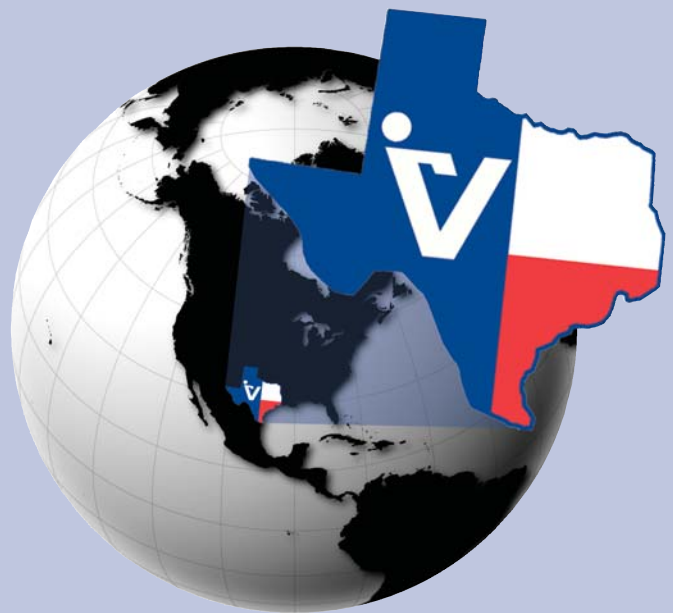


Criminal Victimization of Texas Residents



2006

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A Member of the Texas State University System*

Mission Statement

The Mission of the Crime Victims' Institute is to

- Conduct research to examine the impact of crime on victims of all ages in order to promote a better understanding of victimization
- Improve services to victims
- Assist victims of crime by giving them a voice
- Inform victim-related policymaking at the state and local levels.

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Table of Contents

Executive Summary	5
Introduction	6
Methodology	7
Characteristics of Respondents	9
Violent Victimization	12
Age	12
Gender	12
Race/Ethnicity	13
Marital Status	13
Government Assistance	14
Income	14
Type of Residence	15
Firearm Ownership	15
Reporting to Police	15
Injuries	16
Emotional Responses	16
Neighborhood Safety	17
Property Crime Victimization	18
Age	18
Gender	18
Race/Ethnicity	19
Marital Status	19
Government Assistance	20
Income	20
Type of Residence	20
Firearm Ownership	21
Neighborhood Safety	21
Reporting to Police	21
Conclusion	22
Endnotes	23

List of Tables

Table 1	Survey Methodology	7
Table 2	Neighborhood Safety Perceptions, Crime Perceptions, and Firearm Ownership	11
Table 3	Other Characteristics Associated with Violent Crime Victimization	17
Table 4	Perceptions of Neighborhood Safety Among Property Crime Victims	22

List of Figures

Figure 1	U.S. Violent Crime Victimization per 1,000 Residents	5
Figure 2	U.S. Property Crime Rates per 1,000 Residents	6
Figure 3	Distribution of Survey	8
Figure 4	Age of Respondents	9
Figure 5	Gender of Respondents	9
Figure 6	Race/Ethnicity of Respondents	9
Figure 7	Marital Status of Respondents	9
Figure 8	Respondents Receiving Government Assistance	9
Figure 9	Income of Respondents	9
Figure 10	Type of Residence of Respondents	10
Figure 11	Firearm Ownership among Respondents	10
Figure 12	Educational Level of Respondents	10
Figure 13	Employment of Respondents	10
Figure 14	Comparison of Crime Victims	11
Figure 15	Types of Violent Crime Victimitizations	12
Figure 16	Percentage of Victims in each Age Group	12
Figure 17	Percentage of Victims in each Gender Group	13
Figure 18	Percentage of Victims in each Race/Ethnicity Group	13
Figure 19	Percentage of Victims in each Marital Group	13
Figure 20	Percentage of Victims in each Government Assistance Group	14
Figure 21	Percentage of Victims in each Income Group	14
Figure 22	Percentage of Victims in each Type of Residence Group	15
Figure 23	Percentage of Victims in each Firearm Ownership Group	15
Figure 24	Satisfaction of Violent Crime Victims with Police	15
Figure 25	Injuries Suffered by Violent Crime Victims	16
Figure 26	Emotional Responses after Violent Victimization	16
Figure 27	Type of Property Crime Victimitizations	18
Figure 28	Percentage of Victims in each Age Group	18
Figure 29	Percentage of Victims in each Gender Group	19
Figure 30	Percentage of Victims in each Race/Ethnicity Group	19
Figure 31	Percentage of Victims in each Marital Group	19
Figure 32	Percentage of Victims in each Government Assistance Group	20
Figure 33	Percentage of Victims in each Income Group	20
Figure 34	Percentage of Victims in each Type of Residence Group	20
Figure 35	Percentage of Victims in each Firearm Ownership Group	21
Figure 36	Satisfaction of Property Crime Victims with Police	22

Executive Summary

This report summarizes the results from the third annual Texas Crime Victimization survey conducted by the Crime Victims' Institute at Sam Houston State University. Over 700 randomly selected Texas residents shared their experiences during a phone interview. This report is intended to inform policymakers, service providers, and the general public about the experiences and needs of victims of crime.

Safety Concerns of Respondents (N=701)

- 67% of respondents believe that the incidence of crime in their neighborhood has stayed the same over the past 2 years.
- 27% of respondents believe that crime in Texas has stayed the same or decreased in the last 2 years.
- 87% of respondents feel safe walking alone in their neighborhood during the day.
- 67% of respondents feel safe walking alone in their neighborhood at night.
- 63% of respondents report having a neighborhood watch program in their community.
- 46% of respondents own a firearm.
- 39% of respondents report being a victim of either a violent or property crime in the last 2 years.

Property crime is the most common kind of victimization.

Violent Crime Victimization (n=49)

- 81 violent crime victimizations were reported.
- 41% of victims were physically attacked in some way.
- 33% of victims were threatened or attacked with a weapon.
- Respondents between the ages of 18 and 34 are more likely to be a victim of a violent crime than are those who are older.
- Males are more likely to be a victim of a violent crime than are females.
- Minority residents are more likely to be victims of a violent crime than are Caucasian, Non-Hispanic.
- Single, never married residents are more likely to be a victim of a violent crime than are married or previously married persons.
- Persons with an annual income below \$30,000 are more likely to be victims of a violent crime than are those who earn more.
- Persons who rent a house or apartment are slightly more likely to be a victim of a violent crime than are those who own their homes.
- 43% of violent crime victims reported the offense to the police.
- 63% of victims were injured during the violent incident, the most common injury being a bruise.
- 73% of victims were affected emotionally by the violent incident, the most common reaction being anger.

Property Crime Victimization (n=223)

- 372 instances of property crime victimization were reported.
- The 3 most common kinds of property victimizations were damage to property, items stolen outside the home, and items stolen that the victim was wearing.
- 6% of respondents reported that their identity was stolen through theft of credit cards or misuse of credit card numbers.
- Respondents between the ages of 18 and 34 are more likely to be a victim of a property crime than those who are older.
- Men and women are equally likely to be victims of a property crime.
- Single, never married residents are more likely to be victims of a property crime than are married or previously married residents.
- Minority residents are more likely to be property crime victims than Caucasians.
- Persons who make more than \$30,000 per year are just as likely to be a victim of a property crime as those who make less than that.
- Residents who rent their residences are at slightly greater risk to be victimized than are homeowners.
- 52% of property crime victims reported the crime to the police.

Introduction

One of the most terrifying experiences a person can have is to be the victim of a crime. Crimes such as physical and sexual assault bring untold physical and emotional suffering both to the victims and their families. Even victims of property crimes suffer, as they cope with the loss of their resources and possessions and with their lessened sense of security.

Overall, however, there is good news about criminal victimization in the United States: “Between 1993 and 2004 the violent crime rate decreased 57% from 50 to 21 victimizations per 1,000 persons age 12 or older. Property crime declined 50% from 319 to 161 per 1,000 households.”¹ In addition to an overall drop in victimization rates, an increase in reporting crime to police has also been found. Although a comparison of National Crime Victimization Survey results between 2003 and 2004 shows a leveling off of the downward trend of victimization rates, a 9% drop in violent crime was found between 2001 and 2004, a relatively short time span for such a significant decline. However, rates are still higher in the U.S. than in most industrialized nations, and the decline may be leveling off.

Even though the rate of violent crime in the United States has declined since 1993, it is clear that many U.S. citizens are victimized each year. The following information provides an overview of the rate of criminal victimization per 1,000 persons who are at least 12 years of age.²

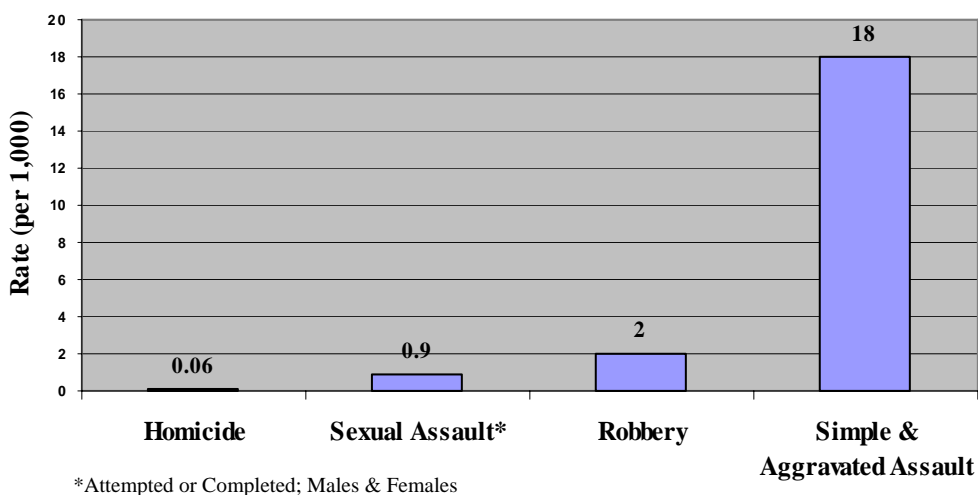


Figure 1. U.S. Violent Crime Victimization per 1,000 Residents

Victimization rates are highest for persons between the ages of 12 and 24 and decline after that. Males are more likely to be a victim (22/1,000) than are females (19/1,000). Victimization rates are higher for African Americans (12/1,000) than they are for Caucasians (7/1,000).

Property crime rates have also declined since 1993 from a high of 335/1,000 in that year to 170/1,000 in 2004. These rates do not reflect identity theft victimizations. It is important not only to understand the many

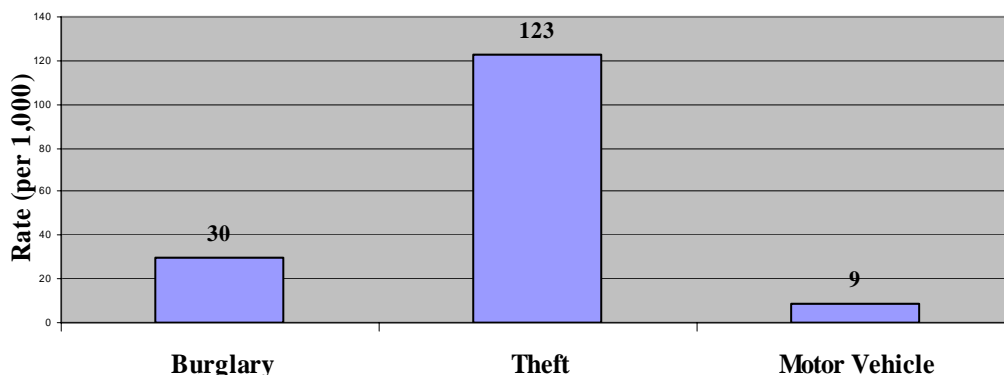


Figure 2. U.S. Property Crime Rates per 1,000 Residents

ways people are victimized, but also the impact those experiences have on them both immediately and in the weeks and months that follow. For many, victimization is an extremely degrading experience. It can be a violation on a number of levels:

- Violation of the body,
- Violation of the mind and soul,
- Violation of personal property.

The emotional consequences of victimization can prompt adverse reactions such as anger, fear, depression, disillusionment, and detachment from family and friends.³ As will be shown in this report, many crime victims struggle to cope with that experience and return to a semblance of normalcy. However, not only is the victim affected, but also the family and friends of a victim, who try to provide support and reassurance. Moreover, the general public can also be affected as their sense of decency and security in their community is threatened.

Some of the images that come to mind when thinking about criminal victimization are of the most heinous, violent types of acts. These images may be due in part to the way the media tends to highlight the most serious offenses. Sometimes one's perception of what it is like to be a victim is based on things that have happened to him or her. In spite of the all-too-common media portrayals of victimization, most criminal victimizations do not involve violence. The rates of violent victimization are much lower than those of property victimization.⁴ Some citizens may also believe that the majority of victimizations are perpetrated by strangers. However, especially for violent offenses, it is more likely that the victim knows the offender.⁵

Methodology

This third annual report by the Crime Victims' Institute presents information about criminal victimization among Texas residents. Using an internet computer-assisted telephone interviewing system (ICATI), the Public Policy Research Institute (PPRI) at Texas A&M University collected the data for the survey. The ICATI system utilizes a computer system that randomly generates phone numbers, allowing for a better representation of the Texas population. Interviews were conducted between 8:00 a.m. and 9:30 p.m. during the week, Saturday from 10:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m., and 1:00 p.m. to 9:30 p.m. on Sunday. The procedure for attempting to contact a household was to place a call during each of five different interview shifts throughout the week. Four of these calls occurred during the evening or weekend hours when respondents were most likely to be at home. Numbers that were apparently disconnected were tried twice. Busy numbers were tried twice during the same shift, with repeated attempts during five different shifts. When a household had been reached, but the correct respondent was not available, as many as five more tries were made to reach the correct respondent.

An attempt was made to convert virtually all refusals. Interviewers completed a special form when a refusal occurred that provided as much information as possible on the circumstances of the refusal. The respondent was then re-contacted by interviewers specially trained to convert refusals.

Over 10,000 phone numbers were called (see Table 1), but far fewer calls were answered. Many calls were not answered or were discontinued because the respondent was never available, the call was picked up by an answering machine, the phone was always busy, the number was a fax line, the number dialed was a non-working or disconnected number, or the number was for a business or organization.

Table 1. Survey Methodology

Total Phone Numbers Used	10,836
Calls Answered	3,733
Complete Interviews	701
Partial Interviews	57
Refusal and Break Off	2,974

This response rate is not unusual for phone surveys of this length.

Figure 3 shows the distribution of respondents across the state.

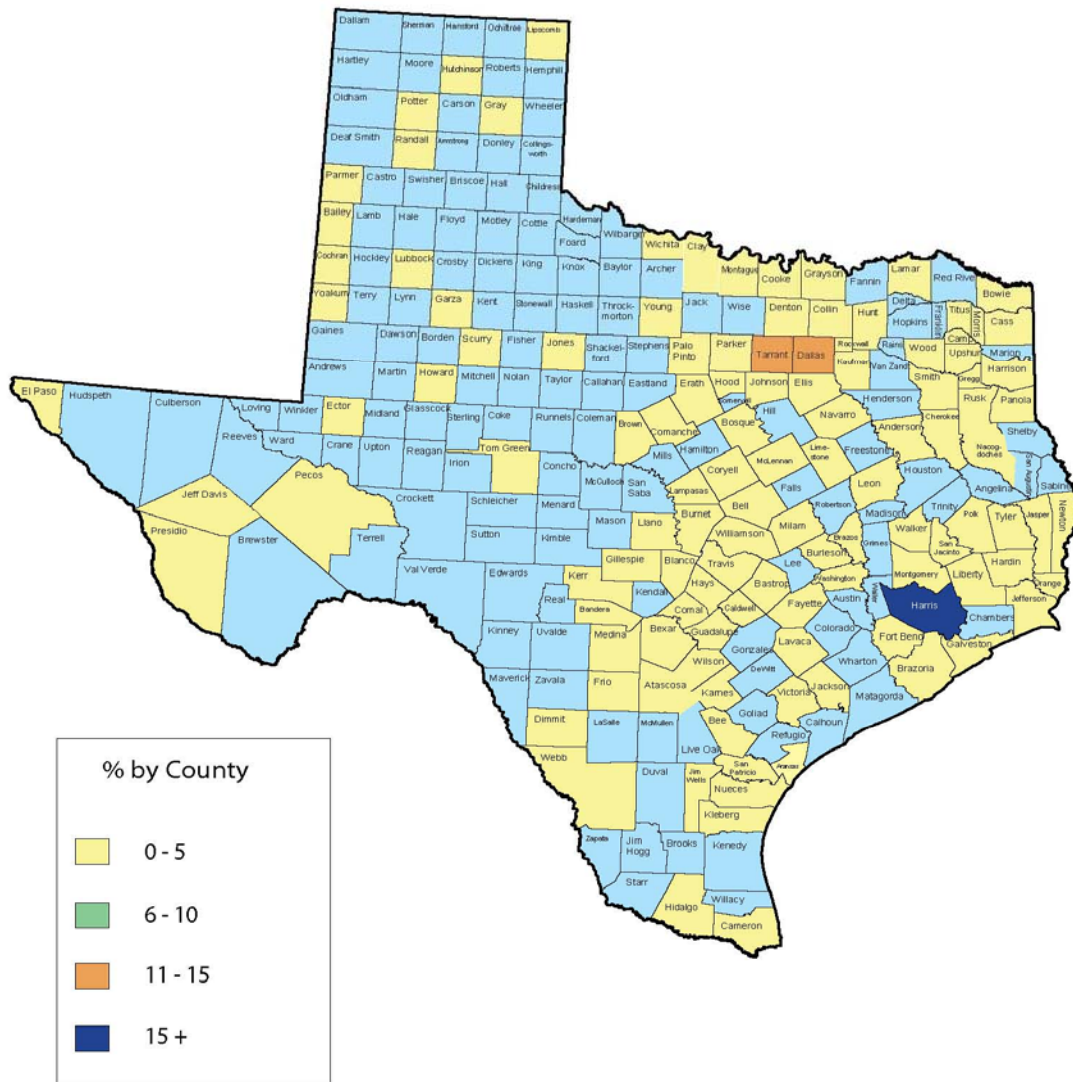


Figure 3. Distribution of Survey

The telephone protocol used for this survey was different in many respects from the one used in the two previous surveys. The variable of race/ethnicity was expanded to separate Asian and Native Americans from the Other category. Similarly the marital status and educational level variables were expanded. Employment Status was changed from a yes-no question on the 2005 survey to four categories this year. Household income was also expanded from a single range in 2005 to four categories in this survey.

Violent victimization was conceptualized differently to provide new insights into the experiences of Texas crime victims. Victims were asked to indicate the types of injuries and the emotional reactions they experienced as a result of the crime.

A new category was added to the property crime section, which addressed identity theft and property that was damaged.

Characteristics of Respondents

The average age of respondents was 45.5, which is slightly younger than that of respondents in last year's survey (47). The youngest respondent was 18, and the oldest was 89 years of age at the time of the interview. The following figures present respondent characteristics for age, gender, race/ethnicity, marital status, government assistance, income, residence, firearm ownership, educational level and employment (Figures 4 through 13).

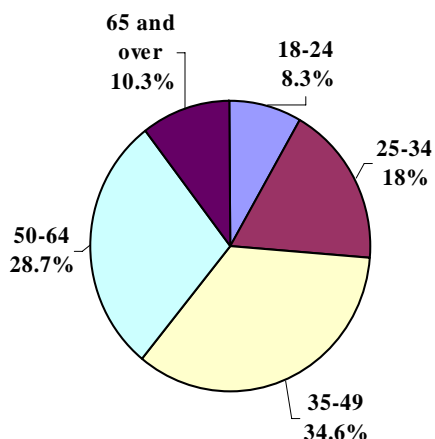


Figure 4. Age of Respondents

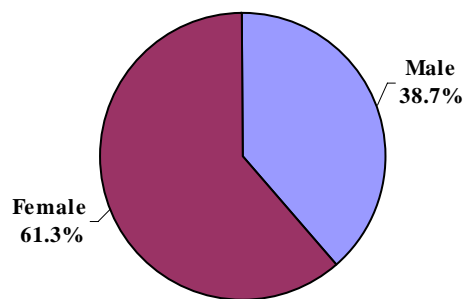


Figure 5. Gender of Respondents

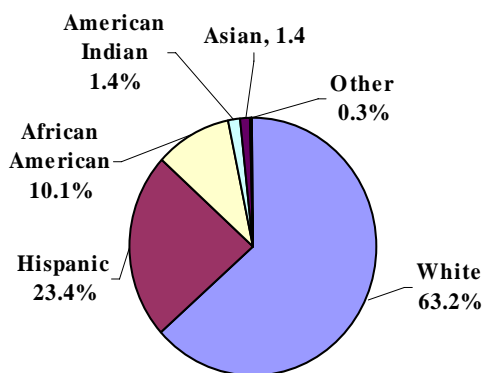


Figure 6. Race/Ethnicity of Respondents

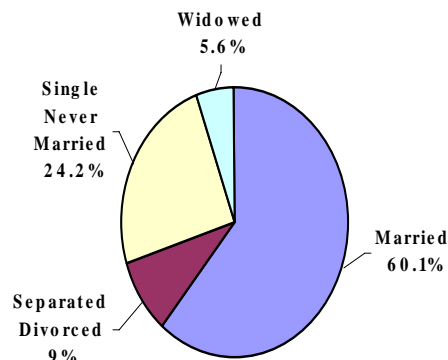


Figure 7. Marital Status of Respondents

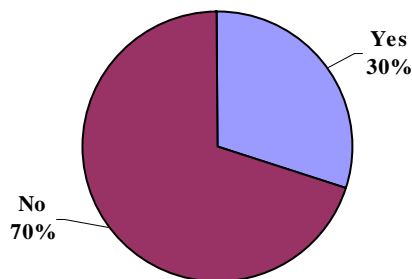


Figure 8. Respondents Receiving Government Assistance

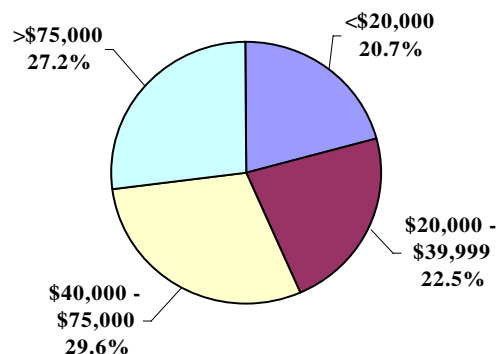


Figure 9. Income of Respondents

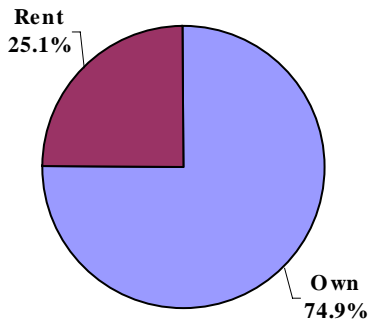


Figure 10. Type of Residence of Respondents

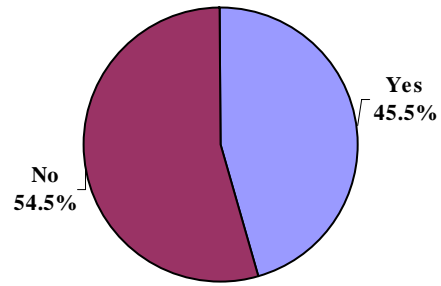


Figure 11. Firearm Ownership among Respondents

The high number of respondents without employment may be indicative of the age of the sample, which includes a high number of respondents who are at retirement age, as well as a number of students (Figure 8).

The relatively high percentage of respondents who receive government assistance may reflect respondents who were receiving social security benefits, those who are disabled, and those who were otherwise financially handicapped.

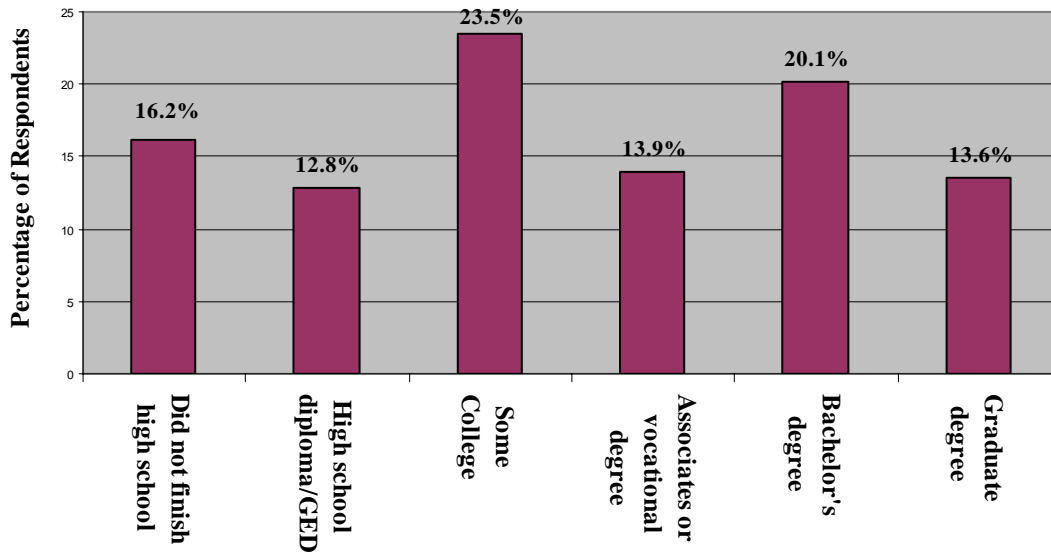


Figure 12. Educational Level of Respondents

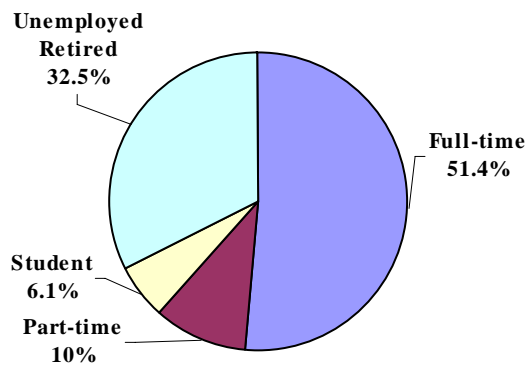


Figure 13. Employment of Respondents

Data were also collected on characteristics associated with neighborhood safety perceptions, perceptions of changes in crime rates, and firearm ownership (See Table 2).

Table 2. Neighborhood Safety Perceptions, Crime Perceptions, and Firearm Ownership

	Frequency	2006 (N=701) Percent
How safe walking alone in neighborhood during the day		
Very/somewhat unsafe	68	9.8
Neither unsafe nor safe	22	3.2
Very/somewhat safe	602	87.0
How safe walking alone in neighborhood at night		
Very/somewhat unsafe	187	28.0
Neither unsafe nor safe	35	5.2
Very/somewhat safe	448	67.0
Has Neighborhood Watch		
Yes	233	37.3
No	391	62.7
How well know neighbors		
Know many well	198	28.6
Know some well	214	30.9
Know only a couple well	221	31.9
Know none	60	8.7
Own or rent property		
Own property	516	74.9
Rent	173	25.1

	Frequency	2006 (N=701) Percent
Think neighborhood high-crime area		
Yes	86	12.6
No	596	87.4
Crime in neighborhood past 24 months		
Decreased	54	8.2
Stayed the same	443	67.1
Increased	163	24.7
Crime in Texas past 24 Months		
Decreased	46	7.2
Stayed the same	127	19.8
Increased	467	73.0
Anyone in household own firearm		
Yes	311	45.5
No	372	54.5

Overall, most respondents reported feeling safe walking alone in their neighborhood during the day (87%), and to a lesser extent (67%) at night. Most respondents reported *not* having a Neighborhood Watch Program. Also, most respondents reported knowing at least some of their neighbors and owning property. Additionally, most stated that they did not think they lived in a high-crime area, nor did they think crime had increased in their community over the previous two years. In contrast, most thought that crime in Texas has increased over the past two months. Finally, just under half of the sample (45.5%) reported that they, or someone else in the household, owned a firearm.

Data were collected on two types of victimization: violent and property. Figure 14 shows the breakdown of victims among the survey respondents.

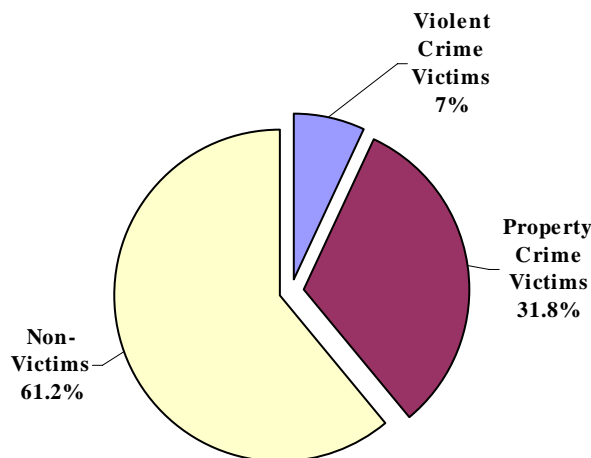


Figure 14. Comparison of Crime Victims

Violent Victimization

Figure 15 shows the kinds of violent victimization experiences reported by respondents.

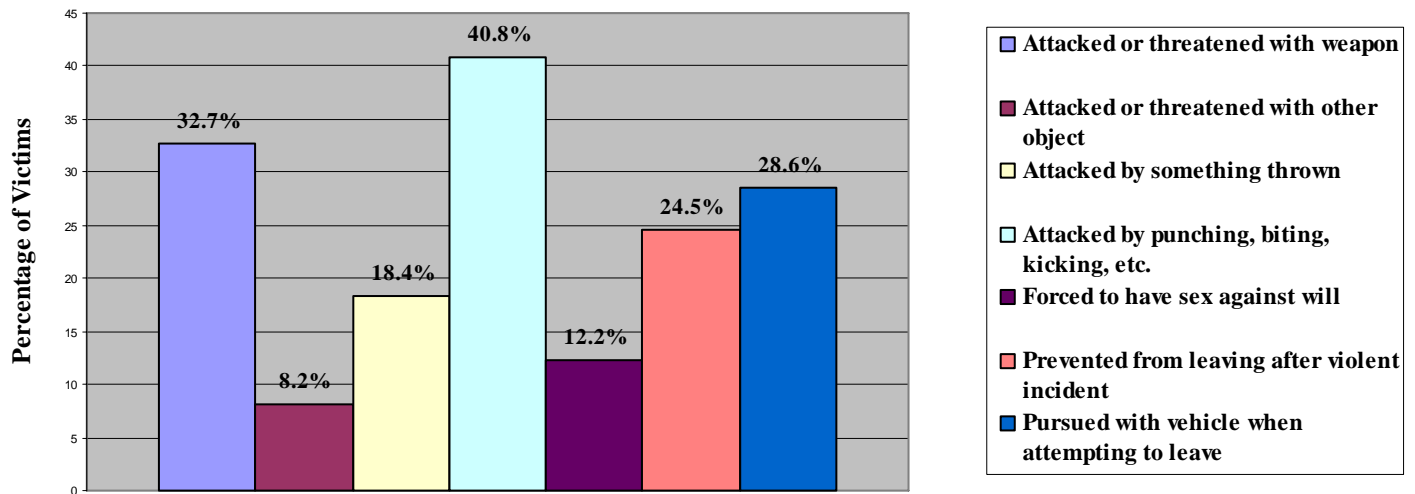


Figure 15. Types of Violent Crime Victimization n=49

Note: Percentages total more than 100 due to some victims reporting more than one type of violent crime.

Overall, there were 81 instances of violent victimization reported. This is an increase in the number of victimizations reported by respondents compared to the 2005 Victimization Survey, and reflects, at least in part, refinement of the phone protocol from the one used last year. Forty-nine persons were the victims of the 81 reported incidents (as compared to 25 victims interviewed for the 2005 survey).⁶ The highest percentage (40.8%) of victimization was for persons who reported being punched, kicked, slapped, or bitten.

Many of the victimization items measured in the current study are different from those used in the previous annual surveys. This limits the ability to examine trends over time.

The following figures show the characteristics of the violent victimizations of respondents.

Age

Figure 16 shows that respondents who were between the ages of 18 and 34 reported being a victim of a violent crime significantly more often than those over age 34 reported such. These findings are similar to those reported in the national victimization surveys.⁷

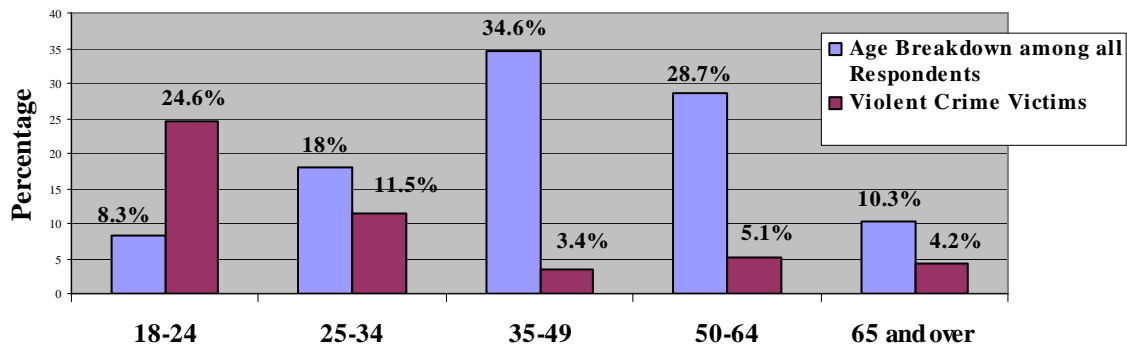


Figure 16. Percentage of Victims in each Age Group

Gender

Figure 17 shows that a higher percentage of males reported being victimized by violent crime than did women. Males appear to be twice as likely to be a victim than are women. This finding is consistent with what has been found in national victimization surveys.

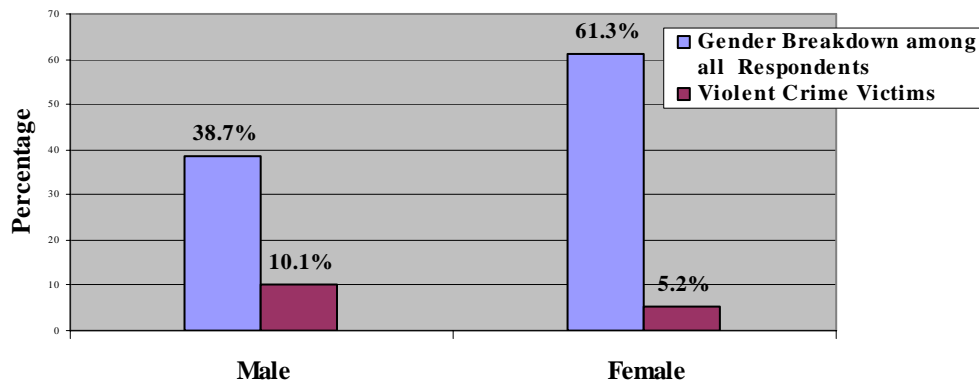


Figure 17. Percentage of Victims in each Gender Group

Race/Ethnicity

White victims made up the largest group of violent crime victims, but given their representation in the total sample of respondents (63.2%) they were underrepresented, while Asians who made up only 1.4% of the total sample were slightly overrepresented among victims. When violent victimization is considered in terms of the racial distribution among all respondents (N=701), minority victims are at greater risk for victimization than are Whites. Contrary to what has been found in national victimization surveys, African American respondents did not report violent crime victimization more frequently than did other groups (Figure 18).

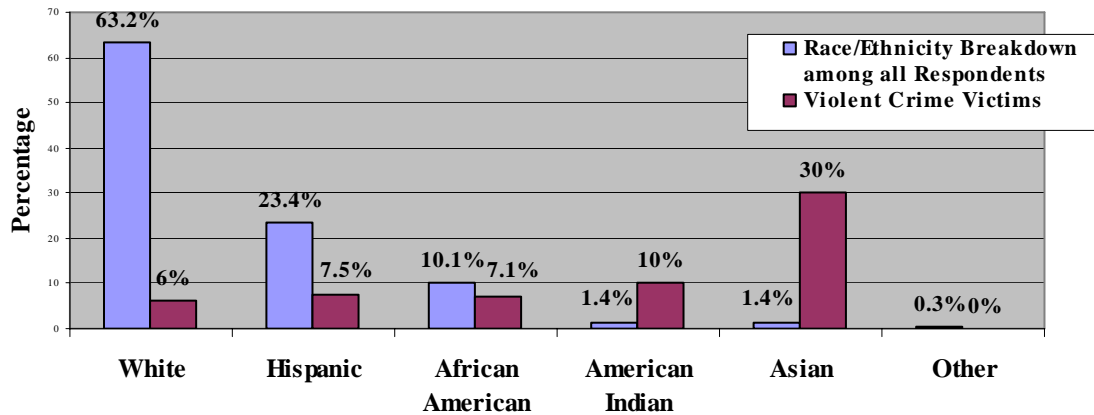


Figure 18. Percentage of Victims in each Race/Ethnicity Group

Marital Status

Even though single/never married respondents made up only 24% of our sample, 53% of violent crime victims in this study were single (or 15.7% of all single respondents). This seems consistent with the above finding that persons under 35 years of age were the most likely victims of violent crime. On the other hand, married respondents, who comprised 60% of the survey sample, comprised only 35% of the violent crime victims (or only 4.1% of all married respondents).

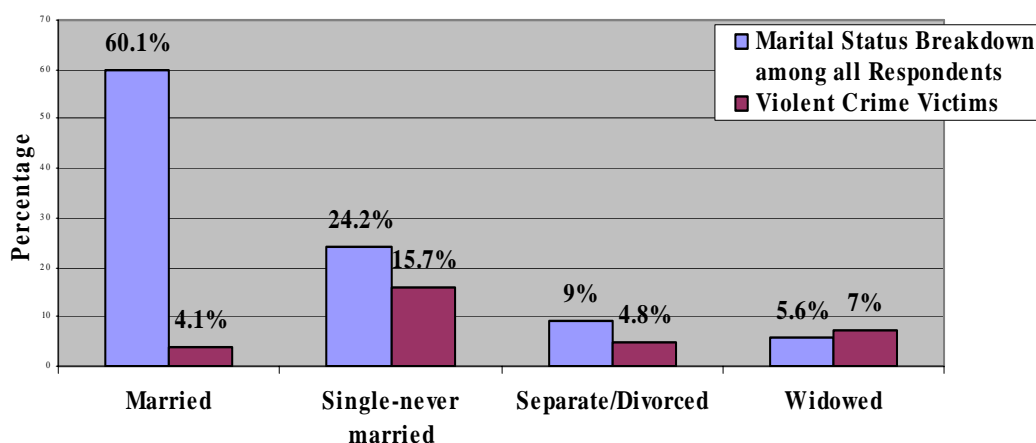


Figure 19. Percentage of Victims in each Marital Group

Despite small sample sizes for some of the measures, these results are generally compatible with estimates from extant research. Victims of violence were more likely to be

- Young*
- Male*
- Racial Minority*
- Single*

* Statistically differentiated between persons who were victims of a violent crime and those who were not.

Those who did **not** report being a victim of a violent offense were more likely to be female, married, between 35 and 49 years of age, and Caucasian (Figure 19).

Government Assistance

Figure 20 shows the percentage of violent crime victims who receive government assistance. These percentages suggest that victimization rates for the two groups are similar. Many in the recipient group may be senior citizens who receive social security benefits. Their lifestyles are usually such that they are less likely to be in places where the risk of violent victimization is high. Also, disabled persons may also be receiving government assistance, and their lifestyles may place them at lower risk for victimization.

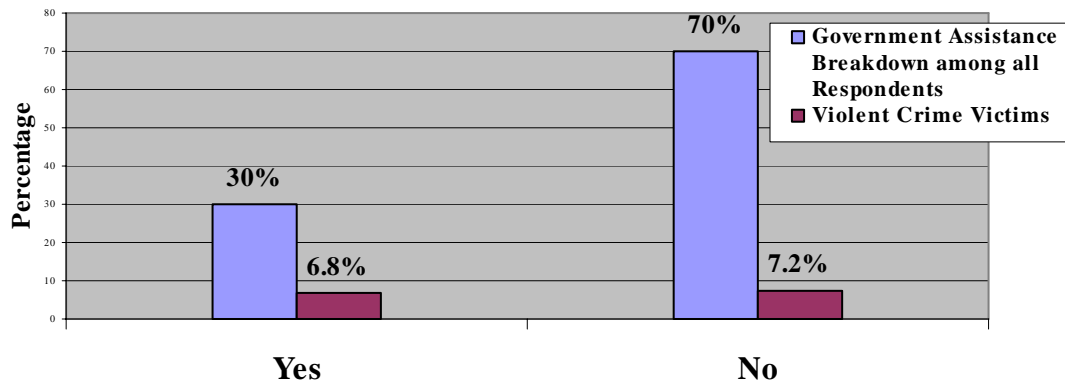


Figure 20. Percentage of Victims in each Government Assistance Group

Income

Figure 21 shows that respondents (N=701) reporting an annual income below \$30,000 were more likely to be violently victimized (46.9%) than were those reporting an income above \$30,000 (38.8%).

Those making below \$30,000 per year include marginally employed persons and students. Both of those two groups apparently are at greater risk for victimization.

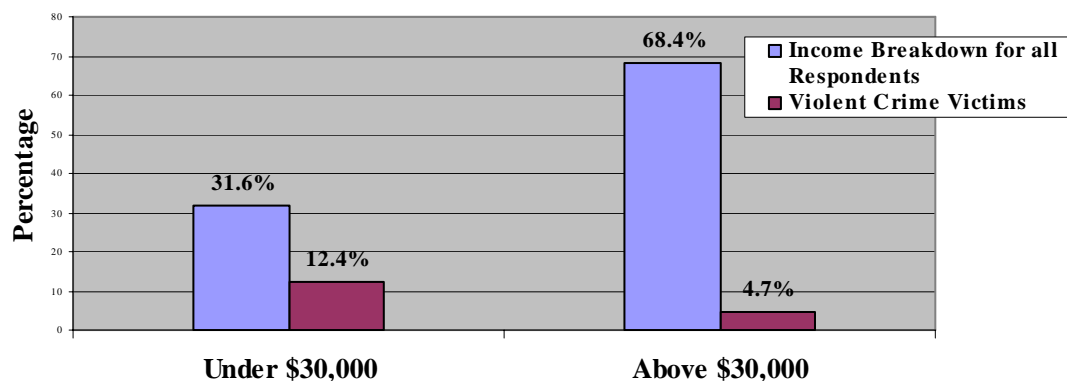


Figure 21. Percentage of Victims in each Income Group

Type of Residence

More respondents owned their homes than rented them. The percentage of respondents who were victims of a violent crime did not substantially differ among those who own and rent their residences. Those who rent have only a slightly greater risk of violent crime victimization than those who own their homes. Even though there is relatively little difference in victimization rates between home owners and renters, owning a home may create a greater sense of personal safety (Figure 22).

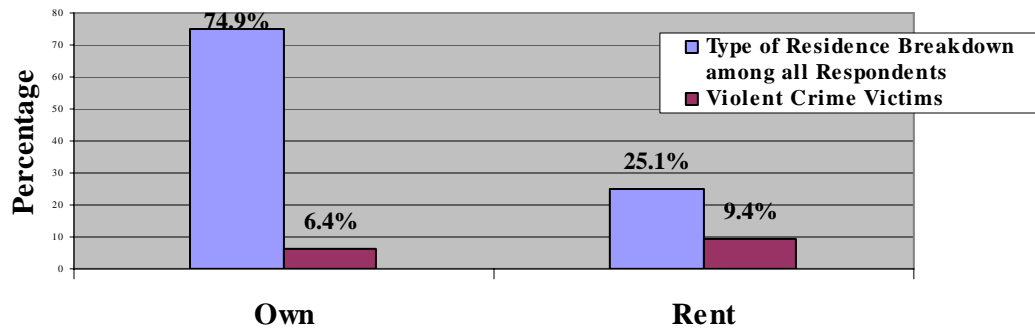


Figure 22. Percentage of Victims in each Type of Residence Group

Firearm Ownership

Figure 23 shows that there is not much difference among victims of violent crime in terms of firearm ownership. Those who owned firearms were as likely to be crime victims as those who did not.

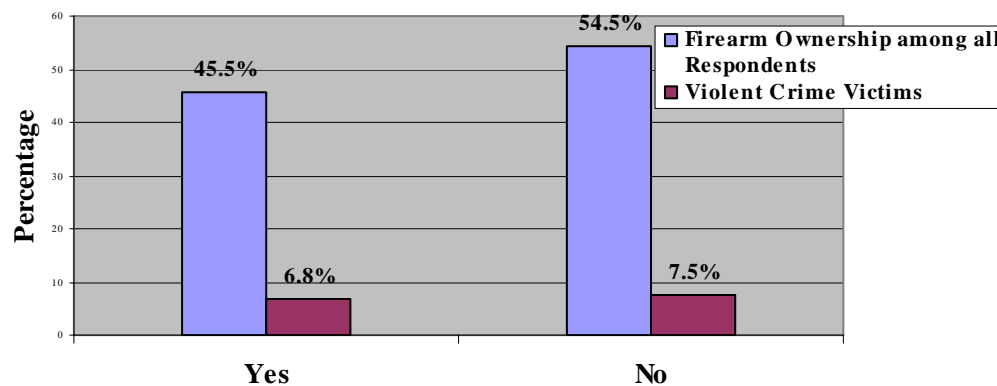


Figure 23. Percentage of Victims in each Firearm Ownership Group

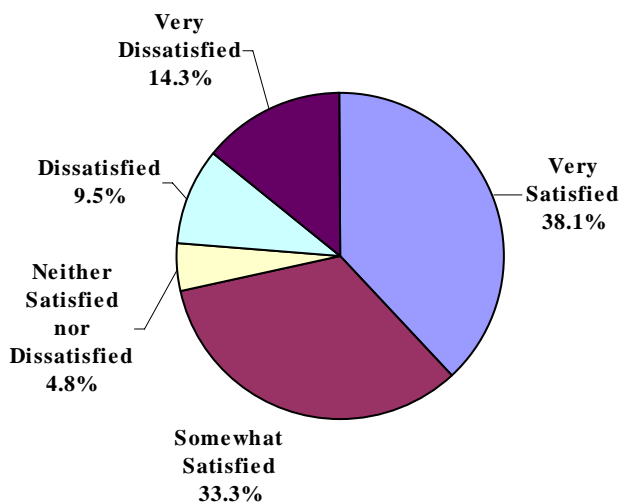


Figure 24. Satisfaction of Violent Crime Victims with Police

Reporting to the Police

Respondents who reported at least one violent victimization were asked if they reported the most serious offense to the police. Of the victims, 42.9% reported the offense to the police. Of those reporting the victimization to the police, 19% (4) stated that the offender was arrested. Figure 24 shows the degree of satisfaction among those who reported the offense to the way the police handled their report.

Injuries

Figure 25 shows the percentage of victims who received injuries during their victimization. The most common injury was a bruise, followed by a blackened eye. Some victims received multiple injuries and 37% reported that they were not injured.

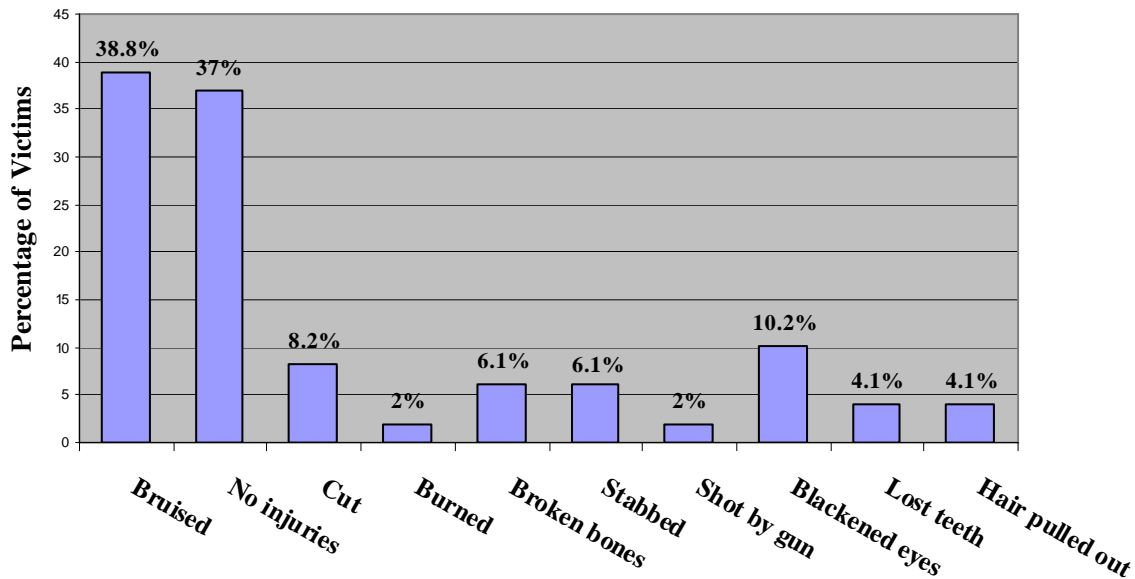


Figure 25. Injuries Suffered by Violent Crime Victims n=49

Note: Percentages total more than 100 due to some victims reporting more than one type of injury.

Emotional Responses

Persons who had been victims of a violent crime were asked about how their lives were affected by the crime. Figure 26 summarizes their responses. Approximately 73% of participants who reported being a victim of a violent offense reported some type of emotional response to the victimization. Anger was the most frequent response (55.1%), followed by fear of being alone (34.7%), loss of sleep (26.5%), and depression (24.5%). These results suggest that some victims were at least slightly traumatized by the incidents and might have benefited from short-term counseling or debriefing.

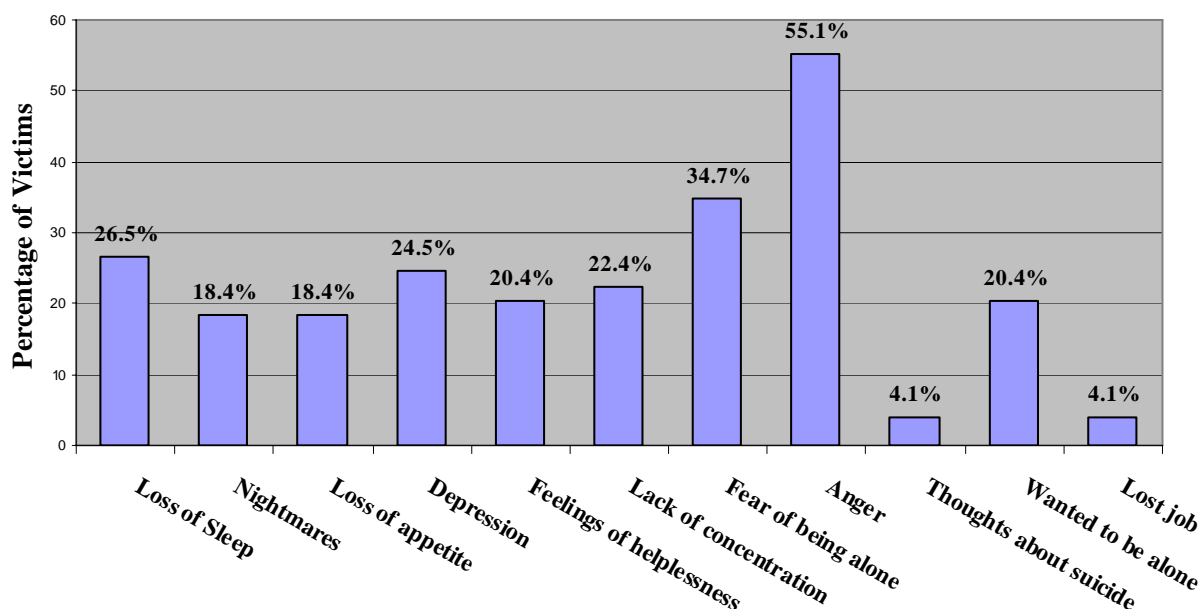


Figure 26. Emotional Responses after Violent Victimization

Note: Percentages total more than 100 due to some victims reporting more than one type of reaction.

Neighborhood Safety

Respondents who reported not feeling safe walking alone in their neighborhood (day or night) were more likely to report violent victimization (Table 3).^a

This may be due to prior personal victimization making them more wary or hearing of the victimization of acquaintances. Predictably, among all respondents to the survey, those who thought they lived in a high-crime area were more likely to report being a victim of a violent crime (21.2%) as compared to those who did not think they lived in a high-crime area (5%).^b Respondents who knew only a couple of their neighbors were the most likely (16.8%) to report violent victimization, while those who knew more of their neighbors were the least likely (4.7%). Also, those who reported that their community had a Neighborhood Watch program were slightly less likely (5.6% compared to 8.2%) to report a violent victimization. Over 11% of respondents thought crime had decreased in their neighborhood over the past 24 months, which is not far from the 12.3% of respondents who thought crime increased and reported a violent victimization.^c

Table 3. Other Characteristics Associated with Violent Crime Victimization

	Frequency	Percent of Victims n=49	Percent of Respondents N=701
How safe walking alone in neighborhood—day			
Very/somewhat unsafe	10	20.4	14.7
Neither unsafe nor safe	2	4.1	9.1
Very/Somewhat safe	36	73.5	6
How safe walking alone in neighborhood—night			
Very/somewhat unsafe	17	34.7	9.1
Neither unsafe nor safe	6	12.2	13.3
Very/Somewhat safe	24	49	5.4
Has a Neighborhood Watch			
Yes	13	26.5	5.6
No	32	65.3	8.2
How well know neighbors			
Know many well	14	28.6	6.8
Know some well	10	20.4	4.7
Know only a couple well	20	40.8	16.8
Know none	5	10.2	8.3
Think neighborhood high crime area			
Yes	18	36.7	21.2
No	30	61.2	5
Crime in neighborhood past 24 months			
Decreased	6	12.2	11.1
Stayed the same	21	46.9	4.8
Increased	20	40.8	12.3
Crime in Texas past 24 months			
Decreased	3	6.1	6.7
Stayed the same	4	8.2	19
Increased	39	79.6	8.4

a Statistically differentiated between persons who were victims of a violent crime and those who were not.

b Statistically differentiated between persons who were victims of a violent crime and those who were not.

c Statistically differentiated between persons who were victims of a violent crime and those who were not.

Property Crime Victimization

Figure 27 displays the results for individual property victimization. Overall, there were 372 total instances of property victimization. This increase in the number of reported property crime victimizations compared to that reported in the 2005 Survey may be due to refinement of the phone protocol. There were a total of 223 different victims who reported these incidents (as compared to 131 victimizations found in the 2005 survey), which indicates that many victims experienced more than one type of loss.⁸ The most frequently reported property victimization was having property damaged (36.8%), followed by things stolen outside the home, (34.5%), items the respondent carried or wore (34.5%), and items stolen from inside a vehicle (23.8%). It should be noted that 11.7% of property crime victims reported having their identity stolen (i.e., theft of credit cards or credit card numbers).

Some of the differences found among violent crime victims were not evident among property crime victims.

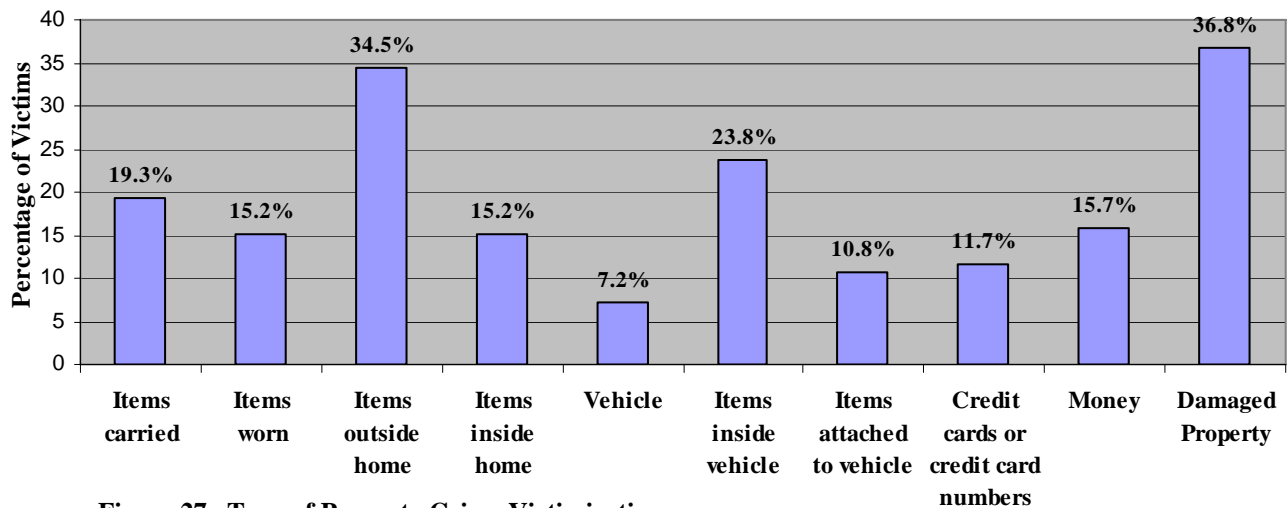


Figure 27. Type of Property Crime Victimization

Note: Percentages may total more than 100 due to some victims reporting more than one item stolen or damaged.

Age

It is interesting to note that 81% of respondents between 18 and 34 years of age reported at least one property victimization. Persons older than 34 were at lesser risk (Figure 28).

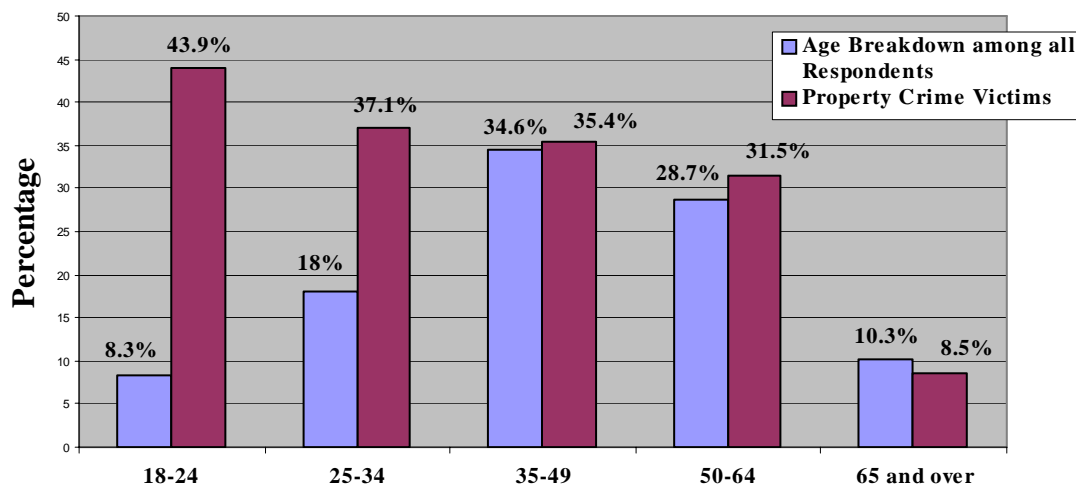


Figure 28. Percentage of Victims in each Age Group

Gender

When the gender breakdown among all respondents is considered (N=701), it appears that men and women were about equally likely to be victimized (Figure 29).

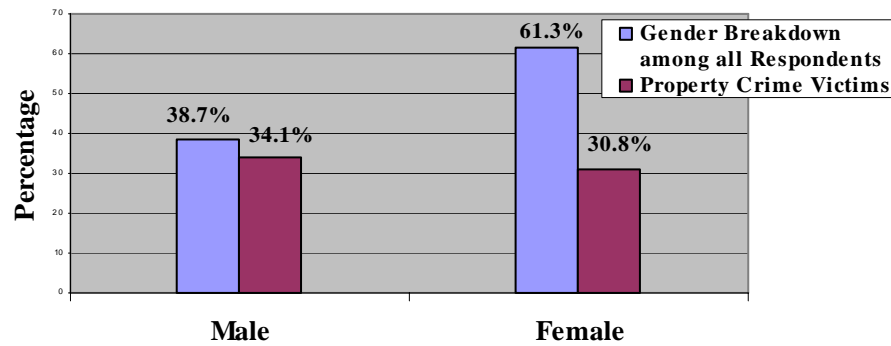


Figure 29. Percentage of Victims in each Gender Group

Race/Ethnicity

Figure 30 shows that minority respondents were more frequently victims of property crime than were Caucasians.

Many of the above findings may reflect lifestyle differences among property crime victims. For example, single, young adults may be out in public to a greater extent than is true of the other groups and subsequently making their property vulnerable because of their absence from their homes or the accessibility of their property in public places (e.g., vehicles).

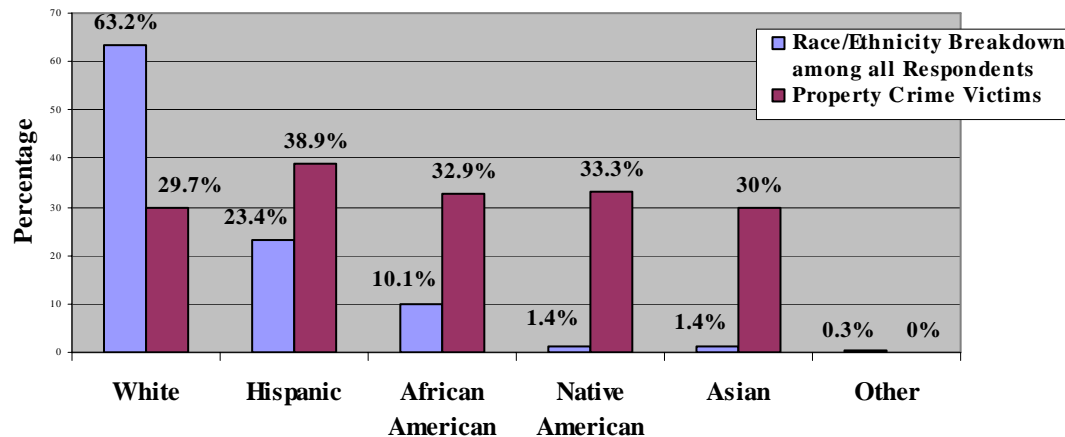


Figure 30. Percentage of Victims in each Race/Ethnicity Group

Marital Status

When the marital status of the sample as a whole is taken into account, single/never married victims were the most frequently victimized, followed by married respondents (Figure 31).

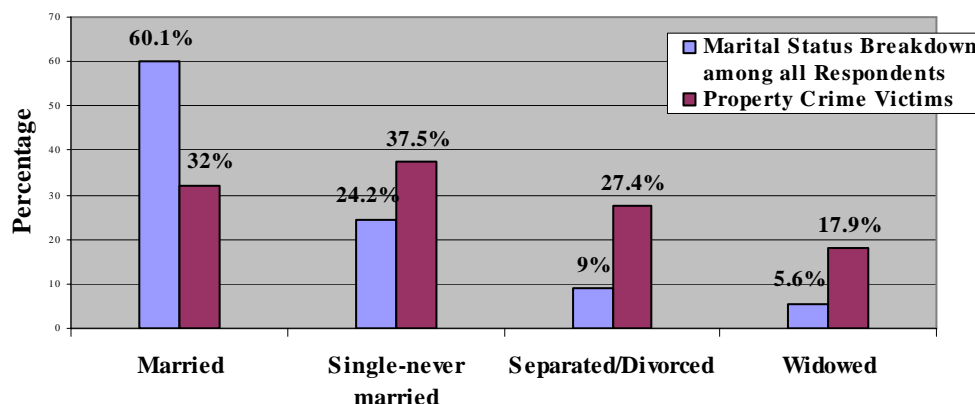


Figure 31. Percentage of Victims in each Marital Group

Government Assistance

Respondents who reported receiving government assistance were less likely to report property victimization than those not receiving support.

The lower victimization percentage for those respondents receiving government assistance may be due in part to the number of persons who are disabled or retired in this group. As noted earlier, persons in these categories have lifestyles that make them less susceptible to victimization.

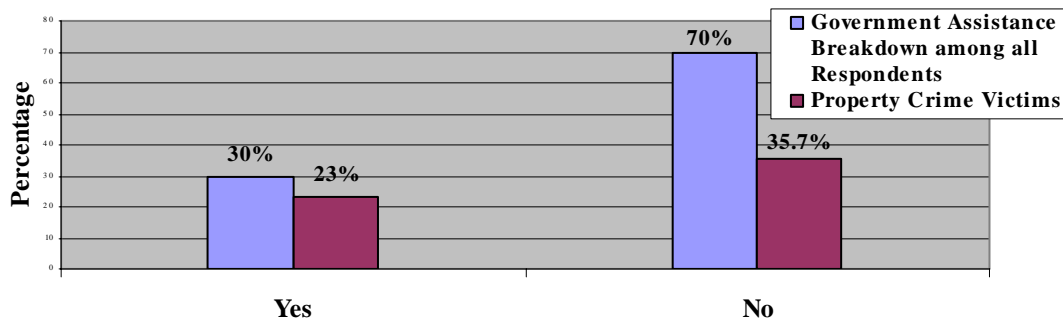


Figure 32. Percentage of Victims in each Government Assistance Group

Income

In contrast to what was found for violent crime victimization, respondents with an annual income below \$30,000 were victimized as much as those who made more than \$30,000 (figure 33).

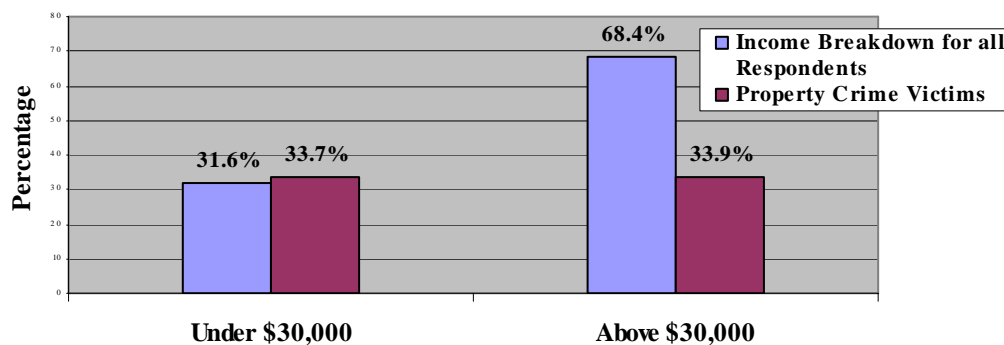


Figure 33. Percentage of Victims in each Income Group

Type of Residence

Homeowners were less likely to report property victimization than were renters (Figure 34). Associations were explored between property victimization and property ownership, firearm ownership, neighborhood safety, perceptions of neighborhood safety, and perceptions of crime trends in respondents' neighborhoods as well as in Texas.

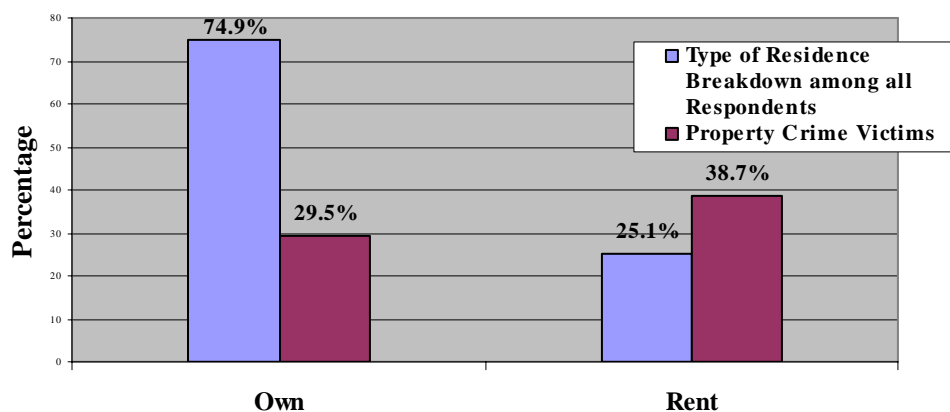


Figure 34. Percentage of Victims in each Type of Residence Group

Firearm Ownership

Property crime victims were evenly divided between those who owned a firearm and those who did not.

Again, it is also important to conduct tests of statistical significance when examining factors associated with victimization. The following characteristics were found to be significantly associated with property victimization:

- Respondent age (18-24)
- Renting a home
- Perception of living in a high-crime area
- Respondents' belief that crime in their area has increased

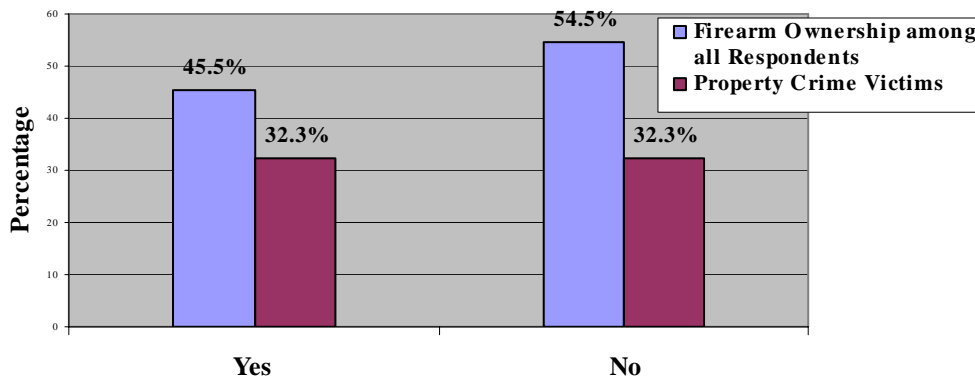


Figure 35. Percentage of Victims in each Firearm Ownership Group

Neighborhood Safety

Table 4 (page 22) shows that respondents who did not feel safe walking alone in their neighborhood during the day were slightly less likely to report being a property crime victim. The results are reversed (with little difference between the two categories) when looking at feeling safe at night.

Having a Neighborhood Watch program did not differentiate among those who reported being a victim of a property crime and respondents who were not victimized. Respondents who claimed to know many of their neighbors were least likely to report a property victimization (26.9%), followed by those who know some of their neighbors (32.2%), a couple of their neighbors (35.7%), and those who did not know any of their neighbors (36.7%).

Finally, related to perceptions of crime in the neighborhood, 52.3% of respondents who thought they lived in a high-crime area reported property victimization, compared to 29.2% of those who thought they did not live in a high-crime area. Also, respondents who thought that crime in their neighborhood had increased over the past 24 months were more likely to report being a victim of a property offense (44.8% compared with 37% who thought crime decreased).

Reporting to the Police

Of the respondents reporting a property victimization, about half (52.2%) reported the offense to the police. Respondents were generally satisfied with the way they were treated by the police at the scene of the incident. Respondents were very satisfied with the police 42.7% of the time, satisfied 21.4% of the time, dissatisfied 8.5% of the time, and very dissatisfied 10.3% of the time.

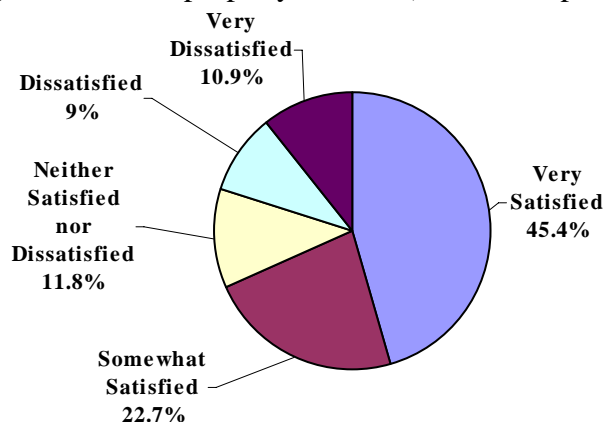


Figure 36. Satisfaction of Property Crime Victims with Police

Table 4. Perceptions of Neighborhood Safety Among Property Crime Victims

	Frequency	Percent of Victims N=223	Percent of Respondents N=701
How safe walking alone in neighborhood—day			
Very/Somewhat unsafe	25	11.2	30.1
Neither unsafe nor safe	7	3.1	31.8
Very/Somewhat safe	190	8.5	31.6
How safe walking alone in neighborhood—night			
Very/Somewhat unsafe	71	3.2	38
Neither unsafe nor safe	13	5.8	37.1
Very/Somewhat safe	137	61.4	30.6
Has Neighborhood Watch			
Yes	68	30.5	29.2
No	123	55.1	31.5
How well know neighbors			
Know many well	53	23.8	26.9
Know some well	29	13	32.2
Know only a couple well	79	35.4	35.7
Know none	22	9.9	36.7
Think neighborhood high-crime area			
Yes	45	20.2	52.3
No	174	78	29.2
Crime in neighborhood past 24 months			
Decreased	20	9	37
Stayed the same	119	53.4	26.9
Increased	73	32.8	44.8
Crime in Texas past 24 months			
Decreased	13	5.8	28.3
Stayed the same	39	17.5	30.7
Increased	157	70.4	33.7

Conclusion

The changes made to the telephone protocol used for this survey led to a slightly younger group of respondents and an increase in the numbers of persons who reported violent or property crimes. Overall, 35.6% of respondents reported being a victim of at least one crime in the previous 24 months, and most victimization experiences were associated with property crimes. This compares with 20.8% of the respondents in the 2005 Survey.

The findings from this survey resulted in identifying profiles for the victims of a violent or property crime in Texas. These profiles are largely similar to what has been reported in national crime victimization surveys. This information is potentially useful in devising strategies to better educate the public about the likelihood of victimization and steps that might be taken to avoid such an occurrence. Not surprisingly, 63% of the victims of a violent crime were injured in the incident, and 73% of those victims experienced some kind of emotional reaction to their victimization. This underscores the importance of having the needed community resources to assist victims.

The finding that the age of a person is unrelated to the likelihood of victimization is consistent with previous research in this area. It is speculated that because the lifestyles of young adults often include being out in public more and interacting with a variety of people, this places them at greater risk than older adults whose lifestyles are more settled.

The finding that a person's marital status was related to violent crime victimization is also consistent with much previous research. Generally speaking, persons who are married are *less* likely to be a victim of a violent crime than those who are not married. It is speculated that this relationship is also related to lifestyle factors, as it is for a person's age.

The two most frequently reported property crimes were damage to property and thefts outside of a residence. The third most common type of property crime reported was articles inside a vehicle. These results may be related to the finding that being employed increases the risk that a person will be a property crime victim. That is, residences are more likely to be unattended when someone is working, and the vehicles people use for transportation are more likely to be parked in public areas.

Similar to what was found in last year's survey, no relationship was found between gun ownership or the presence of neighborhood watch programs and a person's likelihood of victimization.

The number of crime victims who reported the crime(s) to the police was lower than found in the 2005 survey. Only 58% of violent and property crime victims in the sample reported the crimes to the police. It is not surprising to find a higher reporting rate for property crime victims, since a police report may be required for insurance reimbursement purposes. Those victims in the sample who reported the crimes to law enforcement officials were largely satisfied with the way they were treated. This was true for both person and property crime victims.

As with any research project, there are limitations to this study. Many of the demographic characteristics of the sample were not representative of the Texas adult population. For example, the sample contained a disproportionately high number of females, Caucasians, and older citizens. This means that caution must be used when generalizing our findings to all Texas residents. The sample characteristics, however, were quite similar to those of the 2004 and 2005 surveys conducted by the Crime Victims' Institute. Worth noting, however, is that there was a higher percentage of single, never married respondents (24.2%) than was true last year. The 2006 survey sample contained a larger percentage of persons who did not finish high school (14.1%) than was true last year. The number of people who earned less than \$20,000 (20.7%) was higher in this sample than previous ones.

In future victimization surveys, continuing efforts will be made to examine the possible relationship between respondent personal and situational characteristics and criminal victimization. Future surveys will address not only violent and property victimization, but more specific types of victimization. A focal issue in the 2005 Victimization Survey was identity theft. This survey also looked at stalking. Those results will be presented in a separate report. The 2007 Survey will address intimate partner violence.

Endnotes

¹ Catalano, S. M. (2005). Criminal victimization, 2004. National Crime Victimization Survey. Bureau of Justice Statistics.

² National Crime Victimization Survey, 2004; Uniform Crime Report, Federal Bureau of Investigation, 2004.

³ Marquart, supra note 2.

⁴ Catalano, supra, note 1; Patsy A. Klaus. (2004). Crime and the Nation's Households, 2003. NCJ 206348. Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Justice.

⁵ Catalano, supra, note 2. This is generally true, although differences exist depending on the type of offense and gender of victim.

⁶ Of those reporting multiple violent victimizations, 10 respondents reported two victimization incidents, four respondents reported 3 incidents, two respondents reported four incidents, and two respondents reported five incidents.

⁷ National Crime Victimization Survey, 2004.

⁸ Of those reporting multiple property victimizations, 44 reported two, 19 reported three, seven reported four, seven reported five, three reported six, and one reported seven.

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