

Crime Surveys User Conference 2024

LIFT, 45 White Lion Street, London, N1 9PW

Tuesday 6 February 2024, 9.30 – 16.20

Abstracts

Keynote presentation

Exploring the Individual-Level Effects of Thatcherism on Crime Over the Life-Course: Evidence from Strategically-Paired Cohort Studies

Professor Stephen Farrall, University of Nottingham

Margaret Thatcher's period as UK Prime Minister (1979-1990) and that of her successor (John Major, 1990-1997) saw dramatic social and economic changes in the lives and life-courses of many UK citizens, and indeed the country itself. Using two individual-level cohort studies of British citizens born in 1958 (the National Child development Study) and 1970 (the British Birth Cohort Study), I will assess the extent to which economic transformations affected the lives and life-courses of these two groups of people born just 12 years apart. The talk will focus on the geographically-uneven impact of economic restructuring on truancy from school and the ways in which the right to buy housing policy was related with homelessness. As well as relying on these two studies, my talk will draw on data from the Censuses in 1961, 1971 and 1981, and documentary evidence to show how radical economic and social policies interacted to leave some at greater risk of becoming involved in crime. The paper shows how repeated cohort studies and quantitative data can be used to explore the 'birth lottery' of history.

Key words: Thatcherism; macro-criminology; politics and crime; public policy; truancy; housing.

Research paper abstracts

Covid, mode effects and the SCJS: Did changes to the survey approach post-pandemic impact survey estimates?

Chris Martin, Ipsos Scotland

This presentation will: detail the change in methodology for the SCJS pre- and post-pandemic; explore the impact of on key survey estimates; ask whether we can be confident that changes in estimates over time reflect genuine changes in people's views and experiences as opposed to being due to changes in how the survey was carried out; and highlight any lessons for future survey design.

Pre-pandemic, the core methodology of the SCJS (and its predecessors) had always relied on face-to-face in-home interviewing. However, when fieldwork resumed post-pandemic in November 2021, a knock-to-nudge approach was used until April 2022 with the remainder of the post-pandemic wave being undertaken using face-to-face in-home interviewing but also retaining the option of using the alternative modes of telephone and video interviewing for respondents unwilling to let an interviewer into their home due to concerns about Covid-19. Compared to a response rate of 64% achieved in the 2019/2020 wave, in the post-pandemic wave, the response rate dropped to 48%. The change in approach had the potential for disrupting the time series of results and have an impact on the accuracy of estimates, both in terms of the profile of the achieved sample and in how people respond to survey questions.

Overall, the impact of the change in approach was minimal. For a small number of variables, the changes in estimates were more than expected. Generally, the profile of respondents in post-pandemic wave is slightly more affluent on a range of measure than the pre-pandemic wave. However, the scale of this change was small, especially on key substantive measures such as victimisation. The change of approach did not have a major impact on the results and are unlikely to have introduced discontinuity into the data series for the SCJS.

The regrettable prevalence of incidence in crime counts and how it misleads

Dainis Ignatans, Seren Farrar and James Stockton, University of Huddersfield

This paper demonstrates the importance of measuring crime concentration at the individual level to realise an understanding of victimisation patterns, trends and prevention opportunities. The absence of concentration measures from the annual statistical report 'Crime in England and Wales' is lamented. The distribution of crime amongst individuals and households has changed in the period from 1982 with the proportion of those repeatedly victimised increasing markedly relative to statistical expectation. Recommendations for change are made.

The rise, fall and stall of violence in England and Wales: How have risks of violence changed for groups in the population?

Polina Obolenskaya, City, University of London

Often referred to as 'remarkable', 'unexpected' and 'unprecedented', the fall in crime, including violent crime, in the mid-1990s followed a period of steep increase in the decade preceding it. While the crime drop was witnessed across many countries around the world, there is evidence suggesting it varied by type of crime as well as its impacts on different population groups.

Similarly, previous studies on violent crime showed that the drop in violence in England and Wales did not translate equally into reduced risks of violence for all groups and for different forms of violence (Cooper and Obolenskaya, 2022, Ganpat et al., 2022, Walby et al., 2016). However, these studies either employed a limited number of victim characteristics or/and did not cover at entire span of the rise, fall and stall of violence.

This paper aims to fill the gap in empirical evidence on how different groups were affected by the rise, fall and stall in violence since 1980s using Crime Survey for England and Wales. We explore the changes in prevalence of different forms of violence (physical, sexual violence and threats) by gender, age, disability, and migration. We find that while for most groups trends in violence mirrored that of the overall trend, some groups experienced no such trend (e.g. aged

70 and over), for some groups inequalities in violence narrowed as the prevalence of it decreased (e.g. by migration), for others – they widened (e.g. by disability). Moreover, despite the overall stability of violence in the more recent period, prevalence of certain forms of violence, such as threats, increased. The findings highlight the unequal experiences and trends across groups, not only in the periods of the changing risks of violence but also at times of relative stability, and the need to understand these differences to inform policy and service provision.

When there's more than one assailant: Understanding variation in victims' needs

Elouise Davies, Lancaster University

Previous research into co-offending has shown that crimes with multiple perpetrators are more often perpetrated by groups of males (Van Mastrigt, 2014; Lantz, 2020), and youths (Lantz, 2021). Multiple perpetrator violent events (MPVE) are often more severe and injurious to victims than single perpetrator violent events (SPVE) (Andresen and Felson, 2010; Carrington, 2002). However, limited research has been undertaken focusing on the victims of multiple perpetrator violence, with most research focusing on the perpetrators and the group composition.

This paper uses eight years of data from the CSEW to consider the profiles of victims of MPVE, comparing them to victims of single perpetrator violence finding that victims are more often male, younger and a minority ethnic group. When considering victims' needs, victims of MPVE were more likely to report to the police than victims of single perpetrator violent events. They were also twice as likely to receive treatment in hospital after the event. These findings highlight how victims of violent events with one perpetrator may well be underrepresented in records drawn from police, health, and specialist services.

New Crime Survey for England and Wales integration code: Impact for investigating rare events such as different intimate partner perpetrator types

Niels Blom, City, University of London

While the Crime Survey for England and Wales (CSEW) and its predecessor, the British Crime Survey (BCS), have run since 1982, combining the multiple years of the survey can be complex and mistakes are easily made. To support other researchers who also analyse the CSEW in Stata (or would like to start), I have shared the code (available via UKDSreshare). With this code, you can specify what you need, namely, which years of the Crime Survey you want to merge and if you want the adolescent and young adult panels, the bolt-on datasets that provide uncapped codes, and/or if you want to use the ethnic minority booster samples. As a result, the code can be easily tailored for researchers' needs.

By combining multiple survey sweeps, analysts can examine temporal trends but also look at low prevalence offences, population groups, or consequences, that do not have a high enough frequency in a single year.

Example: Investigating different intimate partner perpetrator types and their impact.

This integrated dataset provides new opportunities, for example the study included here on different types intimate partner violence and abuse (IPVA) and its emotional wellbeing impact and risk of injuries. Intimate partners include a range of different relationship types, which are rarely differentiated or contrasted in research. Here, we investigate whether different types of intimate partners commit different types of violence/abuse (physical, sexual, threats, or

economic offences) and whether injury and wellbeing impact on victims varies between them using the CSEW 2001-2020. Ordered logit models indicate that female victims of physical violence/abuse or economic crimes have more severe emotional impact when the perpetrator is their current or former spouse/partner compared to a current or former boy/girlfriend. Women's risk of injuries from physical violence and economic offences are higher when committed by current compared to former partners.