and relationships between offenders and victims as well as the contributions of each to the criminal event itself. In pursuit of this goal, Fattah studied homicides committed during robberies in order to understand what contributed to the criminal event—including the victim's own actions. He, like many other eminent victimologists, also attempted to construct a way of understanding victimization risks along a type of continuum (see Table 1.3).

Table 1.3 Fattah's Victim Classification Scheme

Victim Classes	Characterised by
Non-Participating Victims	A lack of contribution or participation in the crime
Latent or Predisposed Victims	Presence of risk factors that increase the likelihood of crime
Provocative Victims	Engaging in actions that lead to the genesis of a crime
Participating Victims	Engaging in actions that facilitate the genesis of a crime
False Victims	The lack of actual victimization perpetrated by another individual

(as cited in Schafer, 1977)

Sara Margery Fry (1874–1958)

Sara Margery Fry was particularly progressive for the period in which she lived. Similar to Fattah, her passion stemmed from witnessing the inhumane treatment of incarcerated offenders, and she worked throughout her life to improve the criminal justice system for both offenders and victims (Viano, 1976). Perhaps most importantly, Fry advocated for improved treatment of

offenders without de-emphasizing the harm victims experienced in the aftermath of crime. After experiencing a crime herself, Fry worked tirelessly in England to encourage the establishment of a compensation fund for crime victims, which ultimately occurred in 1964. Additionally, her efforts led to the development of similar programs around the world—including in the United States (Viano, 1983; Dussich, 2006).

Koichi Miyazawa

As victimology gained much more awareness and acceptance of victims as important components of criminal events across the globe, especially in Asia as a continent. This interest eventually led to the founding of the Institute for Victimology at Keio University (Tokyo, Japan) in 1969, which was largely the result of efforts by Koichi Miyazawa (b. 1930) (Viano, 1976). Miyazawa's interest in victimology originated during his early studies in criminology, when he realized that the role of victims in the genesis of criminal events was an under-researched area ripe for investigation (Viano, 1976). However, at that time, many of the works by early victimologists in Europe and America were not accessible to Japanese and other Asian scholars. Therefore, Miyazawa's text *Basic Problems and Concepts in Victimology*, in which he synthesized the essential and important victimological works of the time in Japanese, was particularly significant (Viano, 1976). Aside from creating this accessibility, Miyazawa's *Basic Problems* also presented a theoretical framework for understanding victimization (Viano, 1976).

Stephen Schafer (1911–1976)

Stephen Schafer also began his career as a lawyer and pivoted toward academia after escaping persecution during World War II. His interest in victimology first arose during late adolescence, when he noticed that victims were largely overlooked in the administration of justice despite the harm these individuals experienced. Years later, he spent considerable time parsing out the “functional responsibility” victims had in criminal events (Viano, 1976, p. 224). Indeed, in his seminal work, *Victimology: The Victim and His Criminal*, Schafer (1977) criticized victimization studies for the lack of attention placed on the criminal-victim relationship, which he emphasized should be a central line of inquiry in the field. Aside from calling attention to the perceived misdirection in the field, Schafer (1977) also proposed a typology that sought to overcome some of the challenges associated with previous frameworks that he noted were largely “speculative guesswork” (p. 45).

Table 1.4 Schafer's Victim Responsibility Typology

Unrelated Victims	Criminal is solely responsible; there is no relationship to the victim
Provocative Victims	Shared responsibility between criminal and victim because of victim's provocation
Precipitative Victims	Shared responsibility between criminal and victim because of victim's carelessness
Biologically Weak Victims	Shared responsibility between criminal and larger society, which failed to protect the victim despite his/her inherent vulnerabilities
Socially Weak Victims	Shared responsibility between criminal and larger society, which failed to protect the victim despite his/her socially vulnerable position
Self-victimizing Victims	The victim is completely responsible and is considered a criminal-victim
Political Victims	Victim is not responsible, because of his/her lack of socio-political capital

- More explanation in unit 2

In contrast to previous frameworks, Schafer's (1977) typology (as shown above in Table 1.4) accounted for both behavioural and social characteristics that contributed to the genesis of crime. Moreover, he sought to ensure that his framework was applicable and transferable to various types of crimes. According to Schafer (1977), his ultimate goal in constructing this typology was to provide an instrument by which the responsibility of both the offender and the victim could be assessed in the criminal-victim relationship.

4.0 Conclusion

These scholars have contributed in no small measures to the development and the rapid evolution of victimology, over time, helping the mother discipline (criminology) in expanding its frontiers and research capacity, by implication a new branch of knowledge. Nevertheless, the typologies drawn by these scholars appreciable as they were generated substantial criticism and debate given the too much emphasis on victim-blaming and the nature of their typologies. In order to understand the origin of this debate and how these discussions continue to shape the field today, the next section of this chapter discusses the different areas of victimological thought beyond any

particular scholar's work. In this discussion, we also explain and explore important concepts regarding the victim's role in criminal events (e.g., victim-precipitation, victim-provocation, and victim-facilitation) that largely developed because of these scholars' works.

5.0 Summary

This unit introduced you to the branch of criminology called victimology, its founding father (Benjamin Mendelsohn, 1947) and the earlier scholars (Hans von Hentig (1887–1974); Ezzat A. Fattah (b. 1929; Sara Margery Fry (1874–1958'); Koichi Miyazawa (b. 1930) ; Stephen Schafer (1911–1976)) that contributed to the development of the discipline. It is clearly stated that in 1947, Mendelsohn, defined victimology as “the science of victims and victimity. Or simply put the scientific study of crime victims. Victimity, as used means the general concept, the specific common phenomenon which characterizes all categories of victims, whatever the cause of their situation may be”. Finally a common narrative and success story of these earlier scholars was evident in their ability to come out with several typologies of risk factors: *Mendelsohn's (1956) Victim Culpability Spectrum (6 in number)*; expanded upon by *Von Hentig's to Thirteen (13), Victim Risk Factors*. Similarly Ezzat Fattah came up with the idea of latent and manifest characteristics of Victim Classification as a way to enhance the understanding not only the those who are more likely to be the susceptibility but also in furthering the knowledge of the neglected aspects of victims in the broader discipline- criminology.

6.0 Self-Assessment Exercise

1. What is victimology?
2. What does the term Victimity
3. Using *Mendelsohn's (1956)* schema, explain with examples the concept of *Culpability*
4. *What is the background of the founding fathers of victimology?*
5. *Account for at least three (3) reasons towards the progress of victimology as an independent discipline.*
6. *Who is well known as the pioneer of victimology in the Asian continent?*
7. Identify at least three pioneers in the field of victimology

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Unit 2.

Key concepts in victim's role in crime: Victim Precipitation, Victim Facilitation, and Victim Provocation

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1.0 Introduction

The field of victimology has come to realise through several research that most crime are not just committed freely all the time by criminals without the victims' role in them. In other words, the extent to which a crime is successfully or unsuccessfully executed to a large extent can be traced to the victims' activities, exposure or carelessness. And that is why sometimes victims regret and say to themselves. I should have known; I should have been prepared for it, I should have seen it coming or I saw it coming, had I know, while other times victims tend to blame themselves for the occurrence of the crime, making themselves vulnerable. Thus a new lens of looking at crime from the victims' role came to be in discipline of victimology. This will aid students in understanding the crime, the criminal and the victim in a more comprehensive manner. Often than not victimologists ask directly or indirectly questions to unravel victims role in crime, because it is very important not only in counselling the victim, but as a learning curve to the victim and victimologists especially with new cases; and to future victims ultimately to nip in the bud future occurrences. Thus you can see that understanding these aspects sounds interesting, of which core criminologist often do not delve into. It is also important here to say that the study of victimology has largely moved away from simply investigating how much a victim contributes to his or her own victimization, the first forays into the study of crime victims were

centered on such investigations. In this way, the first studies of crime victims did not portray victims as innocents who were wronged at the hands of an offender. Rather, concepts such as victim precipitation, victim facilitation, and victim provocation developed from these investigations. These are clearly discussed in the main content of this unit.

2.0 Intended Learning Outcomes (ILOs)

This unit is set to introduce students to the three major concepts of (1) victim precipitation, (2) provocation, and (3) facilitation. It is expected that it will further give an insight and buttress victimology as a behavioural science. Students are expected to grasp the idea that individuals can become a victim in their roles towards being victimised and also understanding victims' role in crime.

3.0 Main Content

Victimologists have come to realise, that victims can also play a role in criminal activities. For which they have come up with three elementary but key concepts that practitioners, researchers and students must be abreast with. These concepts are: (1) victim precipitation, (2) victim facilitation, and (3) victim provocation. These concepts came to be as a result of several years of victimologists investigations.

1. Victim precipitation

Victim precipitation is defined as the extent to which a victim is responsible for his or her own victimization. The concept of victim precipitation is rooted in the notion that, although some victims are not at all responsible for their victimization, other victims are. In this way, victim precipitation acknowledges that crime victimization involves at least two people—an offender and a victim—and that both parties are acting and often reacting before, during, and after the incident. Identifying victim precipitation does not necessarily lead to negative outcomes. It is problematic, however, when it is used to blame the victim while ignoring the offender's role. Similar to victim precipitation is the concept of victim facilitation.

Photo 1.1 A person left his keys in his car while he went shopping. By doing so, the person inadvertently made it easier for an offender to steal his car, thus precipitating his victimization.



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2. Victim facilitation

Victim facilitation occurs when a victim unintentionally makes it easier for an offender to commit a crime. A victim may, in this way, be a catalyst for victimization. A woman who accidentally left her purse in plain view in her office while she went to the restroom and then had it stolen would be a victim who facilitated her own victimization. This woman is not blameworthy—the offender should not steal, regardless of whether the purse is in plain view. But the victim's actions certainly made her a likely target and made it easy for the offender to steal her purse. Unlike precipitation, facilitation helps understand why one person may be victimized over another but does not connote blame and responsibility. Contrast victim facilitation with victim provocation.

3. Victim provocation

Victim provocation occurs when a person does something that incites another person to commit an illegal act. Provocation suggests that without the victim's behaviour, the crime would not have occurred. Provocation, then, most certainly connotes blame. In fact, the offender is not at all

responsible. An example of victim provocation would be if a person attempted to mug a man who was walking home from work and the man, instead of willingly giving the offender his wallet, pulled out a gun and shot the mugger. The offender in this scenario ultimately is a victim, but he would not have been shot if not for attempting to mug the shooter. The distinctions between victim precipitation, facilitation, and provocation, as you probably noticed, are not always clear-cut. These terms were developed, described, studied, and used in somewhat different ways in the mid-1900s by several scholars.

Hans von Hentig: *The Criminal and His Victim: Studies in the Sociobiology of Crime*,

In his book *The Criminal and His Victim: Studies in the Sociobiology of Crime*, Hans von Hentig (1948) recognized the importance of investigating what factors underpin why certain people are victims, just as criminology attempts to identify those factors that produce criminality. He determined that some of the same characteristics that produce crime also produce victimization. In studying victimization, then, von Hentig looked at the criminal-victim dyad, thus recognizing the importance of considering the victim and the criminal not in isolation but together. He attempted to identify the characteristics of a victim that may effectively serve to increase victimization risk (see Unit 1). He considered that victims may provoke victimization—acting as agent provocateurs—based on their characteristics. He argued that crime victims could be placed into one of 13 categories based on their propensity for victimization: (1) young; (2) females; (3) old; (4) immigrants; (5) depressed; (6) mentally defective/deranged; (7) the acquisitive; (8) dull normals; (9) minorities; (10) wanton; (11) the lonesome and heartbroken; (12) tormentor; and (13) the blocked, exempted, and fighting. All these victims are targeted and contribute to their own victimization because of their characteristics. For example, the young, the old, and females may be victimized because of their ignorance or risk taking, or may be taken advantage of, such as when women are sexually assaulted. Immigrants, minorities, and dull normals are likely to be victimized due to their social status and inability to activate assistance in the community. The mentally defective or deranged may be victimized because they do not recognize or appropriately respond to threats in the environment. Those who are depressed, acquisitive, wanton, lonesome, or heartbroken may place themselves in situations in which they do not recognize danger because of their mental state, their sadness over a lost relationship, their desire

for companionship, or their greed. Tormentors are people who provoke their own victimization via violence and aggression toward others. Finally, the blocked, exempted, and fighting victims are those who are enmeshed in poor decisions and unable to defend themselves or seek assistance if victimized. An example of such a victim is a person who is blackmailed because of his behaviour, which places him in a precarious situation if he reports the blackmail to the police (Dupont-Morales, 2009).

Benjamin Mendelsohn *Victim Culpability Spectrum*

As a lawyer, he became interested in the relationship between the victim and the criminal as he conducted interviews with victims and witnesses and realized that victims and offenders often knew each other and had some kind of existing relationship. This was what led to his typology (see Unit 1, Table 1.1). He then created a classification of victims based on their culpability, or the degree of the victim's blame (*Victim Culpability Spectrum*). His classification entailed the following:

1. *Completely innocent victim*: a victim who bears no responsibility at all for victimization; victimized simply because of his or her nature, such as being a child
2. *Victim with minor guilt*: a victim who is victimized due to ignorance; a victim who inadvertently places himself or herself in harm's way
3. *Victim as guilty as offender/voluntary victim*: a victim who bears as much responsibility as the offender; a person who, for example, enters into a suicide pact
4. *Victim more guilty than offender*: a victim who instigates or provokes his or her own victimization
5. *Most guilty victim*: a victim who is victimized during the perpetration of a crime or as a result of crime
6. *Simulating or imaginary victim*: a victim who is not victimized at all but, instead, fabricates a victimization event.

Mendelsohn's classification emphasized degrees of culpability, recognizing that some victims bear no responsibility for their victimization, whereas others, based on their behaviours or actions, do.

Stephen Schafer: *The Victim and His Criminal: A Study in Functional Responsibility*

In his article titled “*The Victim and His Criminal: A Study in Functional Responsibility*” (1968), much like von Hentig and Mendelsohn, Schafer also proposed a victim typology. Using both social characteristics and behaviours, his typology places victims in groups based on how responsible they are or were for their own victimization. In this way, it includes facets of von Hentig’s typology based on personal characteristics and Mendelsohn’s typology rooted in behaviour. He argued that people have a functional responsibility not to provoke others into victimizing or harming them and that they also should actively attempt to prevent that from occurring. He identified seven categories and labeled their levels of responsibility as follows:

1. Unrelated victims—no responsibility
2. Provocative victims—share responsibility
3. Precipitative victims—some degree of responsibility
4. Biologically weak victims—no responsibility
5. Socially weak victims—no responsibility
6. Self-victimizing—total responsibility
7. Political victims—no responsibility

Marvin Wolfgang’s revelations from his Homicides Study

Marvin Wolfgang has been recognised as one of the most influential criminologists in the English-speaking world (Kaufman, 1998) and the first person to have empirically investigate victim precipitation in his 1957 classic study of homicides occurring in Philadelphia from 1948 to 1952. He examined some 558 homicides to see to what extent victims precipitated their own deaths. In those instances in which the victim was the direct, positive precipitator in the homicide, Wolfgang labeled the incident as victim precipitated. For example, the victim in such an incident would be the first to brandish or use a weapon, the first to strike a blow, and the first to initiate physical violence. He found that 26% (slightly above a quarter) of all homicides in Philadelphia during this period were victim precipitated. Even though the first study examining victim precipitation and homicide was published in 1957, this phenomenon is being examined in contemporary times as well. In recent research examining 895 homicides that occurred in Dallas, Texas, Muftić and Hunt (2013) found that 48.9% ($n = 438$) were victim precipitated. They

further found that homicides in which the victim had a previous history of offending were more likely to be victim precipitated than homicides in which the victim had no such history.

Beyond simply identifying the extent to which homicides were victim precipitated, Wolfgang also identified those factors that were common in such homicides. He determined that often in this kind of homicide, the victim and the offender knew each other. He also found that most victim-precipitated homicides involved male offenders and male victims and that the victim was likely to have a history of violent offending himself. Alcohol was also likely to play a role in victim-precipitated homicides, which makes sense, especially considering that Wolfgang determined these homicides often started as minor altercations that escalated to murder. Since Wolfgang's study of victim-precipitated homicide, others have expanded his definition to include felony-related homicide and subintentional homicide. Subintentional homicide occurs when the victim facilitates his or her own demise by using poor judgment, placing himself or herself at risk, living a risky lifestyle, or using alcohol or drugs. Perhaps not surprising, a study of subintentional homicide found that as many as three-fourths of victims were subintentional (Allen, 1980).

Menachem Amir's rape study (Evidential but controversial)

Menachem Amir, a student of Wolfgang's, conducted an empirical investigation into rape incidents reported to the police. Like Wolfgang, he conducted his study using data from Philadelphia, although he examined rapes that occurred from 1958 to 1960. He examined the extent to which victims precipitated their own rapes and identified common attributes of victim-precipitated rape. Amir labelled almost 1 in 5 rapes as victim precipitated. He found that these rapes were likely to involve alcohol and that the victim was likely to engage in seductive behaviour, wear revealing clothing, use risqué language, and have a bad reputation. What Amir also determined was that it is the offender's interpretation of actions that is important, rather than what the victim actually does. The offender may view the victim—her actions, words, and clothing—as going against what he considers appropriate female behaviour. In this way, the victim may be viewed as being “bad” in terms of how women should behave sexually. He may then choose to rape her because of his misguided view of how women should act, because he

thinks she deserves it, or because he thinks she has it coming to her. Amir's study was quite controversial—it was attacked for blaming victims, namely women, for their own victimization.

4.0 Conclusion

The relevance of the three concepts of victim precipitation, provocation, and facilitation cannot be over emphasised in victimology/criminology as a behavioural discipline. Understanding these concepts as tools in criminal investigation and in preventing and curbing future occurrences of criminality and victimisation are hallmarks of their potency. Though the field of victimology has moved beyond the early typologies put forth by von Hentig and others, victimology is very much still concerned with victim precipitation, provocation, and facilitation.

5.0 Summary

This unit basic introduced the students to the three major concepts of victim precipitation, provocation, and facilitation in furthering their horizons about the scope of the definition of victimology. Through the articles of Menachem Amir's; Marvin Wolfgang's, Stephen Schafer, Benjamin Mendelsohn and Hans von Hentig: *The Criminal and His Victim*, Victim precipitation is defined as the extent to which a victim is responsible for his or her own victimization. The concept of victim precipitation is rooted in the notion that, although some victims are not at all responsible for their victimization, other victims are. Victim facilitation occurs when a victim unintentionally makes it easier for an offender to commit a crime. A victim may, in this way, be a catalyst for victimization. And that victim provocation occurs when a person does something that incites another person to commit an illegal act. Provocation suggests that without the victim's behaviour, the crime would not have occurred. Provocation, then, most certainly connotes blame. These definitions suggest that victims behaviourally can influence directly or indirectly, knowingly or unknowingly activities of criminality and may be need to see their hands in their own victimisation.

6.0 Self-Assessment Exercise

1. What are the contributions of Wolfgang and Amir to the knowledge of victims role in crime and in becoming victims

2. List and briefly explain the three concepts therein in the discourse of victims role in criminal activities?
3. What do understand by the term subintentional homicide?
4. On a particular day, four armed robbers entered a departmental store, stole cash and jewellery. They got more than they bargained for! After leaving the store with their loot, a friend of the owner of the store confronted them, and the four robbers then raised their guns at him. In response, the man then pulled out his own weapon and shot the robbers in the chest. All robbers were pronounced dead at the scene (Adapted and modified from: Bayliss& Chang (2013).
 - a) What do you think about this incident?
 - b) Was the man justified in shooting the robbers?
 - c) Was this victim facilitation? Precipitation? Provocation?
 - d) What do you think about one of the friends of the robbers who said, “They should have thought about this before going”?

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Unit 3

Understanding the Victim Crime

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1.0 Introduction

Recent happenings have come to victimology as a discipline broadly speaking cuts across a wide range of topics, most especially crime-victims, causes of victimization, consequences of victimization, interaction of victims with the criminal justice system, interaction of victims with other social service agencies and programs, and prevention of victimization. These topics are designed with the sole intension to see victims as integral part of the criminal justice system rather than on the offenders. Thus the nexus between the victim and crime becomes handy to victimologists. One of the first things victimologists needed to know was who was victimized by crime. To determine who victims were, victimologists looked at official data sources (crime statistics. This will be elaborated upon in subsequent units/modules)—namely, the Uniform Crime Reports (UCR)—but found them to be imperfect sources for victim information because they do not include detailed information on crime victims. As a result, victimization surveys were developed to determine the extent to which people were victimized, the typical characteristics of victims, and the characteristics of victimization incidents. The most widely cited and used victimization survey is the National Crime Victimization Survey (NCVS), which is discussed in detail in other units. From the NCVS and other victimization surveys, victimologists discovered that victimization is more prevalent than originally thought. Also, the “typical” victim was identified—a young male who lives in urban areas. This is not to say that other people are not victimized. In fact, children, women, and older people are all prone to

victimization. In addition, victimologists have uncovered other vulnerable groups. Homeless individuals, persons with mental illness, disabled persons, and prisoners all have been recognized as deserving of special attention given their victimization rates (Clarke, 1997). Thus understanding victims as people who are vulnerable or likely to be or people as potential victims come with a cost of not knowing the causes of victimisation alone but also the costs of victimisation to the victim, the society and the criminal justice system. These are well captured in the main content section.

2.0 Intended Learning Outcomes (ILOs)

In this unit students are expected to understand basically the

1. The construction of victimisation through the records of the National Crime Victimization Survey (NCVS).
2. The causes and cost of victimisation
3. Ordeals of victims, victimisation and re-victimisation
4. Reasons for low reportage of victimisation and lastly
5. The implication of support systems available to victims

3.0 Main Content

The Causes of Victimization

It is difficult to know why a person is singled out and victimized by crime (Tseloni, & Pease, 2003). Is it something he did? Did an offender choose a particular individual because she seemed like an easy target? Or does victimization occur because somebody is simply in the wrong place at the wrong time? Perhaps there is an element of “bad luck” or chance involved, but victimologists have developed some theories to explain victimization (some of these theories will be discussed later). Theories are sets of propositions that explain phenomena. In relation to victimology, victimization theories explain why some people are more likely than others to be victimized. As you have seen in the typologies in the previous units and you will also come across later in other module. The most widely used theories of victimization are routine activities theory and risky lifestyles theory. In the past two decades, however, victimologists and criminologists alike have developed additional theories and identified other correlates of

victimization both generally and to explain why particular types of victimization, such as child abuse, occur.

Costs of Victimization

Victimologists are particularly interested in studying victims of crime because of the mass costs they often incur. These costs of victimization can be tangible, such as the cost of stolen or damaged property or the costs of receiving treatment at the emergency room, but they can also be harder to quantify. Crime victims may experience mental anguish or other more serious mental health issues such as post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD). Costs also include monies spent by the criminal justice system preventing and responding to crime and monies spent to assist crime victims (Duborg, Hamed & Thorns, 2005). An additional consequence of victimization is fear of being a victim. This fear may be tied to the actual risk of being a victim, with the other consequences of victimization. Similarly an additional significant cost of victimization is the real risk of being victimized again that many victims face. Unfortunately, some victims do not suffer only a single victimization event but, rather, are victimized again and, sometimes, again and again. In this way, a certain subset of victims appears to be particularly vulnerable to re-victimization (Farrell, 2005). Research has begun to describe which victims are at risk of recurring victimization. In addition, theoretical explanations of recurring victimization have been proffered. Two main theories used to explain recurring victimization are state dependence and risk heterogeneity theories.

The Crime Victim and the Criminal Justice System

Another experience of crime victims that is important to understand is how they interact with the criminal justice system. Though, it has been revealed that many persons who are victimized by crime do not report their experiences to the police, for various reasons. The reasons victims choose to remain silent, at least in terms of not calling the police, are varied but often include an element of suspicion and distrust of the police. Often than not victim's worry that police will not take them seriously or will not think what happened to them is worth the police's time. Others may be worried that calling the police will effectively invoke a system response that cannot be erased or stopped, even when the victim wishes not to have the system move forward. An example of such a victim is one who does not want to call the police after being hit by her

partner because she fears the police will automatically and mandatorily arrest him. Whatever the reason, without a report, the victim will not activate the formal criminal justice system, which will preclude an arrest and may preclude the victim from receiving victim services explicitly tied to reporting. When victims do report, they then enter the world of criminal justice, a world in which they are often seen as **witnesses rather than victims**, given that the various criminal justice system recognize crimes as harms against the state. This being the case, victims do not always find it palatable with the treatment netted on them, by way of disrespects and loss of dignity in the attention given to cases rather to them as victims (humans). The police are not the only ones with whom victims must contend. If an offender is apprehended and charged with a crime, the victim will also interact with the prosecutor and perhaps a judge. The experience of the crime victim after the system is put into motion is an area of research ripe for study by victimologists. It is important to understand how victims view their interactions with the criminal justice system so that victim satisfaction can be maximized and any additional harm caused to the victim can be minimized especially in cases involving rapes and traumatic harm, thus different victim types have unique experiences with the police the criminal justice in general.

The Crime Victim and Social Services

The criminal justice system is not the only organization with which crime victims may come into contact. After being victimized, victims may need medical attention. As a result, emergency medical technicians, hospital and doctor's office staff, nurses, doctors, and clinicians may all be persons with whom victims interact. Although some of these professionals will have training or specialize in dealing with victims, others may not treat victims with the care and sensitivity they need. To combat this, sometimes victims will have persons from the police department or prosecutor's office with them at the hospital to serve as mediators and provide counsel. Also to aid victims, many hospitals and clinics now have sexual assault nurse examiners, who are specially trained in completing forensic and health exams for sexual assault victims. In addition to medical professionals, mental health clinicians also often serve victims, for large numbers of victims seek mental health services after being victimized. This is often not the case in Africa and other developing nations. Beyond mental health care, victims may use the services of social workers or other social service workers. But not all persons with whom victims interact as a consequence of being victimized are part of social service agencies accustomed to serving

victims. Crime victims may seek assistance from religious groups, and colleagues at work. Crime victims may need special accommodations from their employers or schools. In short, being victimized may touch multiple aspects of a person's life, and agencies, businesses, and organizations alike may find themselves in the position of dealing with the aftermath, one to which they may not be particularly attuned. The more knowledge people have about crime victimization and its impact on victims, the more likely victims will be satisfactorily treated.

4.0 Conclusion

Knowing the extent to which people are victimized, who is likely targeted, and the reasons why people are victimized can help in the development of prevention efforts. To be effective, prevention programs and policies need to target the known causes of victimization. Although the offender is ultimately responsible for crime victimization, it is difficult to change offender behaviour. Reliance on doing so limits complete prevention because victimization involves at least two elements—the offender and the victim—both of which need to be addressed to stop crime victimization. In addition, it is easier to reduce the opportunity than the motivation to offend.

5.0 Summary

This unit is basically explains the interactions, actions of victim crime as a construction which highlights the causes and costs of victimization, from victims are defined with the help of a **National Crime Victimization Survey (NCVS)**. Buttressing further much emphasis was placed on how victims navigate their ordeals pre and post victimisation experiences. From the offenders, the criminal justice system, colleagues at workplace, and other agencies in society that are expected to give support to the victim. However as it has been observed through research and documentations of the plights of victims, many a time victims in the quagmire of not reporting their ordeals and may often decide to keep it to themselves because of suspicion, fear and distrust of the criminal justice systems.

6.0 Self-Assessment Exercise

1. Highlight at least three (3) major reasons for low reportage of victimisation in the criminal justice system.

2. Do you think the National Crime Victimization Survey (NCVS) is necessary? Write in support for or against its relevance?
3. What are the causes and cost of victimisation?
4. Highlight at least three (3) support systems available to victims in society

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Unit 4: Consequences of victimization

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1.0 Introduction

The consequences of victimisation in all ramifications create a state of sympathy, empathy, commiseration and compassion for victims, especially for those in distress or suffering great hardship thereafter their victimisation. Thus these feelings are undoubtedly among the most noble human sentiments victimologists share. According to Garofalo (1889), the universality of these feelings has led some to suggest that they are innate and natural. Garofalo (1889), for example, identified what he believed to be the two *basic* altruistic moral sentiments: pity and probity. He defined pity as the revulsion we feel against the deliberate infliction of pain and suffering on others. The more helpless and defenceless the victim, be it an infant, a child, one of the elderly or even an animal, the stronger is the sense of indignation at the victimizer and the pity we feel for the object of victimization. This is because many crimes cause enormous pain and suffering to those who are victimized: death, physical injury, psychological trauma, degradation, humiliation, fear, financial loss and so forth.

2.0 Intended Learning Outcomes (ILOs)

In this unit, you are expected to understand:

1. What the consequences of victimisation are, from the economic, social and psychological points.

2. The pain associated with victimisation, in what has been termed the consequences of victimisation.
3. Also to note the cost implications of victimisation beyond the victims.

3.0 Main Content

Physical Injury

Clearly, when people suffer personal victimizations, they are at risk of physical injury. These injuries can include bruises, soreness, scratches, cuts, broken bones, contracted diseases, and stab or gunshot wounds. Some of these injuries may be temporary and short-lived, whereas others can be long-lasting or permanent. In the United States of America (where data is very much available and reliable compare to any other developed country) data from the National Crime Victimization Survey (NCVS) in 2008, revealed that 21% of assault victims sustained physical injuries. Those who experienced robbery were more likely to be injured; 37% of robbery victims suffered physical injury. In available data on assault admissions to hospitals show that, for the 12 months ending April 2015, there were 28,992 hospital admissions for assault (Office for National Statistics, 2015/Crime Survey for England and Wales). The most serious physical injury is, of course, death.

Mental Health Consequences and Costs

People differentially respond to trauma, including victimization. Some people may cope by internalizing their feelings and emotions, whereas others may experience externalizing responses. It is likely that the way people deal with victimization is tied to their biological makeup, their interactional style, their coping style and resources, and the context in which the incident occurs and in which they operate thereafter. Some of the responses can be quite serious and long-term, whereas others may be more transitory. **Three affective responses** that are common among crime victims are depression, reductions in self-esteem, and anxiety. The way in which depression manifests itself varies greatly across individuals. It can include symptoms such as sleep disturbances (insomnia), changes in eating habits (anorexia), feelings of guilt and worthlessness, and irritability. Generally, depressed persons will experience a decline in interest in activities they once enjoyed, a depressed mood, or both. For youth, depression is a common outcome for those who are victimized by peers, such as in bullying. Victimization is powerful

enough to alter the way in which a crime victim views himself or herself. **Self-esteem and self-worth both have been found to be reduced in some crime victims, particularly female victims.** (Logan, Walker, & Hoyt, 2011; Miller et., 1996).

Mental Health Care Costs

When victims seek mental health care, this also adds to their total cost. It is estimated that between 10% and 20% of total mental health care costs in the United States are related to crime (Miller et al., 1996). Most of this cost is a result of crime victims seeking treatment to deal with the effects of their victimization. Between one-quarter and one-half of rape and child sexual abuse victims receive mental health care. As a result, sexual victimizations, of both adults and children, result in some of the largest mental health care costs for victims all over the world. The average mental health care cost per rape and sexual assault is \$2,200, and the average for child abuse is \$5,800 in the United States. Victims of arson who are injured incur about \$10,000 of mental health care expenditures per victimization.

Post-traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD)

One of the recognized disorders associated with a patterned response to trauma, such as victimization, is posttraumatic stress disorder (PTSD). Commonly associated with individuals returning from war and combat, PTSD is a psychiatric condition that recently has been recognized as a possible consequence of other traumatic events, such as criminal victimization. A person must have experienced or witnessed a traumatic event that involved actual or threatened death or serious injury to oneself or others, or threat to the physical integrity of oneself or others. The person must have experienced fear, helplessness, or horror in response to the event and then re-experienced the trauma over time via flashbacks, nightmares, images, and/or reliving the event. The person must avoid stimuli associated with the traumatic event and experience numbness of response, such as lack of affect and reduced interest in activities. Finally, PTSD is characterized by hyperarousal. In order for PTSD to be diagnosed, symptoms must be experienced for more than 1 month and must cause clinically significant distress or impairment in social, occupational, or other functional areas (American Psychiatric Association, 2000). As you may imagine, PTSD can be debilitating and can impact a victim's ability to heal,

move on, and thrive after being victimized. About 8% of Americans will experience PTSD, although women are more likely than men to experience this disorder. The traumatic events most likely to lead to PTSD for men are military combat and witnessing a serious injury or violent death. Women, on the other hand, are most likely to be diagnosed with PTSD related to incidents of rape and sexual molestation (Kessler, 200).

Although it is difficult to know how common PTSD is among crime victims, some studies suggest that PTSD is a real problem for this group. Research has shown that victims of sexual assault and aggravated assault and persons whose family members were homicide victims are more likely than other crime victims to develop PTSD. In support of this link, the occurrence of PTSD in rape victims has been estimated to be almost 1 in 3 (Ullman, & Peter-Hagene, 2016). The effects of victimization on PTSD and how PTSD may influence other outcomes such as revictimization.

Self-Blame, Learned Helplessness, and the Brain

Victims of crime may blame themselves for their victimization. One type of self-blame is characterological self-blame, which occurs when a person ascribes blame to a non-modifiable source, such as one's character. In this way, **characterological self-blame involves believing that victimization is deserved. Another type of self-blame is behavioural self-blame**, which occurs when a person ascribes blame to a modifiable source—behaviour (Janoff-Bulman, 1979). When a person turns to behavioural self-blame, a future victimization can be avoided as long as behaviour is changed. In addition to self-blame, others may experience learned helplessness following victimization. Learned helplessness is a response to victimization in which victims learn that responding is futile and become passive and numb. In this way, victims may not activate to protect themselves in the face of danger and, instead, stay in risky situations that result in subsequent victimization experiences. Although learned helplessness as originally proposed by Seligman is not alone sufficient in explaining victimization, research on animals shows that exposure to inescapable aversive stimuli (such as shocks to rats' tails) is related to behavioural changes that are likely related to fear—changes in eating and drinking, changes in sleep patterns, and not escaping future aversive stimuli when possible. These behavioural

changes are linked to changes in brain chemistry, and researchers have hypothesized that these are similar to the neurochemical and behavioural changes seen in humans who suffer from major depressive disorders. In this way then, it is possible that people who have been exposed to serious trauma and who interpret this trauma as being unavoidable may become depressed and experience behavioural changes that are then linked to future risk of victimization.

Economic Costs

Not only are victimologists concerned with the impact that being a crime victim has on an individual in terms of health, but they are also concerned with the economic costs incurred by both the victim and the public. In this sense, victimization is a public health issue. Economic costs can result from:

1. property losses;
2. monies associated with medical care;
3. time lost from work, school, and housework;
4. pain, suffering, and reduced quality of life; and
5. legal costs.

In the United States of America for instance, the 2008 NCVS estimated the total economic loss from crimes at \$17.4 trillion. It also shows that the median dollar amount of loss attributed to crime was \$125 (Harrell, 2011). Although this number may appear to be low, it largely represents the fact that the typical property crime is a simple larceny-theft.

Direct Property Losses

Crime victims often experience tangible losses in terms of having their property damaged or taken. Generally, when determining direct property losses, the value of property that is damaged, taken, and not recovered, and insurance claims and administration costs are considered. According to the NCVS, in 2008, 94% of property crimes resulted in economic losses. In one of the most comprehensive reports on the costs of victimization—sponsored by the American National Institute of Justice—T. R. Miller, Cohen, and Wiersema (1996) estimated the property loss or damage experienced per crime victimization event. They found that arson victimizations resulted in an estimated \$15,500 per episode. Motor vehicle theft costs about \$3,300 per incident.

Results from the NCVS show that personal crime victimizations typically did not result in as much direct property loss. For example, only 18% of personal crime victimizations resulted in economic loss. Rape and sexual assaults typically resulted in \$100 of property loss or property damage. It is rare for a victim of a violent or property offense to recover any losses. Only about 29% of victims of personal crime and 16% of victims of property crime recover all or some property (Logan, Robert Walker, & Hoyt, 2012).

Medical Care

To be sure, many victims would gladly suffer property loss if it meant they would not experience any physical injury. After all, items can be replaced and damage repaired. Physical injury may lead to victims needing medical attention, which for some may be the first step in accumulating costs associated with their victimization. Medical care costs encompass such expenses as transporting victims to the hospital, doctor care, prescription drugs, allied health services, medical devices, coroner payments, insurance claims processing fees, and premature funeral expenses (Harrell, 2011; Miller et al., 1996). Costs vary across types of victimization. For example, the annual cost of hospitalizations for victims of child abuse in the United States of America is estimated to be \$6.2 billion (Prevent Child Abuse America, 2000). Medical treatment for battered women is estimated to cost \$1.8 billion annually (Wisner, Gilmer, Saltman, & Zink, 1999). Per-criminal victimization medical care costs also have been estimated. Assaults in which there were injuries cost \$1,470 per incident. Drunk-driving victims who were injured incurred \$6,400 in medical care costs (Miller et al., 1996). Gun violence is associated with substantial medical costs for victims. Although most crime victims do not require hospitalization, even if they are treated in the emergency room, a report on gun violence published by the Office for Victims of Crime showed that gunshot victims make up one-third of those who require hospitalization and are likely to face numerous re-hospitalizations and incur medical costs throughout their lifetimes. In cases where the victim is not having any health insurance policy (uninsured) the burden falls on the state (this is also referred to as system cost in victimology), thus public resources are often depleted as a result of victimisation emanating from crime (Bonderman, 2001; Howell et al., 2014).

Losses in Productivity

Research has shown that persons who are victimized may experience an inability to work at their place of employment, complete housework, or attend school. Not being able to do these things contributes to the total lost productivity that crime victims experience. In 2008, about 7% of persons in the NCVS who said they were violently victimized lost some time from work. About the same percentage of victims of property offenses lost time from work. Some victims are more prone to miss work than others. For example, almost one-tenth of burglary victimizations cause victims to miss at least one day of work. Data from the NCVS show that 9% of robbery victimizations resulted in victims missing more than 10 days of work (Bureau of Justice Statistics, 2011), whereas victims of intimate partner violence lost almost 8 million paid days of work annually (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, 2003). Employers also bear some costs when their employees are victimized; victimized employees may be less productive, their employers may incur costs associated with hiring replacements, and employers may experience costs dealing with the emotional responses of their employees. Parents also may suffer costs when their children are victimized and they are unable to meet all their job responsibilities as a result of doing things such as taking the child to the doctor or staying home with the child (Miller et al., 1996).

Pain, Suffering, and Lost Quality of Life

The most difficult cost to quantify is the pain, suffering, and loss of quality of life that crime victims experience. When these elements are added to the costs associated with medical care, lost earnings, and programs associated with victim assistance, the cost to crime victims increases 4 times. In other words, this is the largest cost that crime victims sustain (Miller et al., 1996). Another cost that crime victims may experience is a change in their routines and lifestyles. Many victims report that after being victimized, they changed their behaviour. For example, victims of stalking may change their phone numbers, move, or change their normal routines. Others may stop going out alone or start carrying a weapon when they do so. Although these changes may reduce risk of being victimized again, for victims to bear the cost of crime seems somewhat unfair.

Vicarious Victimization/ **Secondary victimization**

Victimologists have come to note that not only the victims bear the cost of victimisation, but also his relatives, significant others and the society at large. While the victim primarily is affected directly, others and the system also are saddled with costs, economically, emotionally and as the case may be (secondary cost). The effects that victimization has on those close to the victim are critical in understanding the total impact of crime. The effects that victimization has on others are collectively known as vicarious victimization. Vicarious victimization has been most widely studied in regard to homicide survivors—people whose loved ones have been murdered—given the profound effect that homicide has on family members, even when compared with non-homicide deaths. Homicide deaths are almost exclusively sudden and violent. Surviving family members often experience guilt about not being able to prevent the death. The involvement of the criminal justice system also adds an element to the response family members have, and there is often a feeling that others view the death as at least partly the victim's fault. For instance, research has shown that homicide survivors largely experience many of the same posttrauma symptoms that crime victims themselves experience (Applebaum & Burns, 1991).

Fear of Crime

Another cost associated with victimization is fear. Fear is an emotional response to a perceived threat. Physiologically, when people experience fear, their body activates to alert them to danger. These bodily responses are associated with the autonomic nervous system being activated—heart rate increases, pupils dilate, digestion slows, blood supply to muscles increases, breathing rate increases, and sweating increases. These physiological changes occur so that in the face of danger, a person can fight or flee. Fear of crime is different than perceived risk of being a victim. Perceived risk is the perceived likelihood that a person feels that he or she will become a crime victim. Perceptions of risk are related to fear in that those people who perceive their risk to be high generally have higher levels of fear of crime than those who do not perceive their risk of victimization to be high (May, Rader, & Goodrum, 2010). As you may imagine, fear is difficult to measure. How do you know whether someone is more fearful of crime than another person? Would you simply ask someone, or do you think looking for other indications of fear would be better? One of the most common ways to measure fear of crime is by asking individuals on

surveys, “How safe do you feel or would you feel being out alone in your neighborhood?” (Ferraro, 1995; 1996).

4.0 Conclusion

The overall understanding of victimisation and its consequences on the victims primarily bearer of the cost and also secondarily on the society in general cannot be overemphasised. One cannot understand the plights of victims if one does not understand the specifics in terms of the various types and consequences of victimisation, the economic, social and psychological impact, for which many are unquantifiable monetarily, and also the fact that some consequences are more enduring than others. In all, irrespective of the consequences victims are expected to seek help wherever possible to alleviate these overarching consequences

5.0 Summary

This unit examine the consequences of victimisation as creating a state of sympathy, empathy, commiseration and compassion for victims, especially for those in distress or suffering great hardship thereafter their victimisation. It further highlights the consequences of victimization ranging from physical injury, mental health consequences, PTSD, **Self-Blame, Learned Helplessness**, Economic cost, property lost, medical care, loss in productivity, secondary victimization and fear of crime as well as their costs primarily to the victims and the society at large in real terms with economic data from United State survey.

6.0 Self-Assessment Exercise

1. **What are the three affective responses** that are common among crime victims?
2. How can these responses be ameliorated?
3. Identify four consequences of victimisation
4. What does the abbreviation PTSD connote?
5. How does it relate to victimisation?

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MODULE 2

Unit 1: Theories of victimisation I (understanding the genesis of crime, and victim crime)

Unit 2: Theories of victimisation II (understanding the genesis of crime, and victim crime)

Unit 3: Measuring Victimization

Unit 4: Recurring Victimisation

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Unit 1: Theories of victimisation I (understand the genesis of crime, and victim crime)

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1.0 Introduction

The introduction to victimology, the link between victim crime and victimisation as explained in unit 1, with regards to the pioneers of the discipline and their contributions, an idea of the causes and factors that create victimisation are already established however not in-depth. This module and subunits will highlight and explain some of the dominant theories in the discipline. The

concept of theory needs to be explained. It is important first and foremost for us to know its meaning, usage and implication in reading, in doing research and in everyday usage. According to the dictionary, theory is “a plausible or scientifically acceptable general principle or body of principles offered to explain phenomena” (Theory [Def. 1], n.d.). In this module, we present several perspectives in victimology, some of which focus on the offender and victim selection while others focus purely on victim behaviours.

2.0 Intended Learning Outcomes (ILOs)

This unit seeks to introduce the students to various explanations therein in the crime-victim puzzle with the help of theories. Students are expected to know what theories, different types are and their applicability to situations differently, moving away from mere speculations to facts through scholastic and established victimisation (understand the genesis of crime, and victim crime).

3.0 Main Content

Now that you have an idea about who the typical crime victim is, you are probably wondering *why* some people are more likely than others to find themselves victims of crime. Is it because those people provoke the victimization, as von Hentig and his contemporaries thought? Is it because crime victims are perceived by offenders to be more vulnerable than others? Is there some personality trait that influences victimization risk? Answers to all these questions may play at least some role in understanding (the why), why victimization occurs to particular people. Before discussing several theoretical perspectives utilized to understand the genesis of crime, victim crime, it is important to note that no one framework (theory) is universally agreed upon by all scholars. Each perspective noted below has strengths as well as weaknesses.

Biosocial Criminology Theory

One of the earliest pioneers of biosocial criminology theory was Dr. Lee Ellis, who utilized this perspective in the understanding of rape (1991). According to the Biosocial Criminology Association, biosocial criminology seeks to “understand the biological and environmental influences on the development of antisocial behaviour.” In other words, biosocial criminologists

investigate the perpetration and/or experiencing of criminal activity from a vantage point that accounts for biological as well as social factors. As mentioned, some of the earliest work utilizing this perspective focused on rape. In his seminal (1991) article entitled “A Synthesized (Biosocial) Theory of Rape,” Ellis attempted to integrate and merge other perspectives on the topic into one all-inclusive framework. At the time, many scholars utilized the following approaches to understand this crime: (1) feminist perspective, (2) evolutionary theory, and (3) social learning theory (Ellis, 1991). In order to understand Ellis’ attempt to integrate and merge these theories into a biosocial criminology framework, it is necessary to discuss each of these perspectives separately. In terms of the feminist perspective, scholars in this field theorize that violence against women, including rape, is ultimately an expression of power and control originating from a system of oppression and patriarchy (Ellis, 1991). From this perspective, rape is a symptom of the larger systemic issue of gender inequality—it is not grounded in sexual attraction or gratification (Ellis, 1991). From an evolutionary theory perspective, rape stems from an internal motivation among males to ensure the production of offspring (Ellis, 1991). Finally, from a social learning theory perspective, rape is the result of individuals internalizing sexist attitudes and beliefs, such as those depicted through mass media, and then acting on those antisocial norms (Ellis, 1991). Given that these perspectives speak to both biological (e.g., evolutionary theory) and social (e.g., feminist perspective; social learning theory) causes of violence, Ellis (1991) leveraged each of their respective strengths in his construction of a biosocial theory of rape. From Ellis’ (1991) biosocial criminology perspective, rape occurs as a result of the following four biosocial factors: (1) men’s biological drive as well as social drive to “possess” another person; (2) men’s desire to continue their lineage through the production of multiple offspring, which for men generally does not require the same level of investment as it does for women; (3) men’s learned and internalized attitudes and beliefs about sexual activity perpetrated through mass media; and (4) men’s hormonal differences compared to women’s. This theory also can be used to explain sexual violence related victimisation. The main criticism of this theory is that it is used to justify sexism. Biosocial criminology has since evolved to take into account both the biological and social roots of crime.

Control Balance Theory CBT)

Charles Tittle proposed control balance theory (CBT) in 1995 and asserted that deviance resulted from an imbalance in control among individuals and, specifically, *control deficits* and *control surpluses* (Tittle, 2004). According to Tittle (2004), control is the degree to which individuals can influence a course of action or outcome. All individuals seek control, but are also subjected to it as well (Tittle, 2004). Those experiencing a *control balance* can influence outcomes, but are subjected to control themselves in proportional measure. In contrast, those experiencing a *control deficit* experience more control than they exert, whereas those experiencing a *control surplus* can exert great control over outcomes. In terms of the latter two situations of control, if someone is given the opportunity to engage in deviance, Tittle (2004) notes, criminal activity becomes more likely. In instances of a control imbalance, Tittle (2004) theorized engagement in crime was more likely but that the *type* of crime would differ. For individuals experiencing a lack of control (i.e., control deficit), crimes of a *repressive* nature would dominate their criminal activity such as violence and sexual assault (Braithwaite, 1997) after there was recognition within the individual of their position (Tittle, 2004). Braithwaite (1997) provides the example of an individual who, upon recognizing his/her lack of autonomy, experiences humiliation and engages in deviance. Contrasting to the former, individuals experiencing great control are likely to engage in crimes of an *autonomous* nature such as bribery, extortion, and price-fixing. A typical example, is a powerful individual who, upon sensing dissension within his/her social circle, experiences anger and engages in deviance.

Feminist pathways theory (FPT)

Feminist pathways theory (Pasko & Chesney-Lind, 2016) essentially frames women's engagement in crime as stemming from the negative impacts of prior victimization as well as their interactions with the criminal justice system. Similar in thought to the life course development perspective, which is discussed below, feminist pathways theory asserts that one cannot understand the origins of female-perpetrated crimes unless the impact of prior life experiences is also taken into account (Sharp, 2009). This theory explains further that young girls are often punished more harshly than their male counterparts for status offenses, which forces them into the criminal justice system at a pivotal time of their development. Utilizing the FPT

perspective, it can be argued that this early interaction between the female youth and the criminal justice system likely increases the chances of her engaging in later criminal activity.

Life Course Development (LCD)

Scholars in the life course development (LCD) field, championed by Gluecks (1930), asserted that this framework addresses a long-standing dearth of understanding within the academic community of how an individual's development and experiences from childhood to death affect their decisions. Through a longitudinal surveys research methodology Glueck (1930) followed the lives of 500 Boston youth for extended periods to monitor onset, persistence, and desistance from criminal activity to discover a social pathway. To put the theory in broad terms, LCD scholars are concerned with how normative *social pathways* are altered by life events, referred to as *transitions* that then lead to different *trajectories* (i.e., a long-term change in roles and expectations). For example, the development and progression of a young man's life may dramatically change if he is diagnosed with a serious illness (change in trajectory) that requires him to completely change his life (transition). In another example more specific to criminology, the development and progression of a young woman's life may dramatically change if she is arrested on a serious charge (change in trajectory) that results in her incarceration (transition). In his discussion of LCD, Elder and his colleagues (2003; pp. 10–14) identified five general principles that drove this field of inquiry:

1. Human development and aging are lifelong processes
2. Individuals construct their own life course through the choices and actions they take within the opportunities and constraints of history and social circumstance
3. The life course of individuals is embedded in and shaped by historical time and places they experience over a lifetime
4. The developmental antecedents and consequences of life transitions, events, and behavioural patterns vary according to their timing in a person's life
5. Lives are lived interdependently and socio-historical influences are expressed through this network of shared relationships.

Thinking back to earlier discussion on the feminist pathways theory (FPT), LCD scholars are also concerned with the effect victimization has on the onset of crime. For example, violent victimization has a profound, lasting impact on an individual's life. And this profound impact stems from victimizations challenging an individual's sense of autonomy, safety, and security.

Lifestyle Exposure Theory (LET)

Unlike previous theoretical frameworks, lifestyle exposure theory (LET) centers on the actions and behaviours of potential victims that increase their vulnerability to experiencing a crime. LET was proposed by Hindelang, Gottfredson, and Garofalo in 1978 and is very similar to routine activities theory (RAT), which is the work of Cohen and Felson (1982). In fact, scholars have claimed that RAT is “merely an expansion” of LET (Choi, 2008, p. 308). In terms of its applicability to understanding victimization, LET essentially asserts that the risk of experiencing crime varies across society given the differences in how individuals are structurally situated (e.g., age, class, gender, race) (Choi, 2008). This theory is devoted to understanding why certain segments of the population, such as young men, are more vulnerable to experiencing crime versus other groups. It is also important in explaining the fact that individuals' activities and *lifestyles* are intertwined with the roles and expectations they hold in society. Thus, a young bachelor is likely at greater risk of experiencing a crime by the sheer nature of leading a more active lifestyle that exposes him to potential offenders. In another example, a woman who engages in survival sex as a means to acquire life's necessities is at greater risk of experiencing crime by the sheer nature of that role. LET is also one of the perspectives that is applicable to victimization. Another example is the exposure to online activities (risky online behaviour) and the cases of cyber-stalking and online bullying.

Low Self-Control (LSC)

Low self-control (LSC) theory also referred to as “self-control theory” or as the “general theory of crime,” is unique in the sense that it is argued to be a general explanation of why individuals engage in crime regardless of the type of incident or surrounding cultural background. Gottfredson & Hirschi, (1990) are key proponents of this theory. The essential premise of the theory is that individuals engage in criminal activity because they cannot resist the opportunity

for immediate gratification that it provides *and* they lack the barrier of self-control that law-abiding individuals develop during childhood (Gottfredson&Hirschi, 1990). This lack of self-control, which could be demonstrated by a volatile personality and/or substance use, is alleged to stem from inadequate parenting during childhood. Not only is LSC a unique perspective in that it is an alleged universal explanation for crime engagement (Gottfredson&Hirschi, 1990), but scholars have used this framework to explain victimization as well (Schreck, 1999).

Routine Activities Theory

Cohen and Felson introduced routine activities theory (RAT) to academia in the 1970s at approximately the same time as LET (discussed earlier). Much like LET, RAT is an opportunity-driven theoretical understanding of victimization. According to Cohen and Felson (1979), crime likely results from a convergence in time and space of the following three factors: a potential offender, a suitable target, and the lack of a capable guardian. This perspective, like LSC, is applicable across personal and property offenses; moreover, it has informed cybercrime research as well (Navarro et al., 2015; Navarro & Jasinski, 2012, 2013). While scholars conceptualize RAT's main components slightly differently across studies, the essential premise underlining each remains largely the same. According to RAT scholars, potential offenders, formerly referred to as motivated offenders, are omnipresent in society (Mustaine& Tewksbury, 2009).

The second component of RAT is akin to the main premise of LET and takes into account target vulnerability to victimization. The target can be a person or property (Cohen & Felson, 1979), and vulnerabilities broadly range across studies. For example, in their 2015 study of cyberbullying on social networking sites (SNS), Navarro and colleagues assessed what behaviours on social media platforms like Facebook make users vulnerable to cybervictimization. Ultimately, the scholars found that using SNS daily increased the risk of experiencing cyberbullying (Navarro et al., 2015). Additionally, bullying others, posting status updates, and using private messages all increased the odds of experiencing cyberbullying (Navarro et al., 2015).

The third component, a capable guardian, counteracts the chance of victimization occurring (Cohen & Felson, 1979). Although scholars' conceptualization of the capable guardian widely

varies across studies, this component was envisioned as someone who could keep a crime from happening by keeping “an eye on the potential *target* of crime” (Felson, 2006, p. 80). In other words, using an alarm system or bright lights may deter a burglary, but these items are not capable forms of guardianship in terms of understanding RAT. Instead, capable forms of guardianship are parents, police officers, teachers, and others who are in positions to both monitor potential targets of crime *and* act if a crime is likely to occur. Taking this into account, Cohen and Felson (1979) theorized that the *lack* of a capable guardian contributed to the genesis of crime when a potential offender and suitable target converged in time and space.

4.0 Conclusion

It is quite evident that the causes of criminality have a lot to do with victimisation insofar as both emphasise human actions and inactions that are capable of harming individuals and the society at large. However it also very clear that understanding the causes of victimisation is very complex, with diverse ways of explaining events, circumstances and impact that are linked to victimisation. Thus the theories in this unit do not represent an inclusive list, as new ways of understanding crime and victimization are constantly proposed by scholars in the field.

5.0 Summary

The theoretical perspectives discussed in this chapter represent a large swath of the frameworks utilized in criminological and victimological research today. This unit introduce the student to the following specific theories: **Biosocial Criminology Theory, Control Balance Theory, Feminist Perspective, Life Course Development Theory, Lifestyle Exposure Theory, Low Self-control Theory, Routine Activities Theory, Social Disorganization Theory, Social Interactionist Perspective, Social Learning Theory, Strain Theory, Structural Choice Theory, and Subculture of Violence Theory. These theories can be broadly** explained ranging from the biological, social and subcultural view standpoints.

6.0 Self-Assessment Exercise

1. What theory critically discussed the idea of a potential offender, a suitable target, and the lack of a capable guardian?
2. Explain the concepts and link between low self esteem and victimization.
3. Which of the theory/theories is/are better focused in the debate of why certain segments of the population are more vulnerable to experiencing crime versus other groups?
4. Which theory is specifically interested in understanding how normative *social pathways* are altered by life events, *transitions and trajectories*?
5. *How does the Biosocial Criminology Theory captures rape as a crime and the rape victim?*

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Unit 2: Theories of victimisation II (understanding the genesis of crime, and victim crime)

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- 2.0 Intended Learning Outcomes (ILOs)
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1.0 Introduction

The capacity of any theories to aid understanding of social events is always overwhelming. As a continuation from Unit 1, this unit further introduces seven more theories: **Social Disorganization Theory, Social Interactionist Perspective, Social Learning Theory, differential association theory, Strain Theory, Structural Choice Theory, and Subculture of Violence Theory. These theories are not peculiar to victimology, but to the mother discipline of sociology and criminology.** They explain further the link between victim crime and victimisation as explained in unit 1, with regards to the pioneers of the discipline and their contributions, an idea of the causes and factors that create victimisation in-depth. This unit with exemplification highlight and explain the structural aspect of causes of victimisation from the structural and learning perspectives. As a guiding principle theories are continuous and dynamic in nature, for which no one theory often explains it all in victimisation studies. In doing research and in everyday usage, the best theory is often that which explains a situation better. In many instances the combination of theories to explain event(s) are also very welcome. At the end a theory is expected to be plausible in terms of its logic to explain phenomena. The theories are presented in section 3 below

2.0 Intended Learning Outcomes (ILOs)

This unit is a continuum from unit 1 in which students are expected at the end to further enrich their capacity to think and explain victimisation and criminal activities. Specifically to be able to make use of theories in explaining

1. the victim-offender overlap
2. formation, activities and the victimisation by gang members
3. concepts in strain, differential and learning theories among others
4. structural and causative agents to victim crime

3.0 Main Content

Drawing from the Unit 1 above it is now clearer that there are reasons beyond speculations about the ‘why’ of victimisation and crime in society. Now that you have an idea about who the typical crime victim is, you are probably wondering less, *why* some people are more likely than others to find themselves victims of crime. Is it because those people provoke the victimization, as von Hentig and his contemporaries thought? Is it because crime victims are perceived by offenders to be more vulnerable than others? Is there some personality trait that influences victimization risk? Answers to all these questions may play at least some role in understanding (the why), why victimization occurs to particular people. Thus the following theories were discussed below as a continuation from Unit 1: **Social Disorganization Theory, Social Interactionist Perspective, Social Learning Theory, differential association theory, Strain Theory, Structural Choice Theory, and Subculture of Violence Theory**

Social Disorganization Theory

Social disorganization theory (SDT) is perhaps one of the most influential theoretical perspectives in criminology. First introduced by Shaw and McKay (1942), the framework argues that victimization at the individual level is a product of disorganization at the community level. Indeed, the main premise of SDT is that all social problems that plague a community are ultimately a reflection of ecological factors. When first introduced, SDT centered on the following three broad concepts: “physical status, economic status, and population status”. Many studies have evaluated the utility of SDT in urban locations (Vélez, 2001) and rural locations

(Osgood & Chambers, 2000) with interesting results. Broadly speaking, SDT scholars have found that various community-level factors, such as residential instability, family disruption, and ethnic heterogeneity affect juvenile delinquency (Osgood & Chambers, 2000; Sampson & Groves, 1989). More specifically, a community with residents frequently moving in and out (i.e., residential instability), that has unstable family dynamics (i.e., family disruption), and a population including individuals of various backgrounds and cultures (e.g., ethnic heterogeneity) is less likely to forge the collective bonds that curb juvenile delinquency and exposure to victimisation for population that are more stable less mobile and sedentary. SDT is a macro-level theory that takes into account community-level factors rather than individual-level factors this perspective has framed various types of victimization.

Social Interactionist Theory (SIT)

Social interactionist (SI) theory, proposed by Felson and Tedeschi (1993), explains that victimization is the result of a conscious choice by offenders to utilize violence, or some other type of coercive action (e.g., bodily force, threat, or punishment), in order to achieve an important objective. SI argues that perpetrators use violence in an instrumental and purposeful way (Felson & Tedeschi, 1993). According to Felson and Tedeschi (1993, p. 295), instrumental violence is often perpetrated with one or more of the following three goals in mind:

- “(1) gain compliance,
- (2) redress grievances, or
- (3) promote or defend valued identities.”

Perhaps what is most disturbing about this decision-making process, as Felson and Tedeschi (1993) note, is the fact that perpetrators of violence likely feel justified in their utilization of it. Taking this into account, SI is easily applicable to various sorts of offenses, but particularly interpersonal abuse like domestic violence and sexual assault. Imagine an abuser who arrives home and finds dinner is not on the table yet (i.e., a perceived slight): the batterer may feel the need to reassert who controls the household and decide to physically assault the partner to redress this grievance. In another example, imagine a woman is trapped in a room with an aggressive male who is

attempting to engage her in sexual activity. The male may decide to threaten her with great physical bodily harm unless she complies with his demands. Finally, imagine a group of young people is out at a social event. In the midst of having a good time, one individual hurls an insult at another. The targeted individual, feeling his very identity has just been challenged by the insult, may decide to defend himself by violent means.

Social Learning Theory

Social learning theory (Akers, 1973) argues that social behaviour, regardless of whether it is prosocial or antisocial, is a learning process. Akers (1973) proposed SLT several decades ago and it has come to be referred to as a general theory of crime because, much like (Low self-control theory) LSC, it has wide applicability across various offense types. As noted by Akers (1973), SLT comprises four important concepts:

- (1) differential association (e.g., association with deviant peers),
- (2) definitions (e.g., positive or negative beliefs about crime),
- (3) differential reinforcement (e.g., punishments or rewards), and
- (4) imitation.

Depending on the effects of these four concepts, SLT theorists argue, individuals are socialized toward a path of prosocial behaviour or antisocial behaviour. To gain a greater understanding of SLT, the criminological theory of Differential association helps out as a way of further explanation of its key components.

Differential association theory (DAT)

Differential association, sometimes considered as part of SLT, is an important stand-alone concept in criminology first introduced by Sutherland (1939). The term essentially describes an association with deviant peers (Sutherland, 1939), which could then influence one's own engagement in deviance. Definitions are an important component of SLT, because engagement in delinquency is reliant on an individual believing criminal behaviours are acceptable. Next, differential reinforcement is critical for the potential replication of behaviour. According to SLT, a behaviour that is reinforced—either positively (e.g., something is added of value) or

negatively (e.g., something is removed that is unwanted)—likely leads to a continuance of that behaviour. In contrast, a behaviour that results in punishment—either positively (e.g., something negative is added) or negatively (e.g., something of value is removed)—likely deters a continuance of that behaviour. Finally, imitation occurs when the behaviour is learned and repeated.

Strain Theory

Robert Agnew's general strain theory greatly expanded the understanding of criminal offending. According to Agnew (2001), engagement in criminal behaviour ultimately stems from an individual encountering a source of adversity (i.e., strain), experiencing a negative emotion as a result (i.e., anger, frustration), and then reacting in an antisocial manner. In terms of sources of strain, Agnew identified three broad groups:

1. "loss of positive valued stimuli,
2. presentation of negative stimuli, and
3. goal blockage" (p. 319).

Assessing whether an individual will react to strain or not is also dependent on whether:

- (1) these are seen as unjust,
- (2) are seen as high in magnitude,
- (3) are associated with low self-control, and
- (4) create some pressure or incentive to engage in crime" (Agnew, 2001, p. 320).

Agnew's (2001) sources of strain are easily applicable in the understanding of both offending and victimization. To consider the first source of strain, loss of positively valued stimuli, imagine a domestic abuser who becomes enraged after his partner threatens to terminate the relationship (i.e., loss of positively valued stimuli). The abuser may engage in or threaten violence to the partner in order to prevent the termination of the relationship, thus resolving the source of strain. Next, consider the second source of strain (i.e., the presentation of negative stimuli) and imagine the same situation as described above. After reconciling their relationship, the couple described above experience several horrific violent altercations. The partner, who fears for her life as her abuser

continues to escalate in his violence (i.e., presentation of negative stimuli), kills him in a fit of rage. By killing her abuser, the victim resolved the source of strain confronting her. Finally, consider the final source of strain (i.e., goal blockage) and once again imagine the same couple as before, but with a different outcome. After reconciling their relationship, the abuser continues to escalate in his violence, because he blames his partner for his lack of success in his professional career (i.e., goal blockage). As a result, he becomes increasingly frustrated and kills his partner. While the aforementioned are gruesome examples, they illustrate how flexible general strain theory is in the application of criminal activity to understand why individuals perpetrate crime as well as experience it.

Structural Choice Theory

In order to leverage the strengths associated with lifestyle exposure theory and routine activities theory, Meier and Miethe (1993) proposed an integrated perspective referred to as structural choice theory. In their words, “proximity to motivated offenders, exposure to high-risk environments, target attractiveness, and absence of guardianship. . . [are] necessary conditions for predatory crime” (p. 475). According to the scholars, structural choice theory (SCT) is uniquely suited to explain both offending and victimization, because it accounts for structural factors as well as micro-level factors (Meier & Miethe, 1993). Put another way, SCT asserts that risk of crime offending and victimization derives from patterned behaviour that is both structurally driven (e.g., exposure to offenders and potentially risky situations) as well as offender “choice” driven (e.g., assessment of vulnerability of victim and presence of guardians) (Meier & Miethe, 1993).

Subculture of Violence Theory

The subculture of violence theory (SVT) is one of the few theoretical perspectives that explains both offending and victimization from a broad perspective. The theory originated from the work of Wolfgang and Ferracuti (1967) and is based on the premise of the existence of a violent subculture in which antisocial behaviour becomes a normative response to certain affronts that, in turn, perpetuates the cycle. SVT does not claim that violence is *always* the reaction in this type of subculture, but rather, that individuals in this subculture encounter situations in which violence is their normative response, in contrast to those socialized in the dominant

culture. In this situation, adhering individuals likely experience praise for their conformity to these subculture norms, while those who fail to conform risk ostracisation from the community. SVT is therefore a useful perspective for understanding both why individuals engage in deviance as well as why individuals *experience* deviance. Examining various theoretical perspectives, not just SVT, shows that one of the most salient risk factors for experiencing victimization is the victim engaging in deviant activity. This is often referred to as the victim-offender overlap. It is easily applicable to SVT in the sense that individuals socialized to utilize violence as part of the normative culture are likely to also be met with violence, which can result in their own victimization. For example, imagine a gang member who engages in violence in order to maintain his/her status in the surrounding community and consider the likelihood of that gang member eventually experiencing violence him/herself.

4.0 Conclusion

The causality of victimisation and its relationship with crime is further explained with much emphasis this time on the structural problems inherent in society that can spur criminality and by so doing victimisation. It is important to note that theories are ever progressive and dynamic with the changes in society as emphasised by the various technological knowhow and characteristics of modern society.

5.0 Summary

This unit is a continuum from unit 1 with theoretical perspectives that deal with the social/community influence on crime and victimisation. Specifically the following theories were discussed: **Social Disorganization Theory, Social Interactionist Perspective, Social Learning Theory, differential association theory, Strain Theory, Structural Choice Theory, and Subculture of Violence Theory.**

6.0 Self-Assessment Exercise

5. What theory can better explain the formation, activities and the victimisation by gang members?
6. What are the highlights of the strain theory?

7. Which of the theoretical perspective is associated with Sutherland (1939)? With relevant examples discuss three relevance of his theory.
8. What are Akers (1973), four important concepts in the highlight of the social learning theory (SLT)?
9. What do you understand by the construct “victim-offender overlap”?
10. In what theory did Shaw and McKay (1942) feature?

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Unit 3: Measuring Victimization

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1.0 Introduction

It is axiomatic that accurate and valid data and research information on both crime and victimization are critical for an understanding of crime world over and for any assessment of the quality of the activities and programs of the criminal justice system. It is in this regard that research, routine formation of committees on Law and Justice and on National Statistics of Research Council regularly convene to examine an array of measurement issues in the area of crime victimization and offending and to explore possible areas for future research to improve not only measurement methods but also the prevalence and statics of victimisation for the betterment of the victims and the society at large. This unit provides information that are very relevant in understand issues in victimisation measurement.

2.0 Intended Learning Outcomes (ILOs)

In this unit students are expected to know the

1. two major sources of measuring victimisation
2. relevance of measuring victimisation alongside crime, as well
3. **problems and challenges in uniform crime reporting (UCR) and the National Crime and Victimisation Survey (NCVS).**

3.0 Main Content

Having been exposed to victimology and theories in the previous modules and units, measuring victimisation is a further step **to understanding *why* some people are the victims of crime and others are not or simply put why are some people in the statistics and others are not, who most likely and those who are not etc, before we can these can be unravelled, it is important for us know how often victimization occurs. Also important is to know who the typical crime victim is. Luckily, these characteristics of victimization can be readily gleaned from existing data sources. These sources are usually two:**

Uniform Crime Reports (UCR) and the National Crime Victimization Survey (NCVS),

TWO MAJOR DATA SOURCES

Most measurement of crime in any country emanates from two major data sources. In America like in other countries, for instance over the years, the FBI's (1) Uniform Crime Reports (UCR) has collected information on crimes known to the police and arrests from local and state jurisdictions throughout the country. (2)The National Crime Victimization Survey (NCVS), a general population survey designed to discover the extent, nature, and consequences of criminal victimization, has been conducted annually since the early 1970s. Other national surveys that focus on specific problems, such as delinquency, violence against women, and child abuse, also provide important data on crime, victims, and offenders.

These data collection systems utilize different methods of measuring criminal behaviour. The UCR relies on official data that have been collected and reported by law enforcement agencies. The NCVS and other surveys discussed in this unit are large-scale social surveys that rely on self-reports of offenses or victimization.

Although these data collection systems do many things right, they are, like any such system, beset with the methodological problems of surveys (the use of questionnaire in data gathering) in general as well as particular problems associated with measuring illicit, deviant, and deleterious activities. Such problems include:

- 1. nonreporting and false reporting,**

2. nonstandard definitions of events,
3. difficulties associated with asking sensitive questions,
4. sampling problems such as coverage and nonresponse, and
5. an array of other factors involved in conducting surveys of individuals and implementing official data reporting systems.

Compounding these problems are the recent interest in rare crime events, such as violent crimes committed by youth and hate crimes; the need for attention to vulnerable subpopulations, such as very young and school-age children and disabled, elderly, and immigrant populations; and a focus on small- or local-area estimates of crime and victimization. In Nigeria just like any other developed country the Senate or congress periodically requires the security agencies such as the Nigeria Police and the Department of State Services (DSS), Ministry cum Department of Justice to develop new research or data collection efforts to measure crime victimization in specific populations and for small areas. Understanding victimization and offending in these subgroups, however, can be particularly difficult.

In general, criminal victimization is a relatively rare event—that is, in any given reference period, the majority of respondents do not report any victimization. Very large general population samples are therefore required to accurately characterize the population of offenders and victims, and detailed subgroup analyses can be problematic. Some important subgroups may not be covered at all (e.g., homeless people), and smaller research studies of crimes against these subgroups often have problems of statistical power because of small sample sizes in most cases. For many hard-to identify subpopulations, such as people with disabilities and abused children, there is no large, well-defined group from which to draw a sample for measuring victimization—in other words, a sampling frame. This, as well as more conventional problems associated with interviewing crime victims, presents substantial design and analytical difficulties. Official data such as UCR arrest data have a different set of problems. Foremost among them is that most crimes are not reported to the police, and only a small proportion of those that are reported result in an arrest. Increases or decreases in reports or in arrests for certain offenses, such as burglary or auto theft, can

therefore result in large differences in outcomes and misleading conclusions about crime trends. The accuracy of official data is also compromised by differences in the definitions of crimes and reporting protocols. Most national-level official data are compiled through the voluntary reporting of local-level security agencies—for example the collection of data of arrest made from the Nigeria Police, nationwide; a sample from prosecutors' offices nationwide for prosecution data and other times from local vigilante groups. However, these agencies do not always file reports as called for in the reporting protocol.

As developed the American system is, a review of the 1999 UCR data posted on the FBI's web site indicates that six states out the 50 States—Illinois, Kansas, Kentucky, Maine, Montana, and New Hampshire—report only limited data. In Illinois, for example, only six cities with populations of 10,000 or more report arrest data. Rape data were unavailable for two states because the state reporting agencies did not follow the national UCR guidelines (available: <<http://www.FBI.gov/ucr/99cius.htm>> [15/8/20]).

4.0 Conclusion

There has been a significant lack of governmental and private interest and investment in research aimed at solving the problems associated with measuring crime and victimisation. Over the years the inclusion of research questions as part of the structure of the NCVS has made it not only lengthy but more complex. A major research effort undertaken as part of the redesign of the NCVS addressed many important sampling questions, but for social and political reasons, much of this information did not make it into the survey. Today, in fact, the problems may be growing worse because of eroding federal investment and funding in data systems and social science research on crime and victimization). The promise of improvements in data on reported crimes through conversion to an incident based reporting system has not been realized because of a lack of funding to support the necessary changes at the state and local levels. Lastly support for longitudinal or methodological studies for the most part simply is not there.

5.0 Summary

This unit highlights the relevance of measuring victimisation alongside crime, as well as the **two major data sources of victimisation measurements: The uniform crime reporting (UCR) and the National Crime and Victimization Survey (NCVS)**. The problems and challenges were discussed as it pertained to each of the measurement system.

6.0 Self-Assessment Exercise

1. Why is **criminal victimization** often referred as generally and relatively rare event?
2. What are the peculiar problems associated with the Uniform Crime Reporting (UCR)?
3. What is voluntary reporting?
4. How are most national-level official crime and victimisation data compiled?

7.0 References/Further Reading

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Unit 4: Recurring victimisation

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I. Introduction

Another cost of victimization often not discussed or known is the real possibility that a person who is victimized once will be victimized again. In fact, persons who have been victimized are more likely to be victimized again than others who have not experienced any victimization. For example, a home that has been burgled is 4 times more likely to be burgled a second time than a home that has not experienced any burglary (Forrester, Chatterton, & Pease, 1988). At first, this reality probably does not make sense. After all, if you were victimized, you may be likely to implement crime reduction strategies. For example, if you had your car broken into because you had valuables in plain view, would you keep items in your car again? You probably are shaking your head no. So, why then are some people prone to being victimized not once but again and sometimes, again and again and again? Before we can address that question, let us first define terms related to recurring victimization and find out the extent to which people are victimized more than once.

2.0 Intended Learning Outcomes (ILOs)

This unit is expected to inform the students that people are faced with multiple victimization even though it is expected that one re-strategies after initial victimization. Specifically,

- a. student should grapple with the fact that some people are prone to being victimized not once but again and sometimes, again and again and again?*
- b. They should also know the categories involved*

- c. *They should be able to differentiate recurring victimization and repeat victimization; vis-à-vis recurring victimization and revictimisation.*

3.0 Main Content

Types of Recurring Victimization

To know the extent to which people experience more than one victimization, let us first identify what we mean by recurring victimization. As seen in Table below.,

- i. **Recurring** victimization occurs when a person or place is victimized more than once by any type of victimization.
- ii. Repeat victimization occurs when a person or place is victimized more than once by the same type of victimization.
- iii. Revictimization is commonly referred to when a person is victimized more than once by any type of victimization but across a relatively wide span of time—such as from childhood to adulthood. Revictimization has been most widely studied in terms of childhood sexual abuse and sexual assault in adulthood. Polyvictimization is another form of recurring victimization.
- iv. *Polyvictimization* is a term that is generally used for childhood-recurring victimization, when a person has experienced multiple forms of victimization (Finkelhor, Ormrod, & Turner, 2007a, 2007b). For example, a child who is beaten by his or her parents and who experiences sexual abuse by a neighbor is a polyvictim.
- v. The last term to be familiar with is near-repeat victimization. A near-repeat victimization occurs when a place is victimized that is close by or near in proximity to a place that was previously victimized.

Type of Victimization	Type of Incidents Experienced	Length of Time Between Incidents
Recurring victimization	A victimization of any type followed by a victimization of any type (e.g., a theft followed by an assault)	Can be any time between incidents (e.g., a man is the victim of an armed robbery at age 19 and then suffers an assault at the hands of his girlfriend when he is 20)
Repeat victimization	A victimization followed by another victimization of the exact same type (e.g., a theft followed by a theft)	Generally, incidents occur relatively close to each other temporally in the same developmental period (e.g., a college student is assaulted in May and assaulted in June of the same year)
Revictimization	A victimization of any type followed by a victimization of any type (e.g., a theft followed by an assault)	Can be any time between incidents; generally refers to incidents that occur in different developmental time periods (e.g., a person is abused as a child and then is raped as an adult)
Polyvictimization	A victimization of any type followed by a victimization of a different type (e.g., a sexual abuse followed by a physical assault)	Generally during childhood, but must be during the same developmental time period (e.g., a child is hit by his parents and bullied by students at school)
Near-repeat victimization	A victimization that occurs in one location followed by the same type of victimization at a nearby location (e.g., a burglary at one home followed by a burglary at a neighbor's home)	No set time frame in between incidents but generally relatively close to each other. More important is the geographical closeness of incidents (e.g., a home is burglarized in a neighborhood, and 6 months later, the house next door is burglarized)

Johnson et al., 2007

Near repeats occur because of crime displacement within a relatively small geographical area after an initial victimization has occurred (Johnson et al., 2007). Near repeats are often studied in reference to burglary incidents. Consider a home that experiences a burglary. The homeowner decides to install an alarm and security lighting after the burglary, thus “hardening” the home from future burglary. Other homes without alarms, however, are not similarly protected. As a result, a burglar who returns to the location may find the first home an unattractive target and choose to burglarize a nearby home instead. In this way, near-repeat victimization happens to a new place but is considered recurring victimization, because it is believed that the initial place that was victimized would have been targeted again had it not been for its target hardening.

4.0 Conclusion

Recurring victimisation just like the broad study of victimisation has a way of creeping into society, especially in societies that are relatively unstable and criminogenic in nature. The causes of recurring victimisation is often based on several factors ranging from the individual to the

structural defect in security operatives responsibility and responsiveness in tackling previous acts of victimisation.

5.0 Summary

Recurring victimisation as a concept deals with the repeated nature of victimisation as well as criminal activities directly or indirectly to individuals or the community. In whatever the case depending on the nature and the category of persons involved recurring victimisation comes in any form of repeat victimisation, near-repeat victimisation, revictimisation, or/andpolyvictimisation

6.0 Self-Assessment Exercise

- a. Where does attractive and unattractive targets come in the study of recurring victimisation
- b. What is *Polyvictimization*?
- c. *How does near-repeat victimization occur?*

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- Violent Repeat Victimization: Prospects and Challenges for Research and Practice?: <http://www.nij.gov/multimedia/presenter/presenter-lauritsen/pages/presenter-lauritsen-transcript.aspx>
- The Kirkholt Burglary Prevention Project: <http://www.popcenter.org/library/scp/pdf/71-Kirkholt.pdf>

MODULE 3

Unit 1. Theoretical Explanations of Recurring Victimization

Unit 2. Extent and consequences of Recurring victimisation

Unit 3.Characteristics of Recurring Victimization

Unit 4.Risk Factors for Recurring Victimization

Unit 1: Theoretical Explanations of Recurring Victimization**Contents**

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1.0 Introduction

We know, then, that recurring victimization is a reality many victims face, that it is likely to recur rather quickly if it does happen, and that the same type of victimization is likely to follow. But this picture of what recurring victimization looks like does not address why some people are victimized a single time and others find themselves victimized again.

2.0 Intended Learning Outcomes (ILOs)

In this unit, students are expected to learn and engage situations pertaining to victimization recurrence with the logic of theory. Thus specifically students should know among others the following theories

1. the risk heterogeneity or the “flag” explanation which focuses on qualities or characteristics of the victim as enablers of recurring victimisation.
2. the State dependence, event dependence, or the “boost” explanation theory of recurring

victimization and

3. the Negative state dependence perspective focusing on what happens during and after the victimization as determinants and/or deterrents to recurring victimization.

3.0 Main Content

There are two and a sub theoretical explanations that have been proffered to explain recurring victimization.

- (1). The first is called risk heterogeneity or the “flag” explanation.

This explanation of recurring victimization focuses on qualities or characteristics of the victim. Those qualities or characteristics that initially place a victim at risk will keep that person at risk of experiencing a subsequent victimization if unchanged (Farrell, Phillips, & Pease, 1995). The story below will give an insight to the answers of the following questions to buttress what is meant by the theory of risk heterogeneity or the “flag” explanation.

It was not exactly a typical night for Polly. Instead of studying at the library as she normally did during the week, she decided to meet two of her friends at a local bar. They spent the evening catching up and drinking a few beers before they decided to head home. Because Polly lived within walking distance of the bar, she bid her friends goodnight and started on her journey home. It was dark out, but because she had never confronted trouble in the neighborhood before—even though it was in a fairly crime-ridden part of a large city—she felt relatively safe.

As Polly walked by an alley, two young men whom she had never seen before stepped out, and one of them grabbed her arm and demanded that she give them her school bag, in which she had her wallet, computer, keys, and phone. Because Polly refused, the other man shoved her, causing her to hit her head, while the first man grabbed her bag. Despite holding on as tightly as she could, the men were able to take her bag before running off into the night. Slightly stunned, Polly stood there trying to calm down. Without her bag, which held her phone and keys, she felt there was little she could do other than continue to walk home and hope her roommates were there to let her in. As she walked home, she wondered why she had such bad luck. Why was she targeted? Was she simply in “the wrong place at the wrong time,” or did she do something to place herself in harm’s way? Although it is hard to know why Polly was victimized, we can compare her to other victims to see how similar she is to them. To this end, a description of the “typical” crime victim is presented in this section. But what about why she was targeted? Fortunately, we can use the theories presented in this section to understand why Polly fell victim on that particular night.

Take a look at the story above. Is there any quality or characteristic that placed Polly at risk for being

accosted by the two men in the alley? You are probably thinking that her walking home at night may have been a risk factor for her. This has been discussed earlier about lifestyles and routine activities as theoretical framework. Polly quite likely was victimized, at least in part, because she was seen by the two men as being a vulnerable target. In this way, walking home at night by herself placed her at risk. If Polly walks home at night by herself on other nights, she is again at risk of being victimized. In this way, Polly's walking home at night by herself placed her at risk of being victimized the first time, and it also places her at risk of being a victim in the future. What if she walked home because she could not afford a car? In other words, what if her social status or class placed her in a position that increased her vulnerability to crime victimization because she had to walk home at night rather than drive? This quality or characteristic would also fall into the explanation of risk heterogeneity.

Also, remember other factors, discussed in the earlier units and modules, that place individuals at risk of victimization more generally—living in disadvantaged neighborhoods and exposure to delinquent peers, for example. These factors, if left unchanged, will keep individuals at risk of subsequent victimization.

(2). State dependence, event dependence, or the “boost” explanation

In contrast to the risk heterogeneity argument, the second theoretical explanation of recurring victimization is known as state dependence, event dependence, or the “boost” explanation. According to state dependence, it is not the qualities or characteristics of a victim that are important for recurring victimization so much as what happens during and after the victimization (Farrell et al., 1995). How the victim and the offender act and react to the victimization event will predict risk of becoming a recurrent victim. In this way, the victim and offender are learning key information that will impact the likelihood of subsequent victimizations. For example, a victim of rape or other sexual victimization who resists or uses self-protective actions is less likely than those who do not to be victimized again (Fisher et al., 2010). This reduction in risk is likely due to the victim learning that she has agency and control over her life. Protecting herself may even serve to empower her so that in the future she is able to identify and avoid risk. Likewise, the offender is likely learning that she is not an “easy” target and that victimizing her will not pay off in the future. In both scenarios, the victim is

less likely to find herself the target of an offender. It is not always clear if recurring victimization occurs because of a “boost” or “flag.” To investigate whether repeat burglary victimization can best be explained by boosts or flags, Brendan Lantz and R. Barry Ruback (2015) identified the offending networks of burglars to see their connections. Read about whether it is the same offender who targets the same house in this section’s

What if, after being victimized, a person changes his or her routine activities? Doing so probably makes sense to you—a person may become afraid of being victimized again, so he decides to stay in and not go out at night, or a person who was victimized on the subway decides to only take taxi/uber at night. Recent research has explored what people do after being victimized. Surprisingly, at least one study has found that victims engage in *greater*, not lower, levels of risky behaviour (going shopping and spending evenings away from home) after being victimized. What these researchers found, however, was that it was not in response to the victimization itself but related to preexisting features of the person (Bunch, Clay-Warner, & McMahon-Howard, 2014). One possible explanation for why a person may not change risky behaviours is rooted in low self-control. Turanovic and Pratt (2014) found that victims with low self-control are less likely than others to change their risky behaviours than those with higher levels. Other research has uncovered structural constraints that may limit individuals from changing their risky behaviours (Turanovic, Pratt, & Piquero, 2016).

In Polly’s case, it is difficult to know if she is likely to be victimized again based on a state dependence explanation. Because she tried to resist and she called the police, she certainly is learning that she has some control over her life. If doing so empowers her, she likely will be less attractive as a target to offenders, and she may be less likely to find herself in risky situations—such as walking home at night alone. To be clear, neither of these explanations should be used to blame the victim or place responsibility for the victimization on the victim. The offender is responsible for his or her actions, and blame should rest there. These explanations are, however, tools to help understand why some people are targeted over and over again.

Recent theoretical developments have been made in the recurring victimization literature to better understand the interplay between risk heterogeneity and state dependence. According to the compounding vulnerability argument, those with the highest levels of underlying propensity for victimization will be at risk for future victimization because of state dependence processes. For example, those with low income who are victimized may be more likely to show signs of depression following a victimization. These signs of depression are signals to offenders of vulnerability that then increase risk of future victimization. A different perspective is that of victimization salience. In this perspective, state dependence processes will be most salient among those with the lowest underlying risks. Because a target has initially low risk, it makes sense statistically that his or her

risk has more potential than other targets to increase after an initial victimization. Because the target's risk was initially low, the information an offender gains about the target (consider a burglar and the house he successfully stole from) is particularly useful and serves to increase risk for future victimization. Contrast this to a target whose risk is initially fairly high—the information gained may not be of much use or needed because the target cannot be much more at risk anyway.

(3). Negative state dependence perspective

A third perspective is the negative state dependence perspective, which suggests that low-risk persons experience negative state dependence. In this way, a victimization event would serve to reduce victimization risk because a person would become more aware of his or her risk and would take steps to reduce the chances of being victimized in the future (see Clay-Warner, Bunch, & McMahon-Howard, 2016).

4.0 Conclusion

These theories are parts of a number of theories that cannot be exhausted that explain recurring victimisation. In as much as they serve the purpose of explanation, understanding and prediction of recurring victimisation, we are free to use it in qualitative engagement in our discussion as students of criminology and victimology.

5.0 Summary

This unit examine two major theories that can be used to understand, explain and predict, the causes

situations that may warrant. The first in line was the risk heterogeneity or the “flag” explanation which focuses on qualities or characteristics of the victim. And the second which is the State dependence, event dependence, or the “boost” explanation focusing on what happens during and after the victimization as determinants of recurring victimization. The third is a sub theoretical framework which emphasizes on the awareness of risk or a victimization to re-strategize against further occurrence of victimization, in what is called the negative state dependence perspective.

6.0 Self-Assessment Exercise

1. What has research put forward about what people do after being victimized?
2. Explain why signs of depression are signals to offenders, of vulnerability that then increase risk of future victimization.
3. What are the three major theories that can be used to explain recurring victimization?

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Unit 2: Extent and consequences of Recurring victimisation

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1.0 Introduction

Now that we know what the terms mean, let's find out how often people and places are victimized more than once. Although most people and households in a given year or more are not victimized at all, some households experience more than one victimization in the same period. Large-scale national victimization surveys reveal that many people who are victimized are unfortunate enough to experience recurring victimization.

2.0 Intended Learning Outcomes (ILOs)

After reading this unit students are expected to be able to give an overview of the extent and consequences of recurring victimization with the use of statistical and demographic references as depicted by the data from the Home office (2011) about Crime in England and Wales. Similarly they should note that but with a difference the overwhelming consequences of recurring victimisation over victimisation ordinary nature.

3.0 Main Content

Drawing from the Home office (2011) data on Crime in England and Wales, with findings from the British Crime Survey and police recorded crime it was obvious that of individuals who experienced any type of violent victimization, 23% experienced two or more incidents during the previous 12 months (Office for National Statistics, 2015). Forty-four percent of domestic violence

victims and 19% of acquaintance violence victims experienced more than one incident (Home Office, 2011). Results from the NCVS also indicate that recurring victimization is occurring. For example, in 2015, about 1% of victimizations were series victimizations (Truman & Morgan, 2016). Findings from the General Social Survey on Victimization in Canada also highlight the occurrence of recurring victimization. The results from the 2004 survey show that 38% of victims experienced more than one incident (Perrault, Sauve, & Burns, 2010).

You may be wondering if all types of victimizations are likely to happen to victims more than once. Although some types are more likely to recur than others, research shows that victims of intimate partner violence, rape, assault, and property victimization are all at risk of experiencing a subsequent incident following their initial victimization. For example, between 1992 and 2004, about 15% of households surveyed in the NCVS experienced multiple family violence incidents involving the same victim (Goodlin & Dunn, 2010). Other research on intimate partner violence supports this finding. Findings from the National Violence Against Women Survey show that female victims of intimate partner physical assault reported being assaulted on average 6.9 times by the same partner, whereas men reported experiencing an average 4.4 assaults by the same intimate partner.

Rape and other sexual victimizations also recur. Women in the National Violence Against Women Study who had been raped averaged 2.9 rapes during the previous 12 months. In addition, research on college students shows that they too are at risk of experiencing recurring sexual victimization. In fact, as noted by Daigle, Fisher, and Cullen (2008), 7% of college students in the National Women Sexual Victimization Study had experienced more than one sexual victimization incident during the previous academic year. There is a strong correlation between sexual victimization in childhood and sexual victimization later in life as well. Women who had experienced childhood sexual abuse were 6 times more likely to experience sexual abuse as adults by a current intimate partner than women without a childhood sexual abuse history. Others have estimated that childhood sexual abuse increases the risk of adult sexual victimization by 2 to 3 times. Assault and property victimizations are other types of victimizations that may recur. Findings from the National Youth Survey revealed that almost 60% of youth who had been assaulted were actually repeat victims. Although not quite as

prevalent, a proportion of burglary victims in the British Crime Survey (BCS) were repeat victims—14% in 2004 (Nicholas, Povey, Walker, & Kershaw, 2005). Another interesting feature of recurring victimization is that these recurring victims also experience a disproportionate share of all victimization events. For example, 6% of the respondents in the BCS over 10 years experienced 68% of all the thefts that occurred (Pease, 1998). Other research on property victimization also supports this finding. Research on university students in the East Midlands of England showed that 10% of the victims of property crime accounted for 56% of all the property crime incidents (Barberet, Fisher, & Taylor, 2004). Recurring violent crime victims also experience more than their “fair share” of victimization events. The 2% of respondents in Canada’s General Social Survey who were recurring violent victims had experienced 60% of all the violent victimizations (Perrault et al., 2010). Similarly, 3% of personal crime victims in the BCS accounted for 78% of all personal crime victimizations (Pease, 1998). Lauritsen and Davis Quinet’s (1995) research on youth found that 18% of them experienced almost 90% of assaults. Finally, sexual assault recurring victims also experience an inordinate amount of all sexual victimization incidents. In their study of college women, Daigle, Fisher, and Cullen (2008) found that 7% of college women experienced more than one sexual victimization incident during the previous academic year and that these women experienced almost three-fourths of all sexual victimizations that occurred. Understanding the extent of recurring victimisation statistically speaking where they are available gives a picture for which the consequences becomes germane for research and policy formulation.

Consequences of Recurring Victimization

As you have already come across the consequences of victimisation in Module 1, victimization can take a toll on individuals. What happens to individuals, then, when they experience multiple victimization incidents? Do the consequences of victimization accumulate and cause even more destruction in victims’ lives? It is not clear that experiencing more than one victimization necessarily causes more negative outcomes for victims, but some research does suggest that experiencing more than one victimization can be particularly bad for victims (Finkelhor, Ormrod, & Turner, 2007a, 2009; Ford, Elhai, Connor, & Frueh, 2010; Snyder, Fisher, Scherer, & Daigle, 2012). For example, Finkelhor, Ormrod, and Turner (2009) found that youth who

experience polyvictimization also experience significantly more distress than those youth who experience a single type of victimization. Polyvictimization has also been linked to an increase in depression, anxiety, and anger/depression among children ages 2 to 11 (Cyr, Clement, & Chamberland, 2014). These have been extensively discussed in the previous module.

4.0 Conclusion

A number of research and policy papers are abundant as discussed have come to realise and position it as a fact that re-victimisation and recurring have negative impact on victims. Similarly, the NCVS Survey also found support for the link between experiencing more than one victimization and worse outcomes. For instance, the number of sexual assaults experienced during a woman's lifetime was predictive of current depressive symptoms, current PTSD symptoms, poor health, and binge drinking (Casey & Nurius, 2005). In this way, experiencing more than one victimization may in fact carry negative outcomes for individuals that a single victimization experience does not.

5.0 Summary

This unit succinctly gives an overview of the extent and consequences of recurring victimization with the use of statistical data from the Home Office (2011) data on Crime in England and Wales, and survey of crime and victimisation in Canada. Recurring victimization is not only real but also comes with severe consequences, such as depression, post-traumatic stress disorder among other consequences in terms of economic and social cost just as emphasized in Module 1 about the consequences of victimisation in its ordinary nature.

6.0 Self-Assessment Exercise

- I. What are the likely consequences of recurring victimization?
- II. Explain the correlation between sexual victimization in childhood and sexual victimization later in life.
- III. What are those events/types of victimisation that are more likely to recur than others?
- IV. What are the possible solutions to the list from above?

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Unit 3. Characteristics of Recurring Victimization

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1.0 Introduction

In addition to knowing to what extent recurring victimization occurs, two other features of recurring victimization have been introduced (1) The first characteristic is known as the time course of recurring victimization the time between recurring incidents and (2) the crime-switching patterns and victim proneness ie. the type of incident a person is likely to experience after the initial victimization. These two major characteristics are discussed in turn.

2.0 Intended Learning Outcomes (ILOs).

Basically at the end of this unit students are expected to know and be able to differentiate between the two features that are common to recurring victimisation.

3.0 Main Content

1. Time Course of Recurring Victimization

Researchers have been interested in knowing how soon a victim is likely to experience a subsequent victimization. What this body of research has generally found is that recurring victimization is likely to happen quickly. When examining the time between incidents, researchers have found that, often, little time transpires between incidents. Specifically research on residential burglary show that a subsequent burglary is likely to happen within

a month after the initial burglary incident, in fact, one study showed that half of the second residential burglaries in Canada that were reported to the police occurred within 7 days of the first burglary (Polvi, Looman, Humphries, & Pease, 1991). Research within the United States also confirms that the time immediately following an initial burglary is the key period of risk for households—25% of repeat burglary incidents occurred within a week and just more than half occurred within a month in a study that examined police call data in Tallahassee, Florida (M. B. Robinson, 1998). This period of heightened risk holds true for domestic violence, sexual victimization, and near repeats. Of the households that had called the police for domestic violence once, 35% had done so again within 5 weeks (as cited by G. Farrell & Pease, 2006). For college women's sexual victimization, one study found that most subsequent incidents happened within the same month or 1 month after the initial incident (Daigle, Fisher, & Cullen, 2008). Near repeats are most likely to occur within 2 weeks.

Research on shootings in Philadelphia discovered that near repeats were likely to occur within 2 weeks and one city block after previous shootings (Ratcliffe&Rengert, 2008). This elevated risk also occurs for near-repeat burglaries. After a burglary occurs, burglaries within 200 meters of the burgled home are at greatest risk of being burgled for a 2-week period (S.D. Johnson et al., 2007). What is also interesting is that across victimization types, this heightened risk period declines over time. For example, in the study of college women's experiences of sexual victimization by Daigle, Fisher, and Cullen (2008) only 21% of rape incidents occurred within 3 months or more after the initial rape incident. Others have studied the amount of time that transpires between successive incidents of victimization.

Intimate partner violence has been investigated in this manner to see how long victims go without being victimized. In her study of repeat intimate partner violence, Mele (2009) found that, over time, the median number of days between successive incidents of intimate partner violence decreases. The median number of days between the first and second incident was 62, and the median number of days between the third and fourth incident was 37. This finding shows that the frequency of recurring intimate partner violence actually accelerates over time.

You may have noticed that the research on the time course of repeat victimization has also pinpointed a spatial element to this phenomenon. Indeed, there appears to be a clustering of incidents in that near-repeat incidents are likely to recur within a relatively small geographic space to an initial victimized target. In other words, the risk of a near repeat is not random but rather concentrated in particular areas within a city or neighborhood. This pattern holds true for near-repeat burglaries as well as gun violence (Wells, Wu, & Ye, 2011). Importantly, knowing that repeat victimization is likely to recur within a close proximity should aid in prevention efforts (Johnson & Bowers, 2004).

2. Crime-Switch Patterns and Victim Proneness

The question that often comes to mind is to ask - do recurring victims always experience the same type of victimization when they experience more than one victimization? One may wonder what type of victimization victims are likely to experience if they experience more than one. Research examining this issue concludes that, most likely, when a person is victimized a subsequent time, he or she will experience the same type of victimization previously experienced (Reiss, 1980). For example, a theft victim is likely to experience another theft if victimized a second time. One of the first investigations that examined crime-switch (or proneness) patterns found evidence for victim proneness for victims of larceny, burglary, household larceny, and assault (Reiss, 1980). More recent research examining crime switching within types of sexual victimization also found evidence of victim proneness. For example, in a sample of sexual victimization incidents occurring among college women, rape incidents were likely to be followed by rape incidents, and sexual coercion incidents were likely to be followed by sexual coercion incidents (Daigle, Fisher, & Cullen, 2008).

4.0 Conclusion

The features of recurring victimization clearly show that victims are likely to face the same type of recurring victimisation directly or by near-repeat victimisation indirectly. Similarly if it is not happening to the same person, it is surely and likely to happen to different persons in the same neighbourhood.

5.0 Summary

Intimate partner violence has been investigated in this manner to see how long victims go without being victimized.(Time course). Research along this line have come revealed that **recurring victimization is likely to happen quickly**. All things being equal, **little time transpires between incidents**. Similarly along proneness to crime is what victimologists refer to as crime-Switch Patterns, stating the obvious that victims always experience the same type of victimization when they experience more than one victimization depending on the crime .

6.0 Self-Assessment Exercise

- I. what type of victimization victims are likely to experience if they experience more than one
- II. What has the body of research on recurring victimisation shown overtime?**

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Unit 4. Risk Factors for Recurring Victimization

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1.0 Introduction

We know that recurring victimization is likely to happen quickly and is likely to be of the same type of victimization, but what factors place a person or place at risk of experiencing recurring victimization? These risk factors can be individual-level risk factors or characteristics of the area or household.

2.0 Intended Learning Outcomes (ILOs)

Students are expected to understand the various risk factors therein that can expose an individual or a community to revictimisation. These factors have been grouped into two categories: individual level risk and the neighbourhood/household factors. Specifically students should be able to identify age (young/old), marital status, (Married/separated/divorced), socioeconomic status (employed/unemployed) and characteristics neighbourhood as captured by population, size settlement patterns and density as risk factors in the explanation of recurring victimisation at the end of the study

3.0 Main Content

Individual-Level Risk Factors

Let's first consider those factors tied to the individual that place a person at risk of being victimized more than once. Demographic characteristics are examples of individual-level risk factors that may place a person at risk for recurring victimization. Indeed, the recurring victimization literature has found that males are more likely to be victims repeatedly than females (for all types of victimizations except sexual victimization) (Lauritsen & Davis Quinet, 1995; Mukherjee & Carcach, 1998). In addition, younger people are at a greater risk for recurring victimization than are older persons (Gabor & Mata, 2004; Lauritsen & Davis Quinet, 1995; Mukherjee & Carcach, 1998; Outlaw, Ruback, & Britt, 2002; Perrault et al., 2010; Tseloni, 2000; Wittebrood & Nieuwbeerta, 2000). Single (Lasley & Rosenbaum, 1988; Perrault et al., 2010), separated (Mukherjee & Carcach, 1998), and divorced (Tseloni, 2000) persons face greater risks of repeat victimization than others. Socioeconomic and employment status are two additional demographic characteristics that have been linked to recurring victimization. Low, as compared to high, socioeconomic status is a risk factor for personal recurring victimization (Lauritsen & Davis Quinet, 1995), although having high socioeconomic status actually places you at greater risk of repeat property victimization (Lauritsen & Davis Quinet, 1995; Outlaw et al., 2002). Unemployed persons are more likely than employed persons to be victimized more than once (Mukherjee & Carcach, 1998). Among persons diagnosed with a serious mental illness, Black persons remain at a greater risk of experiencing recurring victimization as compared with White persons once released from a psychiatric hospital (Policastro, Teasdale, & Daigle, 2016). Generally in White dominated communities in Europe and America, where Blacks are faced with a myriad of problems. Take the issue of racism and police brutality, the evidences are bound.

Demographics are not the only type of individual-level characteristics that may increase risk for recurring victimization. Let's go back to the issues around routine activities and lifestyles theories as discussed earlier. Given what these theoretical perspectives say about victimization risk, what other factors may increase risk for recurring victimization? Research indicates that people who spend nights away from home more frequently face greater chances of being repeatedly victimized than those who spend less time away from home at night (Lasley & Rosenbaum, 1988; Tseloni, 2000). Using public transportation after 6:00 p.m. also places people at risk for repeat victimization (Mukherjee & Carcach, 1998). Other features of lifestyles theory that have been linked to repeat victimization are spending time with delinquent peers and involvement in

delinquency (Lauritsen&DavisQuinet, 1995). Participating in dangerous activities has been linked to repeat victimization for adults(Outlaw et al., 2002), and frequency of offending has been linked to repeat victimization for people in theNetherlands (Wittebrood&Nieuwbeerta, 2000). Alcohol use has also been linked to recurring victimization.Specifically, the link between alcohol use and recurring victimization has been found for sexual victimization.Among adolescent women, using alcohol within the past year was predictive of sexual revictimization(Raghavan, Bogart, Elliott, Vestal, & Schuster, 2004). Others have found a link between alcohol use andsexualrevictimization among persons with a history of childhood sexual assault (Messman-Moore & Long,2002; J. A. Siegel & Williams, 2003). When these factors are considered together, it is likely then thatparticipating in a risky lifestyle or routine activities increases the likelihood that a person will experience morethan one victimization.

Why might some people engage in these risky lifestyles or routine activities? Some research has linkedrecurring victimization to genetic factors that may be related to involvement in risky behaviours. Rememberfrom the biosocial theory in that genes in and of themselves do not cause criminal behaviour, but rather they influence howa person responds to his or her environment. Genetic factors have been linked to victimization and, morerecently, to recurring victimization. A particular study by Beaver, Boutwell, Barnes, & Cooper, (2009) revealed that the genetic factors account for 64% of thevariance in repeat victimization. Another study on recurringvictimization has attempted to identify what specific genetic factor is linked to recurring victimization risk.

This study found that the 7-repeat allele of the DRD4 gene distinguishes those individuals who have beenvictimized a single time from those who have been victimized more than once (Daigle, 2010). DRD4 codesfor the production of dopamine receptors located in postsynaptic neurons (DeYoung et al., 2006). The 7-repeat allele produces less efficient receptors and has been linked to attention-related problems (Faraone,Doyle, Mick, &Biederman, 2001), novelty seeking (Benjamin et al., 1996; Ebstein et al., 1996), and conductdisorder (Rowe et al., 2001). DRD4 has also been linked to aggression (L. A. Schmidt, Fox, Rubin, Hu, &Hamer, 2002) and serious violence for males who also have the A1 allele of DRD2 (Beaver, Wright, DeLisi,Walsh, et al.,

2007). Because of its impact on these characteristics, DRD4 may be related to recurring victimization because individuals may be less attuned to risk and likely to actually seek out novel or risky situations, perhaps even after being victimized.

The last set of individual-level risk factors that have been explored are psychological and cognitive factors. Much of this research has focused on the sexual revictimization of women. What this research has shown is that women who have been revictimized often experience high levels of psychological distress and posttraumatic stress disorder (PTSD) symptoms, and these levels are higher than in women who have experienced a single sexual victimization incident (Banyard, Williams, & Siegel, 2001; L. E. Gibson & Leitenberg, 2001; S. M. Murphy et al., 1988). PTSD may play an important role in revictimization in that it may inhibit women's ability to quickly identify risk. In fact, one study found that PTSD reduced latency in recognizing risk in an audiotape of a date-rape situation among revictimized women (Wilson, Calhoun, & Bernat, 1999). Other research has shown a link between mental illness and recurring victimization. Similarly the study by Teasdale, Daigle, & Ballard, (2013) found that almost two-thirds of victims, all of whom had been diagnosed with a major mental disorder, experienced a recurring victimization during one of the follow-ups that occurred over the following year. Also found was that individuals who had been diagnosed with manic disorder or schizophrenia spectrum disorder had flat trajectories of recurring victimization over the study period, whereas those diagnosed with a substance abuse disorder or major depression had declining trajectories.

Neighborhood- or Household-Level Risk Factors

The last set of risk factors for recurring victimization to consider are those tied to the neighborhood or household. There are basically three main characteristics of household/neighbourhood analysis of risk factors to recurring victimisation:

- 1) Neighborhoods that are dangerous place the residents who reside in them at risk for recurring victimization. That is, living in urban areas places people at risk for repeat victimization (Tseloni, 2000; Wittebrood & Nieuwbeerta, 2000), and
- 2) living in areas with a high concentration of single-parent households puts people at risk for recurring victimization as well (Osborn, Ellingworth, Hope, & Trickett, 1996).

- 3) A third characteristic, neighborhood disorder, has also been linked to recurring victimization. It has been linked to an increase in the number of assault, larceny, and vandalism victimizations experienced by youth (Lauritsen & Davis-Quinet, 1995) and to repeat property victimizations experienced by adults (Outlaw et al., 2002).

The question students/readers should ask is that ‘Why is it, though, that these factors would impact risk for recurring victimization? It is likely that urban areas are simply those areas where more crime happens? Therefore, a person who lives there is at greater risk of experiencing recurring victimization? In addition, areas with lots of single-parent households may not have high levels of supervision or capable guardianship and may be indicative of an area’s socioeconomic status.

Finally, areas that are highly disordered are likely low in socioeconomic status, low in capable guardianship, and beacons for motivated offenders. Household characteristics such as living in a low-income household, having children, having four or more cars, participating in neighbourhood watch, and having security devices installed in the home are related to an increase in the number of personal victimizations (Tseloni, 2000). However, higher incomes have been linked to recurring property victimization (Perrault et al., 2010). In addition, younger households, having two or more adults in the household, having more children in the household, and having more than one car increased the number of crime victimizations (Osborn & Tseloni, 1998). The shorter the time people have lived in a residence, the greater the likelihood of repeat victimization (Osborn & Tseloni, 1998). Renting a residence is also linked to recurring victimization (Osborn & Tseloni, 1998; Perrault et al., 2010).

4.0 Conclusion

The fact that individual level analyses are very germane in understanding risk factors attributed to recurring victimisation, as captured by the demographics of the person and well explained by the lifestyles and routine activities theories nevertheless the geographical location (neighbourhood/household composition) co-factored with the personal attributes to give a broad analysis and a better view of why these risk factors are very useful in understanding the crux of the matter - recurring victimisation.

5.0 Summary

This unit specifically dealt with two broad analyses of the risk factors contributing to the statistics of recurring victimisation (individual/personal characteristic and the neighbourhood/household) of events that are likely to expose an individual to risk of recurring victimisation. Some of these risk factors were identified as age (young/old), marital status (Married/separated/divorced), socioeconomic status (employed/unemployed) and characteristics neighbourhood as captured by population, size settlement patterns and density.

6.0 Self-Assessment Exercise

- 1) What are individual-level risk factors in recurring victimisation?
- 2) Why are women favoured or exempted in certain recurring victimisation?
- 3) In what ways are males more likely to be victims repeatedly than females?

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MODULE 4

Unit 1. Measuring Crime and Crime Victimization

Unit 2 Historical development of methods for Measuring Crime

Unit 3 Introduction to Crime Statistics

Unit 4 Users (and Uses) of Crime Statistics

Unit 1

Measuring Crime and Crime Victimization

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1.0 Introduction

It is self-evident that accurate and valid data and research information on both crime and victimization are critical for an understanding of crime everywhere in the world and for any assessment of the quality of the activities and programs of the criminal justice system. Most measurement of crime emanates from two major data sources: (1) Uniform Crime Reports and (2). The National Crime Victimization Survey (NCVS). Uniform Crime Reports (UCR) has collected information on crimes known to the police and arrests from local and state jurisdictions throughout the country. The National Crime Victimization Survey (NCVS), a general population survey designed to discover the extent, nature, and consequences of criminal victimization. There are other national surveys focusing on specific problems, such as victimisation,

delinquency, violence against women, and child abuse, which also provide important data on crime, victims, and offenders.

2.0 Intended Learning Outcomes (ILOs)

This unit intends to impact on students the knowledge of the sources of data collection and measurement of crime and victimisation and the various challenges there in. At the end of the study students should be able to freely itemise and discuss the

1. specific problems associated with UCR arrest data,
2. the puzzle why criminal victimization is said to be a relatively rare event
3. need to disaggregate data especially as pertaining to identified subgroups in society and lastly
4. the general and particularly difficulties therein measuring crime and victimisation

3.0 Main Content

These data collection systems utilize different methods of measuring criminal behaviour. The UCR relies on official data that have been collected and reported by law enforcement agencies (See Box 1.2). The NCVS and other surveys discussed in this unit are large-scale social surveys that rely on self-reports of offenses or victimization. Although these data collection systems do many things right, they are, like any such system, beset with the methodological problems of surveys in general as well as particular problems associated with measuring illicit, deviant, and deleterious activities. Such problems include nonreporting and false reporting, nonstandard definitions of events, difficulties associated with asking sensitive questions, sampling problems such as coverage and nonresponse, and an array of other factors involved in conducting surveys of individuals and implementing official data reporting systems. Compounding these problems are the recent interest in rare crime events, such as violent crimes committed by youth and hate crimes; the need for attention to vulnerable subpopulations, such as very young and school-age children and disabled, elderly, minority, queer group and immigrant populations; and a focus on small- or local-area estimates of crime and victimization. Periodically it is expected by way of research and policy to develop new and relevant data collection efforts to measure crime

victimization in specific populations and for small areas. Understanding victimization and offending in these subgroups, however, can be particularly difficult.

Difficulties in measuring and understanding victimisation

In general, criminal victimization is a relatively rare event—

1. that is, in any given reference period, the majority of respondents do not report any victimization.
2. Very large general population samples are therefore required to accurately characterize the population of offenders and victims, and
3. detailed subgroup analyses can be problematic. Some important subgroups may not be covered at all (e.g., homeless people), and smaller research studies of crimes against these subgroups often have problems of statistical power because of small sample sizes in most cases.
4. For many hard-to identify subpopulations, such as people with disabilities and abused children, there is no large, well-defined group from which to draw a sample for measuring victimization—in other words, a sampling frame. This, as well as more conventional problems associated with interviewing crime victims, presents substantial design and analytical difficulties.

Box 1.2 Original Uniform Crime Reporting (UCR) Crime Classification, 1929	
Part I Classes	Part II Classes
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Felonious homicide <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Murder and nonnegligent manslaughter – Manslaughter by negligence • Rape • Robbery • Aggravated assault • Burglary—breaking or entering • Larceny—theft <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – \$50 and over in value – Under \$50 in value • Auto theft 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Other assaults • Forgery and counterfeiting • Embezzlement and fraud • Weapons; carrying, possessing etc. • Sex offenses (except rape) • Offenses against the family and children • Drug laws • Driving while intoxicated • Liquor laws • Drunkenness • Disorderly conduct and vagrancy • Gambling • Traffic and motor vehicle laws • All other offenses • Suspicion
SOURCE: International Association of Chiefs of Police (1929:24–25).	

Problems with the UCR arrest data

Specifically official data such as UCR arrest data have a different set of problems. Foremost among them is that:

1. most crimes are not reported to the police,
2. and only a small proportion of those that are reported result in an arrest.
3. Increases or decreases in reports or in arrests for certain offenses, such as burglary or auto theft, can therefore result in large differences in outcomes and misleading conclusions about crime trends.
4. The accuracy of official data is also compromised by differences in the definitions of crimes and reporting protocols.
5. Most national-level official data are compiled through the voluntary reporting of local-level agencies— for example getting data specifically from the police, the vigilante groups, or other law enforcement agencies (formal and informal) and also from a sample of prosecutors' officers separately for prosecution data.

However, these agencies do not always file reports as called for in the reporting protocol. A review of the 1999 UCR data in America shows that of the 50 States only six cities reported limited data. Rape data were unavailable for two states because the state reporting agencies did not follow the national UCR guidelines and there were more report on arrest (available: <http://www.FBI.gov/ucr/99cius.htm>) [15/8/19]. There has been a significant lack of governmental and private interest and investment in research aimed at solving these categories of problems. Often than not large-scale data systems on crime victimization are not available, despite the constant agitation for funding redesigning and restructuring of NCVS to address many important sampling questions, but due to social and political reasons sensitive information are often not included.

In recent times, in fact, the problems may be growing worse because of eroding federal investment in data systems and social science research on crime and victimization. Thus sample in the NCVS has continuously shrunk because of flat funding over time. Similarly the promise of improvements in data on reported crimes through conversion to an incident based reporting system has not been realized because of a lack of funding to support the necessary changes at the state and local levels. Except for modest new funds to study violence against women, the federal budget for social science research on crime and victimization specifically is often not there in Nigeria. As in the case of the Tertiary Education Trust Fund (TETFUND) available funds generally are reserved for studies that potentially have a direct impact on policy.

4.0 Conclusion

The relevance of the two major sources and methods for the measurement of crime, which are: (1) Uniform Crime Reports and (2) The National Crime Victimization Survey (NCVS) is overwhelming, if only the challenges of nonreporting by victims, poor funding and discrepancies in the way and manners crime and victimisation data are often collated and generalised without recourse to sub population and dynamics of communities can be frustrating.

5.0 Summary

This unit emphasized the relevance of the two major sources and methods for the measurement of crime, which are: (1) Uniform Crime Reports and (2) The National Crime Victimization Survey (NCVS) as well as the challenges in understanding victimisation and offending in different subgroups in a population. It also shows that these data sources are faced with a lot of inadequacies where they are available for crime and victimization. Among these problems are inadequate records and poor funding to update and research on the specifics in victimization and last the traditional problems of non-reporting of victimization by the people

6.0 Self-Assessment Exercise

1. What are specific problems associated with UCR arrest data?
2. Despite the daily occurrence of criminality and victimization, why is criminal victimization regarded as relatively rare event?
3. What are the major data sources in measuring crime and victimization?
4. What are the reasons behind the maxim the ‘Understanding victimization and offending in identified subgroups can be particularly difficult’?

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Unit 2

Historical development of methods for Measuring Crime

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1.0 Introduction

There are three basic ways to measure criminal behaviour on a large scale. The oldest method is to rely on official data collected by criminal justice agencies, such as data on arrests or convictions. The other two rely on social surveys. In one case, individuals are asked if they have been victims of crime; in the other, they are asked to self-report their own criminal activity. This unit examines the historical development of the various methods of data collection in study of delinquency, criminal careers and victimisation.

2.0 Intended Learning Outcomes (ILOs)

The intended purpose of this unit is to ensure students understand the historical development of the various methods of data collection peculiar to delinquency, crime and victimisation research as well as the factors that were responsible for the changes overtime. Specifically students should know the least among others:

1. The development from observational studies to the more scientific methods of data collection
2. the developments that have made self-report studies an integral part of the way delinquency, crime, and victimisation are studied?

3. the shortcomings of the various methods and instruments of data collection

3.0 Main Content

The development and widespread use of the self-report method of collecting data on delinquent and criminal behaviour together were one of the most important innovations in criminology research in the twentieth century. This method of data collection is used extensively all over the world. Because of its common use, we often lose sight of the important impact that self-report studies have had on the study of the distribution and patterns of crime and delinquency, the etiological study of criminality, and the study of the juvenile justice and criminal justice systems. Sellin made the simple but critically important observation that “the value of a crime rate for index purposes decreases as the distance from the crime itself in terms of procedure increases” (1931:337). Thus, prison data are less useful than court or police data as a measure of actual delinquent or criminal behaviour. Moreover, the reactions of the juvenile and criminal justice systems often rely on information from victims or witnesses of crime. It does not take an expert on crime to recognize that a substantial amount of crime is not reported and, if reported, is not officially recorded. Thus, reliance on official sources introduces a number of layers of potential bias between the actual behaviour and the data. Yet, through the first half of the twentieth century, our understanding of the behaviour of criminals and those who reacted to crime was based almost entirely on official data. While researchers were aware of many of these limitations, the dilemma they faced was how to obtain valid information on crime that was closer to the source of the behaviour. Observing the behaviour taking place would be one method of doing so, but given the illegal nature of the behaviour and the potential consequences if caught committing the behaviour, participants in crime are reluctant to have their behaviour observed.

Even when observational studies have been conducted—for example, gang studies (e.g., Thrasher, 1927)—researchers could observe only a very small portion of the crimes that took place. Hence, observational studies had limited utility in describing the distribution and patterns of criminal behaviour. If one could not observe the behaviour taking place, self-reports of delinquent and criminal behaviour would be the data source nearest to the actual behaviour. There was great skepticism, however, about whether respondents would be willing to tell researchers about their participation in illegal behaviours. Early studies (Porterfield, 1943;

Wallerstein and Wylie, 1947) found that not only were respondents willing to self-report their delinquency and criminal behaviour, they did so in surprising numbers. Since those very early studies, the self-report methodology has become much more sophisticated in design, making it more reliable and valid and extending its applicability to myriad issues. Much work has been done to improve the reliability and validity of self-reports, including the introduction of specialized techniques intended to enhance the quality of self-report data. These developments have made self-report studies an integral part of the way delinquency, crime, and victimisation are studied.

Although the self-report method began with the contributions of Porterfield (1943, 1946) and Wallerstein and Wylie (1947), the work of Short and Nye (1957, 1958) “revolutionized ideas about the feasibility of using survey procedures with a hitherto taboo topic” and changed how the discipline thought about delinquent behaviour itself (Hindelang et al., 1981: 23). Short and Nye’s research is distinguished from previous self-report measures in their attention to methodological issues, such as scale construction, reliability and validity, and sampling and their explicit focus on the substantive relationship between social class and delinquent behaviour. A 21-item list of criminal and antisocial behaviours was used to measure delinquency, although in most of their analyses a scale comprised of a subset of only seven items was employed. Focusing on the relationship between delinquent behaviour and the socioeconomic status of the adolescents’ parents, Nye et al. (1958) found that relatively few of the differences in delinquent behaviour among the different socioeconomic status groups were statistically significant. Short and Nye’s work stimulated much interest in both use of the self-report methodology and the relationship between some measure of social status (socioeconomic status, ethnicity, race) and delinquent behaviour.

The failure to find a relationship between social status and delinquency served at once to question extant theories built on the assumption that an inverse relationship did in fact exist and to suggest that the juvenile justice system may be using extra-legal factors in making decisions concerning juveniles who misbehave. A number of studies in the late 1950s and early 1960s used self-reports to examine the relationship between social status and delinquent behaviour (Akers,

1964; Clark and Wenninger, 1962; Dentler and Monroe, 1961; Empey and Erickson, 1966; Erickson and Empey, 1963; Gold, 1966; Reiss and Rhodes, 1959; Slocum and Stone, 1963; Vaz, 1966; Voss, 1966). These studies advanced the use of the self-report method by applying it to different, more ethnically diverse populations (Clark and Wenninger, 1962; Gold, 1966; Voss, 1966), attending to issues concerning validity and reliability (Clark and Tifft, 1966; Dentler and Monroe, 1961; Gold, 1966), and constructing measures of delinquency that specifically addressed issues regarding offense seriousness and frequency (Gold, 1966). These studies found that, while most juveniles engaged in some delinquency, relatively few committed serious delinquency repetitively. With few exceptions, these studies supported the general conclusion that, if there were any statistically significant relationship between measures of social status and self-reported delinquent behaviour, it was weak and clearly did not mirror the findings of studies using official data sources.

During this period of time researchers began to recognize the true potential of the self-report methodology. By including questions concerning other aspects of an adolescent's life as well as a delinquency scale on the same questionnaire, researchers could explore a host of etiological issues. Theoretically interesting issues concerning the family (Stanfield, 1966; Voss, 1964), peers (Gold, 1970; Matthews, 1968; Reiss and Rhodes), and school (Elliott, 1966; Gold, 1970; Kelly, 1974) emerged as the central focus of self-report studies. The potential of the self-report methodology in examining etiological theories of delinquency was perhaps best displayed in Hirschi's (1969) *Causes of Delinquency*. The use of self-report studies to examine theoretical issues continued throughout the 1970s. In addition to several partial replications of Hirschi's, other theoretical perspectives such as social learning theory (Akers et al., 1979), self-concept theory (Jensen, 1973; Kaplan, 1972), strain theory (Elliott and Voss, 1974; Johnson, 1979), and deterrence theory (Anderson et al., 1977; Jensen et al., 1978; Silberman, 1976; Waldo and Chiricos, 1972) were evaluated using data from self-report surveys.

Another development during this period was the introduction of national surveys on delinquency and drug use. Williams and Gold (1972) conducted the first nationwide survey, with a probability sample of 847 boys and girls 13 to 16 years old. Monitoring the Future (Johnston et

al., 1996) is a national survey on drug use that has been conducted annually since 1975. It began as an in-school survey of a nationally representative sample of high school seniors and was expanded to include eighth- and tenth-grade students. One of the larger undertakings on a national level is the National Youth Survey (NYS), conducted by Elliott and colleagues (1985). The NYS began in 1976 by surveying a national probability sample of 1,725 youth ages 11 through 17. The survey design was sensitive to a number of methodological deficiencies of prior self-report studies and has been greatly instrumental in improving the self-report method. The NYS is also noteworthy because it is a panel design, having followed the original respondents into their thirties. Despite the expanding applications of this methodology, questions remained about what self-report instruments measure. The discrepancy in findings regarding the relationship between social status and delinquency based on self-report data versus official (and victim) data continued to perplex scholars. Early on, self-reports came under heavy criticism on a number of counts, including the selection of respondents and the selection of delinquency items. Nettler (1978:98) stated that “an evaluation of these unofficial ways of counting crime does not fulfill the promise that they would provide a better enumeration of offensive activity.” Gibbons (1979:84) was even more critical in his summary evaluation, stating: The burst of energy devoted to self-report studies of delinquency has apparently been exhausted. This work constituted a criminological fad that has waned, probably because such studies have not fulfilled their early promise.

Two studies were particularly instrumental at that time in pointing to flaws in self-report measures. Hindelang and colleagues (1979) illustrated the problems encountered when comparing the results from studies using self-reports and those using official data or victimization data by comparing characteristics of offenders across the three data sources. They observed more similarity in those characteristics between victimization and Uniform Crime Reports data than between self-report data and the other two sources. They argued that self-report instruments did not include the more serious crimes for which people are arrested and that are included in victimization surveys. Thus, self-reports tap a different, less serious domain of behaviours than either of the other two sources, and discrepancies in observed relationships when using self-reports should not be surprising. The differential domain of crime tapped by early self-report measures could also explain the discrepancy in findings regarding the association between

social status and delinquency. Elliott and Ageton (1980) also explored the methodological shortcomings of self-reports. They observed that a relatively small numbers of youth commit a disproportionate number of serious offenses. However, most early self-report instruments failed to include serious offenses in the inventory and truncated the response categories for the frequency of offenses. In addition, many of the samples did not include enough high-rate offenders to clearly distinguish them from other delinquents. By allowing respondents to report the number of delinquent acts they committed rather than specifying an upper limit (e.g., 10 or more) and by focusing on high-rate offenders, Elliott and Ageton found relationships between engaging in serious delinquent behaviour and race and social class that are more consistent with results from studies using official data. Hindelang and colleagues (1979) and Elliott and Ageton (1980) suggested designing self-report studies so that they would acquire sufficient data from those high-rate, serious offenders who would be most likely to come to the attention of the authorities. They also suggested a number of changes in the way in which self-report data are measured, so that the data reflect the fact that some offenders contribute disproportionately to the rate of serious and violent delinquent acts.

The development of instruments to better measure serious offenses and the suggestion to acquire data from high-rate offenders coincided with a substantive change in the 1980s in the focus of much criminology work on the etiology of offenders. The identification of a relatively small group of offenders who commit a disproportionate amount of crime and delinquency led for a call to focus research efforts on “chronic” or “career” criminals (Blumstein et al., 1986; Wolfgang et al., 1972, 1987). Blumstein et al.’s observation that we need to study the careers of criminals, including early precursors of delinquency, maintenance through the adolescent years, and later consequences during the adult years, was particularly important in recognizing the need for examining the life-course development of highrate offenders with self-report methodology. The self-report methodology continues to advance in terms of both its application to new substantive areas and the improvement of its design. Gibbons’s (1979) suggestion that self-reports were just a fad, likely to disappear, is clearly wrong. Rather, with improvements in question design, administration technique, reliability and validity, and sample selection, this technique is being used in the most innovative research on crime and delinquency. The sections

that follow describe the key methodological developments that have made such applications possible.

4.0 Conclusion

The various methods of data collection have come of age, like iron passing through fire. They have developed (still developing) into stronger and better tools in the study of delinquency, crime and victimisation. The critic and criticisms of these methods of data collection at the early stages of development were all rational as identified shortcomings in each helped in no small measures to continuously shape the ways data have been collected scientifically in the 21st century better than in the past.

5.0 Summary

The historical development of methods of data collection was traced from the observational studies conducted among gangs—for example, gang studies (e.g., Thrasher, 1927), to self-report method which began with the contributions of Porterfield (1943, 1946), Wallerstein and Wylie (1947) and the work of Short and Nye (1957, 1958). All these contributed to the revolutionized ideas about methodological issues, such as scale construction, reliability and validity, and sampling and their explicit usage to ultimately capture delinquency, crime and victimization in-depth.

6.0 Self-Assessment Exercise

1. History has shown that reliance on official sources of data introduces a number of layers of potential bias between the actual behaviour and the data. List some of these layers of potential bias?
2. What are the developments that have made self-report studies an integral part of the way delinquency, crime, and victimisation are studied?
3. What were the shortcomings of most early self-report instruments?
4. Why do researchers need to obtain information closer to the source of the behaviour?
5. Why has observational methodology been described as 'limited in utility'?

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Unit 3

Introduction to Crime Statistics

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1.0 Introduction

To derive statistics about crime—to estimate its levels and trends, assess its costs to and impacts on society, and inform law enforcement approaches to prevent it—a conceptual framework for defining and thinking about crime is virtually a prerequisite. Developing and maintaining such a framework is no easy task, because the mechanics of crime are ever evolving and shifting. For example, the continuous spate of kidnapping and demand for ransom in Nigeria, hostage taking in the horn of Africa, Suicide bombing among religious extremists, the current public (dis)closure of corruption in the Niger-Delta Development Commission (NDDC) in 2020 and other numerous criminalities raises major conceptual challenges. In respect of Kidnapping and demand for ransom, it is certainly intuitive that a “crime” has occurred, but few of the related questions have easy answers:

- *What is the criminal action(s)?* The authoring of the threatening personality? The act of taking ones liberty? The causing of harm (if any) to victims’ existing cartel of kidnappers networks or resources? The demand for, or the acceptance of, the ransom?

- *Who is the victim(s)?* The person (the kidnapped/the family, the State)?The relatives or associates?His place of work?His staff?others, whose effective access to the kidnapped may have been encumbered by the act”? implication of insurance company and unknown individuals with high security risk after an incidence?
- *Who is the offender(s), and where did the offense(s) take place?* Is it proper to think of the community as the “scene of the crime,” or the specific location from which the kidnapper carried out the act (if such is ever determined)? Or is it more proper to think of “cyberspace” as involved a location outside of conventional geographic space, or even of the crime as truly “locationless?” especially when scam is involved. Assuming that answers to the above conceptual questions are decided upon, the next step—developing statistical measures for such attacks—is challenging in its own right. A “simple” count of incidents is anything to go by take another example in the case of cyber fraud, where perpetrators are not known in person, but probably only the victims, the question will be: does embedding malicious code in an email or on a webpage constitute one incident, thousands of incidents (based on the number of email recipients targeted), or potentially millions of incidents (based on webpage browse attempts)? If an incident count fails as a metric, does an estimate of incurred loss or harm (if feasible) fare any better?

These are but few examples, but illustrative enough of larger concerns. “Crime anywhere is, arguably, at least as much about corporate fraud as about armed robbery, harassment via the Internet as about breaking and entering, and endangering health through environmental pollutants as about assaults and muggings. But, for decades, the perspective on crime has been dominated by so-called “street crime”—violent crime and some types of property crime—to the general exclusion of non-street crime, of which the fielding of cybercrime is certainly an example in no other century than the 21st. The lack of systematic information about non-street crimes makes it very difficult to develop sound judgments about whether adequate resources are being devoted to these types of problems. A conceptual framework that encompasses the full range of crime is essential for drawing attention to important issues that may be ignored because they do not have the necessary statistical indicators for comparative purposes.

It is useful to begin with a brief history of how crime statistics arrived at their current state, but to make the story short upfront: statistics on crime are, by and large, still measured following concepts outlined nearly a century earlier in 1929, making use of a list of defined crimes that evolved from what was most feasible and tractable to measure. As we describe later in this chapter, this unit is an attempt to step back and rethink the approach to the entire enterprise of crime data collection—beginning, in this report, with development of a proposed classification of criminal offenses to serve as a broad, conceptual framework for what “crime” means. This classification and framework would then be a useful blueprint for constructing measures of crime.

2.0 Intended Learning Outcomes (ILOs)

This unit intends to ensure students are well grounded in the definition of crime as a precursor to understanding how to go about measuring criminal activities which is the heartbeat of statistics.....know what should be the unit of analysis, know how to aggregate and disaggregate beyond just numbers and incidents. At the end of this unit students should be able among others decipher the complexities of what constitute a crime, how and why it should be classified. And lastly make sense of the state of crime statistics in the 21st century.

3.0 Main Content

WHAT IS “CRIME,” AND WHY CLASSIFY IT?

To measure “crime” one must first define it—and that is no easier a conceptual task in 2020 than it was in 1929 or earlier. There are at least two general approaches to defining crime, and both sound simple while masking bewildering complexity. This general divide is illustrated in the language of the different countries Penal Code or the constitution as the case may be in an effort to suggest standardization in criminal codes and which at least informed the continuous revisions of these codes with development in society, technology and associated new forms and waves of harmful behaviours and events. Explicitly, every nation’s code/law holds that crime is “an offense defined by the Code or by any other statute of the State, for which a sentence of [death or of] imprisonment is authorized” (American Law Institute, 1985:§ 1.04). The first clause of this definition is the

simple, obvious, literally legal definition—“*crime*” is *activity that is unlawful*, either the commission of something that is explicitly banned or the failure to do something that is explicitly mandated by letter of the law. But complexity sets in with the second clause, which modifies the first and narrows its focus: the full thought becomes “*crime*” is *that activity that is both unlawful and subject to certain punishments or sanctions*. *Black’s Law Dictionary* puts the point more succinctly, defining crime as “an act that the law makes punishable” (Garner, 2014).

What this basic legal definition leaves open are the questions of exactly which law and which degree of punishment are used to define crime, and the answers to those questions vary greatly everywhere in the world. Roughly, the challenge is delineating “criminal” law, procedure, and adjudication from “civil” or “regulatory” concepts, and that line is far from sharp. The language of codes as said earlier differs from one country to another—echoed in some states—uses the punishment of incarceration as the criterion: behaviour that is deemed punishable by incarceration is crime, but behaviour punishable only by other means (e.g., fine or forfeiture) is not. However, for example, while in some countries even in some states and counties in Europe and America, for instance the state of Wisconsin, the scope of crime is broadened to include those with only financial punishment, specifying that crime is “conduct which is prohibited by state law and punishable by fine or imprisonment or both” but adding that “conduct punishable only by a forfeiture is not a crime” (2011–12 Wis. Stats. § 939.12). California’s definition, which dates back to 1873, goes further, melding the concept of crime with that of a “public offense” and so including offenses of a political variety (California Penal Code § 15):

A crime or public offense is an act committed or omitted in violation of a law forbidding or commanding it, and to which is annexed, upon conviction either of the following punishments: 1. Death; 2. Imprisonment; 3. Fine; 4. Removal from office; or, 5. Disqualification to hold and enjoy any office of honor, trust, or profit in this State.

Several states demur on stating a core definition of “crime” and instead delve directly into distinguishing offenses based on severity of offense (including aggravating or contributing factors to the act, such as weapon involvement) or the extent of imprisonment or punishment. Hence, the common differentiation between felonies, misdemeanors, petty offenses, or some other general infractions occurs, as well as the

typically numbered degrees attached to offenses. But the criteria for these gradations of offense types vary by jurisdiction, and so the concept of what behaviour is thought of as crime (or perhaps most crime-like) varies as well. For instance, Vermont statute holds that “any offense whose maximum term of imprisonment is more than two years, for life or which may be punished by death is a felony. Any other offense is a misdemeanor” (13 Vermont Stat. 1). Meanwhile, Virginia code uses “felony” to denote a crime subject to a prison term of any length, and explicitly excludes the broad class of traffic offenses from designation as crime (Virginia Criminal Code § 18.2-8):

Offenses are either felonies or misdemeanors. Such offenses as are punishable with death or confinement in a state correctional facility are felonies; all other offenses are misdemeanors. Traffic infractions are violations of public order [defined elsewhere in law] not deemed to be criminal in nature.

Still other state codes take different approaches: Connecticut Penal Code § 53a-24 distinguishes between “crimes” and “offenses,” dividing the former into felonies and misdemeanors and setting aside “violations” as “every offense that is not ‘crime’ ”; Indiana’s criminal code adds a clause including “a delinquent act” as “crime” for purposes of the Victim Rights article of the code (IC 35-40); Colorado Revised Statutes 18-1-104 take “offense” and “crime” as synonymous and subdivides offenses among one of 18 felony (drug or nondrug), misdemeanor (drug or nondrug), petty offense (drug or nondrug), or unclassified categories.

Recitation of the legal text may be dry, but it is undeniably vital in defining crime—and it makes clear the challenges of working within a measurement framework defined strictly by the language of federal and state criminal codes. Hence, the second approach illustrated by the language of the codes in any nation’s constitution, which is to emphasize the general, type of behaviour that might be said to constitute crime. The first-stated guiding principle to note is that it is a given that the Code is intended to “forbid and prevent” “conduct that unjustifiably and inexcusably inflicts or threatens harm to individual or public interests” (American Law Institute, 1985:§ 1.02). This language serves as an implicit, behavioural-rather- than-legal definition of crime: roughly speaking, *“crime” is a class of socially unacceptable behaviour that directly harms or threatens harm to others*. Like the legal

definition, this thread has also frequently been woven into state criminal codes—though substitutions in wording hint at the complexity inherent in this behavioural application. For instance, Texas Penal Code § 1.02 repeats this language, albeit substituting “causes” for “inflicts” and revising “individual or public interests” to “those individual or public interests for which state protection is appropriate.” Washington Criminal Code § 9A.04.020 states the first principle of construction of the code as forbidding “conduct that inflicts or threatens substantial harm to individual or public interests.” Florida Criminal Code § 775.012 eschews “unjustifiably or inexcusably,” stating that the code is meant to prohibit “conduct that improperly causes or threatens substantial harm to individual or public interest.” More than mere semantics, these substitutions in language raise difficult questions in operationalizing a common definition. How “substantial” must the real or threatened harm be before the action constitutes a “crime”? How palpable or immediate must the *threat* of harm be to qualify as “crime”? And—akin to the blurred line between action that is criminal and that which is civil/regulatory in the purely legal definition— how broad are “individual or public interests,” and which qualify as those “for which state protection is appropriate”?

The point may seem basic but is undeniably important: The definition of “crime” is and must be dynamic in nature, because crime is tied to shifts and development in technology, society, and legislation. Just as some crimes such as motor vehicle theft and carjacking were made possible only by the invention of the automobile, so too did the creation and emergence of the Internet spur all manner of new behaviours—some of which are indisputably “crime.” Other incidents, such as those known as “hate crimes,” existed long before there were legislative efforts to recognize and designate such incidents as criminal acts, but come into sharper focus with shifts in social norms and expectations. Some behaviours, such as marijuana possession and use, have involved many legislative actions to both criminalize and decriminalize such acts over time, and these laws currently exhibit important variations across jurisdictions. Considering “crime” as a unit of analysis raises further complexity; in the simplest case—thinking of “crime” as an action by one party against some other actor (whether another person, another business/institution, or society at large)—one has to recognize an essential duality: Legal criminal codes may appropriately treat “crime” and “offense” as synonymous, yet “crime” and “victimization” are also inherently linked. Accordingly, thinking of crime

from the perspective of its victims can affect what one labels “crime” and how one tries to measure it. Of course, “crime” is not a strictly one- to-one action; broader “incidents” of crime may involve one (or multiple) offender(s) taking one (or multiple) crime-type action(s) against one (or multiple) victims. Hence, measuring “crime” is not completely equivalent to measuring (or counting) crime “incidents.” Moreover, some specific “crime” types are serial in nature and may best (or only) be thought of as processes over time, stalking or harassment being examples of such pattern-of-conduct crimes. A very fundamental measurement concept relative to crime—one with major implications for the scope of this study—is that “crime” also takes place in the context of a broader justice system, in the various stages of which different labels and structures may apply. *So the same “crime(s)” become: “arrests,” booking “charges,” “arrestable offenses,” or investigative “cases” to law enforcement officers; judicial “cases,” counts of “charges,” and grounds for sentencing criteria in the courts; and charges of conviction in the correctional system.* Each of these additional different labels are countable and capable of analysis, but each has different scope and potentially different underlying definitions—and arguably serve as better seeds for measuring other phenomena (such as law enforcement effectiveness or judicial system throughput) than for measuring the level of criminal activity. Yet it is also true that some of these alternative labels and corresponding measures might be the best, if not the only, way to get a reading on some types of criminal behaviour—for instance, white- collar offenses such as embezzlement or some types of fraud may only appear to be potential “crime” when charges are rendered or arrests made, much later in the law enforcement and investigatory processes than crimes such as homicide or burglary.

Given this extensive degree of diversity of concept and potential mis-alignment in definition, one thing that must be said clearly of the historic (and existing) UCR program standards is this: The degree of standardization in concept and reporting style that the UCR program was able to impose beginning in 1929, across widely disparate law enforcement agencies contributing information on a strictly voluntary basis, was and remains a phenomenal accomplishment. That said, the problem is that the “uniformity” that the UCR has achieved has been greater in concept than in practice—and, in concept at least, has arguably worked *too* well. Useful standardization rigidified over time—highlighting, in the UCR’s short list of Part I offenses, a set of important crimes to be sure, but

not necessarily the most important or most salient (to the American public) crimes—and so the basic features of UCR measurement remain largely the same over 90 years later.

4.0 Conclusion

The law enforcement agencies annually releases tabulations of UCR data in series, and has done so for decades—so it is not surprising that discussions of “crime in anywhere in the world tend to put great weight on the UCR numbers and largely follow the contours of UCR’s Part I offenses which consist of six types of crime—or offenses of murder, rape, robbery, aggravated assault, burglary, and motor vehicle theft (and UCR content, generally) typically require either enacted legislation or years of vetting through an elaborate advisory process. Consequently, it has been difficult for the UCR program (and corresponding crime statistics) to nimbly adapt to the wider range of actors (e.g., offenses by and against businesses and institutions) and offense types that characterize contemporary crime.

5.0 Summary

Some summary points from the above discussion are useful in understanding crime as well as the direction to go when it comes to crime statistics:

- For purposes of developing a modern crime classification, it is most appropriate to take the criminal *offense* as the most fine-grained unit of analysis—and, specifically, to emphasize *behavioural* definitions of individual offenses rather than rely exclusively on the language of statute and criminal law.
- Though we may classify and think of crime in terms of specific offenses, the practical unit of analysis on which we concentrate is the *incident*. Incidents of crime can be very complex—comprising one or more criminal offenses and “linking” one or more offenders with one or more victims, typically but not necessarily occurring within a tight window of time and physical space.
- While “simple” counts of offenses or incidents are the most common end statistics, there are other measures related to offense behaviours (such as estimates of damage or

financial loss inflicted, or even the *perception* of victimizations or occurrences) that may have greater salience for some crime types.

6.0 Self-Assessment Exercise

1. What are the complexities in considering “crime” as a unit of analysis raises in statistics?
2. How palpable or immediate must the *threat* of harm be to qualify as “crime”?
3. Why do we need to recite the legal definition of crime as measurement framework crime statistics?
4. Why classify crime?
5. What is the state of crime statistics in the 21st century?

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Unit 4

Users (and Uses) of Crime Statistics

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1.0 Introduction

Crime statistics have many users, from researchers, practitioners, advocates, business representatives, policy makers, and others. In general, the uses of existing crime data include operational and resource allocation decisions by law enforcement, local and state government agencies, and businesses and other groups. Crime data are also a critical source of information for program and policy evaluations by researchers in government, academia, and the public and private sectors. They are also used by advocates of particular issues and by the public, and are often seen as measures of accountability. For some of these purposes, existing crime data appear to be adequate, though users often noted many ways that the available data could be improved. For many types of crime, often than not data are incomplete, lacking in consistency, inadequate, restricted, classified as official or unavailable.

2.0 Intended Learning Outcomes (ILOs)

At the end of this unit students are expected to be well grounded on the various uses and users of statistics as criminologists and security experts to be. Bearing this in mind the unit intend to specifically highlight the various uses/users of crime statistics and described it as diverse beyond law enforcement officials or departments to individuals, communities, researchers, research

institutions and business owners and in all the ability of statistics to inform and empower society through policy formulation. And lastly by way of examples students should be able to expatiate on why statistics is relevant as well as the problems and challenges facing the use and users of crime statistics when they are needed.

3.0 Main Content

What follows, then, in this brief overview above is to elaborate on the identified users and uses of crime data alongside the need for a more useful crime statistics system.

3.1 LAW ENFORCEMENT AGENCIES

Law enforcement agencies are one of the major providers of crime data and the ways in which the different agencies in the country use their crime data differs considerably. Some of the smaller local police departments in the country, for example, simply record the crime incidents that come to their attention and forward their reports to their state's Statistical Analysis Center or directly to the FBI's UCR program. However, not all police departments do this on a regular basis as participation in the national UCR program is voluntary. The reasons for non-regular participation are varied, but in some cases this is because the agency has relatively few crimes to report on a monthly basis and therefore reports are accumulated and then submitted periodically or annually. In developed climes, the majority of law enforcement agencies, however, do report regularly to the UCR program, using either the Summary Reporting System (SRS) format or using the National Incident Based Reporting System (NIBRS). Many police departments use the data to issue their own reports on crime in their jurisdictions on an annual basis, and most states issue annual reports based on the compilations of local agency crime reports that are sent to them. These reports are then used to inform the public and government officials about local and state levels of crime, and changes in the levels of crime over time. Aside from serving as a general indicator of crime in their own communities, crime data compiled by state, local, and other law enforcement agencies are often used for strategic decision-making and operational or tactical purposes. Many police departments use what is referred to as a "CompStat" approach in which detailed departmental crime data are summarized by in-house crime analysis units and

disseminated to police commanders (typically on a weekly basis). These data are used to discuss the nature of emerging and continuing crime problems in different areas of the jurisdiction.

The purpose of “CompStat” is to track crimes and the efforts used to deal with these crimes, and to provide information that allows for better decision-making about tactical strategies for addressing these problems. Another important aspect of CompStat meetings is that they provide police commanders with greater managerial control over their field operations. However, it can be argued with similar strength that the CompStat approach to police management has drawbacks to temper its benefits—not the least of which a sort of “negative quota” mentality that comes from managing *to* crime counts, creating at least the appearance of an incentive to manipulate or misreport crime incidences so as to curb the appearance of spikes of crime (Eterno and Silverman, 2012). More fundamentally, not all police departments have the luxury of dedicated crime analysis units—and even those that do face the difficult problem of putting CompStat-type crime numbers in proper context, to understand the underlying dynamics behind upticks or downticks of some crime types.

An important concern that was raised about police-based crime statistics is the timeliness of their release from the FBI’s UCR program. As advance as the U.S. Crime statistics typically are released by the FBI in their annual publication *Crime in the United States* approximately 10 months after the collection year (for example, crime statistics for 2014 were released during the last week of September 2015). Although police departments have crime data for their jurisdictions as soon as they are compiled in their own data management systems, information about crime in other jurisdictions is not available to them through the UCR program until much later, thus precluding timely comparative assessments about how changes in their crime rates may be related to problems occurring elsewhere. Moreover, the information available in the UCR annual publication necessarily excludes details on the types of problems that may be emerging because the data are reported in summary form, primarily consisting of the total counts and rates for the eight index offenses (i.e., the eight major categories of violent and property crime), rather than with the more expansive detail that the NIBRS system can provide (e.g. offense categories, victim characteristics, etc.).

3.2 FEDERAL, STATE AND LOCAL POLICY MAKERS

Policy makers at the local, state, and federal levels need accurate and timely data on crime to inform budgetary decisions about the amount of resources needed to address crimes of various types. Crime data are used to inform projections of the resources needed for criminal justice agencies to investigate cases, prosecute and defend arrestees, supervise persons on probation and parole, and incarcerate offenders in jails and prisons. In addition, policy makers may use crime and victimization data to estimate the amount of resources needed for specific types of crime victims (such as child abuse, intimate partner violence, and elder abuse victims), and grant agencies often require victim service providers to use such data to evaluate the effectiveness of their programs designed to reduce these crimes.

3.2.1 Legislative Uses

Federal, state, and local legislators often are provided with crime and justice data to assist them with efforts to identify priority areas, design responsive legislation, and help make budgetary decisions for law enforcement and justice agencies in specific locales. Reports based on these data may come from numerous sources, including members of their constituencies, advocacy groups, or research from state Statistical Analysis Centers (SACs) or other crime analysts. Because of the overlap in data use by legislators and the others users noted here, only a few illustrative examples of how these officials use crime data are provided. Customarily as it in the US, Federal legislators often request crime information and related assessments from the Government Accountability Office (GAO) to inform legislative issues, and reports from these requests are made available on the GAO website. GAO reports cover a wide range of crime-related topics and include assessments of the availability of data on specific crimes (for example, on sexual assault, fraud risks in federal programs, and cybersecurity), the quality of some of the existing crime data, the rigor of the methodologies used in research evaluations of crime-related programs, and the state of the evidence about specific crime programs. Though these reports are often requested by federal legislators, it is challenging to determine whether and how the findings in these reports may have been used subsequently by legislators. It should be noted that when such assessments are completed, the results may lead to well-founded decisions.

3.2.2 Justice Assistance and Fund Allocation

Policy formulation requires identifying problems, weighing the importance of those problems based on their magnitude and impact, and developing policy approaches to address them. Policy implementation involves making decisions for the appropriateness of the policy, encouraging people to adopt that policy, and securing the resources necessary to carry it out. Accordingly, in the crime and justice area, crime statistics play vital roles in both policy justification and fund allocation.

3.3 PUBLIC SECTOR AND ACADEMIC RESEARCHERS

Use of crime data by researchers in both the public sector and academia is extensive and diverse. Because this research covers a very large range of data uses and approaches, the discussion below necessarily provides a very brief overview of its primary features with respect to available crime data and gaps in existing data. In addition, public-sector researchers (such as those in ministries/parastatals and other research organizations or public desks) and academic researchers often work in collaboration with other users of crime data such as law enforcement agencies, local, state, and federal agencies, businesses, and other groups, so there is considerable overlap between their uses of crime data and uses by others.

3.3.1 Academic Researchers

Academic and public-sector research consists of both descriptive and multivariate analysis of crime and victimization problems and their outcomes. Crime data are used at numerous levels of analysis to describe the extent to which crime varies over time, across places (such as countries, states, cities, neighbourhoods, and other areas), across organizations (such as schools, businesses, and sectors of the economy), between individuals and groups, and how individuals' experiences with crime and victimization vary and change over the life-course. The type of data used for the descriptive analyses of these variations necessarily depends on the research question and the availability of crime data at the various levels of analysis. For example, studies of national-level crime trends for major categories of crime must use UCR or NCVS data as they are the world's two main indicators of crime, providing different types of information as well as distinct trends during some time periods. Beyond describing trends in the major categories of violence and property crime, researchers often examine these data with additional information

from other sources to assess the association of crime rates with social, demographic, and economic factors; criminal justice resources and practices; and changes in the law. Some researchers have also attempted to forecast future rates of crime, though this is an area fraught with significant challenges (National Research Council, 2009).

While studies of UCR (and NCVS) crime trends provide basic and essential information about levels and changes in violent and property over time, researchers noted a wide range of crimes that are not captured by these measurement systems. It is very difficult to determine, for example, whether crimes against businesses and other organizations, the environment, or government agencies have increased or decreased over time, and trends for some types of crimes against persons are unknown as well (e.g., human trafficking, fraud). There are numerous reasons why such information is difficult to obtain, but the lack of this basic information means that current understandings of crime trends are incomplete and dominated by analyses of “street crimes” that can be more easily obtained because the reports are initiated by victims and local police. Other types of crime (such as fraud) can have different detection rates and mechanisms, and data for these types of incidents may only be available after investigations are completed. When this is the case, the crime data are dependent on the level of investigation and the incidents are only revealed when prosecutors proceed with charges of illegal activity.

Without additional information about investigation resources and processes, charge count data provides information on crime that may be misleading in terms of both levels and trends in such crimes. Another major component of public-sector and academic research combines data and statistical models to infer how different factors and policies affect crime rates, and how crime rates may, in turn, affect other important socioeconomic outcomes (such as neighbourhood change and economic development). The unit of analysis for these types of studies also varies and includes highly aggregated rates for places such as states, cities and neighbourhoods, but may also be based on lower levels of aggregation or persons when the research is interested in understanding how different treatment policies affect individuals’ risk for future criminal involvement. Some examples of these aggregate rate studies include research on the effects of the death penalty on homicide rates (National Research Council, 2012), gun legislation on county or state violence rates in America (National Research Council, 2005), and policing

strategies on neighbourhood, block group, or street segment rates of crime (National Research Council, 2004b; Weisburd et al., 2012).

In each of these types of studies, the need for geographic information about the location of the incident is important, and with more targeted interventions, the geographic data for incidents of crime needs to be more precise. Studies of program effects on individuals' offending typically follow persons over time and use either arrest or other criminal justice system data as an indicator of criminal involvement. Alternatively, because such data only include information on detected criminal activity, some researchers track persons over time and administer self-report surveys to obtain information about offending. With either approach, the researcher must be able to link the person's crime data with previous information about the individuals and their participation in the program under evaluation. The more detailed and reliable the crime information, the more useful the results will be for policy evaluation purposes.

3.3.2 Policy Advocacy and Issue Constituencies

There are many policy advocates or issue constituencies that use crime and victimization data to make arguments to advance their claims about the nature and extent of the problem they want to see addressed. Some of these groups may be advocating for new data collections (such as in the case of previously discussed efforts to obtain hate crime statistics), while others may be advocating for changes in existing data collections to better capture the problem of concern. A recent example of the latter instance can be found in the effort to redefine "rape" incidents in the UCR program. Advocates for this change argued that the long-standing definition used by the FBI was highly restricted and did not capture the full range of sexual assaults, as it defined rape as "the carnal knowledge of a female forcibly and against her will." Many police agencies interpreted this to exclude sexual offenses that were criminal in their own jurisdictions, such as those involving anal or oral penetration, or penetration with objects. In addition, the definition excluded rapes committed against males. The new UCR definition of rape became effective on January 1, 2013, and states that rape is "penetration, no matter how slight, of the vagina or anus with any body part or object, or oral penetration by a sex organ of another person, without the consent of the victim." Assessments of the difference in 2013 NIBRS counts of rape between the legacy and the revised definition suggests that this change increased the number of incidents in

that year by roughly 42 percent (https://www.fbi.gov/about-us/cjis/ucr/crime-in-the-u.s/2013/crime-in-the-u.s.-2013/rape-addendum/rape_addendum_final).

Advocacy groups also request that other national data sources, such as the NCVS, be modified to obtain data on their issue of concern, particularly when it is believed that victims of certain crimes are unlikely to report the incident to the police. However, because the NCVS is a self-report survey rather than a record-keeping mechanism by police departments, changes to the survey are not often easily accommodated as each request would require unique considerations. For example, if a new victimization rate is desired for a subgroup in the population that is relatively small in size, the sampling framework of the NCVS necessarily limits the precision of the rate that would be obtained and may not be feasible. In addition, the questions necessary to identify the subgroup may be problematic in that respondents may not be willing to answer such questions, such as would likely be the case to learn whether undocumented immigrants experience higher rates of crime than citizens. For these types of reasons, the issues that are necessary to consider for obtaining new crime and victimization data via the NCVS are different from those that must be considered when changes are proposed for the UCR.

3.4 BUSINESS SECTOR

The business sector helps to generate statistics as well as uses of crime data which is unique from those of other groups. Businesses may use UCR crime data to learn about the nature and extent of problems in the cities or communities in which they operate or are considering for expansion or relocation opportunities. Some businesses may use local crime data to target sales of their products, such as burglar alarms or antitheft devices. But a large component of crime data use by businesses is focused on analyzing and responding to their own crime information collection systems to protect the businesses against thefts from customers and employees, as well as other crimes including cyberattacks of various types. Discussions with business representatives suggested that a large, but unknown proportion of the crimes against their companies is not reported to police. Instead the data are used to monitor losses, improve security, and thwart anticipated future incidents.

One example of business “crime” data that contains information distinct from that provided by either the UCR or NCVS in America is the National Retail Federation’s annual National Retail Security Survey (NRSS). According to the 2015 survey of 100 senior loss-prevention executives, inventory shrinkage in 2014 due to shoplifting, employee and other internal theft, paperwork errors, and other factors amounted to approximately \$44 billion. The two largest components of this loss were attributed to shoplifting (38%) and employee/internal theft (35%). However, unlike the UCR which provides larceny incident counts, these data estimate crime in terms of inventory loss amounts that are more readily estimated than the number of distinct incidents or persons involved in retail inventory loss.

3.5 NEWS MEDIA AND THE PUBLIC

A very large amount of crime information appears daily in news media outlets, most often as descriptions of recent specific incidents, offenders, and victims, but also in the form of national and local crime statistics to illustrate comparative crime rates and trends. For example, the release of annual statistics from the UCR and NCVS by the U.S. Department of Justice is typically covered in major news outlets, but increasingly local media outlets turn to their local police departments to provide regular updates on recorded crimes. Several unique issues about media and public use of crime statistics are noted here, including efforts to improve the understanding of crime and appropriate uses of data to help better inform the public about crime and related issues. Journalists and other media personnel often have been criticized for their misuse or misinterpretation of crime statistics, and for failing to put recent unique or high-profile incidents in broader temporal context. Without such contextual information, the most recent newsworthy crime is often seen as an indicator of a new trend, and the continual overage of crime in this way can contribute to the false impression that rates are continuously on the rise.

Media coverage of crime has helped in some instances to spur public criticisms of gaps in data systems, and journalists have been responsible for producing pressure to make changes in crime data records. Thus the need to continuously improve media coverage of crime and justice issues and sensitisation of journalists about the implication of misleading crime reports in society especially with the growing trend of online journalism. This will go a long way to strengthen the relationship between the media and law enforcement agencies.

4.0 Conclusion

There is strong demand for comprehensive, yet detailed, information, statistic or data about crime by a broad range of users. The uses of crime and criminal justice data/statistics to inform a variety of stakeholders (who are also users) are overwhelming. The availability of statistics in this regard promotes the capacity of organizations to conduct evaluations of various criminal justice programs and public policies. No single data collection can completely fulfil the needs of every user and stakeholder, providing data with sufficient detail, timeliness, and quality to address every interest of importance. Any structure devised to measure “crime anywhere in the world” should necessarily be conceptualized as a system of data collection efforts, and informative details about the collection and quality of the distinct components in the data system should be included to help ensure proper interpretation and use of the data.

5.0 Summary

In summary there are numerous users of crime statistics and as it is often said data is life, to show that in one way or the other we cannot avoid relying and making use of data, we are also involved in the whole data processes from start to finish because crime and victimisation are constructs that exist between individuals, and among us all and the various institutions connecting everyone directly or indirectly. Broadly speaking the uses of crime statistics include operational and resource allocation decisions by law enforcement, local and state government agencies, and businesses and other groups. Crime data are also a critical source of information for program and policy evaluations by researchers in government, academia, and the public and private sectors. They are also used by advocates of particular issues and by the public, and are often seen as measures of accountability. For some of these purposes, existing crime data appear to be adequate, though users often noted many ways that available data could be improved upon. For many types of crime, however, the statistics are incomplete, lacking in consistency, inadequate, or unavailable, especially when it comes to specifics about crime.

6.0 Self-Assessment Exercise

1. Crime data are used at numerous levels of analysis. List and discuss at least four of these.

2. What are the problems associated with the use of the uniform crime reports (UCR)?
3. Write short notes on the following relating to crime statistics:
 - a. Timeliness,
 - b. Summary of data,
 - c. Police-based statistics
 - d. “CompStat” approach
4. What are the uses and abuses of crime statistics?
5. What are the focuses of the business sector when crime statistics are used?
6. How does crime statistics contribute to policy advocacy?

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MODULE 5

Unit 1 Scope and State of Nationally Compiled Crime Statistics: UCR Program and National Incident-Based Reporting System (NIBRS)

Unit 2 Basic Structure and Crime Coverage of the Base NCVS

Unit 3 The Wider Field Of “Crime” Data

Unit 4 National Self-Report Surveys of criminal offending

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Unit 1 Scope and State of Nationally Compiled Crime Statistics

1.0 Introduction

In the previous unit we have looked at the definition of “What is ‘crime’?” this questions will continue to be our guide in this unit and invariably till the end of the module. This unit is certainly driven by that question, too, though it is also motivated by a dual question—“What are ‘crime statistics’?”—that shares with the first question the vexing property that it seems simple but is very complex to answer. The pat answer is that in every country in the 21st century there two primary sources for nationally compiled statistics on the incidence of crime: the statistics gathered by the Uniform Crime Reporting (UCR) Program and the results of the any National Crime Victimization Survey (NCVS), these may have different names in different countries they are nevertheless the same in nature and structure. The former data are premised on the voluntary contribution of information from local law enforcement agencies (primarily through state

coordinators) to the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI), and the latter are derived from a major sample survey sponsored by the Bureau of Justice Statistics (BJS) that directly interviews people and households on their experiences with crime and violence as in the with the United States of America.

These two sources span two major concepts or philosophies of data collection: The UCR series are essentially administrative records, premised on the voluntary contribution of information culled from the records of local law enforcement agencies, while the NCVS is a sample survey involving direct interviews with people and households on their experiences with victimization or crime. Ultimately, both data systems produce *estimates* of the incidence of crime, the UCR emphasizing counts of incidents of various types that come to the attention of police (and serving as an estimate of crime because it is also subject to nonreporting or misreporting by local agencies) and the NCVS emphasizing rates of victimization within the broader population (and overtly being an estimate based on inference from a carefully chosen sample of households). The UCR and the NCVS are two principal sources of U.S. crime statistics, but are certainly not the only data systems that are or might be sources of crime related statistics

2.0 Intended Learning Outcomes (ILOs)

This unit examine the state and scope of nationally compiled data in terms of coverage of different crime types which has been added to the larger UCR and NCVS data collection schemes described in the previous unit.

Students should be able to

- make sense of the fact that it is commonplace for parallel data collection systems with sometimes strong substantive overlap to be established in other bureaus and departments in every country.
- understand that there are indeed cases of multiple, “competing” data collections using different methodologies established to examine the same type of criminal (or socially unacceptable) behaviour.

- to identify some of the same crime types being covered by different data collections in an administrative data compilation arrangement similar to the UCR Program, in a sample survey of the same kind to the NCVS, or through other means.

Lastly for the sake of clarity, the treatment of these parallel data sources in this unit is meant to be suggestive, not exhaustive of the full range of crime-related data resources. It is simply meant to illustrate the complexity in identifying any single uniquely correct or comprehensive source of “crime statistics”

3.0 Main Content

Given the sweeping nature of crime statistics, it is natural to start with a description of the two extant major resources for crime statistics, the UCR and the NCVS in detail in subsequent chapter, before delving into parallel sources for some specific crime types. In all cases, there is the need to do a classification of crime in order to guide identification of an eventual set of crime indicators, in this unit we will limit ourselves to the descriptions of the coverage (topic/crime type) and basic nature of the sources of crime statistics.

3.1 UNIFORM CRIME REPORTING (UCR) PROGRAM AND NATIONAL INCIDENT-BASED REPORTING SYSTEM (NIBRS)

The origin of the Uniform Crime Reporting Program is recounted in Module 4; to recap in brief, today’s UCR Program compiles the voluntary data contributions from law enforcement agencies (in most cases, monthly reports coordinated through a state-level coordinating agency) into a national level resource. Data collection under the UCR Program began in 1929. Contribution of data to the national UCR Program remains voluntary, as it has since the outset, although statute in some countries require law enforcement agencies to report data to the state. The basic legal authority for UCR data collection stems from a single line in legal authorization, in which the Attorney General (as in the case in the US) is directed to “acquire, collect, classify, and preserve identification, criminal identification, crime, and other records. In extending UCR’s scope to include crimes known to federal law enforcement agencies, Congress noted that “the term

‘Uniform Crime Reports’ means the reports” authorized under the Attorney General’s record collection powers “and administered by the Federal Bureau of Investigation which compiles nationwide criminal statistics for use in law enforcement administration, operation, and management and to assess the nature and type of crime.

3.1.1 Core Components of the UCR Program

In common usage over several decades (and still continuing), generic references to “UCR” information typically refer to only one part of the fuller suite of data collections that have evolved over time under the UCR aegis. Such general references are typically to the *Summary Reporting System (SRS)* of the UCR—the lineal successor of the original 1929 work that collect summary counts of offenses known or reported to the police. The SRS is sometimes referenced as “Return A” data after the name of the form on which the local agencies are supposed to supply monthly returns. In terms of content, it is important to note that SRS is intended only to cover the small set of offenses dubbed “Part I” crimes (and not those designated “Part II” crimes; the distinction is shown in Box 2.1 and discussed further below).

Box 2.1 Current Uniform Crime Reporting (UCR) Summary Reporting System (SRS) Crime Classification, 2014

Part I Classes

- 1 Criminal homicide
 - 1a Murder and nonnegligent manslaughter
 - 1b Manslaughter by negligence
- 2 Rape
 - 2a Rape
 - 2b Attempts to commit rape
 - 2c Historical rape
- 3 Robbery
 - 3a Firearm
 - 3b Knife or cutting instrument
 - 3c Other dangerous weapon
 - 3d Strong-arm—hands, fists, feet, etc.
- 4 Aggravated assault
 - 4a Firearm
 - 4b Knife or cutting instrument
 - 4c Other dangerous weapon
 - 4d Strong-arm—hands, fists, feet, etc.—aggravated injury
- 5 Burglary
 - 5a Forcible entry
 - 5b Unlawful entry—no force
 - 5c Attempted forcible entry
- 6 Larceny—theft (except motor vehicle theft)
 - 6Xa Pocket-picking
 - 6Xb Purse-snatching
 - 6Xc Shoplifting
 - 6Xd Thefts from motor vehicles
 - 6Xe Theft of motor vehicle parts and accessories
 - 6Xf Theft of bicycles
 - 6Xg Theft from buildings
 - 6Xh Theft from coin-operated device or machine
 - 6Xi All other
- 7 Motor vehicle theft
 - 7a Autos
 - 7b Trucks and buses
 - 7c Other vehicles
- 8 Arson
 - Structural (Codes 8a–g cover different types of structures)

- Mobile (Codes 8h–i differentiate between motor vehicles and other mobile property)
- Other (Code 8j)

A Human trafficking—commercial sex acts

B Human trafficking—involuntary servitude

Part II Classes

- 9 Other assaults—simple, not aggravated (*also coded 4e “as a quality control matter and for the purpose of looking at total assault violence”*)
- 10 Forgery and counterfeiting
- 11 Fraud
- 12 Embezzlement
- 13 Stolen property: buying, receiving, possessing
- 14 Vandalism
- 15 Weapons; carrying, possessing etc.
- 16 Prostitution and commercialized vice
 - 16a Prostitution
 - 16b Assisting or promoting prostitution (*also coded 30*)
 - 16c Purchasing prostitution (*also coded 31*)
- 17 Sex offenses (except rape and prostitution and commercialized vice)
- 18 Drug abuse violations
- 19 Gambling
- 20 Offenses against the family and children
- 21 Driving under the influence
- 22 Liquor laws
- 23 Drunkenness
- 24 Disorderly conduct
- 25 Vagrancy
- 26 All other offenses
- 27 Suspicion
- 28 Curfew and loitering laws (persons under 18)
- 29 Runaways (persons under 18)

SOURCE: Adapted from Federal Bureau of Investigation (2013b).

We will describe the *National Incident-Based Reporting System (NIBRS)* more completely below; together, the SRS and NIBRS may be thought of as the central components of incidence-

of-crime statistics in the UCR program. Originally envisioned as the next-generation core UCR collection when it was crafted in the 1980s—that is, as a replacement for the SRS—the practice over time has been to treat SRS and NIBRS as distinct, parallel entities, largely due to relatively slow adoption of NIBRS standards for local data submissions. NIBRS is designed to span a wider array of offenses than the SRS, though the NIBRS component of the broader UCR program eschews the “traditional” Part I and II terminology.

Detailed incident-level data and arrest information are collected in NIBRS for roughly 22 Group A offense categories while only arrest information is collected for an additional 11 Group B categories. Given their centrality, references to “the UCR” in this unit focus exclusively on SRS or NIBRS. In describing the content and crime coverage of the UCR program as a whole, though, it is important to clarify that the UCR has evolved into a family of related data collections, largely defined by the type or nature of underlying offenses. Other key components of the fuller UCR program include the following:

- a.** The *Supplementary Homicide Report (SHR)* is a form that queries for additional detail—on characteristics of the victim, on weaponry used (and other factors), on victim-offender relationship, and the setting/context—that is expected to be completed for every homicide. The rich contextual information available in the compiled SHR data exceeds that expected of all crime types in the NIBRS incident-level data, and has fuelled extensive research on the nature of the very important single crime type of homicide. SHR data were first collected and published in 1962 (Federal Bureau of Investigation, 2004:2).
- b.** As described below in Box 2.3, additional crime types have been added to the UCR roster over time. In most cases, this functionally takes the form of additional special-case forms that are expected to be filled by local agencies, tallying the numbers of such incidents. So, for instance, separate tallies of specific crimes types are expected to be submitted on the Monthly Return of Arson Offenses Known to Law Enforcement and Monthly Return of Human Trafficking Offenses. Similar to the SHR, additional detail on specific

incidents are meant to be provided on separate Hate Crime Incident Reports and Cargo Theft Incident Reports.

- c. The basic unit for “crime statistics” in SRS and NIBRS is an incident known to law enforcement; for much of the UCR Program’s lifetime, a parallel UCR component switched the basic unit to arrests made by law enforcement and the “clearance” or resolution of cases through arrest. The full name associated with the collection is the Age, Sex, and Race of Persons Arrested series, in which separate tallies are supposed to be prepared for persons 18 years of age and over and for those under 18 years of age. Given the nomenclature, these arrest data are sometimes referred to by the acronym ASR. Arrestee data have been collected in the UCR Program since 1952 (Federal Bureau of Investigation, 2004:2); arrests are to be recorded and counted for both Part I and Part II offenses, while the “Return A” SRS focuses on Part I offenses.
- d. The Law Enforcement Officers Killed or Assaulted (LEOKA) collection is exactly as described by its name, save for the clarification that it is intended to cover incidents in which the officer is either in the line of duty or off-duty but performing functions that would be normally expected of them when on duty. As has been made clear in the wake of recent incidents involving the lethal application of force by law enforcement officers in the course of arrest, there is no regular, comprehensive data collection covering “use of force” in the United States; the LEOKA collection addresses a subset of incidents where harm is done to the police. The first UCR data on law enforcement officers killed on duty were gathered in 1960 (Federal Bureau of Investigation, 2004:2).

A final component of the broader UCR program collects no offense or incident information at all. Rather, it functions as a “rolling census” of sorts of law enforcement personnel. On an annual basis, UCR data providers are asked to submit the Number of Full-Time Law Enforcement Employees, providing some rough information on size of law enforcement staffs (total and sworn officers) and the resources available to some specific units within the individual agencies. Though this particular sub-collection does not gather actual crime data, it does have some

bearing on the final estimates of crime generated by the UCR. Size of a law enforcement agency, whether in number of personnel or in population of the communities within the department's jurisdiction, can play a role in imputation routines for handling missing data through reference to "similar" agencies.

3.1.2 Crime-Type Coverage and the Hierarchy Rule in UCR Summary Reporting

Box 2.1 depicts the basic classification of crimes/offenses covered by the UCR Summary Reporting System as of 2014. Contrasting it with the original Part I and Part II crimes outlined in 1929 (Box 1.2 in Module 4)—and looking over the cosmetic appearance of the 2014 Part I list being expanded to include some subcategories (the reason for said expansion being described below)—it is clear that change has occurred but at a vastly slower pace than might reasonably be expected over many decades. Moreover, the changes that have been made have largely taken the form of expanding crime types or making relatively modest additions, rather than revising definitions.

When discussing the crime-type coverage of the UCR's Summary Reporting System, one must inevitably describe what is probably the system's single most distinctive feature, as it is the one that most starkly illustrates the "Summary" nature of the data. This distinctive feature is what is known as the Hierarchy Rule, which is invoked to determine the one—and only one—offense type that is recorded for any particular incident. The order in which offenses are listed in the UCR Part I classification is not accidental, and derives directly from the order in which they were originally presented in 1929; the offense types are listed in a rough descending order of severity while also differentiating between crimes against a person and crimes against property. Box 2.2 presents the Part I listing again, with some expansion, in formally laying out the Hierarchy Rule. As it was stated as a "General Provision" in 1929 (International Association of Chiefs of Police, 1929:34–35):

When several offenses are committed by one person at the same time, list as the crime committed the one which comes first in the classification. For example, one offense of robbery would be listed if both assault and robbery

had been committed, because Robbery appears before Aggravated Assault in the classification.

Box 2.2 Hierarchy Rule for Part I Offenses, Uniform Crime Reporting Program

The order in which the Part I offenses and their subcategories are listed in Box 2.1 is not accidental; rather, it defines a preference hierarchy used in the UCR Summary Reporting System to associate incidents (which may involve the commission of multiple crime offenses) with a single crime type for reporting purposes. Lower numbers outrank higher numbers, so that a home invasion/burglary gone awry that ends in serious injury to a homeowner would be counted only as assault; a robbery in which the offender also sexually assaults the victim would be counted only as the rape or attempted rape; and so forth.

The 2013 *Summary Reporting System User Manual* (Federal Bureau of Investigation, 2013b)—the successor to the *Uniform Crime Reporting Program Handbook* that spelled out UCR policy in various revisions over the decades (Federal Bureau of Investigation, 2004)—retains four prominent “exceptions” to the Hierarchy Rule:

- The first, largely technical exception derives from the fact that motor vehicle theft is a subset—but special case—of the broader offense of larceny-theft. In instances of larceny-theft involving theft of a whole vehicle *and* other items (e.g., contents of trunk or parts of the vehicle, as when a stolen car is recovered with parts missing), the theft of the vehicle would trump the theft of the other items and the incident counts as motor vehicle theft.
- Two Part I offenses—arson and human trafficking (both the commercial sex acts and involuntary servitude variants)—are special exceptions to the Hierarchy Rule in that the same incident can result in multiple offenses being counted. Arson and human trafficking are reported on separate forms, so other offenses committed in conjunction with the arson or trafficking (e.g., homicide due to arson) would be reconciled using the Hierarchy Rule and counted on Return A, while the arson/trafficking component would be logged on the separate reporting form.
- For UCR purposes, “justifiable homicide” necessarily occurs in conjunction with some other offense(s); it is defined as “the killing of a felon” either “by a peace officer in the line of duty” or by a private citizen “during the commission of a felony” (Federal Bureau of Investigation, 2013b:30). Accordingly, the same incident can involve multiple offenses being counted: The other offense(s) would be evaluated under the Hierarchy Rule for reporting on Return A while the felon’s death may be reported as a homicide “known to the police” but which is “unfounded” (in this case, not considered a crime) rather than an actual offense.

In this manner, single incidents occurring at the same time but involving multiple individual offense types are generally collapsed in the SRS to count as only one offense. Box 2.2 describes some exceptions to this general rule that have developed over the years.

A second distinctive rule, known as the Separation of Time and Place Rule, also governs how—and how many—offenses are tallied in the SRS. It, too, derives directly from a “General Provision” promulgated in the original 1929 UCR manual (International Association of Chiefs of Police, 1929:35):

Offenses which follow in a more or less natural sequence but after an appreciable length of time, such as a robbery following auto theft, should be listed as separate offenses in their respective classes.

As currently operationalized (Federal Bureau of Investigation, 2013b:26), the statement of the rule actually addresses the inverse of separation of time and place. That is, it does not argue for any minimum interval in time or space that would constitute a separation but rather defines “same time and place” as occurrences in which “the time interval between the offenses and the distance between locations where they occurred is insignificant.” Generally, the rule defers to investigative findings by law enforcement: If “investigation deems the activity to constitute a single criminal transaction,” then even incidents at different times and locations are to be treated as single occurrences in the SRS.

3.1.3 National Incident-Based Reporting System (NIBRS)

Problems with the relative inflexibility of UCR structures were already apparent by the early 1980s. After several calls for the creation of a new UCR program, the FBI and BJS formed a joint task force in 1982 to oversee a study by Abt Associates Inc., which led to a major planning conference in 1984 and ultimately to a final report, the Blueprint for the Future of the Uniform Crime Reporting Program (Poggio et al., 1985). The Blueprint called for implementation of “unit-record” data collection within a tiered structure: All agencies would be asked to submit incident and arrest information in incident level detail, NIBRS covers a substantially broader array of crime/offense types than the traditional SRS, as depicted in Table 2.1 below. Like the traditional SRS, in which contributing agencies are expected to file both “offenses known to police” and arrest counts for Part I crimes but only arrest data for Part II crimes, NIBRS

recognizes a distinction between “Group A” and “Group B” offenses. As in the SRS, only arrests are to be reported for the Group B crimes while highly detailed incident-level data is supposed to be filed for Group A crimes. A critical difference is that the list of Group A offenses (subject to the most detailed reporting) is vastly longer than both the lists of Group B offenses and the list of Part I offenses focused on by the SRS.

Table 2.1 Offenses Covered by National Incident-Based Reporting System (NIBRS) and Summary Reporting System (SRS), Uniform Crime Reporting Program

Offense Codes		Description
NIBRS	SRS	
NIBRS Group A Offenses		
09	1	<i>Homicide offenses</i>
09A	1a	Murder and nonnegligent manslaughter
09B	1b	Negligent manslaughter
100	—	Kidnapping/abduction
11	2,17	<i>Sex offenses</i>
11A	2a	Rape (except statutory rape)
—	2b	Attempts to commit rape
—	2c	Historical rape ^a
11B	17	Sodomy
11C	17	Sexual assault with an object
11D	17	Fondling
—	17	Sex offenses (except rape and prostitution and commercialized vice)
36A	—	Incest ^a
36B	—	Statutory rape ^a
120	3a–d	Robbery
13	4	<i>Assault offenses</i>
13A	4a–d	Aggravated assault
13B	4e/9	Simple assault
13C	—	Intimidation
200	8a–j	Arson
210	—	Extortion/blackmail
220	5a–c	Burglary/breaking and entering
23	6	<i>Larceny/theft offenses</i>
23A	6Xa	Pocket-picking
23B	6Xb	Purse-snatching
23C	6Xc	Shoplifting
23D	6Xg	Theft from building
23E	6Xh	Theft from coin-operated device or machine
23F	6Xd	Theft from motor vehicles
23G	6Xe	Theft of motor vehicle parts and accessories
23H	6Xf	Theft of bicycles
23H	6Xi	All other larceny
240	7a–c	Motor vehicle theft
250	10	Counterfeiting and forgery
26	11	<i>Fraud offenses</i>
26A	11	False pretenses/swindle/confidence game
26B	11	Credit card/automated teller machine fraud
26C	11	Impersonation
26D	11	Welfare fraud
26E	11	Wire fraud
26F	—	Identity theft ^b
26G	—	Hacking/computer invasion ^b

Table 2.1 (continued)

270	12	Embezzlement
280	13	Stolen property offenses
290	14	Destruction/damage/vandalism of property (except arson)
35	18	<i>Drug offenses</i>
35A	18	Drug/narcotic violations
35B	—	Drug equipment violations
370	—	Pornography/obscene material
39	19	<i>Gambling offenses</i>
39A	19	Betting/wagering
39B	19	Operating/promoting/assisting gambling
39C	19	Gambling equipment violations
39D	19	Sports tampering
40	16	<i>Prostitution offenses</i>
40A	16a	Prostitution
40B	16b	Assisting or promoting prostitution
40C	16c	Purchasing prostitution
510	—	Bribery
520	15	Weapon law violations
64	A-B	<i>Human trafficking offenses</i>
64A	A	Human trafficking, commercial sex acts
64B	B	Human trafficking, involuntary servitude
720	—	Animal cruelty ^c
NIBRS Group B Offenses		
90A	—	Bad checks (except counterfeit or forged checks)
90B	25	Vagrancy
90B	28	Curfew and loitering laws (persons under 18)
90C	24	Disorderly conduct
90D	21	Driving under the influence
90E	23	Drunkenness (except driving under the influence)
90F	20	Family offenses, nonviolent
90G	22	Liquor law violations (except driving under the influence)
90H	—	Peeping Tom
90J	—	Trespass of real property
90Z	26	All other offenses
Reportable Offenses, But Deemed "Not a Crime"		
09C	—	Justifiable homicide
90I	29	Runaways (persons under 18)
—	27	Suspicion

Table 2.1 (continued)

NOTE: NIBRS offense codes take the form *NNX*, where a blank for *X* denotes a top-level grouping category, a zero (0) denotes a specific offense without further subcategories, or an alphabetic character for *X* denotes a specific offense subcategory.

^a Federal Bureau of Investigation (2013a) continues to list incest and statutory rape under a parent category 36 “Sex offenses, nonforcible,” despite the 2011 change in definitions to eliminate “forcible” as a descriptor of rape. Other sources, such as the request to the U.S. Office of Management and Budget (OMB) for clearance for NIBRS collection attach these 36-stub categories under the broader heading of 11 “Sex offenses;” we follow the latter approach. “Historical rape” refers to data compiled under the pre-2011 definition.

^b Data collection on two new fraud offenses is to begin in calendar year 2016.

^c Data collection on 720 “Animal cruelty” is to begin in 2015, with tabulation effective in calendar year 2016, pending OMB approval.

SOURCE: Adapted from Federal Bureau of Investigation (2013a), with reference to Federal Bureau of Investigation (2013b), Criminal Justice Information Services Division (2015a:9), and Criminal Justice Information Services Division (2015b:6). For the NIBRS Information Collection Review package submitted to OMB, search www.reginfo.gov for OMB control number 1110-0058.

3.1.4 Strengths and Weaknesses of UCR/NIBRS Coverage

From the particular lens of the program’s coverage of crime types, we already characterized in Module 4 what is simultaneously the UCR Program’s most significant strength *and* weakness. The problem with the list of crimes developed by the assembled law enforcement agencies is not that it is uninformative—the original Part I crimes were chosen in large part for their salience to the general public, and they remain serious events of interest today. Rather, the issues are that the list of Part I crimes have so successfully “defined”—and limited—what is commonly meant by “crime” and that the lists of both Part I and Part II crimes have remained so relatively invariant over the years. More generally, the fundamental challenge of crime coverage in the UCR Program’s data collections is major uncertainty as to what information is really at hand. In the case of the SRS, the problem returns to the language used that—the SRS really and necessarily produces *estimates* of crime totals and rates. The historical branding of UCR tabulations as *Crime in a country* contributes to a somewhat exaggerated sense of comprehensiveness and absolute accuracy—for several reasons, not least of which is that the UCR logically cannot encompass *total* crime because not all crime is reported to the police. In addition, the myriad tables of the annual *Crime in a country* report each come with considerable fine print in companion “data declaration” and “methodology” documents. So, the UCR data tables are

characterized in the report text and overview summaries as having impressive overall participation rates.

As you can see the tables typically avoid mention of the extent to which individual law enforcement agencies actually submitted a full 12 months' worth of data (or whether and how many months of missing data had to be imputed), nor do they indicate whether all departments provided data on all the types of crime in the UCR framework. In essence, the SRS tabulations create the impression of being a complete census of crime activity, yet do nothing to suggest that individual entries in the tables may have considerable variation due to nonresponse. This level of uncertainty is undoubtedly elevated for the newer crimes—for example, arson, human trafficking, and so forth. Likewise, in the case of NIBRS, the problem is even more acute because adoption of the new reporting standards has been much slower than hoped. Alas, NIBRS coverage is such that it does not suffer from the false impression of being fully comprehensive and authoritative; NIBRS take-up, varying by state, is such that the accumulation of NIBRS data cannot be said to be representative of the nation as a whole. Similarly, while NIBRS adds a substantial number of new crime types to the mix, the relatively low take up rate is such that NIBRS's strong potential for understanding crime in context remains largely unexplored by researchers and unknown to the general public.

4.0 Conclusion

The complexity of statistics is further visualized and explained by the presentation in tables of part I and II classification of crime. There is no doubt that crime statistics emanates from criminal activities which is not static, neither is it easy to define. With the dynamics of crime in scope and bound, there is always the need to classify and reclassify crime (which is also problematic) in order for it to be easy for comprehension and outlive its usefulness for analysis and impactful research and policy making.

5.0 Summary

The state, scope and core components of the UCR Program of compiling statistics was typically focused on as one among others in the compilation of national data on crime with regards to the statistics (figures) that are often complex and dynamic, from one state to another, either in terms of how they were compiled or how they are eventually recorded. Other times these changes may be confusing if definitions of what constitute or characterise a crime and associated events and methodologies used in compiling the data are not well defined and explained in terms of the caveat involved. Similarly, this unit was able to capture the coverage of different typologies of crime (part I and II) in the UCR overtime, those added to the larger UCR and NCVS data collection. Cases of multiple, “competing” data collections using different methodologies established to examine the same type of criminal were identified as one among many problems facing statistics and interpretation of nationally compiled database. Thus the introduction of the *National Incident-Based Reporting System (NIBRS)* envisioned as the next-generation core UCR—that is, as a replacement for the traditional Summary Report System SRS to span a wider array of offenses.

6.0 Self-Assessment Exercise

1. What are the Core Components of the UCR Program?
2. Why is the SRS often referenced as “Return A”
3. Identify the major limitation of the SRS
4. List at least three (3) each of Part I” and “Part II” crimes.
5. What are the major issues facing the basic unit for “crime statistics” in SRS and NIBRS?
6. What does the statistics on Law Enforcement Officers Killed or Assaulted (LEOKA) addresses beyond the data?
7. What does Hierarchy Rule in UCR connote?

7.0 References/Further Reading

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Unit 2

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1.0 Introduction

With the recurring fact, that most crime and victimisations are not reported in the UCR system, that is there is far more crime than ever is reported to the police (and so counted in the existing UCR data), and the misses were hardly small: For example in some American cities, crime types, UCR/police-report totals were one-half or one-third the levels suggested by the survey, suggesting that in some cities “only one-tenth of the total number of certain kinds of crimes are reported to the police” (President’s Commission on Law Enforcement and Administration of Justice, 1967:v). The commission’s report led directly to the creation of what is now the Office of Justice Programs (and then known as the Law Enforcement Assistance Administration [LEAA]), and fully realized versions of the commission’s prototype studies—the national representative survey, along with a survey of businesses and a few city-specific surveys—quickly became part of the new unit’s transmit. Formally, the full-fledged national survey (first fielded in 1972, sponsored by what developed into BJS with data collection by the U.S. Census Bureau) was but one part of the broader National Crime Surveys (plural) program, though it rapidly came to be known by the NCS abbreviation. However, an early National Research Council (1976) review of the program advised channelling resources into the national survey and scrapping the business-

and city-specific components; upon implementation of this advice, the survey continued under the National Crime Survey (singular) banner. Several years later, the first wave of improvement and refinement took hold: A broad redesign consortium worked through a comprehensive overhaul of the survey (in particular, improvements in its routine for a “screening” interview, as described below [Biderman et al., 1986]). Following that redesign, it was also decided to rename the survey as the NCVS to denote its new approach. Data collection under the redesigned protocols began in 1992 and continued for over a decade, when the time came for another reappraisal—this time, inspired at least equally by fiscal realities as by the desire for measurement improvement.

2.0 Intended Learning Outcomes (ILOs)

Generally, this unit intend to show to the student the inexhaustibility of both the UCR/NCVS as model/instruments of statistics gathering that must be complimentary and at the same time that will still not be able to give us all the necessary crime statistics in the society. For the fact that society comprises of so many institutions and activities that are changing overtime, the need of supplementary surveys must be brought in. at the end students are expected to comprehend:

: the goals driving the construction of the NCVS as a survey tool.

1. The importance of the NCVS Supplements.
2. The fundamental structure and consequences of NCVS and lastly
3. the principal strength and weakness of the NCVS

3.0 Main Content

3.1 Basic Structure and Crime Coverage of the Base NCVS

Throughout the NCVS various distinct “lives” as a data collection program, the NCVS has maintained a fundamental structure—consisting (stated in simplified form) of personal interviews between a Census Bureau field representative and all individual members of a household age 12 and above, each beginning with a “screener” section meant to trigger recall (and count) of individual incidences of violence and followed by completion of a detailed “incident report” interview for each incident enumerated in the screener section. An important feature of this structure is that the use of crime-type labels and legalistic language is avoided to

the greatest extent possible in the interview: neither the survey respondent nor the field representative is called upon to label a particular offense or incident as a robbery, an aggravated assault, etc. Instead, the survey's intent is to collect descriptive information on and basic attributes of the incident, in order to permit crime type(s) to be derived in post hoc data preparation. Invoking the language that we will use later in this report, it may be said that the base NCVS uses a rough attribute-based classification, wherein crime types are derived algorithmically based on the presence/absence or levels of a set of variables (e.g., whether the incident included an element of taking property from a victim or whether entry to a site was achieved by force) rather than matching the letter of a legal definition. In combination with the reasons for the survey's creation, the NCVS's fundamental structure has major consequences for the types of crimes covered by the survey:

1. The survey/personal interview about individual victimization is uniquely suited to measure some crime types that are not well handled by police report data—but rules out coverage of some crimes and complicates others: The canonical crime type made out-of-scope by the nature of the NCVS is homicide, inasmuch as the victim logically cannot provide details about that particular incident. But, more subtly, survey designers recognized from the outset that the personal interview context created inherent difficulties in measuring crimes where the distinction between “victim” and “offender” is blurry or nonexistent. Ennis (1967:3) commented that “people are simply not going to report their participation in illegal activities ranging from violation of gambling, game, or liquor laws to abortion or the use of narcotics. Nor is it desirable for the survey to be used as an instrument of confession” of misdeeds. The NCVS's current technical documentation (Bureau of Justice Statistics, 2014b:5) explicit articulation of “crimes not covered by the NCVS” expands upon the listing of these borderline offense types, “such as public drunkenness, drug abuse, prostitution, illegal gambling, con games, and blackmail,” adding also that the survey at present does not measure “kidnapping, verbal threats over the phone, and other forms of crime involving social media, arson, fraud, vandalism, drunk driving, and commercial entities.”

2. A major initial (and ongoing) objective of the NCVS is to complement the UCR, which requires consistency with UCR definitions and protocols: National Research Council (2008:§ 2–A) provides more extensive detail on the historical goals and objectives of the NCVS, but it is fair to say that two goals dominated the early construction of the survey. The first was a rare and revolutionary (both, for the time) focus on the victim’s perspective on acts that had almost invariably been viewed from the offender or incident standpoint. But equally important was the goal for the survey to measure “total” crime, not just that which is reported to police—and the contrast with the level of crime that is reported/known to the police only works effectively if the two programs are measuring roughly the same thing. Similarity in content and concept permits periodic assessment of the extent of and continued pervasiveness of the “dark figure” of crime that goes unreported to law enforcement. For instance, Langton et al. (2012) analyzed NCVS responses for 2006–2010 to conclude that just over half (52 percent) of violent victimizations go unreported, with crime-specific non-reporting rates ranging from 17 percent for motor vehicle theft to 65–67 percent for household theft and for rape and sexual assault. The analysis was based solely on NCVS response data, not on any kind of match between NCVS and UCR information—but continuity in concept does permit meaningful discussion of differences between the different sources.

For emphasis sake, both the NCVS and the UCR have roots in questions of the effectiveness of policing and law enforcement, which affected their construction and prompted a similarity in content. The full-fledged NCVS began under the aegis of the LEAA, an entity that (as its name suggests) was to provide assistance to local law enforcement agencies; the LEAA’s original statistical mandate (under which the survey was developed) was to “collect, evaluate, publish, and disseminate statistics and other information on the condition and progress of law enforcement in the several States in America” (in the Omnibus Crime Control and Safe Streets Act of 1968; 82 Stat. 207; emphasis added)—not unlike the reference to “police statistics” in the first mention of UCR data in statute. Not surprisingly, then, developers chose to principally focus the NCVS on the same crime types measured under the UCR summary, with definitions and concepts carrying over to the survey. Only later—in 1979, the

new agency was directed “to collect and analyze information concerning criminal victimization, including crimes against the elderly, and civil disputes,” and moreover to construct “data that will serve as a continuous and comparable national social indication of the prevalence, incidence, rates, extent, distribution, and attributes of crime” and related factors (93 Stat. 1176).

The upshot of these two lines of arguments is that the general list of crimes covered by the base NCVS—summarized in Box 2.4 below—looks remarkably similar to, and roughly follows, the Hierarchy Rule listing of the UCR Summary Reporting System.

Box 2.4 Basic Crime Types/Victimization Rates Estimated by National Crime Victimization Survey

The earliest form of the NCVS—the prototype survey fielded by the National Opinion Research Center (NORC), in support of the work of the President's Commission on Law Enforcement and Administration of Justice—was particularly ambitious in its crime coverage. It aimed to cover all of the "major offenses as defined by the Part I crimes" of the UCR, "suitably translated into everyday language yet retaining the vital elements." In addition, "a substantial number of Part II offenses were also included," as were "several crimes at the boundary of the criminal law, such as consumer fraud landlord-tenant problems, and family problems" (Ennis, 1967:7). This broad sweep was necessary, given the primary interest in comparison with extant UCR data, and enabled in part by deemphasizing some specific incident-level detail and conducting the interview in the classical single-respondent household survey manner (asking a single respondent whether they or anyone else in the household had experienced certain things). The specific crimes estimated in the pilot survey were: homicide, forcible rape, robbery, assaults (aggravated and simple), burglary, larceny (over \$50 or under \$50), vehicle theft, other automobile offenses (e.g., hit-and-run, reckless or drunk driving), malicious mischief or arson, forgery/counterfeiting, fraud, consumer fraud, other sex crimes, family problems (e.g., desertion, failure to provide child support), soliciting a bribe, building violations, and kidnapping.

Once started in "permanent" form as the National Crime Survey (NCS), the survey also developed stricter adherence to interviewing about personal victimization episodes (rather than "anyone in the household"). Necessarily, this involved some revision of the list of covered crimes—most notably (and logically), the omission of homicide. Attention was focused on a short list (roughly 6–7) of fundamental crime types. An early National Research Council (1976:App.D) review of the NCS identified these key crime categories as

- *Assaultive violence with theft*, with subcategories for rape, attempted rape, serious assault (with or without weapon), and minor assault;
- *Assaultive violence without theft*, with subcategories for rape, attempted rape, serious assault (with or without weapon), attempted assault (with or without weapon), and minor assault;
- *Personal theft without assault*, with subcategories for robbery (with or without weapon), attempted robbery (with or without weapon), purse snatch without force (completed or attempted), and pocket picking;
- *Burglary*, with subcategories for forcible entry—nothing taken (with or without property damage), forcible entry—something taken, unlawful entry without force, and attempted forcible entry;
- *Larceny*, with subcategories for value of stolen goods of under \$10, \$10–24, \$25–49, \$50–99, \$100–249, \$250 or more, and value not available/not known, as well as attempted larceny; and
- *Auto theft*, with subcategories for theft of car, theft of other vehicle, attempted theft of car, and attempted theft of other vehicle.

Again, the categories were chosen to enable comparison (if not achieve lock-step conformity in label and definition) with UCR figures. The NCS designers stepped back a bit from the NORC prototype in its handling of rape (and sexual assault, generally), which it considered a form of assaultive violence but declined to single out as a top-level category; then, as now, rape remains a sensitive topic, but the norms of the early 1970s (when the NCS took shape) treated it as a particularly taboo (and interview-disruptive) topic.

Box 2.4 (continued)

Over time, the importance of data collection on rape (and sexual assault) became more clear and some concepts shifted to better match UCR practice (e.g., equating "robbery" with theft including an element of assault). Accordingly, by the time of the NCS's extensive late-1980s redesign (and rebranding as the NCVS in 1992), the high-level short list of NCVS crimes had shifted to "rape, personal robbery, assault, personal and household larceny, burglary, and motor vehicle theft." In line with that redesign, vandalism was briefly added to the list of crimes formally covered and estimated by the NCVS, but it was removed several years later.

One slight liability of the NCVS's great flexibility is that there exist multiple (and slightly differing) lists of the current crime classification used in analyzing the survey. The codebook for the 2014 public NCVS data file details the level-of-seriousness hierarchy used in processing NCVS returns, as follows (Bureau of Justice Statistics, 2014a):

Personal Crime (Violent)

1. Completed rape
2. Attempted rape
3. Sexual assault with serious assault
4. Sexual assault with minor assault
5. Completed robbery with injury from serious assault
6. Completed robbery with injury from minor assault
7. Completed robbery without injury
8. Attempted robbery with injury from serious assault
9. Attempted robbery with injury from minor assault
10. Attempted robbery without injury
11. Completed aggravated assault with injury
12. Attempted aggravated assault with weapon
13. Threatened assault with weapon
14. Simple assault completed with injury
15. Sexual assault without injury
16. Unwanted sexual contact without force

17. Assault without weapon without injury

18. Verbal threat of rape
19. Verbal threat of sexual assault
20. Verbal threat of assault

Personal Crime (Nonviolent)

21. Completed purse-snatching
22. Attempted purse-snatching
23. Completed pocket-picking

Property Crime

24. Completed burglary, forcible entry
25. Completed burglary, unlawful entry without force
26. Attempted forcible entry
27. Completed motor vehicle theft
28. Attempted motor vehicle theft
29. Completed theft, less than \$10
30. Completed theft, \$10–49
31. Completed theft, \$50–249
32. Completed theft, \$250 or greater
33. Completed theft, value unknown
34. Attempted theft

This listing of covered crimes is generally consistent with the "crime classification taxonomy in the NCVS" articulated in the survey's recent technical documentation (Bureau of Justice Statistics, 2014b:4). The technical documentation listing combines or collapses some specific offenses (e.g., elements 3, 4, and 15 above are combined into one single sexual assault measure and the theft of items valued at less than \$10 and at \$10–49 are combined); notably, the technical documentation does not include elements 16 (unwanted sexual contact without force) or the verbal threat elements 18–20. But still a third list exists in the U.S. Census Bureau (2012:C2-3) manual for NCVS interviewers—which simplifies but is likewise generally consistent with the codebook list. It, too, omits unwanted sexual contact—but adds verbal threat of personal robbery—as a violent crime.

The NCVS is an interesting hybrid in that it both employs and eschews a rigid hierarchical rule. On a quarterly basis, a crime type is allocated to each Incident Report in the incoming NCVS data (which would have previously undergone basic editing and coding performed on a monthly cycle). "Incidents that cannot be classified according to the crime classification algorithm (e.g.,

arson, confidence games, and kidnapping) are deleted from the file,” and the level-of-seriousness algorithm—embodied in the final list in Box 2.4—is used to identify the single most serious offense associated with an Incident Report (Bureau of Justice Statistics, 2014b:47). It is that single, most serious offense that is used for basic tabulation and presentation of the survey’s results. However, the public-use NCVS data files contain at least a secondary offense code—as well as the attribute and variable data used to derive the type- of-crime codes—so that researchers may examine and classify incidents in a very flexible manner.

As a survey, the level of detail that can be gathered by the base NCVS is immense, bounded only by constraints in comprehension in posing questions to respondents and restrictions against making the interviews unduly burdensome. Yet, at the same time, the survey fundamentally queries respondents about events that may be enormously consequential in people’s lives but that are—in the statistical sense, and fortunately in the societal sense—relatively rare events. For any given individual respondent, asked to report incidences of crime and violence in the past 6 months, the chances that the interview will yield zero “incident reports” are considerable, simply because there is no such activity for the respondent to report. Estimation based on the survey requires finding occurrences of incidents of a particular type and making inference from that sample—and so, of necessity, two competing dynamics operate at once. The flexibility of the survey’s content makes it possible to articulate very fine categories of crime, with different attributes such as weapon use or the value of property involved in an incident—at the expense of precision and volatility in estimates. Simultaneously, NCVS publications focus on coarser constructs such as all “violent crime,” all “property crime,” or all acts of serious violence between family members, because those broader categories (and changes over time within them) can be estimated more precisely.

Over the years, BJS has acquired several direct mandates through Congressional action to collect certain information on criminal victimization in the NCVS. For instance, the Crime Victims with Disabilities Awareness Act of 1998 (P.L. 105-301) directed that the NCVS produce measures of “the nature of crimes against individuals with developmental disabilities” and “the specific characteristics of the victims of those crimes,” which led to the eventual addition of several

questions to the survey (including one asking the respondent to judge whether any physical or mental impairment provided an opportunity for their victimization). Two years later, the Protecting Seniors from Fraud Act of 2000 (P.L. 106-534) explicitly mandated that BJS, “as part of each National Crime Victimization Survey,” collect information on “crimes targeting or disproportionately affecting seniors,” including “crime risk factors for seniors” such as the “time and locations at which crimes victimizing seniors are most likely to occur.” This mandate, in part, led to the eventual fielding of an Identity Theft Supplement to the NCVS for the first time in 2008.

Most recently, in 2015 as part of the funding for the American Bureau of Justice Statistics (BJS), ‘honour violence’ was included to the list of National Crime Victimization Survey, though without specifying explicitly what is meant by “honour violence.” One common interpretation of honour violence is punishment for disobeying or disrespecting family dignity, particularly acts against women or girls in families. But the range of interpretations could also extend to “stand your ground”/self-defence laws. Even under a more generic definition of “honour violence” as violence committed to avenge a perceived slight to personal or family dignity, the explicit designation of the NCVS as the vehicle is surprising, both because construction of such a measure requires strong speculation by victims about the motives of their attackers and because the most extreme variant of honour violence (honour killing) would be out-of-scope for the NCVS (like all homicide).

3.2. NCVS Supplements

The phrasing ‘NCVS Supplements’ and Box 2.4 (Basic Crime Types/Victimization Rates Estimated by National Crime Victimization Survey), speaking of the coverage of crimes in the “base” NCVS, is deliberate, because a great strength of the NCVS is its capacity to accommodate supplemental modules of questions—focused on different possible crime types or on the incidence of crime within unique populations—that can broaden the survey’s content. Typically conducted with sponsorship from some other federal agency, some of these topic supplements have been purely one-shot efforts while others have been conducted on a somewhat more regular schedule, and the supplements have also provided a forum for survey questions and

content to make their way into the base NCVS interviews. Some of the supplements that have their way into the NCVS are:

- a. Police-Public Contact Survey (PPCS) that asks citizens about the prevalence and characteristics of their contacts with law enforcement personnel and other parts of the criminal justice system (including such settings as traffic stops). The PPCS might not yield estimates of new/different crime types, but it is a rich potential source of information for understanding crime (and reaction to it) in broader context.
- b. School Crime Supplement, conducted in collaboration with the National Center for Education Statistics. The supplement prompts 12–18-year-old school attendees to describe experiences of victimization; accordingly, it is uniquely poised to gather systematic survey-based information about juvenile victimizations by bullying or gang-related violence and the prevalence of drugs in the school environment.
- c. Identity theft survey/supplement: pioneering questions related to identity theft were added to the NCVS questionnaire, providing the basis for some of the first quantitative measures of certain types of fraud (Baum, 2007) intended to estimate prevalence of several variants of identity theft, ranging from unauthorized use of credit card or checking accounts to misuse of personal information to obtain benefits or renting housing. Significantly, the supplement queried for information on the time and resources necessary for victims of identity theft to resolve the problems, and on whether the incidents were reported to credit card companies/financial institutions or to law enforcement (Bureau of Justice Statistics, 2014b; Langton and Planty, 2010; National Research Council 2008).
- d. the Supplemental Victimization Survey—which served as the most extensive survey yet conducted to assess the level and characteristics of criminal harassment generally and the specific offense of stalking. The generic title was chosen to avoid direct mention of the focus on ‘stalking’ - to avoid biasing the responses of individuals and the subsequent estimates (Baum et al., 2009; Catalano, 2012),

- e. Workplace Risk Supplement is one among several other supplements that have delved into specific crime types or the effects of crime on special populations to examining nonfatal violence in the workplace.

3.3 Conceptual Strengths and Weaknesses of NCVS Crime Coverage

In terms of the types of crime for which the NCVS can generate measures, and as a data collection platform in general, the principal strength and weakness of the NCVS can be stated simply and directly. Its principal strength is its flexibility, both analytically and in terms of content. It is unique in its capacity to generate estimates using multiple units of analysis, including incident-, person-, and household-levels of analysis. To “emulate” and facilitate comparison with the UCR, NCVS estimates can be analyzed at the incident-level, assessing levels and rates of change in incidence of crimes of particular types (not to mention that it can be used to generate different metrics of “harm” induced by such crimes other than the raw count). One of the survey’s original hallmarks was that it shed light on the commonly overlooked perspective of the individual-person victim, and can be used to study individual reactions to and losses due to crime. But the nature of its collection also enables the use of the household as the unit of analysis, and so can start to generate insights into household and family effects of crime and violence. Finally, the NCVS can provide a unique perspective on criminal offending. In its incident reports, the NCVS asks victims of crime about the number and character of criminal incidents they experience, gathering information about what victims know about the offenders involved in incidents. Certainly, there are limits to which victims know or can know with precision the motives or characteristics of offenders, but some useful information is possible, particularly for offenses involving face-to-face contact between victim and offender. Accordingly, though it is best known for its victimization measures, the NCVS (and its precursor, the NCS) has been used to construct crime incidence rates (by different characteristics of offender) independent of those gathered in police-report data. Such data have been used to study the similarities and differences in criminal offending as estimated by police-report data and by victim survey data that include crimes not reported to the police (see, e.g., Biderman and Lynch, 1991; Lynch and Addington, 2007b; McDowall and Loftin, 1992). The NCVS also has

been used to produce rates of violent criminal offending over time, from 1973 to the present, for males and females (e.g., Lauritsen et al., 2009) and for persons of specific race and ethnic groups (e.g., Steffensmeier et al., 2011), and for some age groups such as juveniles (e.g., Lynch, 2002). In addition, trends in these survey data have been compared to trends in police estimates of crime for some types of offenses across a limited number of areas, such as metropolitan places (e.g., Lauritsen and Schaum, 2005) and urban, suburban, and rural places (Berg and Lauritsen, 2015; National Research Council, 2009a:28).

3.4 Weakness of the NCVS

However, the principal weakness of the NCVS is that:

1. its flexibility can only be pushed so far: It is designed to be a nationally representative survey, and so is best suited to produce national-level estimates. It is, moreover, a survey principally for budgetary reasons.
2. The smaller sample sizes, combined with the underlying premise of querying for details of statistically rare events meant that, the NCVS was falling short of its basic goal to estimate the level and annual rate of change in criminal victimization.
3. The delay in compilation does not give room for annual data comparison, as it takes over a for the statistics to be well compiled and analysed

It should be noted clearly that these weaknesses are not yet completely remedied, but that BJS is currently engaged in efforts to further address them: refining analysis and sample in order to derive some subnational estimates from the NCVS data and, within tight budgetary parameters, having made substantial effort to restore some part of the sample size cuts. In short, then, it remains true that the NCVS's principal weakness is that it is sharply limited in its capacity for highly detailed annual geographic, demographic, or crime-type disaggregation, simply because a large number of events must occur in the data in order to yield reliable estimates. Individual states, and perhaps some large law enforcement departments, have fielded their own victimization surveys, but the NCVS sample is not designed to produce estimates of crime at the local-jurisdiction level that would be most useful to a variety of users. NCVS estimates certainly

cannot be used for making comparisons to police-report-based estimates for a particular (arbitrarily small) city or police department precinct.

4.0 Conclusion

There is strong demand for comprehensive, yet detailed, information, statistic or data about crime by a broad range of users. The uses of crime and criminal justice data/statistics to inform a variety of stakeholders (who are also users) are overwhelming. The availability of statistics in this regard promotes the capacity of organizations to conduct evaluations of various criminal justice programs and public policies. No single data collection can completely fulfil the needs of every user and stakeholder, providing data with sufficient detail, timeliness, and quality to address every interest of importance. Any structure devised to measure “crime anywhere in the world” should necessarily be conceptualized as a system of data collection efforts, and informative details about the collection and quality of the distinct components in the data system should be included to help ensure proper interpretation and use of the data.

5.0 Summary

This unit examines the general list of crimes covered by the base of NCVS as summarized in Box 2.4 and throws highlight on the Hierarchy Rule listing of the UCR Summary Reporting System which inform of us that in a multiple crime situation involving the same persons, the most severe of all should be recorded. In the same manner the conceptual strengths and weaknesses of NCVS as Crime Coverage and statistical were discussed, of which it was highlighted that in all the combination of the UCR and NCVS programmes and information gathering are not exhaustive, thus the need for other supplementary addendum to capture more information hitherto not captured either in the UCR/NCVS instrument.

6.0 Self-Assessment Exercise

1. Highlight and discuss the two goals that dominated the early construction of the NCVS as a survey tool.
2. List at least three of these NCVS Supplements and state their importance.

3. What are the major consequence of the NCVS's fundamental structure?
4. What are the principal strength and weakness of the NCVS?
5. What do you understand by NCVS Supplements?

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Unit 3: THE WIDER FIELD OF “CRIME” DATA

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1.0 Introduction

The NCVS and the UCR Program’s data collections is omnibus in terms of their coverage of crime and related topics. They are not fully comprehensive over the full extent of “crime,” yet each does still cover some considerable terrain, with the intent of collecting information in a standard way. Yet crime, and related behaviour, is of sufficient public importance that numerous other data collections have emerged over the years, to cover some very specific offense types in a more detailed manner or to focus attention on a specific victim (or offender) population group in more detail than is possible in the more omnibus, nationally compiled crime datasets. These data systems are not routinely thought of as being part of the nation’s crime statistics system but—nonetheless—are sources that *might* serve as sources of indicators of some types of crime. The data collections that touch on some aspect of “crime” comprise a very rough patchwork—the inevitable result of different data resources being developed for different purposes, to cover different constituencies or populations, as has been the developmental path for national statistics generally.

2.0 Intended Learning Outcomes (ILOs)

This unit basically intends to inform students that there are wider field of “crime” data, targeted at exhuming information that have been covered or overshadowed by the summaries in UCR and the NCVS. Among these are statistics of :

- crime in and around secondary and tertiary institutions
- crime and victimization in a closed/total institution like the military
- law enforcement, investigations, punitive measures and justice (often not observed by the public)
- fire incidents, nature, trends, losses, compensation etc
- child abuse and neglects in society

3.0 Main Content

3.1 Law-Enforcement and Public-Safety Based Sources of Crime Data: Crime on College and University Campuses

A typical example of crime data from Postsecondary education institutions began in the US as result of the rising crime and insecurities in the 1990s peculiar secondary and tertiary settings. This involves the compiling and regularly disclosing of statistics on crime and security on campuses. The reporting is effectively mandatory on most institutions because it was made a condition for institutions’ eligibility for federal student financial aid Funds (scholarship/bursary). In addition to required statements on campus security procedures, the 1990 law mandated that occurrences of six types of crime—the UCR Part I offenses of murder, rape, robbery, aggravated assault, burglary, and motor vehicle theft, albeit not explicitly labelled as such—be tallied for the current and the two preceding school years, to include “offenses reported to [either] campus security authorities or local police agencies.” In addition, the law directed that arrest statistics be collected regarding on-campus liquor law, drug abuse, and weapon possession violations. Though, written to include offenses handled by law enforcement in the communities surrounding college campuses. The campus crime reporting law vested collection authority directly in the U.S. Department of Education, where it continues to be operated by the Office of Postsecondary Education (OPE). Eight years later, the crime reporting provisions were revised and expanded, and renamed in memory of Lehigh University freshman Jeanne Clery, who was murdered in her

campus residence hall room in 1986 (P.L. 105-244, 112 Stat. 1742). In terms of crime covered, the new Clery Act (Formally, the Jeanne Clery Disclosure of Campus Security Policy and Campus Crimes Statistics Act; codified at 20 USC § 1092(f) with companion U.S. Department of Education rules for compliance at 34 CFR § 668.46) expanded the list of reportable offenses to include manslaughter (distinct from murder) and replaced “rape” with “sex offenses, forcible or nonforcible.”

The act also paralleled the structure of the Hate Crime Statistics Act and directed that the offense counts be disaggregated to include crimes “in which the person is intentionally selected because of the actual or perceived race, gender, religion, sexual orientation, ethnicity, or disability of the victim.” (Simultaneously, arson was added to the list of reportable offenses and the arrest counts on liquor, drug, or weapon possession charges were made subject to past two - year reporting, but none of these were made subject to the hate crime categorization).

In terms of crime coverage, then, the campus crime statistics collected under the Clery Act are closely patterned after the UCR Summary Reporting System, with some additions directed by the enabling law. That said, OPE’s website for dissemination of the data (<http://ope.ed.gov/security/>) takes care to caution users against directly comparing UCR figures with the OPE compiled data, because the latter includes a mixture of data from local law enforcement agencies (which should report data to UCR) and campus security forces (which may not be so obligated). The Clery Act data also differ from the UCR and other traditional crime statistics programs in that their primary means of dissemination is dictated by law: The same law that requires the data to be collected mandates that an annual security report be published and disclosed/disseminated by all the individual schools to not just current students and employees but to “any applicant for enrolment or employment upon request” (20 U.S.C. § 1092(f)(1)). There is not, however, a standalone document akin to *Crime in the United States* that draws inference from the nationally compiled data. In addition to the “data analysis cutting tool” on the OPE’s website, the Clery Act data are accessible through the National Center for Education Statistics’ College Navigator interface (<https://nces.ed.gov/collegenavigator/>). The above can also be domesticated in gathering

statistics in secondary and tertiary institutions especially with recourse to the incessant rise in cultism and gang violence.

3.2. Defense Incident-Based Reporting System (DIBRS) (Applicable to Military/paramilitary institutions)

Events in the military are often not disclosed in the open. The military as a closed institution is encumbered shrouded in secrecy. However over the years with the new paradigm shift requiring the need for the civil-military relation and cooperation, it is gradually becoming an open institution in some countries, again the US military stands out. Members of the U.S. armed forces, personnel at U.S. military installations, and enemy combatants and prisoners in military custody (This is a highly simplified version of the description of all persons governed by the Uniform Code of Military Justice, including detailed discussion of what exactly it means to be a “member” of the armed forces;) are subject to the adjudication processes outlined in the Uniform Code of Military Justice (UCMJ), comprising Title 10, Chapter 47 of the U.S. Code. Subchapter X of the UCMJ lists a battery of “punitive measures”—in essence, a set of sentencing guidelines dictating what offenses are governed by a court-martial and which incur other penalties; in so doing, the UCMJ lays out an array of crime types unique to the military context, as described in Box 2.5. below:

Box 2.5 Crime Types Uniquely Defined by the Uniform Code of Military Justice

The following are among the crime types (or “punitive articles”) defined by the Uniform Code of Military Justice (UCMJ) that have designated codes in the Defense Incident-Based Reporting System (DIBRS) but that would “convert” to category 90Z (“all other offenses”) in the National Incident-Based Reporting System (NIBRS; as per Table 2.1):

- *Fraudulent/unlawful enlistment into or separation from the armed forces* (10 U.S.C. § 883–884);
- Various offenses related to *absence from duty*, ranging from simple or short-term *absence without leave/unauthorized absence* (10 U.S.C. 886) to much more severe *desertion* (10 U.S.C. § 885)—which itself has major subcategories for going absent from unit/duty with intent to remain away, quitting unit with intent to avoid hazardous duty, or enlisting/joining another U.S. armed service or entering any foreign armed service without being separated from current enlistment;
- Various gradations concerning *disrespectful behavior toward officers*, from basic *disrespect toward a superior commissioned officer to contempt toward officials* (“using contemptuous words against”) including the president, Congress, or state government officials (10 U.S.C. 888–889), to *insubordination toward a noncommissioned officer* (10 U.S.C. 891);
- *General failure to obey orders or regulations* or dereliction in performance of duties (10 U.S.C. § 892);
- *Mutiny and sedition* (10 U.S.C. § 894), the refusal to obey orders with the intent of usurping military authority and the creation of revolt/violence with the intent of usurping civil authority, respectively;
- *Aiding, harboring or protecting, or communicating to the enemy* (10 U.S.C. 904);
- *Misbehavior before the enemy* (10 U.S.C. § 899), shorthand for any of nine behaviors “before or in the presence of the enemy,” including running away, “shamefully abandon[ing or] surrender[ing]” any command or property, “cast[ing] away his arms or ammunition,” and “quit[ting] his place of duty to plunder or pillage;”
- *Malingering* (10 U.S.C. § 115)—feigning illness or physical/mental disability—or the deliberate self-infliction of injury, in order to avoid duty; and
- *Misbehavior of sentinel* (10 U.S.C. § 913), punishing particular dereliction (including being “found drunk or sleeping upon his post, or leav[ing] it” without proper relief); and
- The ill-specified but on-the-books offense of *conduct unbecoming an officer and a gentleman* (10 U.S.C. § 933)

Other crimes defined in the UCMJ either directly match NIBRS categories (e.g., murder and robbery) or map reasonably closely to them (e.g., the UCMJ offense of “drunk on duty” [10 U.S.C. § 912] as applied to persons “other than a sentinel or look-out”, which maps to NIBRS’ “drunk and disorderly” code). In addition to personal and property crimes, the UCMJ defines what are generally termed inchoate offenses—as those inchoate offenses apply to other UCMJ-specific offenses. So, for example, the UCMJ defines the inchoate offense of (*criminal*) *solicitation* (10 U.S.C. § 882), covering the solicitation or advising of other persons to desert, mutiny, misbehave before the enemy, or commit acts of sedition. Similar wording holds for (*criminal*) conspiracy or functioning as an accessory.

As mentioned above in unit 2, the enactment of the Uniform Federal Crime Reporting Act of 1988 did not result in much increased reporting to the UCR Program—but it did partially spur the development of what would become the Defense Incident-Based Reporting System (DIBRS). DIBRS was principally developed within the U.S. Department of Defense (DoD) to coordinate and bring order to the inputs from the numerous law enforcement agencies that serve within and support the functions of the nation's armed services. But a central data repository system also became essential to meet a number of legal mandates—not just reporting to the FBI under the Uniform Federal Crime Reporting Act, but also to satisfy recordkeeping requirements imposed by the Victims' Rights and Restitution Act of 1990 and the Brady Handgun Violence Prevention Act. On October 15, 1996, DoD published Directive 7730.47, "Defense Incident-Based Reporting System (DIBRS)," to introduce the system and implement legal requirements, and to enable responsiveness to anticipated congressional and DoD information needs. Per a technical document regarding the system (U.S. Department of Defense, 2010), DoD areas with responsibility for populating and reporting to DIBRS run the gamut of the internal military justice system:

- *Law enforcement:* general police operations under the broader DoD aegis, such as those conducted by each military service's military police unit, by the Pentagon Police, as well as by Defense agency civilian police;
- *Criminal investigations:* investigations conducted by the Air Force Office of Special Investigations, the Naval Criminal Investigative Service, or other criminal investigative organizations within DoD;
- *Command actions:* case dispositions resulting from command authority or referral for judicial action;
- *Judicial functions:* proceedings conducted through military legal offices and courts responsible for prosecuting DoD offenders, and the dispositions of courts-martial; and

- *Corrections:* actions conducted at military correctional facilities and by persons responsible for DoD employees convicted of a crime and sentenced to imprisonment.

DIBRS also is meant to enable the Department of Defense to track a criminal incident from initial allegation through final disposition. It includes data segments on the law enforcement, criminal investigation, judicial, and corrections phases. These segments from the later phases of the military justice process have substantially more missing data than those segments required for NIBRS. Contributions to DIBRS from within DoD are mandatory, in contrast to the voluntary participation of states and localities in NIBRS, suggesting coverage issues for the core data elements may be less severe. A DoD Inspector General report in late 2014 noted that “10 years of DoD criminal incident data have not been provided to the FBI for inclusion in the annual uniform crime reports” (U.S. Department of Defense, Inspector General, 2014). As of August 2015, DoD remains in the process of obtaining FBI certification for DIBRS to clear the way for transmittal of its criminal incident data for inclusion in NIBRS as required by the Uniform Federal Crime Reporting Act of 1988 and DoD Instruction 7730.47. The remaining hurdle to certification is resolution of geographic tags to avoid inadvertent attribution of incidents to the city or state in which a military installation is located, as opposed to the installation itself or the military service.

DoD produces no regular reports using DIBRS data that track trends on crime in the U.S. military. There are no public access files for DIBRS, whereas NIBRS has released data through the Inter-university Consortium for Political and Social Research. Like the secrecy empathised in military internal affairs we consequently have found no secondary analyses of the data outside of government that speak to its strengths and weaknesses.

3.3 National Fire Incident Reporting System (NFIRS): Arson and Emergency Response Information Component

A national system for the collection, analysis, and dissemination of fire data is needed to help local fire services establish research and action priorities. In the US as in most if not all

countries, the presence of fire service station is unrivalled in major urban and rural communities especially in local government headquarters.. The 1974 act established a National Fire Prevention and Control Administration within the Department of Commerce, and directed that this agency establish a National Fire Data Center to “gather and analyze” data on the “frequency, causes, spread, and extinguishment of fires,” as well as deaths, injuries, and property losses incurred by fires (among other fire fighting-specific information). In response, the first generation National Fire Incident Reporting System (NFIRS) was created in 1976, compiling voluntary data submissions from local fire departments in the same manner as the UCR Program collects voluntary submissions from law enforcement agencies. Today, NFIRS continues to be coordinated by the USFA, though the USFA’s administrative placement has shifted over the years. It is now housed within the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), in turn overseen by the U.S. Department of Homeland Security. The National Fire Information Council (NFIC)—originated in 1979, and comprised of a group of (volunteer) representative NFIRS users—serves as a liaison between USFA and the broader USFA participants, though with less formal standing in policy decisions than the UCR’s Advisory Policy Board.

Generally, NFIRS parallels the UCR Program in construction: It relies on the voluntary contribution of data from local fire departments. Though originally motivated by the desire for better quantification of fire and arson incidents, NFIRS has developed into a record system of *all* functions and activities performed by local fire departments, from emergency medical services (EMS) runs to hazardous material responses to “first responder” calls not actually involving a fire. NFIRS has a modular structure, with fire department personnel intended to fill out a core/Basic module for every response incident, followed by detailed question modules for applicable circumstances. This also involves a core/Basic module (dubbed NFIRS- 1) which is completed by fire department personnel for each incident to which they have responded. NFIRS- 1 prompts for basic identifier information (e.g., an identifier code for the reporting department, the geographic location, and a rough categorization of the incident). It also asks for information about the aid given or received and the actions taken by fire department personnel; whether monetary/property losses were incurred or whether fatalities resulted; and whether any hazardous materials were released. The basic module could also include “incidents” not actually involving a

fire (e.g., first responder calls) or very minor incidents (e.g., “contained no-loss fires,” such as food on- stove extinguished when fire department arrives). In addition to the Basic Module, NFIRS contains nearly a dozen specific additional “modules” that may apply to particular incidents. The second, “Fire” Module (NFIRS-2), starts the process of documenting actual fire incidents, including details about the property and what is known about human factors involved in the ignition of the fire. Depending on the type of land/property involved, a Structure Fire or a Woodland Fire Module would be completed. If the fire resulted in a casualty, then either the Civilian Fire Casualty Module or the Fire Service Casualty Module would be completed; both of those involve the fire department rendering an opinion on the causes of the injury leading to death, including human and contributing factors. Depending on the situation and the specific equipment and staff put into play, then the Personnel Modules would be completed.

In addition to some of the information collected on NFIRS-1 and NFIRS-2 (and the associated Property Type module), interest in NFIRS as a companion measure of arson (or, generally, malicious burning or other property-damage crimes involving the use of fire) centres around two other modules:

1. The Arson Module applies to incidents where a fire is believed to be intentionally set. The module includes documentation of case status, possible/suspected motivation factors, and information on how entry was secured and what specific devices or incendiary materials may have been used.
2. The general EMS Module would apply to non-fire incidents—any time the fire department applies emergency medical services. The module calls on the reporting department to report the EMS providers’ “impression/ assessment” of the underlying problem (including trauma, sexual assault, overdose/poisoning, and “obvious death”) and speculate on the nature/cause of the injury (or illness).

Retrieval of such NFIRS data and subsequent comparison with/attribution to incidents collected through other reporting sources is difficult because of NFIRS’ unique structure.

3.4 National Child Abuse and Neglect Data System (NCANDS)

The original Child Abuse Prevention and Treatment Act (CAPTA), enacted in 1974, required a new center within the U.S. Department of Health, Education, and Welfare to “make a complete and full study and investigation of the national incidence of child abuse and neglect, including a determination of the extent to which incidence of child abuse and neglect are increasing in number or severity” (P.L. 93-247; 88 Stat. 5). A 1988 revision of CAPTA (formally the Child Abuse Prevention, Adoption, and Family Services Act; P.L. 100-294, codified at 42 USC § 5104 et seq.) required the Secretary of Health and Human Services (HHS) to establish and appoint a director for the National Center on Child Abuse and Neglect, as well as establish a national clearing house for information relating to child abuse. The general task of coordinating information (from state and local resources) on national-level incidence of child abuse and neglect swelled in magnitude and specificity as CAPTA was periodically revised over the years. The current specifications of data required to be collected by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services on “the national incidence of child abuse and neglect” includes 11 specific dimensions, ranging from “the incidence of substantiated and unsubstantiated reported child abuse and neglect cases” to “the extent to which reports of suspected or known instances of child abuse . . . are being screened out solely on the basis of the cross-jurisdictional complications” of multiple agencies (42 USC § 5105(a)(1)(O)). Though the legislation beginning in 1974 laid the groundwork for a data collection system, it would take until enactment of P.L. 111-320, the CAPTA Reauthorization Act of 2010, for amendment text to formally define “child abuse and neglect” for these purposes: “any recent act or failure to act on the part of a parent or caretaker, which results in death, serious physical or emotional harm, sexual abuse or exploitation, or an act or failure to act which presents an imminent risk of serious harm.”

The specific data system established to meet these legislatively mandated requests is the National Child Abuse and Neglect Data System (NCANDS), under which HHS’s Administration for Children and Families (ACF) coordinates data inputs from state child welfare agencies. In its basic structure, NCANDS uncannily parallels both the core mission of BJS and emulates the methodology of the UCR Program. Under its information clearinghouse authority under law, HHS (through ACF) is required to “annually compile and analyze research on child abuse and

neglect and publish a summary of such research,” to promulgate “materials and information to assist State programs for investigating and prosecuting child abuse cases,” and “establish model information collection systems.” That mission is akin to BJS’s authorizing legislation, emphasizing the function of providing technical assistance to individual communities. The level of state compliance with NCANDS reporting has been and remains impressive. That said, it is important to note that the final step in the data relay, from the states to NCANDS, is strictly voluntary. Established to provide insight on the highly specific crimes of child abuse and neglect.

4.0 Conclusion

Having examined the specific and disaggregated need for statistics on criminal events in secondary and tertiary institutions, in the military settings, and the number and amount of losses arising from fire incidences and capturing the prevalence and incidences child abuse and neglect data, it became clear and necessary not only to state that specific information by way of statistics is important but they are more meaningful when collated separately for better understanding unlike when they are broadly captured under the UCR. The case of crime and punitive measures in the military is quite interesting statistically when they are available because it furthers exhumed other sides of the dark figures usually unknown in criminological/victimology research.

5.0 Summary

As we noted in previewing this units, the description of data resources in this section is not intended to be construed as comprehensive or exhaustive, and mention of a data collection here (at the exclusion of others) is not any special “endorsement” of the data. Nor are these capsule summaries meant to be thorough reviews or assessments. As with the UCR and the NCVS, our primary emphasis is the coverage of crime-related information the data collections may contain but, given their relative unfamiliarity, we also try to go a step further in describing the ways in which the data are currently being used. In this section, then, we describe an illustrative set of possible data resources—potential sources for crime indicators or critical contextual information that may inform gaps or weaknesses in extant BJS and FBI crime data series, or that may be uniquely suited to measure crime-related phenomena among special subpopulations. We begin by reviewing some examples of data systems that are analogous to the UCR in that they are compiled from law enforcement or public safety sources, but also focus on some particular

population or set of offenses. We then turn to some measures from self-report surveys, of victimization like the NCVS, of offending (in some cases), or of perceptions of specific crimes or offenses. Finally, we turn to some resources that do not align neatly with either of these data collection models but that are, in some sense, either administrative surveys (queries made of facilities or institutions) or compilations of administrative records data outside the law enforcement/public safety sphere.

6.0 Self-Assessment Exercise

1. What are the contributions of local fire departments to crime statistics?
2. Why is it difficult to get data from the military/paramilitary institutions?
3. With reference to emergency management at every level (federal, state or local level), how does emergencies become an issue in crime statistics?
4. What does National Fire Data Centers upon?
5. Why has crime statistics often than not neglect the child?

7.0 References/Further Reading

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Unit 4 National Self-Report Surveys of criminal offending

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1.0 Introduction

Self-Report Surveys of Criminal Offending is Independent of the NCVS, it focuses exclusively on obtaining self-reports of recent victimization experiences, there are very few national-level self-report estimates of criminal offending. Five notable exceptions are:

1. *National Youth Survey (NYS)*: Started in 1976, the NYS is a longitudinal study of an original sample of 1,725 adolescents who were between ages 11 and 17 at the first interview and who were selected to be representative of the national population. The study is still ongoing, with follow-up assessments most recently when the sample was ages 39–45. Data from the NYS has been used extensively to study delinquency and criminal offending as well as victimization and associated factors.
2. *National Longitudinal Survey of Youth (NLSY)*: There are two distinct versions/waves of the NLSY, dubbed NLSY79 and NLSY97 for their beginnings in 1979 and 1997, respectively. NLSY79 is a nationally representative sample of persons who were between ages 14–22 at the first interview in 1979 (born 1957–1964); NLSY97 tapped a nationally representative sample of persons who were ages 12–16 at the end of 1996 (born 1980–1984). In both iterations, though, the NLSY contains information on participants' self-reported arrests, incarcerations, and a limited set of criminal activities, with its

longitudinal contacts making it a useful source for studying cohort effects of criminal offending.

3. *Monitoring the Future (MTF) Studies*: Begun in 1975, the MTF collects self-report data on the behaviours and attitudes of secondary school students, college students, and young adults annually. The MTF survey interviews of pupils and students 8th, 10th, and 12th grade students, with annual follow-up surveys conducted with a sample of each graduating class for several years after initial participation.¹⁴ Although it contains some information on self-reported delinquency, most of the antisocial behaviour information contained in the MTF is focused on drug and alcohol use.
4. *National Longitudinal Study of Adolescent Health (Add Health)*: The Add Health is a longitudinal study of a nationally representative sample of adolescents in grades 7–12 in the U.S. starting during the 1994–1995 year, and includes four follow-up interviews with the same subjects, the most recent in 2008 when the sample was aged 24–32. The Add Health survey data contains some self-reported information on delinquency and criminal offending, though its main focus is to gather data on the physical, psychological, social and economic well-being of the respondents.
5. *Youth Risk Behaviour Surveillance System (YRBSS)*: Sponsored by the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), the YRBSS is actually a suite of ongoing annual surveys of high-school and middle-school students. A “national” questionnaire specified by the CDC is administered to the students included in the sample, while the CDC’s state and local health department partners can field a supplementary survey (typically building from a “standard” questionnaire of suggested items and focused on the high-school students in the sample).¹⁶ Like the other surveys, the YRBSS instruments cover a wide array of behaviours and activities (e.g., alcohol/tobacco/“electronic cigarette” or vapour inhalant usage, and sexual behaviour), but do branch into eliciting self-report surveys of both crime victimization and offending. For instance, recent versions of the surveys have asked students how frequently they drive vehicles when they have been drinking alcohol (as well as how many times they ride in cars with peer drivers who have been drinking).

Questions have also focused on bullying and cyber-bullying in the school setting (both victimization and offending), and on instances of forced sexual intercourse or physical abuse by someone a respondent was dating.

2.0 Intended Learning Outcomes (ILOs)

In this unit students are expected to grapple with more realities about the broader nature of crime data with emphasis of crime, delinquency and statistics from children and youths with the radar of 12 years and above better captured by Self-Report Surveys regarding criminal offending Secondly a the need to highlight that crime statistics could also come in form of complaints captured by administrative survey (ie records of the consumer protection agencies), thirdly the need for specific commission to handle statistics of crime involving corporate or individual financial transactions. And lastly the importance of public health data a vital register in understanding unnatural causes of death that are related to murder, illicit drug consumption and other suspicious acts of homicide.

3.0 Main Content

3.1 National Self-Report Surveys of criminal offending

In addition, the annual National Survey on Drug Use and Health (NSDUH), and Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA), generate information on the use (and abuse) of “legal” drugs (alcohol and tobacco) as well as controlled substances “illegal” drugs. The survey targets the population aged 12 and older, and makes use of computer-assisted self-interviewing to try to actively promote the privacy of respondent answers. Although each of these data sources has served as an important resource for understanding the correlates of delinquent and criminal activity, each is limited in some ways for purposes of estimating levels of crimes. Some of these limitations are associated with methodological problems common to self-report surveys, such as sample biases and errors associated with respondent under- and over-reporting (Thornberry and Krohn, 2000); other limitations are due to study-specific differences. For example, longitudinal surveys such as the NYS and the Add Health data suffer from sample attrition over time and the low levels of self-reported involvement in violence suggests that survey participation may not be fully representative of the population. The MTF self-report

information estimates only certain delinquent and antisocial behaviours and is limited to younger age persons in schools. The NLSY does not contain sufficient information on a large array of delinquent or criminal acts, and annual assessments are not routinely conducted. Therefore, although there have been efforts to obtain self-report information directly from persons about their involvement in criminal offending, these data collections are not capable of providing ongoing, reliable national-level estimates of crime. As the NCVS sheds some light on the characteristics of offenders, other national surveys provide specialized glimpses at crimes and offenders, particularly in the area of family and intimate partner violence. Like the NCVS, the focus of these studies is on measuring victimization incidents that are often classifiable as “crime” as well as some important information about the offenders in such incidents (such as victim-offender relationship). In the area of child victimization, the National Incidence Studies of Missing, Abducted, Runaway, and Thrown-away Children (NISMAART) has twice measured abductions of children by strangers and non-strangers (see, e.g., Hammer et al., 2004), once in 1988 and a second time in 1999. The Developmental Victimization Survey, conducted once in early 2003, used a combination of self-reports and proxy reports to measure the extent to which children younger than age 12 have experienced various forms of victimization (Finkelhor et al., 2005).

Like other victim surveys, these data include incidents that are not captured in official records by either the police or by child welfare agencies, or captured in the NCVS because it excludes respondents under the age of 12. Violence against women and intimate partner violence have been captured in various national surveys, the largest including the National Violence Against Women Survey (Tjaden and Thoennes, 2000) and the National Intimate Partner and Sexual Violence Survey (NISVS, <http://www.cdc.gov/violenceprevention/NISVS/index.html>). Several other violence-against-women surveys, including one measuring the sexual victimization against college students (Cullen et al., 2001), are summarized by National Research Council (2004a). It is important to note, that in listing these various surveys, they vary greatly in terms of frequency of administration and sample size. Some, like NSDUH, are ongoing surveys that are meant to produce ongoing data series, but others—either by design or as a result of cost of administration—have been strictly one-shot affairs. Hence, the surveys can produce radically

different estimates of what is purportedly the same phenomenon and, with a one-shot survey, it can be nearly impossible to conclude that one source is inherently better or more accurate than another. That said, the time-limited, one-shot surveys should not necessarily be denigrated; indeed, a well-designed one-shot survey with a solid research base can be highly valuable in pointing out deficiencies in the other, ongoing surveys and studies.

The Federal Trade Commission (FTC) has two data collections that may be partial indicators of the occurrence of fraud as in the case in the US, where it was first used in 2003 to understand the extent to which complaints in the Consumer Sentinel database are representative of consumers' experiences with fraud in the marketplace, to assess the extent to which these experiences vary across demographics, and to identify the determinants of victims filing a complaint with authorities (Anderson, 2004, 2007, 2013). The surveys' samples were large enough to enable some comparison of victimization by race and ethnicity, but not to make sub-national estimates by geography. The first survey explicitly asked respondents about 10 types of fraud that covered those that appeared most frequently in the FTC's complaint database and had led to FTC enforcement actions. These included:

1. Paying an advance fee to obtain a loan or credit card that a consumer was promised or guaranteed to receive;
2. Being billed for a buyers' club membership a consumer did not agree to purchase;
3. Purchasing credit card insurance;
4. Purchasing credit repair services;
5. Paying money or making a purchase to receive a promised prize and then not receiving the prize or receiving a prize that was not as promised;
6. Being billed for Internet services a consumer did not agreed to purchase;
7. Purchasing a membership in a pyramid scheme;
8. Being billed for information services provided either over the Internet or by pay-per-call telephone service that a consumer had not agreed to purchase;
9. Making a payment to someone who represented that as a result of making the payment, a consumer would receive a government job; and

10. Purchasing a business opportunity where the seller made earnings claims that were not realized or promised assistance that was not provided.

The survey also asked about “slamming,” where a consumer’s long-distance telephone service was switched from one provider to another without permission, and two situations that often suggest a fraud may have occurred: paying for a product or service that a consumer does not receive or being billed for a product, other than the specific products identified above, that a consumer had not agreed to purchase. The survey, conducted on FTC’s behalf by Public Opinion Strategies, had respondents obtained via random direct-dialing sampling. The response rate is not included in the documentation available on the FTC’s website. No further information is available on the sampling frame.

3.2 National Administrative Surveys or Records-Based Collections

The data consist of unverified complaints filed by consumers directly to the FTC, along with those filed with numerous state law enforcement agencies, federal agencies and departments (such as the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau (Nigeria equivalent of the Consumer protection agency), the FBI’s Internet Crime Complaint Center, and the Departments of Defense, Education, and Veterans Affairs), and nongovernmental organizations (such as Better Business Bureaus, Green Dot, MoneyGram International, and Western Union; Federal Trade Commission, 2015). A review of sample complaint forms suggests that the data files contain copious amounts of personally identifying information on the victims and alleged perpetrators (Federal Trade Commission, 2004). Directions on the FTC site about filing a complaint ask the filer to be prepared to provide (<https://www.ftc.gov/faq/consumerprotection/submit-consumer-complaint-ftc>):

- a. Your contact information: name, address, phone number, email
- b. The type of product or service involved
- c. Information about the company or seller: business name, address, phone number, website, email address, representative’s name
- d. Details about the transaction: the amount you paid, how you paid, the date.

Consumer Sentinel data access is available to any federal, state, or local law enforcement agencies and select international law enforcement authorities. The collection mechanism was not designed to support traditional crime analysis, but rather to support investigations and decision making about where to focus resources to combat fraud against consumers. The FTC publishes an annual data book in PDF and makes the aggregated data available in Excel format. The data books are often cited by the media in stories about fraud, but there are no public data files available for further analysis.

3.3 Financial Crimes Enforcement Network (FinCEN) equivalent of Economic and Financial Crime Commission (EFCC) in Nigeria Suspicious Activity Reports (SARs)

In the US, the Financial Crimes Enforcement Network (FinCEN), established in 1990, is tasked with safeguarding the financial system from illicit use, combating money laundering, and promoting national security through the collection, analysis, and dissemination of financial intelligence and strategic use of financial authorities. The Bank Secrecy Act (BSA), composed of the Currency and Financial Transactions Reporting Act of 1970, as amended by Title III of the USA PATRIOT Act of 2001 and other legislation, requires banks and other financial institutions to file reports to FinCEN. These reports, in turn, have been found useful by the Treasury Department in its criminal, tax, and regulatory investigations and proceedings, as well as certain intelligence and counterterrorism matters. Of the data series produced under the BSA, Suspicious Activity Reports (SARs) generate the data most likely to reflect a range of criminal activities and, as such, prove useful in the creation of crime indicators. FinCEN is responsible for the central collection, analysis, and dissemination of data reported under the Bank Secrecy Act. Despite its nomenclature, FinCEN's core task is not the determination, prosecution, or measurement of crime per se, but rather—through analysis of a series of reports—to be bellwethers of activities that may subsequently be determined to be criminal.

Like the EFCC, the the types of reports FinCEN collects include:

- Currency Transaction Reports (CTRs) of certain range of amount,
- Currency and Monetary Instrument Reports (CMIRs) of certain range of amount,
- Suspicious Activity Reports (SARs),
- Foreign Bank Account Reports (FBARs) of certain range of amount,

- Cash Transactions/transfer: Non-financial businesses of certain range of amount
- Money Service Business Registration.

A SAR is filed when a filer—a depository institution, non-bank financial institution, money services business, or casino—suspects that a transaction: involves funds derived from illegal activity, or is intended to hide or disguise the proceeds of illegal activity; is designed to evade BSA reporting requirements; has no business or lawful purpose; or is not an expected transaction for that particular customer.

The SAR has five parts: Part I—Subject Information; Part II—Suspicious Activity Information; Part III—Information about the Financial Institution Where Activity Occurred; Part IV—Filing Institution Contact Information; and Part V—Narrative. Detailed descriptions of each item on the SAR form are included in official guidance available on FinCEN’s website (Financial Crimes Enforcement Network, 2015). Filers are asked to record the type of suspicious activity by selecting from 10 categories, each of which has multiple subcategories:

- 1) Structuring,
- 2) Terrorist Financing
- 3) Fraud,
- 4) Casinos,
- 5) Money Laundering,
- 6) Identification/Documentation,
- 7) Other Suspicious Activities,
- 8) Insurance,
- 9) Securities/Futures/Options, and
- 10) Mortgage Fraud.

Some SARs address multiple financial transactions; some assign more than one suspicious activity to a single transaction. These variations would require investment in data management to generate series with consistent units of analysis. FinCEN typically aggregates the number of instances of each type of suspicious activity reported, such that a SAR citing solely check fraud would be tabulated as one instance of check fraud whereas a SAR citing check fraud and identity theft would be tabulated as one instance of each suspicious activity. SARs are viewed primarily as sources of potential lead information for regulators and law enforcement that, when further investigated, may produce or supplement evidence of criminal activity. FinCEN publishes regular updates highlighting trends and emerging issues in suspicious activity reporting both

within and across industries. FinCEN has also published more focused examinations of industry-specific trends or particular suspicious activities.

Theft/Loss Recordkeeping Requirements and Databases Another glimpse at possible criminal activity may be possible because of federally required recordkeeping regulations, requiring the prompt reporting of suspected theft (or general) loss of specific, sensitive “property.” The amount of detail about the nature of the possible theft and the affected property—and whether the offense is also required to be reported to local law enforcement—varies by collection. Among these recordkeeping-type collections are:

- 1) *Firearm loss or theft*: Federal Firearm Licensees (FFLs) are obligated by federal law to “report the theft or loss of a firearm from the licensee’s inventory or collection within 48 hours after the theft or loss is discovered”; said report is required to be made to both “the Attorney General and to the appropriate local authorities” —the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms, and Explosives’ (ATF’s) —obligates the licensee to categorize the incident as burglary, larceny, robbery, or “missing inventory”; the date and time of notification of local law enforcement; a brief (free-text response) description of the incident; and specifications (manufacturer, model, caliber/gauge, and serial number) of the lost or missing firearms.
- 2) *Explosives loss or theft*: Similarly to firearms, federal law makes it unlawful for any person who has knowledge of the theft or loss of any explosive materials from his stock, to fail to report such theft or loss” to both the Attorney General and to “appropriate local authorities”—albeit within an even tighter timeframe of 24 hours,
- 3) *Drug/controlled substance loss or theft*: losses or thefts of controlled substances are to be reported to the Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA), and the local law enforcement agencies.

3.4 Public Health Data Resources

Around the world, birth and death certificates are completed using codes drawn from the International Statistical Classification of Diseases and Related Health Problems maintained by the World Health Organization (WHO). These information are vital statistics to public health as an indicator of numerous happening especially deaths arising from unnatural events. Thus at

every local government area birth and death records are routed for compilation. Akin to the UCR Program, a primary (“underlying”) cause of death is identified on the death certificate and is commonly used for summary tabulation purposes. It also produces what are commonly known as the Mortality Multiple Cause-of-Death files (as public use data files) that permit coding of an additional 20 contributing causes of death. Of course, what is salient to discussion of crime statistics is that not all the causes of death described are internal (to the body) or natural causes, there are also “external” cause of-death codes covering homicide, suicide, accidental deaths, and the like. For purposes of factoring into possible measures of crime, mortality data have both major strengths and liabilities. The strength is that the time for medical examiners to do their work arguably provides the best (and perhaps only) source of some contextual information of the detailed circumstances of a death, such as the presence of specific drugs in the decedent’s system at the time of death or the exact nature of the weapon that inflicted a lethal injury. One major weakness is obvious and inherent, which is to say that mortality data pertinent to crime are necessarily limited to homicide, manslaughter, and other criminal events leading to death. But others are more subtle. The mortality data represent the determination by one source—typically, the medical examiner or coroner—as to whether death was due to deliberate measures or to accidental or other means. However, the coroner’s determination may or may not square with determinations made at any level of the criminal justice arena. More subtly, mortality data have historically suffered from timeliness concerns—not just from the time of death to the publication of data but also simply to edit and compile all of the deaths in a given year from every participant area (recalling that the “external cause” deaths are but a subset of the much broader set of all deaths and corresponding certificates).

4.0 Conclusion

Looking at the examples of a more broader analysis of where and how disaggregated data can be better sourced, for better understanding of crime through National Self-Report Surveys of criminal offending, with the National Administrative Surveys Records-Based Collections, and Financial Crime Commission unravelling suspicious and criminal activities, it is established that they are highly desired as part of an overall, new crime statistics system.

5.0 Summary

This unit is a continuation of Unit 3, emphasising on the broader nature of wider sources of crime data. Specifically the National Self-Report Surveys regarding criminal offending mostly of youths in the crime radar (juvenile delinquency); administrative survey describing statistics of complaints especially of consumer filed with numerous state law enforcement agencies. Here information can be gotten from consumer protection agencies. Similarly statistics of financial crimes were discussed as necessary as components of UCR, but better aggregated and handled by agencies with specialised mandates like the EFCC in Nigeria. Lastly the relevance of public health data to understating unnatural causes of death cannot be sidelined, for which local government authorities contend with and ensure that death statistics are compiled.

6.0 Self-Assessment Exercise

1. What is the major weakness about mortality data pertinent to crime?
2. Highlight two major strengths of mortality data.
3. What is salient to discussion of crime statistics?
4. List and explain two major rationales surrounding Public Health Data in criminal statistics.
5. Often there are 10 categories of suspicious activity by selecting from 10 categories, each of which has multiple subcategories:
6. List the five parts in Suspicious Activities Reports (SARs) statistics
7. What is ‘slamming,’ in crime statistics?
8. List any five types of fraud a survey can unveil
9. Discuss the Consumer Sentinel database as core concern of crime statisticians.
10. What do we refer to as ‘one-shot affairs’ in crime survey?
11. What are the associated methodological problems common with self-report surveys?

7.0 References/Further Reading

Additional information on Add Health may be found at

<http://www.cpc.unc.edu/projects/addhealth>.

Additional information on the studies can be found at <http://www.monitoringthefuture.org/>.

Additional information on the YRBSS is available at

<http://www.cdc.gov/healthyyouth/data/yrbs/index.htm>.

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MODULE 6

Unit 1 Statistics: The Benefits and Risks

Unit 2 Data confidentiality: methods for statistical disclosure limitation and methods for assessing privacy

Unit 3 *International Classification of Crime for Statistical (ICCS) Purposes (An Overview)*

Unit 4 Principles used in the *International Classification of Crime for Statistical (ICCS) Purposes*

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8.0 Intended Learning Outcomes (ILOs)

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Unit 1 Statistics: The Benefits and Risks

1.0 Introduction

When you hear the word *statistics*, you probably either get an attack of crime anxiety or think about lifeless numbers, such as the population of the city or town where you live, as measured by the latest census, or the per capita income in a country. The goal of this unit is to open a whole new world of understanding of the term *statistics*. By the time you finish reading this unit, you will realize that the invention of statistical methods is one of the most important developments of modern times. The word **statistics** is actually used to mean two different things. The better known definition is that statistics are numbers measured for some purpose. A more appropriate, complete definition is the following: *Statistics is a collection of procedures and principles for gaining and processing information in order to make decisions when faced with uncertainty.*

Using this definition, you have undoubtedly used statistics in your own life. For example, if you were faced with a choice of routes to get to school or work, or to get between one classroom building and the next, how would you decide which one to take? You would probably try each of them a number of times (thus gaining information) and then choose the best one according to some criterion important to you, such as speed, fewer red lights, more interesting scenery, and so on. You might even use different criteria on different days—such as when the weather is pleasant versus when it is not. In any case, by sampling the various routes and comparing them, you would have gained and processed useful information to help you make a decision. In this unit, you will learn ways to intelligently improve your own methods for collecting and processing complex information. You will learn how to interpret information that others have collected and processed and how to make decisions when faced with uncertainty.

2.0 Intended Learning Outcomes (ILOs)

It is expected that students get to know (after going through this unit) the following

1. drivers crime over the last decade
2. the how and why old crimes are coming in new forms
3. the dramatic influence of technology on crime statistics.
4. the typical crimes that often neglected in crime statistics
5. the major *pitfalls that can be encountered when asking questions in a survey or experiment*

3.0 Main Content

3.1 The Truth about Crime Statistics

Crime statistics seem to be discussed more than figures for other social phenomenon. Some feel they are little more than government propaganda. Some feel the police count what they choose to and put their faith in the figures obtained from surveys. Some look to the ‘golden past’ when figures were much lower. Some look to figures for other countries and take reassurance of how safe or dangerous their hometown is. Others avoid using figures at all and look at their own experience. When did they last lose anything to a robber, thief or burglar? When was any friend of theirs last attacked? Most people rely on the media for their information. Few actually read the

statistics themselves, published in great detail on the internet. Most rely on highly summarized versions from their favourite source. This confuses further the message from crime statistics. Different media sources often have agendas which drive the particular aspects of crime figures that they choose to comment on. Nearly all current media are characterized by their reliance on 'sound bites'.

Hardly anyone appreciates the complex mix of data collection methods, technical input and expert advice that lie behind crime figures. Probably most people are just thoroughly confused about them. This is made worse by the recent economic crisis that has changed the way common statistical series are behaving, not simply in the area of crime. In situation where there has been virtually no growth in the economy for years, crime figures continue to fall, unemployment has not risen as expected and the stock exchange is booming! Experts cannot understand what is happening so how can the average person expect to?

Many of the problems with crime statistics rest on the basic question as earlier said what is crime? Most people feel that the answer intuitively. But defining what a crime is, is not an easy question, as any policeman will know. And it is further confused by the next question: what sort of crime should be recorded in a particular case?

An example will help to develop this point. *It is generally accepted that killing someone, homicide, is a crime. But not all homicides are the same. We all agree that killing a policeman in an armed robbery is a crime: but was the killing of Osama Ben Laden a crime? Is assisted suicide a crime? Is a doctor who performs an abortion a criminal? Or a doctor who gives more morphine to a terminally ill patient than is strictly necessary to alleviate the pain? Does a rapist whose offence leads directly to his victim committing suicide then become a murderer?* It is clear that there is much scope for differences of opinion. In practical terms, the relatives of dead person have to decide whether to report the death as a possible crime: police have to decide whether they will investigate the death as a homicide and include it in the crime statistics: prosecution have to decide whether there is enough evidence to take the case to court: the judge and the jury will also have their views. That is why we have the body of law, including common

law, statute law and precedent of previous cases to assist law enforcement officers as to what to do in a particular case.

Law and practice changes from time to time: to take another example:

Up to 1991 it was impossible in England for a man who had forced his wife to have sex when she was unwilling to be prosecuted for Rape. This was based on the accepted belief that a wife gave up the possibility of any such accusation when she married. The House of Lords changed this law in 1991. Because most Rapes occur between couples who are, or have been in close relationships, this change has caused the number of reported Rapes to increase dramatically over the last 20 years. Police will now investigate such a report, whereas before 1991 they would have said no crime had been committed.

More complications arise when it is clear that a crime has been committed but not exactly what crime it is or how many crimes there were. Again let us take an example: *Considerable publicity has been given to recent cases of sexual exploitation of young teenage girls. Everyone agrees these were horrendous but how many crimes are actually committed when cases go on for many months or years and involve a number of offenders and victims. Most people will sensibly say that the actual number of crimes is not particularly important. But we need to know whether the number of such cases is rising or not. Therefore there is a need for a clear set of rules to record the number of offences in complex cases: rules every policeman in the country knows about.* What is a crime is not defined in a natural way, such as weight or height or numbers of people living in a town. Crime is what the authorities of a country decide to count. There is a series of rules for counting crime and this can change from time to time and differ from country to country. Counting rules are available for all to see. They form a national standard for the police to operate. It is often included in the processes for collecting statistics within its routine inspection procedures and does not hesitate to criticize police departments that fall below the standards laid down by state.

Having the police directorate set standards is not the only way crime statistics could be collected: other methods are possible. Crime statistics could be left to each police force districts or area command – but that would mean national figures would be misleading. The logic of allowing the police directorate to set the rules for counting is that the law is the same for each each police force districts or area command. However, such pragmatism has its disadvantages. It completely depends on the police being the sole organization to collect the data on crime. But research has shown and the police acknowledge that they do not hear about all crime. There are two ways of dealing with this:

- i. *to collect crime numbers through surveys: such as asking a sample of households or businesses about crimes they experienced and whether they reported them to the police.*
- ii. *to collect information from other authorities on crimes that know about and how they dealt with them.*

Reasons why crime statistics are often low

It is also worth noting that the official figures have never claimed to include all crimes that the police know about. They are a subset of all crime, defined by the police directorate vis-à-vis the constitution because it would be impossible and/or unrealistic to expect police to record or households to report every single crime: eg every misuse of drugs or all road offences.) Typical crimes not included but which can result in a criminal sanction, are:

- Most motoring offences such as speeding, drink driving, parking, driving without various forms of authority (eg. MOT, licence, insurance) although the more serious motoring offences are included.
- Most public order offences (eg, public drunkenness, prostitution)
- Most drugs offences of possession and use.
- Most regulatory offences (eg. TV licence evasion, offences against by-laws)
- Most cybercrime, fraud and bribery

What lies behind the falls in published crime statistics?

First, it is necessary to consider the main drivers for the levels of crime over the last generation:

Crime Prevention

The past decade has shown that police concentrated on crime investigation and public protection like no other. As much more emphasis on crime prevention: manufacturers recognized the commercial advantage in making their products safer: cars became more secure: perimeter security for houses, schools and hospitals became much more effective and local authorities were encouraged to take into account the implications for crime prevention of all that they did and form partnerships with others to reduce the likelihood of crime occurring. It is not surprising that such concentration of effort into crime prevention has led to a real fall in crime in most developed countries. We also find that other countries that have had similar crime prevention initiatives have also seen a fall in their crime figures.

Technological changes

Developments in technology have also affected crime levels. The last 20 years have seen great strides in the use of computers, which are now integral to nearly all consumer goods and household appliances. Security is also integral to any appliance which has a power source: the use of passwords, etc to be able to enter buildings and use computers, TVs, DVD players, etc has grown so that it is not surprising that traditional crimes of stealing have reduced as many modern electric goods can be effectively useless without their electronic key. The use of physical money has been substantially reduced, so that few people now carry large sums of cash around for day-to-day transactions: card use has replaced cash and cheque use. To steal a modern car you need to steal the keys first or force the owner to open it up for you. These technological developments have substantially altered crime. Traditional crime such as theft, burglary, car theft, robbery have declined because there is less to steal in the way of cash and perimeter security is so much greater than it was. But the criminal has not gone away: he may find it less worthwhile to try to break into your house or pick your pocket. What does seem to be happening, however, is that the criminal is now moving his target to your computer, your web site or to your bank account. Old crimes come in new guises, as well. Computer hackers have devised a new crime whereby they

threaten to deny service to web sites and demand 'protection money' from local firms in return for not hacking into their web sites. Not surprisingly, many firms do not report this to the police.

Increased prosperity

Whatever we may feel about the past, it is accepted that the 21st century saw a great increase in personal wealth and possessions. However, whereas this wealth was in the form of valuable possessions it is now more likely to be held in savings for the purchase of services such as holidays, eating out, or increased leisure. Criminals, in the past were likely to try to steal these possessions. Today they target savings by committing frauds that are characterized by the making of thousands of telephone calls to persuade 'victims' to put their money into dodgy investments or the sending out of millions of e-mails in the hope that a small percentage of people will be persuaded to respond to non-existent lottery wins, free holidays, easily obtained qualifications, high-yielding investments or other similar temptations.

Reactions to new forms of crime

Traditional reactions to crime were to record the event, and then investigate it in the hope of prosecution. Counting was a by-product. Reaction to more modern crimes is very different.

If a credit card is cloned or a bank account hacked into, the police tend not to get involved. Financial institutions spend large sums of money on electronic security but they acknowledge that breaches do occur. Once they do, however, the response is primarily to restore the customer's financial position. The attitude of financial institutions to investigation can be very different from the 'traditional' police attitude. Police investigate to catch and prosecute a criminal. Financial institutions primarily look at patterns of offending so that they can modify their systems to reduce the likelihood of such offences occurring in the future. They give lower priority to investigating the specific crime and pursuing the specific criminal. This reasons behind this are primarily economic: the money available for security in the financial institution is usually better spent by building more secure firewalls or other form of security into their systems: moreover, to catch a specific computer hacker is often virtually impossible, as the offender might well be physically in another jurisdiction.

Detecting Patterns and Relationships

Some differences are obvious to the naked eye, such as the fact that the average man is taller than the average woman. If we were content to know only about such obvious relationships, we would not need the power of statistical methods. But had you noticed that babies who listen to the sound of a heartbeat gain more weight? Have you ever noticed that taking aspirin helps prevent heart attacks? How about the fact that people are more likely to buy blue jeans in certain months of the year than in others? The fact that men have lower resting pulse rates than women do? The fact that listening to Mozart improves performance on the spatial reasoning questions of an IQ test? All of these are relationships that have been demonstrated in studies using proper statistical methods, yet none of them are obvious to the naked eye. Let's take the simplest of these examples—one you can test yourself—and see what's needed to properly demonstrate the relationship. Suppose you wanted to verify the claim that, on average, men have lower resting pulse rates than women do. Would it be sufficient to measure only your own pulse rate and that of a friend of the opposite sex? Obviously not. Even if the pair came out in the predicted direction, the singular measurements would certainly not speak for all members of each sex. It is not easy to conduct a study properly, but it is easy to understand much of how it should be done. We will examine each of the following concepts in great detail in the remainder of this book; here we just introduce them, using the simple example of comparing male and female pulse rates, it could have also been the rate of crime between men and women, or persons of different age categories.

To conduct a study properly, one must

1. Get a representative sample.
2. Get a large enough sample.
3. Decide whether the study should be an observational study or an experiment.

Many pitfalls can be encountered when asking questions in a survey or experiment.

Here are some of them; each will be discussed in turn:

1. Deliberate bias
2. Unintentional bias

3. Desire to please
4. Asking the uninformed
5. Unnecessary complexity
6. Ordering of questions
7. Confidentiality and anonymity

4.0 Conclusion

Many currently held assumptions about crime statistics may need to be jettisoned. Specifically, the following aspects will need to be carefully considered:

- Law enforcement should acknowledge they are only a small part of the system to combat crime. In the future prevention, measurement, investigation and sanctions for crimes will be spread across many more authorities than just law enforcement and coordinated in a loose way, if at all.
- Statistics should no longer be a by-product of the investigation process or the individual reporting process for surveys.
- Some international agreement will be needed to cover crimes that cut across national boundaries.
- In the area of measurement, the following is likely to happen
 - Many more sources of crime figures should be used.
 - The idea of a simple global national total of crime should be abandoned.
 - It will need to be recognized that many crimes exist only in cyberspace
 - More organizations need to be involved in setting the rules for crime measurement.
 - Such organizations will also need to become part of the government data collection systems.
 - Many of these will be government departments, financial institutions or traders who may not wish to acknowledge publicly the full extent of crime to which they are subjected.
 - Some central authority, probably the Office for National Statistics should coordinate all this

5.0 Summary

In this unit, we have just begun to examine both the advantages and the dangers of using statistical methods. We have seen that it is not enough to know the results of a study, survey, or experiment, but also to know how they were arrived at in terms of methodology and personality/agencies behind them.

6.0 Self-Assessment Exercise

6. What are the drivers for the level of crime over the last decade?
7. How and why are old crimes coming in new forms?
8. Discuss the role of technology in crime statistics.
9. List some of the typical crimes often neglected in crime statistics that can result in criminal sanctions.
- 10.** What are the major *pitfalls that can be encountered when asking questions in a survey or experiment?*

7.0 References/Further Reading

Crime and Disorder Act, 1998

See eg. Lewis (2013) *The Safer Sutton Partnership Service: Blueprint For the Future?*. The Police Journal: March 2013, Vol. 86, No. 1, pp. 15-28.

Address for correspondence chris.lewis@port.ac.uk. Chris was Chief Statistician at the Home Office in charge of Crime Statistics from 1983-1996 and continues to research, teach, and write on the topic.

The most recent figures at the time of writing were available in a 106-page Statistical Bulletin from the Office of National Statistics at

http://www.ons.gov.uk/ons/dcp171778_307458.pdf accessed on 15 May 2013

This has been highlighted most recently by the report of the Home Affairs Select Committee on E-Crime, Fifth report 29 July 2013 downloaded from

<http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm201314/cmselect/cmhaff/70/7002.htm>

The marital rape exemption was abolished in England and Wales in 1991 by the Appellate Committee of the House of Lords, in the case of *R v R*.

<http://www.bailii.org/uk/cases/UKHL/1991/12.html> accessed 15 May 2013.

This change occurred before the setting up of the current Supreme Court which would decide any future similar changes.

See press discussion of the verdicts given to a group of men in Oxford accused of grooming and sexual exploitation at <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-oxfordshire-22438623> accessed 15 May 2013

Home Office counting rules can be found at <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/counting-rules-for-recorded-crime> accessed on 15 May 2013. This document contains the 2013 revised set of Rules for counting and classifying crime.

See 'Rethinking the 'fall' in crime' at <http://www.kent.ac.uk/sspsr/postgraduate/news/view.html?view=1378> accessed on 15 May 2013

See detailed discussion at <http://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-2313942/UK-Peace-Index-Rate-murders-violent-crime-falling-faster-Western-Europe.html#ixzz2TNNoKfZg> accessed on 15 May 2013

See discussion on the Guardian web site at <http://www.guardian.co.uk/uk/2013/apr/25/crime-rates-falling-austerity> accessed on 15 May 2013

See discussion at www.parliament.uk/briefing-papers/SN06567.pdf accessed on 15 May 2013

See vehicle licence statistics bulletin for September 2012, accessed May 22 2013, at https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/9290/vls-q2-2012.pdf

See history of this development in *National Crime Recording Standard (NCRS): an analysis of the impact on recorded crime* by Simmons et al. accessed on 24 May 2013 from: <http://webarchive.nationalarchives.gov.uk/20110218135832/http://rds.homeoffice.gov.uk/rds/pdfs2/rdsolr3103.pdf>

Eg. see the web site of ActionFraud, which encourages victims of fraud to report direct to them rather than to a local police force and produces national fraud statistics of its own. <http://www.actionfraud.police.uk/> accessed 22 May 2013.

For example, as this paper was being finalized, a High Court decision ruled that a ‘Tweet’ which the author claimed to be conversational and malicious’ was in fact libellous and hence potentially a crime.

See Eurostat Statistical Bulletin **Crime Trends in detail, January 2012** accessed 20 May 2013 at http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/statistics_explained/index.php/Crime_trends_in_detail

For Cyber Crime the need for the government and law enforcement agencies to respond to technological developments and the need for better public education has been covered most recently by the Home Affairs Select Committee in their 29 July 2013 report downloaded from <http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm201314/cmselect/cmhaff/70/7002.htm>

MODULE 6

Unit 2

Data confidentiality: methods for statistical disclosure limitation and methods for assessing privacy

Contents

1.0 Introduction

2.0 Intended Learning Outcomes (ILOs)

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6.0 Self-Assessment Exercise

7.0 References/Further Reading

1.0 Introduction

Article 12 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (General Assembly of the United Nations, 1948) states: “No one shall be subjected to arbitrary interference with his privacy, family, home or correspondence, nor to attacks upon his honour and reputation. Everyone has the right to the protection of the law against such interference or attacks”. As such, with privacy being viewed as a basic human right by the United Nations, data releasing agencies must make every effort possible to maintain high levels of privacy for the individuals who entrust their data to an agency. What exactly is meant by privacy? Given a piece of information about an individual, one person may wish to keep that data private while another individual may not particularly care about that specific piece of information. This leads to a good definition of privacy. Fellegi (1972, page 7) used the definition of privacy provided by Professor Weston of Columbia University which defines privacy as the right “to determine what information about ourselves we will share with others.”

Privacy considerations of microdata are an increasingly important issue. The amount of data being produced everyday pertaining to individuals is unprecedented. Between medical, educational, and human services records, large amounts of data are produced. These types of data are invaluable to researchers in a vast array of fields, driving demand for this data. However, this raw data cannot simply be released to the public for study due to these privacy concerns. Many agencies rely on publicly released data from the census, and numerous public policy research projects depend on publicly available medical or educational data sets. Further, agencies like the U.S. National Institute of Health (NIH) urge its data collecting grantees to release their data for public use, but they require that this be done in a private way. They state: “In NIH’s view, all data should be considered for data sharing. Data should be made as widely and freely available as possible while safeguarding the privacy of participants, and protecting confidential and proprietary data. To facilitate data sharing, investigators submitting a research application requesting \$500,000 or more of direct costs in any single year to NIH on or after October 1, 2003 are expected to include a plan for sharing final research data for research purposes, or state why data sharing is not possible.”

Often times, the most interesting data for research can be extremely sensitive information about an individual that must remain private for ethical or even legal reasons (e.g. Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA), Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA). HIPAA creates a legal protection for individuals who wish to keep their medical records private, whereas, FERPA provides individuals with legal protection of their educational data. Data collecting organizations have a further incentive to maintain the privacy of their respondents’ data that goes beyond ethics or the law: If respondents feel that their data are at risk for disclosure, they may be less likely to be completely honest in their responses. This may cause respondents to alter responses or simply not respond at all to some surveys. Therefore, trust between a data collecting agency and its respondents is very important. Ideally, any useful collected data set could be released to the public for re- search with the implicit trust that that the data would not be used for inappropriate purposes. However, groups or individuals often have incentives to use data maliciously. For example, in 1995, prior to the passage of HIPAA, Woodward (1995) described a case involving a banker from Maryland who obtained a list of

patients with cancer. Using the list of patients with cancer along with a list of clients with outstanding loans, the banker sought to match individuals across both lists. When a match was found, he then called in the loans of the clients who had cancer. Today, with the regulations of HIPAA, private medical information cannot simply be released to the public. As such, institutions that wish to release sensitive data must take steps to protect the identity of the individuals in the data.

2.0 Intended Learning Outcomes (ILOs)

At the end of this unit, students are expected to identify some of the reasons why statistics as data are often not released by agencies in its raw form to concealed sensitive issues, that could either harm the person as in the case of the sample population, where identifiers and markers are removed. Specifically the techniques used should also be known and understood why they are necessary and must be used

3.0 Main Content

The first, most basic step in maintaining privacy is to remove variables such as name, social security number, and home address. Agencies strive to do their best to de-identify the data so that the privacy of the individual remains intact, while still providing researchers with useful data with which they can use to make useful, correct conclusions. However, simply removing these obvious identifiers is not always enough to maintain the privacy of an individual. For instance, several years ago the Massachusetts Group Insurance Commission released data to the public for research that was stripped of obvious identifiers. Sweeney (2002b) used this data, along with publicly available voting records, to identify the released medical information of former Massachusetts governor William Weld. Sweeney (2002b, page 2) went on to say "...87% (216 million of 248 million) of the population in the United States had reported characteristics that likely made them unique based only on {5-digit ZIP, gender, date of birth}. Clearly, data released containing such information about these individuals should not be considered anonymous. Yet, health and other person-specific data are often publicly available in this form." Thus, simply removing obvious identifiers from the data is not always adequate to maintain the privacy of the individual. More rigorous procedures are required to achieve privacy.

It is this type of disclosure, from what Sarathy and Muralidhar (2002a) referred to as “snoopers”, that is discussed here. (As opposed to, say, privacy breaches from unauthorized users of a database (hackers). Sarathy and Muralidhar (2002a, page 1) stated: “The security threat posed by snoopers generally takes the form of undesired inferences about confidential data using other data available either within or outside the database.” We view all data discussed as rectangular data with each row representing an observation and each column representing a variable, however, the rectangle need not be complete. For some methods, rectangular data is expressed in tabular format, and the discussed techniques for tabular data would be applied. While we consider this to be a thorough review, the breadth of the topic is vast, and we do not attempt to cover all papers on the topic. Another very good review of disclosure control techniques which protect against this type of disclosure can be found in Skinner (2009).

3.1. Releasing microdata to the public in a private way

Microdata are data containing observations on individual level. When this type of data is released for research purposes the very first action taken to maintain confidentiality is the removal of obvious identifiers such as name, address, social security number, zip code, etc. However, as mentioned above, this is not always enough to protect the privacy of the individual from an inferential disclosure which can occur, for example, when an individual in the released microdata has some outlying or unique trait (e.g. a very large income, a rare occupation). In this section, we discuss different proposed privacy preserving techniques for releasing data for research. We start by discussing basic privacy preserving methods employed by agencies for releasing data. This is followed by several other proposals for maintaining privacy, including matrix masking, data swapping, and synthetic data.

3.2. Basic methods for limiting disclosure risk

After removing obvious identifiers, some of the most basic methods for maintaining privacy of publicly released statistics sets employed by data releasing agencies (e.g. The Census Bureau) include limitation of detail, top/bottom coding, cell suppression, and rounding.

1. Limitation of detail: This technique includes recoding variables into intervals and collapsing together categories in which only a small number of observations appear. For example, the Census does not release geographic identifiers that would leave a sub-population with less than 100,000 observations (Moore, 1996)
2. Top/bottom coding: This technique can help reduce the disclosure risk of extreme values in the data by limiting the largest (or smallest) value possible for a given variable. For example, if an individual has an extremely large salary, rather than reporting the exact amount, which would make the observation vulnerable to disclosure, an agency may simply report it as “over ₦100,000”. Likewise, negative values of income could be recoded to be “less than ₦0” to avoid extremely large negative values.
3. Suppression: In a contingency table, cells with too few observations cannot be released to the public, as it may be easy to infer the identity of these individuals. A simple procedure for controlling disclosure is suppression of these cells. Similarly, if the values of some combination of variables are unique or nearly unique in the data, the identity of these rare combination may be easily de-identified. Therefore, these observations could be suppressed as one possible method for maintaining confidentiality. (Cox, 1980, 1984, Mugge, 1983, Cox et al., 1987).
4. Rounding: Rounding is another method to limit statistical disclosure of data. Random rounding involves deciding on a rounding base and then rounding each observation up or down to the nearest multiple of the rounding base. Rounding up or down is decided upon randomly based on how close the observation is to the nearest multiple of a rounding base. For example, if the rounding base is 10 and 7 was observed, 7 would be rounded up with probability 0.7 and rounded down with probability 0.3. One could also use controlled

rounding which allows the sum of the rounded values to be the same as the rounded value of the sum of the original data. (Cox, 1984, Cox et al., 1987, Cox, 1987).

5. Addition of noise: Rather than release the actual values of the data, noise is added to the data in an attempt to prevent a linkage attack from occurring. The perturbed data can be correctly analyzed by accounting for the extra variability from the added noise.

3.2.1. Sampling

Sampling is a very powerful tool in limiting disclosure risk of released microdata files, especially against linkage attacks. For instance, a malicious user may try to match an observation in a released set of microdata to another observation in a data set which could identify the individual. However, simply by matching a record in the released data file does not mean that the match is correct. Skinner et al. (1994) pointed out that “Population uniqueness will be a sufficient condition for an exact match to be verified as correct.” If the released microdata are a sample, this make it difficult to verify population uniqueness and is one of the key benefits of sampling. Other benefits of sampling as method of disclosure control are that it is easy to implement and the resulting sampled data are relatively easy to analyze.

3.2.2 Matrix masking

Cox (1980) and Cox (1994) proposed a statistical disclosure limitation (SDL) method called matrix masking. Consider an n by p data matrix, X , consisting of n observation and p variables. Rather than release the data X , one could release the data $Y = AXB + C$ where A , B , C are appropriate conformable matrices. By properly defining the matrices A , B , and C , special cases of matrix masking include: noise addition (Fuller, 1993), sampling, suppressing sensitive variables, cell suppression, and addition of simulated data. A drawback to matrix masking is that in order to analyze the data, the analyzer must have knowledge of the masking procedure used, and, often, even if the consumer knows the masking procedure, the analysis of the data can be complex and special software may be needed. Analysis of masked data is discussed in Little

(1993). Kim (1986) proposed to protect microdata via the addition of noise and transformation. Using their notation, for a data set, x , consisting of n observations and p variables. Kim (1986) suggested masking the j -th variable, x_j by adding noise, e_j , from a normal distribution or from the distribution of x_j itself. Thus the masked, released data for the i -th observation of the j -th variable, y_{ij} will be $x_{ij} + e_{ij}$ where $i = 1 \dots n$ and $j = 1 \dots p$. Kim (1986) further suggests a transformation after the addition of noise of the form $z_{ij} = a y_{ij} + b_j$ where a and b_j are chosen subject to constraints on the first and second moments of z_j and y_j . b_j is chosen such that $E[x_j] = E[z_j]$ and a can either be chosen so that

3.2.3. Randomized response and Post Randomization Method (PRAM)

Randomized response (Warner, 1965, Greenberg et al., 1969) is a technique used in surveys when the questions being posed are of a sensitive nature (Suppose an interviewer was asking about illegal activity which, in turn, may make the respondent more likely to lie or simply refuse to respond). The basic idea is that a respondent answers a question truthfully with some probability p or answers the question untruthfully with probability $1 - p$. In this way, the survey taker does not know for sure whether the respondent is telling the truth or not and a level of confidentiality is maintained. Surveys with randomized response were originally proposed to remove the effect of response bias in surveys that ask sensitive questions. By using this technique respondents privacy is protected, since, even if an individual is identified by a data snooper, they cannot be sure whether the response is correct or not. For example, when administering a survey a researcher may ask a question which would easily identify the respondent, such as asking about a rare condition or disease. After the question is asked, the respondent flips a coin and, for example, tells the truth when heads is observed and lies when tails is observed. In this way, even the raw microdata maintains a level of confidentiality. This method could also be applied after raw microdata were collected. For each observation, the real value of a sensitive field would be released with some probability and its opposite would be released with some other probability. Either way, in order to analyze this data, the researcher must have information about the randomization mechanism. Gouweleeuw et al. (1998) introduced Post Randomization Method which is used to protect categorical data from

disclosure. PRAM perturbs each record in a data file using some probability distribution. This essentially amounts to the addition of noise for categorical variables. One important distinction between PRAM and randomized response is that in randomized response the random mechanism is independent of the true score and applied at the time of collection. However, with PRAM the true value is known and one can therefore condition on this value when defining the probability mechanism used to perturb the data.

4.0 Conclusion

There is an ever increasing demand from researchers for access to useful microdata files. However, there are also growing concerns regarding the privacy of the individuals contained in the microdata. Ideally, microdata could be released in such a way that a balance between usefulness of the data and privacy is struck. This unit highlighted and discuss some of the methods of statistical disclosure control and techniques for assessing the privacy of such methods under different definitions of disclosure.

5.0 Summary

This unit examines some of the reasons for and methods of maintaining data confidentiality for assessing privacy. Five of these were discussed to include: limitation of detail, top/bottom coding, cell suppression, and rounding. Similarly with the help of sampling, matrix masking and randomise/postrandomise (PRAM) response techniques statistics are better understood.

6.0 Self-Assessment Exercise

1. Discuss Randomized response technique.
2. List and discuss three of the special cases of matrix masking
3. List five basic methods for maintaining privacy of publicly released statistics and explain three (3) of them.
4. What are the benefits of sampling as a method of disclosure control?
5. What does noise in microdata/statistics connote?

6. Who does raw microdata maintains a level of confidentiality?
7. Why are identifiers not necessary in statistics?

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Unit 3 *International Classification of Crime for Statistical Purposes (An overview)*

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1.0 Introduction

The International Classification of Crime for Statistical Purposes (ICCS) was developed using the “Principles and framework for an international classification of crimes for statistical purposes” produced by the UNECE-UNODC Joint Task Force on Crime Classification and endorsed by the Conference of European Statisticians in 2012. The ICCS was produced on the basis of the plan to finalize by 2015 an international classification of crime for statistical purposes, as approved by the Statistical Commission in its decision 44/110 and by the Economic and Social Council in its resolution 2013/37. The International Classification of Crime for Statistical Purposes (ICCS) is a classification of criminal offences which is based on internationally agreed concepts, definitions and principles in order to enhance the consistency and international comparability of crime statistics, and improve analytical capabilities at both the national and international levels. The ICCS provides a framework for the systematic production and comparison of statistical data across different criminal justice institutions and jurisdictions. This means that the ICCS is applicable to all forms of crime data, whatever the stage of the criminal justice process (police, prosecution, conviction, imprisonment) at which they are collected, as well as to data collected in crime victimization surveys. At the international level, the ICCS improves the comparability of crime data between countries. Standardized concepts and definitions allow for the systematic collection, analysis and dissemination of data, and also

respond to the demand for in-depth research and analysis of transnational crime. At the national level, the ICCS can be used as a model to provide structure and organize statistical data that are often produced according to legal rather than analytical categories. Moreover, the ICCS can harmonize data across domestic criminal justice institutions (police, prosecutions, courts, prisons) and across different data sources (administrative records and statistical surveys). Likewise, the ICCS can be used as a tool to standardize data from sub-national entities that may have different statistical systems or legal frameworks (United Nations Economic and Social Council. Statistical Commission, 2012).

2.0 Intended Learning Outcomes (ILOs)

At the end of this reading students should have come to terms with the need for an international classification and recognition of crime as a social events that is in dire need of quantification and as a means of properly incorporating and understanding crime scientifically amidst the various challenges of methodological and standardisation and jurisdiction barriers.

3.0 Main Content

3.1 The need for an international classification of crime

Reliable crime statistics are critical for measuring changes in crime levels, monitoring state responses to crime, evaluating policies and understanding the various facets of crime in different contexts. Often, raw data from different stages of the criminal justice process are available, but the purposeful collection and organization of these data into statistical form is required to produce valuable information for use in decision-making. The comparison of crime statistics across time, between countries or with other available statistics is particularly difficult due to the lack of standardized concepts and the absence of an internationally agreed statistical framework to make such comparisons possible.

To illustrate, various data sources, often within the same jurisdiction, use different definitions and concepts to organize crime data which are often based on legal rather than statistical principles. This close and intertwined relationship between legislation and statistics creates problems from an analytical perspective: statistical data are often organized and categorized according to legal provisions, such as articles in legal or penal codes, which are not always

relevant from an analytical standpoint. Furthermore, comparability across time and jurisdictions can be hampered by changes in legislation and, for example, by the fact that the same act can be criminalized under very different legal provisions in different countries, or may be considered a criminal offence in one country but not in another. The ICCS addresses these issues by providing a methodological and statistical standard and a common definitional framework to improve data quality and comparability. Offences are grouped in a meaningful and systematic way, resulting in an improvement in the capability to produce, disseminate and analyse crime data accurately in order to inform the public and tailor policies and programmes in the areas of crime prevention, rule of law and criminal justice reform.

3.2 The challenge of developing an international classification of crime for a nationally defined event

Currently, national statistics on crime refer to criminal offences as defined by each country's criminal law system. Without legal harmonization, differences in the definition of offences are inevitable and international comparison must always be placed in the context of these differences. For example, one country may require physical contact for an offence to be considered an assault, while another country may not.

In order to overcome such challenges, the approach used by the ICCS is to consider "criminal" acts in national and international laws as the universe of acts that are subject to classification within the ICCS. However, the specific classification of such acts (i.e. their allocation to analytical categories) is based on behavioural descriptions rather than strictly legal specifications derived from criminal laws. Crimes as defined in criminal law are typically associated with actions or behavioural and contextual attributes that are universally considered to be an offence (for example, wounding or injuring, or taking property without consent). This event-based approach avoids issues created by legal complexities, resulting in a simplified and globally applicable classification. It is important to note that the ICCS uses specific terms, such as "rape", "harassment" or "burglary", which are widely recognized and defined in criminal legislation. These terms are given a specific description in the ICCS, which is intended to be used for statistical purposes. The adoption of the ICCS at the national level will require the attentive translation of offences as defined by national legislation into ICCS categories, with careful consideration of the full act/event descriptions and explanatory notes.

3.3 The process of building the international classification of crime

The Social Commission of the United Nations first highlighted the importance of preparing a standard classification of offences in 1951 (United Nations Economic and Social Council. Social Commission, 1951). However, successive endeavours to develop such an international crime classification were fraught with challenges due to disparities in definitions, national legislations and reporting systems. Concrete steps to overcome such limitations were made in 2009 when the Conference of European Statisticians established a Task Force, led by the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) and the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE), to develop a crime classification framework based on behavioural descriptions rather than legal codes (United Nations Economic Commission for Europe, 2009). The framework of the first international crime classification was developed by the Task Force and approved by the Conference of European Statisticians at the 60th plenary session in June 2012.

The proposal to develop a full international crime classification was discussed at the 43rd session of the United Nations Statistical Commission (UNSC) and the 21st session of the United Nations Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice (CCPCJ). At the next session of both UNSC and CCPCJ, both Commissions approved the plan to develop an international classification of crime for statistical purposes, in consultation with statisticians and experts from national statistical offices, other national government institutions and regional and international organizations (UNSC, 2012).

Three consultation meetings were held between 2012 and 2014, and two large-scale testing exercises of successive versions of the ICCS were also undertaken in the same period. Both testing exercises confirmed the feasibility of developing and implementing the ICCS, with a view to gradually applying it to statistics produced at the national level. A final draft version of the ICCS was sent to Member States and other relevant organizations by the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) and the United Nations Statistical Division in August 2014. Developed with the active participation and collaboration of experts from several countries, who participated in the expert group meetings and testing exercises and provided

inputs and comments, the present version of the ICCS is the result of extensive consultations and collaboration between national statistical offices, other national government institutions, regional and international organizations, including UNODC, the UNODC-INEGI Center of Excellence (COE) on Statistics on Governance, Public Safety, Victimization and Justice, the World Health Organisation (WHO), the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), Eurostat, the Inter-American Development Bank (IADB) and the Organisation of American States (OAS). Furthermore, the ICCS has been reviewed by the Expert Group on International Statistical Classifications, the central coordinating body of the work on international classifications established by the United Nations Statistical Commission.

4.0 Conclusion

There has been no other time than now in the history of mankind, that the need of understanding and harmonising the definition of crime, its attribute in terms of trend occurrence and variations across time and space. And grappled with the technological advancement in science and the requirement in programming language encoded and decoded with algorithm, statistical computation of social events like crime can no longer be overemphasised across borders, thus the coming of the ICCS was prompt.

5.0 Summary

This unit gives an overview of the emergence of the ICCS as a commission saddled with the responsibility of harmonizing statistical issues around the quantification and standardization of crime measurement globally it examined the **challenges of developing an international classification of crime for a nationally defined event, the need for an international classification of crime And the process of building the international classification of crime**

6.0 Self-Assessment Exercise

1. At what session of the United Nations Statistical Commission (UNSC) did the proposal to develop a full international crime classification held?
2. Give a reason or two why legal harmonization is very germane in and for the ICCS.
3. How does the ICCS address these issues by providing a methodological and statistical
4. How does the ICCS improve data quality and comparability?

5. Identify at least three (3) specific terms widely recognised, defined and used for statistical purposes in the ICCS?
6. List and discuss the major problem therein in the comparability of crime statistics across time and jurisdictions.
7. What are the challenges of developing an international classification of crime for a nationally defined event?
8. What are the three tools employed by the ICCS to improve data quality and comparability
9. What does the acronym ICCS stands for?
10. What is the applicability of the ICCS to all forms of crime data?
11. What is the operational importance of the ICCS?

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Unit 4

Principles used in the *International Classification of Crime for Statistical Purposes (ICCS)*

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1.0 Introduction

The International Classification of Crime for Statistical Purposes (ICCS) was developed using the “Principles and framework for an international classification of crimes for statistical purposes” produced by the UNECE-UNODC Joint Task Force on Crime Classification and endorsed by the Conference of European Statisticians in 2012. The ICCS was produced on the basis of the plan to finalize in 2015 an international classification of crime for statistical purposes, as approved by the Statistical Commission in its decision 44/110 and by the Economic and Social Council in its resolution 2013/37. This is to enable researchers and policy makers to be on the same page when crime statistics take the centre stage. To avoid complexities and anxiety that statistics bring. It has been observed that When you hear the word *statistics*, you probably either get an attack of crime anxiety or think about lifeless numbers, such as the population of the city or town where you live, as measured by the latest census, or the per capita income in a country. The goal of this unit is to open a whole new world of understanding of the term *statistics*. By the time you finish reading this unit, you will realize that the invention of statistical methods is one of the most important developments of modern times. The word statistics is actually used to mean two different things. The better known definition is that statistics are numbers measured for some purpose. A more appropriate, complete definition is the following: *Statistics is a collection of procedures and principles for gaining and processing*

information in order to make decisions when faced with uncertainty. Using this definition, you have undoubtedly used statistics in your own life.

2.0 Intended Learning Outcomes (ILOs)

The main intention of this unit is to further carry along readers on the way and manners ICCS operates in classifying and distinguishing offences ie as applicable to Level 1-4 criminal offences for comparative and analytical purposes to the best of international standard.

3.0 Main Content

3.1 Principles used in the *International Classification of Crime for Statistical Purposes (ICCS)*

- **The definition of crime for the purposes of the ICCS**

While certain common elements, such as “harm” and “wrongfulness”, can be associated with crime, they cannot wholly and operationally define it. Moreover, the vast disparity in approaches and sources used in the establishment of criminal laws by different countries makes it impossible to create a consistent and comprehensive definition of crime. The common denominator of what constitutes a “crime” is that it consists of behaviours which are defined as criminal offences and are punishable as such by law. The offences defined as criminal are established by each country’s legal system and the codification of crimes (criminal code, penal code, etc.). As a result, “crime” is considered by the ICCS to be the punishable contravention or violation of the limits on human behaviour as imposed by national criminal legislation. Each criminal offence has a perpetrator — person, corporation or institution — which is liable for the criminal behaviour in question.

- **The unit of classification of the ICCS**

The unit of classification of the ICCS is the act that constitutes a criminal offence. The description of the criminal offence is provided in terms of the behaviour shown by the perpetrator(s) of a crime. The apparent behaviour is in most cases sufficient to define an offence for the purposes of the ICCS, while in some cases additional elements need to be taken into account, such as the intentionality (state of mind) of the perpetrator or the condition/status of the

victim (for example, whether he/she is a minor); in other cases, a crime is defined by a sequence of behaviours, as in the case of trafficking in persons, for example.

Defining and classifying the type of crime event is the primary focus of the classification, which aims to assign all criminal offences to categories on the basis of a number of criteria. The ICCS also provides for a number of additional attributes of the crime event, which, though not determinant of the nature of the crime, are very important additions that provide analytical insight to statistical data on crime, such as selected characteristics of victims or perpetrators.

Besides classifying criminal offences, the ICCS can also be used in relation to other events or conditions related to the criminal justice process, such as arrests, prosecutions, convictions and prison sentences, as well as persons involved as perpetrators or victims. If consistently used by all relevant data sources, the ICCS can measure the flows and links between the different stages of the criminal justice system. For example, if the ICCS is applied at all stages of the criminal justice process, links can be made between data on a given offence (whether from administrative data or from victimization surveys), the number of arrests for the same type of offence and, in sequence, on prosecutions, convictions and on persons in prison for the same type of offence.

- **The application of the principles of statistical classification**

The ICCS is based on established statistical practices and principles. By definition, a statistical classification is: “A set of discrete, exhaustive and mutually exclusive categories which can be assigned to one or more variables used in the collection and presentation of data, and which describe the characteristics of a particular population” (Hancock, 2013). Particular care has been taken that the following three core characteristics of an international statistical classification have been implemented in the ICCS:

1. *Mutual exclusivity: every elementary manifestation of the phenomenon under study should be assigned to one and only one category of the classification such that there are no overlaps*

Application of the principle of mutual exclusivity: the ICCS can be used to classify every offence into one and only one category of the classification with no overlaps.

The description of each category clearly defines the respective event/behaviour with additional guidance provided by legal inclusions and exclusions (examples of criminal offences in national

legislation that are respectively included in, or excluded from, that category), which will further clarify the boundaries of each category. The use of additional crime disaggregations or “tags” provides a method to deal with cases that could be attributed to one offence or another. For example, a fraud offence perpetrated through the use of a computer is classified as a fraud with a cybercrime-related tag. Similarly, a trafficking in persons offence perpetrated by an organized criminal group is classified as trafficking in persons with an organized crime tag.

2. Exhaustiveness: *every possible manifestation of the phenomenon under study should be included in the classification*

Application of the principle of exhaustiveness: while the ICCS aims to cover every manifestation of crime, it is clear that this principle needs to be adopted with due consideration as to what is feasible.

The sheer number of acts criminalized in statutes, regulatory provisions and judicial decisions in any given country, as well as continuous legislative changes, hamper any attempt to build a comprehensive listing of all criminal offences that exist globally. A realistic goal for the classification is thus to capture acts or events generally known to constitute criminal offences in a sufficient number of countries, at a certain level of detail, determined by carefully balancing the classification for practicality and policy-relevance at an international level. In addition, the ICCS does not include classification categories for events that generally constitute administrative offences (such as minor traffic violations). As such, the ICCS also includes some events or behaviours that are criminalized in some countries while being legal in others. In a small number of cases, the criminalization of certain acts has been held to contravene international human rights law. In such cases, it is important to note that the ICCS should not be viewed as supporting or legitimizing the criminalization of any offence presented within the classification, but be taken as a statistical standard that attempts to provide realistic, global coverage of every manifestation of crime for statistical purposes.

3. Statistical feasibility: *it is possible to effectively, accurately and consistently distinguish between the categories in the classification on the basis of the information available*

Application of the principle of statistical feasibility: the statistical feasibility of a statistical classification means that observations can be allocated to categories in the classification on the basis of the information available; for example, on the basis of responses to questions that can be reasonably asked in statistical surveys or on administrative forms (Hancock, 2013). The ICCS supports this by carefully defining the criminal act on the basis of behavioural descriptions, supplemented with examples of legal inclusions and exclusions for each category.

Statistical feasibility was tested on the basis of existing data collections of a significant number of countries which participated in testing subsequent draft versions of the ICCS by allocating data on criminal offences to the categories of the classification (see section: “The process of building the international classification of crime”).

3.2 The criteria used to build the ICCS

Criminal offences can be seen, and classified, from a multitude of angles: their impact on victims, the way they have been perpetrated, the offender’s motive and the seriousness of the offence, to name but a few. In building the classification, priority has been given to criteria which are particularly relevant from a policy perspective: the ICCS categories, and the data produced accordingly, should provide information that can be easily understood and used when developing crime prevention and criminal justice policies. For example, data organized along the lines of the ICCS should provide answers to questions on trends and comparisons regarding acquisitive crime, or crime of a sexual nature, or on more complex constructs such as financial crime or offences committed by organized criminal groups. A number of criteria have been used to build the hierarchical structure of the ICCS, in the attempt to build categories that can respond to a variety of information needs. In particular, the following criteria have been used to form categories of the ICCS:

- a. policy area of the act/event (protection of property rights, protection of health, etc.)
- b. target of the act/event (e.g. person, object, natural environment, State, etc.)
- c. seriousness of the act/event (e.g. acts leading to death, acts causing harm, etc.)
- d. means by which the act/event is perpetrated (e.g. by violence, threat of violence, etc.).

Based on these criteria, criminal offences can be grouped in homogenous categories, which are aggregated at four different hierarchical levels: Levels 1, 2, 3 and 4. There are 11 Level 1 categories designed to cover all acts or events that constitute a crime within the scope of the ICCS. Criminal offences at Levels 2, 3 and 4 can be summed to provide observations at more aggregated levels, while observations at higher levels can be subdivided into lower-level categories (see http://unstats.un.org/unsd/class/family/glossary_short.asp). For the *UN Glossary of Classification Terms*, "Group".

Criminal offences can be identified at the level of detail that is of interest. The ICCS has also been designed with a view to being a flexible tool to create "meta-categories". If needed, categories can be aggregated across categories at different levels. For example, Level 1 category "Acts against property involving violence or threat against a person" can be aggregated with Level 1 category "Acts against property only" to form a new meta-category "Acts against property".

The numerical coding of the categories is in accordance with their level in the classification: Level 1 categories are the broadest categories and have a two-digit code (e.g. 01); Level 2 categories have a four-digit code (e.g. 0101); Level 3 categories have a five-digit code (e.g. 01011); and Level 4 categories, the most detailed level, have a six-digit code (e.g. 010111).

LEVEL 1 CATEGORIES	
1	Acts leading to death or intending to cause death
2	Acts leading to harm or intending to cause harm to the person
3	Injurious acts of a sexual nature
4	Acts against property involving violence or threat against a person
5	Acts against property only
6	Acts involving controlled psychoactive substances or other drugs
7	Acts involving fraud, deception or corruption
8	Acts against public order, authority and provisions of the State
9	Acts against public safety and state security
10	Acts against the natural environment
11	Other criminal acts not elsewhere classified

In particular, the 11 categories in Level 1 have been chosen based on all the four criteria above, as well as by giving due attention to categories often used in national data, on the grounds of

facilitating the practical implementation of the ICCS. The same criteria are used to identify categories at Levels 2, 3 and 4.

For example, based on the target of an act/event, sexual exploitation is disaggregated into sexual exploitation of adults and sexual exploitation of children. Sexual exploitation of children is further disaggregated into four Level 4 categories based on policy relevance: child pornography; child prostitution; sexual grooming of children; and other sexual exploitation of children.

The categories in Levels 1, 2 and 3 of the ICCS are intended to be complete and to encompass every possible criminal offence. However, not all Level 2 and 3 categories are further divided into Level 4 categories since the latter are not always necessary to identify policy-relevant offences.

All categories at each level of the classification are described in detailed terms. Each offence has an act/event-based description, which is the core set of actions, behavioural and contextual attributes that define the offence. Descriptions are accompanied by legal inclusions and exclusions to identify the most common or important criminal offences included in, or excluded from, the category. For example, the ICCS defines negligence through the core behavioural actions: the failure to exercise the care towards others which a reasonable or prudent person would exert under the circumstances; or taking action that a reasonable person would not take. Furthermore, negligence in situations of persons under care is defined with the addition of contextual attributes — in this case, the victim — as behavioural attributes alone cannot define acts that are criminalized separately (often with a higher penalty) due to the specific vulnerability of the target of the act, rather than the overall behaviour itself.

3.3 Disaggregating variables as additional descriptors of criminal offences

The categories of the ICCS capture and describe the nature of criminal offences, but a number of other characteristics are also essential to enable the full identification of policy-relevant patterns and trends in crime and to conduct comprehensive and detailed analyses. For example, when producing statistics on intentional homicide, additional value is provided, if data can be disaggregated by the characteristics of the victims; and the perpetrators, by the use of firearms or by motives for killings. To this end, additional disaggregating variables (also called “tags”) that

enable the coding of additional information about an offence are provided, which helps to enrich the analysis with specific event, victim and perpetrator characteristics related to any particular crime.

In the current practice of national crime recording systems, the number, structure and application of such additional disaggregating variables to datasets on crime and criminal justice statistics vary greatly, and are often determined by factors such as specific policy needs; recording and processing capacities at the local, regional and national levels of data collection; the level of development and sophistication of the national crime statistics system; and the degree of automation and digitalization of data collection. In particular, the last of these criteria (i.e. whether it is a paper or a computer-based system) determines if a national crime statistics system can support a comprehensive structure of disaggregating variables.

In systems where data collection, transmission and aggregation are automated through electronic data capture, storage, transfer and compilation, it is more likely that data are organized in a way which allows for the capture and retrieval of every possible detail. For example, all relevant details of a criminal offence, such as the characteristics of the perpetrator and victim, can be captured and stored electronically in a unit record. Multiple types of statistical outputs can then be obtained, for example, by disaggregating data on individual offences by selected disaggregating variables (for example, corruption offences by economic sector or trafficking in persons by citizenship of the victims) or by using disaggregating variables in combination with several crime categories (for example, by considering the sex and age of victims of all “violent offences” or the geographical location of all “property crimes”). The system of disaggregating variables is thus an additional tool for use in a comprehensive system of crime and criminal justice statistics, the realization of which relies heavily on the existence of an automated data collection system.

A large number of event, victim and perpetrator characteristics could theoretically be of interest in different parts of the world. For practical reasons, not all possible disaggregations can be mentioned in the ICCS. Nevertheless, in cases where a system of disaggregating variables is implemented or is planned to be implemented in the future, it is beneficial to apply a harmonized

set of basic policy-relevant characteristics of crimes, perpetrators and victims for analytical and comparative purposes. For example, using the same disaggregations for data on the victim-perpetrator relationship (such as current intimate partner/spouse, former intimate partner/spouse, blood relative, etc.) would greatly assist the cross-national analysis of patterns and trends in violent crime and its enabling and mitigating factors. Based on their policy relevance, the supplementary table to the ICCS indicates that the following minimum set of disaggregating variables should be applied to criminal offences where relevant:

- i. event descriptions: degree of completion, type of weapon used, situational context, geographical location, date and time, type of location, motive, cybercrime-related, reporting entity;
- ii. victim descriptions: sex, age, age status, citizenship, legal status, economic sector (of victimized businesses), intoxication status;
- iii. perpetrator descriptions: sex, age, age status, victim-perpetrator relationship, citizenship, legal status, intoxication status, repeat offender.

The proposed system of disaggregating variables can be implemented by national crime recording institutions in a number of different ways. A comprehensive statistical solution would integrate at least the minimum set of disaggregating variables in the template used for (electronic) unit records of any type of crime, thus allowing a full analysis of any offence, perpetrator or victim by any relevant combination of disaggregating variable required. A more limited option, for example, would be the collection of only certain perpetrator or victim characteristics for all crimes (separate counts for juvenile perpetrators, for example) while an interim option would be the collection of an expanded number of event, perpetrator and victim characteristics on a few core crimes only (such as homicide, robbery or trafficking in persons). Given the specific value of data on intentional homicide, due to the gravity of the crime and its impact on the wider community, additional disaggregating variables which provide a higher level of detail about the situational context, social relationships and killing mechanism are necessary to describe this offence (see below). For any available dataset, further data descriptors should be made available to facilitate the interpretation of statistical data. While most of the crimes, and their statistical reporting, refer to offences actually committed by one or more direct perpetrators (whether

known or not), data can also include cases of threats to commit a certain crime or when the offence consisted of planning or assisting others to commit it. It is therefore important that information be provided about whether available data on criminal offences (and perpetrators) include or exclude the following behaviours in the counts for the categories:

- a. threats to commit the crime
- b. aiding/abetting/accessory to the crime
- c. accomplice to the crime
- d. conspiracy/planning the crime
- e. incitement to commit the crime.

This information should ideally be captured and stored for every criminal offence to indicate whether the recorded event refers to a threat, a case of aiding/abetting/accessory to the crime or any other typology in the list above. In such cases, the desired statistical outputs can be produced by either including or excluding such events from the aggregate counts. Alternatively, the information on the inclusion of such cases can be provided at an aggregated level of crime categories, in the form of meta-data.

Intentional homicide as a special case

The study of intentional homicide is relevant not only because of the gravity of the offence, but also because intentional homicide is one of the most measurable and comparable indicators for monitoring violent deaths and is often considered both a proxy for violent crime as well as an indicator of levels of security within countries. According to the ICCS, intentional homicide is “unlawful death inflicted upon a person with the intent to cause death or serious injury.” Such a definition provides clear guidance for the determination of whether a specific act of killing is to be considered intentional homicide for the purpose of producing statistics.

However, in some cases, contextual circumstances also have to be taken into account when determining whether, for statistical purposes, certain killings have to be included in the count of homicides. This occurs for killings during situations of collective violence — such as during armed conflicts, or in situations of civil unrest — where it is important to distinguish between different types of killings, as the context can determine if and how such acts should be coded in

the ICCS. Although producing statistical data in such situations can be very challenging, it is nonetheless important to provide guidance on which killings should be considered within the ICCS and about how to classify them for the purpose of producing internationally consistent statistics on homicide.

Killings during civil unrest

Killings during civil unrest are those which occur during a situation of violent hostilities between two or more parties that does not amount to an internal armed conflict, and may include riots or other sporadic acts of violence linked to strikes or protests/demonstrations that turn violent. As these situations do not usually amount to internal armed conflict, and thus are not to be considered within the legal framework in force during conflicts, each violent death that occurs during a situation of civil unrest should be classified according to the same standards applicable to intentional homicide. This means that each killing needs to be examined and attributed to the applicable type according to the factual circumstances, based on whether, for example, the killing was unlawful and intentional. When such killings are classified as intentional homicides in the ICCS, there is the option to use the disaggregating variable tag for intentional homicides, “Situational Context — Related to civil unrest”, which allows for the statistical identification of the situational context in which killings of this nature take place (see Table: III).

Table: III Additional disaggregations of intentional homicide (I): Situational context

SITUATIONAL CONTEXT OF INTENTIONAL HOMICIDE			
Homicide related to other criminal activities ¹⁷⁹	Homicide related to organized criminal groups or gangs	Homicide related to organized criminal groups	The victim or perpetrator was a member of an organized criminal group/gang, or homicide occurs in a fashion related to organized criminal groups/gangs
		Homicide related to gangs	
	Homicide related to other criminal activities	Homicide related to robbery	Homicide may be perpetrated in order to accomplish the original crime and/or avoid detection. Homicide does not represent the primary goal of the criminal act
		Homicide perpetrated during the commission of another criminal offence	
Interpersonal homicide ¹⁸⁰	Intimate partner/family member		Homicide perpetrated by an intimate partner or family member according to the classification by relationship between victim and perpetrator. This includes homicide perpetrated by an (ex-) partner/(ex-)spouse, a family member other than a partner/spouse; infanticide and parricide
	Other interpersonal homicide		Homicide perpetrated on persons other than intimate partners or family members. This includes, for example, killings related to neighbour disputes or property disputes, revenge-related killings, or random and seemingly unprovoked acts of killing ranging from brawls to killing sprees
Socio-political homicide	Homicide related to social prejudice		Homicide as a result of violence against specific social groups, including hate crime (crime in which the victim is specifically targeted because of his or her characteristics, ascribed attributes, ascribed beliefs or values). Social prejudice is discrimination due to the victim's characteristics, attributes, beliefs or values. Characteristics and attributes include sex, gender, sexual orientation, age, language, ethnic origin, disability and/or race. Beliefs or values, at minimum, include religious beliefs and/or economic and social views
	Homicide related to political agendas		Intentional homicide related to political agendas, including killings by terrorist groups with a political agenda, political assassination, and targeted killing of journalists for political reasons. A political agenda is a set of values, beliefs or issues that are advocated by a political or ideological organization
	Homicide related to civil unrest ¹⁸¹		Intentional homicides in a situation of civil unrest
	Homicide related to other socio-political agendas		This includes, for example, homicide through mob violence and vigilantism, unlawful killings by the police, excessive use of force by law enforcement officers and extrajudicial killings

Killings during armed conflict

International humanitarian law distinguishes between two types of armed conflict (Schindler, 1979): (1) international armed conflicts, which exist wherever there is a resort to armed force between States; and (2) non-international armed conflicts (or internal armed conflict), which occur whenever there is protracted armed violence between governmental authorities and organized armed groups or between such groups within a State. While the first type of conflict is largely related to armed actions perpetrated by the military forces of States, non-international armed conflicts are more difficult to define and identify. In particular, in the continuum of situations of collective violence within a country, it is important to distinguish situations of civil unrest from those of internal armed conflict. The elements that determine the difference are the threshold of *intensity of hostilities* (whether hostilities are of a collective character, or whether the Government uses military force rather than police force against insurgents), and the degree of *organization of the group* (whether the armed group is sufficiently organized, with a command structure, headquarters and the ability to plan and carry out military operations). In situations of armed conflict, the following types of killings should be classified within the ICCS:

- 1) in situations of armed conflict, any *targeted or excessive* killing by a combatant (acting in association with or in the context of the conflict) of a civilian taking no active part in the hostilities can be recorded as a war crime in 11013 (Other criminal acts not elsewhere classified; Acts under universal jurisdiction; War crimes);
- 2) in situations of armed conflict, the killing of combatants by other combatants which is in breach of international humanitarian law can also be coded to 11013; for example, wilful killing of parties to the conflict that are *hors de combat*; (Geneva Conventions (1947)).
- 3) a killing perpetrated by a combatant which is not directly in association with the armed conflict, or by a civilian taking no active part in hostilities in a situation of armed conflict should not be considered as associated with the conflict, and should be analysed as any other killing, irrespective of the conflict situation, and classified into the existing typologies of violent death according to the standard definitions;
- 4) killing by a combatant which is considered a criminal offence in the national legislation (and is prosecuted as such) but does not amount to a war crime, should be classified under 0107 (Unlawful killing associated with armed conflict).

These standards can be very challenging to apply when there is a lack of operational capabilities to measure and identify different killings, and, indeed, in situations of collective violence a large share of killings may remain unreported. However, in the case of killings that are recorded, establishing strict boundaries for this ambiguous field will help to distinguish intentional homicide from other killings and increase data quality and comparability around the world.

Additional disaggregations of intentional homicide

Once it has been established whether a particular act of killing is to be classified and counted as an intentional homicide, there is often a need for more detailed quantitative information on the social contexts and mechanisms of intentional homicide that can help to design better evidence-based policies for preventing and responding to this particular type of crime. For comparative

and analytical purposes, three classification criteria are particularly relevant for the characterization of intentional homicide and can be used to define it in more detail. These three criteria (Situational context; Relationship between victim and perpetrator; and Mechanism of killing) have been used to build three additional disaggregation tables that are applicable for intentional homicide only (see Tables III, IV and V).

Table: IV Additional disaggregations of intentional homicide (II): Relationship between victim and perpetrator

RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN VICTIM AND PERPETRATOR OF INTENTIONAL HOMICIDE				
Intimate partner or family member (IPFM)	Intimate partner	Current spouse or intimate partner (cohabitating or non-cohabitating partner or boyfriend/girlfriend)	Current spouse or cohabitating partner	Spouse
			Current non-cohabitating partner (boyfriend/girlfriend but not married)	Cohabitating partner
	Family member	Former spouse or intimate partner (cohabitating or non-cohabitating partner or boyfriend/girlfriend)	Former spouse or cohabitating partner	Former spouse
			Former non-cohabitating partner (boyfriend/girlfriend but not married)	Former cohabitating partner
			Parent	
			Child	
Other perpetrator known to the victim	Friend/acquaintance	Blood relative	Other blood relative	Cohabitating blood relative
		Other household member ¹⁸² or relative by marriage or adoption		Non-cohabitating blood relative
	Colleague/business or work relationship	Friend		
		Acquaintance		
	Authority/care relationship (doctor/nurse/teacher/police/public official, clergy, etc.)			
	Other perpetrator known to the victim			
Perpetrator unknown to the victim	Perpetrator unknown to the victim			

182 Other household members include persons living in the same household as the victim.

Table: V Additional disaggregations of intentional homicide (III): Mechanism of killing

This classification is built by aggregating causes of death by assault as specified by WHO International Classification of Diseases (ICD-10). The letters and numbers in brackets refer to their appearance in the ICD-10.

MECHANISM OF KILLING		
Attack with firearms or explosives	Firearm	Handgun discharge (X93)
		Rifle, shotgun and larger firearm discharge (X94)
		Other and unspecified firearm discharge (X95)
	Explosives (X96)	
Attack with another weapon	Sharp object (X99)	
	Blunt object (Y00)	
	Other object used as a weapon (including deliberately hitting or running over with a motor vehicle (Y03))	
Attack without a weapon	Hanging, strangulation or suffocation (X91)	
	Drowning or submersion (X92)	
	Pushing from a high place (Y01)	
	Pushing or placing victim before moving object (Y02)	
	Bodily force	Bodily force (hitting or kicking) (Y04)
		Sexual assault (Y05)
Other	Drugs and chemical substances	Including: Assault with drugs, medicaments and biological substances (X85) Assault with corrosive substance (X86) Assault with pesticides (X87) Assault with gases and vapours (X88) Assault with other specified chemicals and noxious substances (X89) Assault with unspecified chemical or noxious substance (X90)
	Other	Including: Fire, flames or smoke (X97) Steam, hot vapours or hot objects (X98) Neglect and abandonment (Y06) Other maltreatment syndromes (Y07) Assault by other specified means (Y08)
Assault by unspecified means (Y09)		

4.0 Conclusion

Understanding and harmonizing the crime statistics to a very large extent (procedurally, methodologically and analytically) have been made possible with the coming of the International Classification of Crime for Statistical Purposes (ICCS) especially in the area of standardizing

statistical applications to crime events in terms of trend, occurrence and variations across time and space with ease of reportage as well.

5.0 Summary

This unit examines the underlining principles used in the International Classification of Crime for Statistical Purposes (ICCS) for which categories of criminal offences have emerged, classified and standardized under a four broad levels (1,2,3, and 4) and subcategories for comparative and analytical purposes globally. Some of the challenges in arriving at a universal classification of crime were highlighted especially those dealing with legislative changes across boundary, in time and space. Last with relevant examples tabularized, the implications of disaggregating variables for better understanding were discussed.

6.0 Self-Assessment Exercise

1. Continuous legislative changes have hampered the attempt to build a comprehensive listing of all criminal offences that exist globally. Discuss any two legislative changes known to you.
2. Criminal offences can be seen, and classified, from a multitude of angles. List and discuss any two of these angles.
3. Identify the three minimum set of disaggregating variables that should be applied to criminal offences where relevant?
4. In crime statistics, why is it important to distinguish between different types of killings/homicide?
5. In situations of armed conflict, what are the four (4) types of classifications of killings by the ICCS?
6. International humanitarian law distinguishes between two types of armed conflict. What are they?
7. List five of those behaviours that are often included or excluded in the data on criminal offences (and perpetrators) and explain at least three of them.
8. Specify the numerical coding each for Level 1, 2,3, and 4 criminal offences.
9. There are four criteria used to form categories of the ICCS. List and explain all.

10. What are the four criteria used in choosing the 11 categories in Level 1 criminal offences?
11. What are the three (3) core characteristics of an international statistical classification as implemented in the ICCS?
12. What are the three standardized criteria often used for comparative and analytical purposes in intentional homicide?
13. What does statistical classification entails? and highlight the primary focus of classification.
14. Why are non-international armed conflicts more difficult to define and identify?
15. Why is the study of intentional homicide relevant to crime statistician?

7.0 References/Further Reading

- Geneva Conventions (1947). International Humanitarian Law prohibits wilful killing of parties to the conflict that are hors de combat, as well as treacherous killing of parties to the conflict.
- Hancock, A. (2013). *Best Practice Guidelines for Developing International Statistical Classifications*. United Nations Department for Economic and Social Affairs. Statistical Division. ESA/STAT/AC.267/5 of 6 May 2013. Available at: <http://unstats.un.org/unsd/class/intercop/expertgroup/2013/AC267-5.PDF>.
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- United Nations. Statistical Division. *UN Glossary of Classification Terms. "Group"*. Available at: http://unstats.un.org/unsd/class/family/glossary_short.asp. For reasons of clarity and space, categories at the higher levels that are not further disaggregated are not repeated at the lower levels.