Data & Race in Criminal Justice: Equity, Equality and Disparity
JRSA would like to thank the Bureau of Justice Statistics for their support.

This project was supported by Grant No. 2018-86-CX-K038 awarded by the Bureau of Justice Statistics, Office of Justice Programs, U.S. Department of Justice. Points of view expressed are those of the presenter and do not necessarily represent the official position or policies of the US Department of Justice.
2021 ASUCRP/JRSA Conference
Bismarck, North Dakota
3:30 – 5:00pm CDT, Wednesday, September 2nd

Race and Ethnicity of Violent Crime Offenders and Arrestees, 2018

Lisa E. Faas, PhD, BJS Statistician

In 2018, based on data from the FBI Uniform Crime Reporting (UCR) Program, Black people were overrepresented among persons arrested for motorists-related crimes (37%) and for serious motorists-related crimes (30%) relative to their representation in the U.S. population. White people accounted for 49% of all arrests but were only 34% of the U.S. population. In terms of violent crime, Hispanics were underrepresented, while people accounted for 39% of all arrests but were only 14% of the U.S. population. In terms of violent crime, Hispanics were underrepresented, while people accounted for 39% of all arrests but were only 14% of the U.S. population.

These UCR data on incidents of violent crime can be compared to data from the National Crime Victimization Survey (NCVS) to determine how much this differential was due to underreporting or underregistration of violent crime. The NCVS collects information on victim perceptions about violent criminal acts and provides data on violent crimes not reported to law enforcement (incidents of violent crime). This survey is administered by the BJS to a national probability sample of U.S. households. The 2018 NCVS data file includes interviews from 35,179 households.

An examination of offenders’ characteristics, as reported by victims to the NCVS, provides information about how much the nonreporting of violent crimes among Black and Hispanic persons contributes to the underrepresentation of these groups in UCR data. Black people accounted for 26% of motorists-related arrests and 13% of violent crime arrests in data reported to police, compared to 10% of all persons arrested or violent crime arrests (Table 2). In the NCVS, the older age group of 45 years or older has a higher violent crime arrest rate (6.8%) than any other age group. This is likely due to the fact that the older age group has a higher representation of Hispanic persons who are older.

At the same time, while offenders were overrepresented among persons arrested for motorists-related crimes (37%) and for serious motorists-related crimes (30%) relative to their representation in the U.S. population, Hispanics were overrepresented among persons arrested for motorists-related crimes (37%) and for serious motorists-related crimes (30%) relative to their representation in the U.S. population. Hispanics were overrepresented among persons arrested for motorists-related crimes (37%) and for serious motorists-related crimes (30%) relative to their representation in the U.S. population.

In the NCVS, Hispanics were overrepresented among persons arrested for motorists-related crimes (37%) and for serious motorists-related crimes (30%) relative to their representation in the U.S. population. Hispanics were overrepresented among persons arrested for motorists-related crimes (37%) and for serious motorists-related crimes (30%) relative to their representation in the U.S. population.

These differences in arrests andee

TABLE 1

Race or ethnicity of the U.S. resident population and of persons arrested for motorists-related crimes, 2018

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Race or Ethnicity</th>
<th>Arrests</th>
<th>% of Total Arrests</th>
<th>% of Total Reporting Rate</th>
<th>% of Total Victimization Rate</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>White</td>
<td>4,468</td>
<td>49.6</td>
<td>2.2</td>
<td>2.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Black</td>
<td>1,318</td>
<td>14.9</td>
<td>1.7</td>
<td>1.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hispanic</td>
<td>1,124</td>
<td>12.8</td>
<td>1.8</td>
<td>1.9</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Host:

Jeffrey L. Sedgwick, JRSA Executive Director

Discussants:

Kelly J. Officer, Research Director, Oregon Criminal Justice Commission

Robin Joy, Director of Research, Crime Research Group, Inc.

Christine Reynolds, Research Division Director, Indiana Criminal Justice Institute
**Key Definitions**

- *Inequality* in the justice system is the differential (discriminatory) treatment of individuals or groups based on race, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, religion, or socio-economic standing instead of on their behavior or qualifications.

- *Disparity*, on the other hand, is a difference that exists, due to legal or extralegal factors, which does not necessarily involve discrimination. Legal Factors are the seriousness of the offense, aggravating or mitigating circumstances, or an offender's prior criminal record.

- *Inequity* in the justice system denotes a specific kind of difference, namely, worse outcomes among socially disadvantaged people and, in particular, members of disadvantaged racial/ethnic groups and economically disadvantaged people within any racial/ethnic group.
Discussion Questions

• Was your study self-initiated and designed or the result of a charge from a state official/agency?

• How was the study framed; was the focus on disparity, equality/inequality, or equity/inequity?

• How did you choose the data to use; were there data you would have liked to have but weren’t available?

• What findings were especially valuable; which were especially surprising (if any)?
Questions?