

This report was prepared by Westat using federal funding provided by the Bureau of Justice Statistics.

Document Title: National Crime Victimization Survey Redesign: NCVS Crime Incident Report (CIR)

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Document No.: NCJ 306157

Publication Date: June 2023

Award No.: This project was supported by award numbers 2013-MU-CX-K054 and 2019-R2-CX-K001.

Abstract:

This report describes testing efforts to develop and assess a new National Crime Victimization Survey (NCVS) instrument. This testing was a part of the NCVS Instrument Redesign and Testing Project, a major multiyear effort to revamp the existing core survey instrument, which was last updated in 1992. The effort had three main goals: modernize the organization and content of the NCVS instrument, increase the quality of information collected and efficiency of the instrument flow, and improve the measurement and classification of crime. This report details findings from a large-scale national field test to compare differences in the measurement of victimization incident characteristics between two versions of the core NCVS instrument. It examines the performance of the changes to the Crime Incident Report.

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NCVS Redesign Research and Development Program Report Series

The Bureau of Justice Statistics (BJS) maintains a robust research program geared toward assessing and improving the measurement of key criminal victimization estimates in the National Crime Victimization Survey (NCVS) and its supplements. BJS has undertaken research in several areas to increase the efficiency, reliability, and utility of the NCVS. The *NCVS Instrument Redesign and Testing Project*, a major multiyear effort, is one such research and development effort. It is designed to revamp the existing core survey instrument, which was last updated in 1992.

The overarching objective of the project is to develop and assess a new instrument through a large-scale national field test. The project aims to modernize the core NCVS instrument, including improving the victimization screener and flow and logic of the instrument, as well as providing new measures of police performance and community safety and expanded measures of correlates of victimization and victim help-seeking.

This report describes changes to the Crime Incident Report (CIR) in the new NCVS instrument. It details findings from a large-scale national field test to compare differences in the measurement of victimization incident characteristics between two versions of the core NCVS instrument. The report examines the performance of the changes to the CIR. It presents estimates derived from each instrument and examines differences in victimization incident characteristics and data quality.

This report and others developed under the NCVS Redesign Research and Development Program are part of BJS's efforts to finalize a new core survey instrument. Additional reports and findings from this effort may be found on the BJS webpage at <https://bjs.ojp.gov/programs/ncvs/instrument-redesign>.

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National Crime Victimization Survey Redesign: The NCVS Crime Incident Report (CIR)

Final Report

June 2023

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Table of Contents

Executive Summary	viii
Chapter 1. Introduction and Background	1
1.1 The NCVS	1
1.2 Need for the Redesign	1
1.3 The Instrument Redesign Process	2
1.4 Contents of this Report	3
Chapter 2. Module VO: Victim-offender Relationship	5
2.1 Who Was Asked About the VOR	5
2.2 Defining the VOR	7
2.3 Other Aspects of the Relationship	11
Chapter 3. Module OC: Offender Characteristics	12
3.1 Offender Age	12
3.2 Condition 1 Questions Dropped	14
Chapter 4. Module SP: Self-Protection	15
4.1 Protective Actions	15
Field Test Results	17
Discussion and Recommendations	22
4.2 Timing of Protective Actions	23
4.3 Consequences of Protective Actions	23
4.4 Actions of Others Present During the Incident	24
4.5 Consequences of Others' Actions	25
4.6 Harm to Others Present during the Incident	26
4.7 Who Initiated Threats or Attacks	27
Chapter 5. Module PI: Police Involvement	28
5.1 Whether and How the Police Found Out About the Incident	28
Field Test Results	29
Discussion and Recommendations	31

Table of Contents (Continued)

5.2	Why the Incident Was not Reported to the Police	31
	Field Test Results	33
	Discussion and Recommendations	33
5.3	What the Police Did	35
	Field Test Results	36
	Discussion and Recommendations	38
5.4	Later Contact with the Police	39
	Field Test Results	40
	Discussion and Recommendations	40
5.5	Satisfaction with the Police Response	40
	Field Test Results	41
	Discussion and Recommendations	44
5.6	Whether Incident Considered a Crime	44
	Discussion and Recommendations	50
Chapter 6.	Module CS: Socio-Emotional Consequences	51
6.1	Who Was Asked about Socio-Emotional Consequences	51
6.2	Detailed Emotional and Physical Consequences	53
	Field Test Results	54
	Discussion and Recommendations	58
6.3	Seeking Professional Help	59
Chapter 7.	Module CE: Economic Consequences	61
7.1	Value of Stolen Property	61
7.2	Recovered Property	63
7.3	Damaged Property	66
7.4	Lost Work	68
Chapter 8.	Module VS: Victim Services	71
8.1	Which Incidents Were Asked about Victim Services	71
8.2	Who the Victim Told about the Incident	73

Table of Contents (Continued)

8.3	What Kinds of Services Were Received	74
	Field Test Results	75
	Discussion and Recommendations	77
8.4	Satisfaction with Services	77
8.5	Services the Victim Tried to Get but Could Not	78
8.6	Services the Victim Wanted but Did Not Try to Get	79
Chapter 9.	Series Crimes in the CIR	80

References	R-1
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Tables

ES-1	Major changes, NCVS-R Field Test results, and recommendations going forward for the NCVS Crime Incident Report	ix
2-1	Victim-offender relationship for violent crimes, Conditions 1 and 2	9
2-2	Questionnaire responses leading to Table 2-1 summary relationship categories, Conditions 1 and 2	10
4-1	Unweighted frequencies of reported self-protective actions, Conditions 1 and 2	18
4-2	Recodes for self-protective actions from Condition 1 and Condition 2 responses	20
4-3	Rate of violent crime victim response, recode of Field Test questions by type of crime, Conditions 1 and 2	21
5-1	Field Test questions and response codes for why incidents were not reported to the police, Conditions 1 and 2, with recode categories	32
5-2	Field Test questions and response recodes for why incidents were not reported to the police, by type of crime, Conditions 1 and 2	34
5-3	Field Test questions and response codes for what police did when they came, Conditions 1 and 2	37

Table of Contents (Continued)

5-4	Whether respondent considered the incident a crime at the time of the incident or the time of the interview by type of crime, crimes the police found out about only, Conditions 1 and 2	46
5-5	Whether respondent considered the incident a crime at the time of the incident or the time of the interview by type of crime, crimes the police did not find out about only, Condition 2	47
5-6	Reason for not reporting incident to the police by whether considered it a crime at the time of the incident by type of crime, Condition 2	48
5-7	Whether respondent considered the incident a crime at the time of the incident, all incidents by type of crime, Condition 2 IL and NIL	49
6-1	Number and percent of incidents classified as violent crimes that resulted in problems at work or school, problems with family or friends, or moderate or severe distress, Conditions 1 and 2	52
6-2	Number and percent of incidents classified as property crimes that resulted in problems at work or school, problems with family or friends, or moderate or severe distress, Condition 2	52
8-1	Receipt of victim services by type of crime, Condition 1 and Condition 2	76

Figures

3-1	Single offender age distribution, Conditions 1 and 2	13
5-1	Rate of violent and property crime reported to the police, Condition 1 and Condition 2 IL and NIL	30
5-2	Rate of violent and property crime not reported to the police, Condition 1 and Condition 2 IL and NIL	30
5-3	Satisfaction with phone report (PI11), Condition 2 property crime only	41
5-4	Satisfaction with response time (PI13) by type of crime, Condition 2	42
5-5	How respectfully police treated victim (PI20) by type of crime, Condition 2	42
5-6	Satisfaction with time to tell victim's story (PI21) by type of crime, Condition 2	43

Table of Contents (Continued)

5-7	Satisfaction that police did everything they could (PI22) by type of crime, Condition 2	43
5-8	Perception of police effectiveness (PI23) by type of crime, Condition 2	44
6-1a	Emotional reaction to violent crime for one month or more, by all violent crime, Conditions 1 and 2	55
6-1b	Emotional reaction to violent crime for one month or more, by violent crime excluding Simple Assault, Conditions 1 and 2	56
6-2a	Percent “Yes” response for emotional reactions to violent crime, Condition 1 (1 month or more)	56
6-2b	Percent “Yes” response for emotional reactions to violent crime, Condition 2 (1 month or more and Less than 1 month)	57
6-3	Percent “Yes” responses for emotional reactions to property crime, Condition 2 (1 month or more, one less than 1 month)	58
7-1	Dollar value of stolen property, including cash and excluding motor vehicles, Conditions 1 and 2	63
7-2	Unweighted dollar value of recovered stolen property, including cash and excluding motor vehicles, Conditions 1 and 2	65
8-1a	Distribution of responses to “How upsetting” the incident was, by Burglary, Condition 2	72
8-1b	Distribution of responses to “How upsetting” the incident was, by Motor Vehicle Theft, Condition 2	72
8-1c	Distribution of responses to “How upsetting” the incident was, by Other Theft, Condition 2	73
8-1d	Distribution of responses to “How upsetting” the incident was, by Vandalism, Condition 2	73
8-2	Response distribution (unweighted) for questions about satisfaction with victim services received across all service types, Condition 2	77

Executive Summary

This report describes changes to the National Crime Victimization Survey (NCVS) Crime Incident Report (CIR, also called the NCVS-2) implemented by the NCVS Instrument Redesign and Testing Project (NCVS-R). It also describes results of the NCVS-R Field Test, which was administered in late 2019 and early 2020. The report focuses specifically on those CIR modules asking about aspects of criminal victimizations, such as characteristics of the offender and consequences for the victim, not related to identifying the type of crime involved. A separate report explores how crime is measured in the NCVS. Finally, this report makes recommendations about accepting or rejecting changes made for the Field Test, as well as further changes that seem warranted from analysis of the Field Test results.

The large-scale national Field Test included both the current NCVS questionnaires (Condition 1) and the redesigned questionnaires (Condition 2). It was conducted in person by Westat field interviewers. The two questionnaire conditions had largely separate field staffs. As described in the *National Crime Victimization Survey Redesign Field Test Topline Report: Comparing Condition 1 and Condition 2 by Interleaving Treatment* (“Topline Report,” Cantor et al, 2022), the Condition 2 questionnaire included two separate treatments of follow-up probes to the Victimization Screener, interleaved (IL) and non-interleaved (NIL). The interleaving treatment is largely irrelevant for the CIR modules covered in this report.

The Topline Report recommended adoption of the Condition 2 NIL questionnaire to replace the current NCVS-1 and NCVS-2. Condition 2 Field Test respondents reported more victimization incidents than did Condition 1 respondents, and Condition 2 reported incidents were classified as NCVS crimes at an equivalent rate to Condition 1 reported incidents. Respondent burden (length of the interview) was roughly equivalent except for added sections. Item nonresponse was somewhat higher in some Condition 2 questionnaire sections, but this difference was attributed to artifacts of the Field Test design rather than issues with the questions themselves.

The major changes, Field Test results, and recommendations for the CIR sections covered in this report are laid out in Table ES-1. Overall, the changes appear to have worked as intended, with some notable exceptions. Further details are provided in Chapters 2-9 of the report, organized around the Condition 2 CIR topical modules.

Table ES-1. Major changes, NCVS-R Field Test results, and recommendations going forward for the NCVS Crime Incident Report

Change	Field test result	Recommendation
Victim-Offender Relationship: How many offenders?		
Condition 1 (C1): Asked only if respondent was present during incident Condition 2 (C2): Asked about all incidents	More than 1/3 of C2 respondents not present during the incident were able to say whether there was one or more than one offender.	Retain the C2 approach.
Victim-Offender Relationship: What was the relationship/connection?		
To improve identification of intimate partner violence (IPV), C2 broke the relationship question into two questions and expanded the "intimate partner" response options.	C1 estimate of IPV significantly higher than C2 ($p < .10$), review indicated mis-classification of some likely C2 intimate partners.	Return to one relationship question, retain expanded intimate partner response options.
Victim-Offender Relationship: Live with offender?		
C2 added two questions about cohabitation: ever lived with offender (if not apparent from previous response); and living with offender at time of incident (if cohabitation in a previous response)	In one-third of CIRs where it was asked, respondents said they had ever lived with the offender. In 70% of CIRs where it was asked, respondents said they were cohabiting at the time of the incident.	Useful information added. Retain the new questions.
Offender Characteristics: Age of offender(s)		
C2 split age question into 2 questions and changed the response categories.	C2 had less item nonresponse overall than C1, and a much higher proportion of offenders under 18 (12.2% vs. 3.2%).	Retain the C2 approach.

Table ES-1. Major changes, NCVS-R Field Test results, and recommendations going forward for the NCVS Crime Incident Report (continued)

Change	Field test result	Recommendation
Self-Protection: Do anything to protect self/property?		
<p>C1: Did you do anything with the idea of protecting YOURSELF or your PROPERTY while the incident was going on? Was there anything you did or tried to do about the incident while it was going on?</p> <p>C2: Which of the following describes how you reacted during the incident? MARK ALL THAT APPLY. (Freeze, not do anything, not move; Do what the person told you to do; Do something to protect yourself; Do something else)</p>	<p>The distribution of self-protective actions (including the follow-up "What did you do" question) was similar between C1 and C2. Review of interview recordings revealed respondent difficulties with the "mark-all" approach, e.g., respondents not choosing any of the options and mentioning actions but choosing a "did nothing" response.</p>	<p>Return to the C1 structure, but add a question for those saying "no" to both questions: "Did you do nothing, freeze, do what the offender told you to do, or do something else while the incident was going on?"</p>
Self-Protection: Consequences of actions		
<p>C1: Asked whether and how helped, whether and how made worse</p> <p>C2: Asked only for a net assessment: better, worse, no effect</p>	<p>Distribution of responses similar between C1 and C2 given differences in what was asked. 9.1% of C1 responses indicated both better and worse.</p>	<p>Retain the C2 approach.</p>
Self-Protection: Actions of others		
<p>C1: Asked whether others were present, details of consequences as above</p> <p>C2: Whether others were present, whether they took action, who took action, and what action was taken, single consequences question as above</p>	<p>Others present about the same rate in C1 and C2. New C2 questions added information, worked as expected.</p>	<p>Retain the C2 approach.</p>
Police Response: Did the police find out?		
<p>C1: Were the police informed or did they find out about this incident in any way?</p> <p>C2: Did the police find out about this incident?</p>	<p>C2 estimates of not reported to the police are significantly higher than Condition 1 estimates; the change in wording may be part of the reason.</p>	<p>Return to the C1 wording.</p>

Table ES-1. Major changes, NCVS-R Field Test results, and recommendations going forward for the NCVS Crime Incident Report (continued)

Change	Field test result	Recommendation
Police Response: New questions about contact with police		
Did you tell the police that you believe the incident was a hate crime? How did {you first/they} notify the police? Which of the following BEST describes when the police were first contacted?	New questions provided useful information, no observed problems.	Retain the new questions.
Police Response: Initial response		
C1: Did the police come when they found out about the incident? C2: What did the police do when they found out about the incident? (MARK ALL THAT APPLY.)	The C2 question was not well focused and seems not to have identified all of the incidents with in-person police response.	Return to the C1 wording, but add a new question with the other C2 response categories to be asked if the police did not come.
Police Response: New C2 questions about initial response		
How satisfied were you with how the phone report was taken? Do you think the police should have come to you when they were contacted? How satisfied were you with the time it took the police to get to you after they were contacted? Had the police told {you/the person who contacted them} how long it would take them to get there?	All of these questions worked as expected and provided additional information.	Retain the new questions.
Police Response: New C2 question about what the police did on scene		
Did the police do any of the following other things while they were there?	Almost three-quarters of CIRs had a positive response to one or more of the list of possible police actions.	Retain the new question.

Table ES-1. Major changes, NCVS-R Field Test results, and recommendations going forward for the NCVS Crime Incident Report (continued)		
Change	Field test result	Recommendation
Police Response: New C2 questions on satisfaction with police response		
How respectfully did the police treat you? How satisfied were you with the amount of time the police gave you to tell your story? How satisfied were you that the police did everything they could? Taking the whole experience into account, how effectively did the police handle the incident?	There was variation in the response patterns across the questions, although less so between respect and amount of time and between did everything they could and how effective.	Retain the new questions. Monitor the results, especially against the Police Ask-All module, to track what new information they are adding.
Police Response: New C1/C2 questions on whether incident was a crime		
At the time, did you consider this incident to be a crime? Now, looking back, do you consider this incident to be a crime?	Among almost all types of incidents reported to the police, the vast majority were considered by respondents to be crimes, both at the time of the incident and at the time of the interview. Incidents not reported to the police were less likely to be considered crimes.	Retain the new questions about whether the respondent considered the incident a crime.
Socio-Emotional Consequences: When asked		
C1: Asked only of CIRs mentioning an Attack, Attempted Attack, or Threatened Attack. C2: Asked of all incidents except Attempted Theft and those already determined not to be an NCVS crime.	The proportions of incidents causing problems with work or school, or with family or friends are much smaller for property crime) than for violent crime, but the proportion of property crimes reported as moderately or severely upsetting was almost the same as for violent crimes.	Retain the expanded universe for the Socio-Emotional Consequences module.
Socio-Emotional Consequences: Emotions asked about		
C1: For a month or more: Worried or anxious, angry, sad or depressed, vulnerable, violated, couldn't trust people, unsafe, some other way C2: For less than a month or a month or longer: Angry, shocked, fearful, depressed, anxious or panicked, less confident, sad, annoyed	The C2 set of emotions and the additional response option yielded a larger spread of "Yes" responses than the C1 approach. The C2 approach also allows assessment of short-term versus long-term effects.	Retain the C2 list of emotions and the added response option ("Less than a month"). Both appear to add analytic value.

Table ES-1. Major changes, NCVS-R Field Test results, and recommendations going forward for the NCVS Crime Incident Report (continued)

Change	Field test result	Recommendation
Economic Consequences: New C2 questions about damaged property		
<p>What was damaged or destroyed (other than any stolen property)?</p> <p>Was any of the damage a result of the offender trying to get into the vehicle?</p> <p>Was any of the damage to your house or apartment a result of the offender trying to get inside?</p> <p>Was any of the damage to your garage, shed, greenhouse or other structure on your property a result of the offender trying to get into the structure?</p> <p>What was the total value of the damage done {in this vandalism}?</p>	<p>The utility of these new questions is not clear from the Field Test. They are associated with other Instrument Redesign changes, notably the addition of Vandalism as an NCVS crime and new questions intended to clarify ambiguous incidents involving motor vehicles, which are discussed in <i>National Crime Victimization Survey Redesign: Measuring Crime in the NCVS</i> (Edwards et al., 2023).</p>	<p>BJS should continue to monitor the use of these items in coding and research to assess their utility.</p>
Economic Consequences: New C2 questions about school and employment		
<p>Did you lose your job or have to give up work, or withdraw from school as a result of this incident?</p> <p>Did you have to change your job or school as a result of this incident?</p>	<p>In more than 20% of incidents where the first question was asked, respondents said "Yes." Of the remainder, 7% said "Yes" to the second question.</p>	<p>Retain the new questions.</p>
Victim Services: New C2 questions about who the victim told about the incident		
<p>Have you told any family, friends, co-workers, {IF STUDENT: classmates} or neighbors about the incident?</p> <p>{Other than {the police or} family/friends, have/Have} you told anyone in the following positions about the incident who you thought might be able to help you?</p>	<p>Of those asked, 77.1% (unweighted) said "Yes" to the first question, and 40.6% said "Yes" to one or more of the positions in the second.</p>	<p>Retain the new questions.</p>

Table ES-1. Major changes, NCVS-R Field Test results, and recommendations going forward for the NCVS Crime Incident Report (continued)

Change	Field test result	Recommendation
Victim Services: Services asked about		
<p>C1: Did you (or someone in your household) receive any help or advice from any office or agency—other than the police—that deals with victims of crime? Was that a government or private agency? C2: Besides any help you might have gotten from friends or family, have you received the following kinds of services because of the incident? (11 categories of services)</p>	<p>There was at least one positive response to each of the C2 service types, with most having 2% positive responses or fewer (unweighted). For violent crimes, the rate estimates are remarkably similar between C1 and C2 despite the differences in the questions.</p>	<p>Retain the C2 list of service categories.</p>
Victim Services: Asked for which incidents?		
<p>C1: All reported incidents C2: To reduce burden in the Field Test, only a person's first reported incident, and only if an Attack or Sexual Attack (including attempts and threats) or the respondent considered the incident "severely upsetting."</p>	<p>See above.</p>	<p>Ask about all incidents (not just the first reported) meeting the other Field Test criteria.</p>
Victim Services: New C2 questions about satisfaction with services		
<p>For each type of victim service reported, a follow-up asked how satisfied the respondent was with the services received.</p>	<p>There is insufficient sample for meaningful analysis of each type of service. However, there is a good spread of responses, with 76.9% being either completely or mostly satisfied.</p>	<p>Retain the new questions. They provide useful information and involve relatively little burden because they are not asked often.</p>

Table ES-1. Major changes, NCVS-R Field Test results, and recommendations going forward for the NCVS Crime Incident Report (continued)

Change	Field test result	Recommendation
Victim Services: New C2 questions about services the victim tried to get		
Were there any types of services that you TRIED to get BUT WERE UNABLE TO GET? If yes, what services and what were the reasons they were not obtained?	Only 1.7% of CIRs where the question was asked had a positive response.	Given the yield and the respondent burden for those who say "Yes," drop these questions.
Victim Services: New C2 questions about whether the victim wanted services		
You said you didn't try to get any services. Did you want any services? If yes, what were the reasons?	There were positive responses in 6.9% of CIRs where it was asked, and each of the reasons offered was selected at least three times.	Retain these questions. They provide useful information and involve relatively little burden. If the previous question is dropped, delete "try to."

1. Introduction and Background

This report describes changes to what information is collected about criminal victimization incidents in the National Crime Victimization Survey (NCVS). The changes are the result of a major multi-year effort to overhaul the existing survey instrument, called the National Crime Victimization Survey Instrument Redesign and Testing Project, or the NCVS Instrument Redesign (NCVS-R). The Bureau of Justice Statistics (BJS) initiated this effort in 2014, through a cooperative agreement with Westat, to support the Instrument Redesign and conduct a large-scale national Field Test.

1.1 The NCVS

Since 1972, the NCVS and its predecessor, the National Crime Survey (NCS), have provided national data on the level and change of nonfatal personal crimes (i.e., rape or sexual assault, robbery, aggravated and simple assault, and personal larceny) and property crimes (i.e., burglary, motor vehicle theft, and other theft) both reported and not reported to police. It is one of the two main sources of data on crime in the United States. It is the only source of data on crime not reported to the police, as well as data on incident characteristics (i.e., injuries, victim-offender relationship, police involvement, use of self-protection, consequences, and victim services).

The NCVS is conducted annually for BJS by the U.S. Census Bureau. All persons age 12 or older in cooperating households are interviewed every 6 months for 3½ years, a total of seven times. NCVS data are weighted to produce annual estimates of victimization for persons age 12 or older living in U.S. households. Because the NCVS relies on a sample rather than a census of the entire U.S. population, weights are designed to adjust to known population totals and to compensate for undercoverage, survey nonresponse, and other aspects of the complex sample design (Morgan and Thompson, 2021).

NCVS instrumentation includes the Control Card, or household roster; the NCVS-1, comprising a Victimization Screener and demographic questions; and the NCVS-2, or Crime Incident Report (CIR), which collects more information about each incident reported in the screener. Some of the information collected in the CIR is used to determine whether the incident meets the definition of an “NCVS crime,” and if so to assign a type-of-crime (TOC) code. Other information from the CIR focuses on the context and consequences of the incident, what is known about the offender(s) and the offender’s motivation, how the police responded, and what kinds of support the victim has received.

1.2 Need for the Instrument Redesign

The NCVS was last redesigned in 1992. The intervening 30 years have seen significant change in the nature of crime and the research needs of NCVS users, as well as in public perception of surveys and how they are conducted. The core survey content had been essentially unchanged since the 1992 redesign. Methodologically, when the NCVS questionnaire was programmed for computer-assisted telephone interviewing (CATI) in 1992 and for computer-assisted personal interviewing (CAPI) in 2006, it essentially replicated the paper questionnaire, not taking full advantage of programming features. Finally, the NCVS questionnaires are heavily dependent on the judgment of Census Field Representatives (FRs) in interpreting and coding survey responses. To address all of these issues,

the goals of the Instrument Redesign were (1) to update the content of the survey to reflect crime trends, as well as other indicators important for policy and research; and (2) to increase the efficiency and reliability of the data collection.

1.3 The Instrument Redesign Process

In response to these two goals, the Instrument Redesign proceeded along two parallel tracks: understanding and responding to the data needs of NCVS data users, and developing a questionnaire design that would engage respondents and yield accurate and consistent data. The Instrument Redesign team included staff from BJS and Westat, consultants with extensive experience using NCVS data, and a Technical Review Panel (TRP) of NCVS data users and survey methodologists.

The content update began with a review of research using NCVS data to understand which survey questions contributed to the victimization literature. In deciding which current questions to retain, the criteria were: (1) whether the question contributed directly to victimization estimates, including to TOC coding; and (2) the extent to which the question had been used in other research. The other focus was on unmet research needs that might lead to questions being added. The Instrument Redesign team constituted a Technical Review Panel (TRP)¹ and formed several topical Work Groups to discuss these issues and to develop recommendations for testing.

The methodological update also began with a literature review, focused on research on both the NCVS and other national crime surveys. The Instrument Redesign team considered a number of possible approaches to addressing issues, such as engaging respondents and making the interview more conversational, reducing interviewer effects in survey responses, reducing likely over-reporting in the first NCVS interview, and making better use of CAPI capabilities, such as by incorporating previously reported information in routing through the questionnaire and in question-wording.

Members of the Instrument Redesign team observed NCVS interviews in the field and were interviewed themselves by Census FRs. Survey respondents sometimes seemed frustrated by apparent redundancy in the questions (e.g., one Instrument Redesign team member gave the same answer, “on the street,” to three consecutive questions about where an incident happened), and by a seeming failure to acknowledge what they had already reported. These kinds of frustrations could lead to response error, particularly for the questions about where the incident occurred and who was present, two concepts critical to classifying the type of crime.

These observations are consistent with several other issues that the survey is facing. One is the need for extensive editing once the data are collected. Data editors review all incidents, using the narrative information provided by the interviewer, to check whether the data on the questionnaire represent what was described by the respondent. This process results in changes to correct respondent or interviewer errors. Examples include the Presence and Location questions, which are often misinterpreted by respondents or interviewers, leading to skipping critical questions.

Anecdotally, some have attributed the decline in incident reporting over the survey panel to respondent frustration with the interview. The intent of the Instrument Redesign was to make the

¹ See *National Crime Victimization Survey Instrument Redesign: Field Test Methodology Report* (Giambo et al, 2023), Appendix 10, for a list of TRP members.

survey more conversational and responsive by recognizing what the respondent had already reported and routing the interview through the instrument accordingly.

As the Instrument Redesign team worked to modify sections of the screener and CIR, small-scale cognitive testing examined how respondents would react to these new approaches. Some conceptual testing also used web panels, e.g., asking what words or ideas people associated with particular aspects of crime, such as what might someone steal or how might someone attack a person.

The TRP met four times during the development process. In each meeting, they heard presentations from the Work Groups, commented on the recommendations, and suggested additional lines of inquiry.

The culmination of the development effort was a small-scale Pilot Test to make sure that survey operations would run as planned, followed by a large-scale national Field Test to compare the current NCVS (Condition 1) to the redesigned screener and CIR (Condition 2). The Field Test comprised a single in-person, interviewer-administered interview with each member of sampled households age 12 or older. Approximately 6,900 persons were interviewed in Conditions 1 and 2. Finally, the survey data were processed and weighted for analysis.

As described in the *National Crime Victimization Survey Redesign Field Test Topline Report: Comparing Condition 1 and Condition 2 by Interleaving Treatment* (“Topline Report,” Cantor et al, 2022)², the Condition 2 questionnaire included two separate treatments of follow-up probes to the Victimization Screener, interleaved (IL) and non-interleaved (NIL). The interleaving treatment is largely irrelevant for the CIR modules covered in this report.

The Topline Report recommended adoption of the Condition 2 NIL questionnaire to replace the current NCVS-1 and NCVS-2. Condition 2 Field Test respondents reported more victimization incidents than did Condition 1 respondents, and Condition 2 reported incidents were classified as NCVS crimes at an equivalent rate to Condition 1 reported incidents. Respondent burden (length of the interview) was roughly equivalent except for added sections. Item nonresponse was somewhat higher in some Condition 2 questionnaire sections, but this difference was attributed to artifacts of the Field Test design rather than issues with the questions themselves.

More details of the Field Test design and administration may be found in the Topline Report and Methodology Report (Cantor et al., 2022; Giambo et al., 2023). A third condition, in which the redesigned questionnaire would be self-administered, was also tested. A later report will describe the results of that test.

1.4 Contents of this Report

The Instrument Redesign team organized the new (Condition 2) CIR in modular sections. The first set of modules focused on “What Happened” by type of crime as identified in the screener:

- **Module SA:** Rape and Sexual Assault;
- **Module A:** Attack and Threatened Attack;

² <https://bjs.ojp.gov/library/publications/national-crime-victimization-survey-redesign-field-test-topline-report>.

- **Module CI:** Injury;
- **Module MV:** Motor Vehicle Theft;
- **Module B:** Break-ins;
- **Module T:** Theft; and
- **Module V:** Vandalism.

In Condition 2, Module MV also included Motor Vehicle Parts and Gas Theft. This set of modules collected virtually all of the information needed for TOC coding. Together with the subsequent modules on Presence and Location, they are the subject of a separate report on measuring crime in the NCVS (See *National Crime Victimization Survey Redesign: Measuring Crime in the NCVS*).

The remaining modules, in the order they appeared in Condition 2, were the following:

- **Module VO:** Victim-offender Relationship (Chapter 2);
- **Module OC:** Offender Characteristics (Chapter 3);
- **Module SP:** Self-protection (Chapter 4);
- **Module HC:** Hate Crimes;
- **Module PI:** Police Involvement (Chapter 5);
- **Module WV:** Workplace Violence;
- **Module CS:** Socio-emotional Consequences (Chapter 6);
- **Module CE:** Economic Consequences (Chapter 7); and
- **Module VS:** Victim Services (Chapter 8).

With the exception of Workplace Violence, which will be covered in the *National Crime Victimization Survey Redesign: Measuring Crime in the NCVS* report, and Hate Crimes, which were the subject of a separate development effort (Langton et al., 2021), these modules are covered in this report, in the chapters indicated. Chapter 9 addresses the treatment of series crimes in the CIR.

Questionnaire format and numbering conventions in this report

Condition 1 questions will be presented in *italic* font. Question numbers will be of the form *Qnn*, using the numbering in the current NCVS-2 available here: https://bjs.ojp.gov/content/pub/pdf/ncvs20_cir.pdf. An example:

Q58a. How did you learn about the offender(s)?

Condition 2 questions will be presented in plain font, with numbers from the redesigned instrument (See Appendix 5, Cantor et al., 2022). These take the form LLnn, where “LL” is the module designation and “nn” is the question number within the module. Because of frequent changes during development, the numbers may not represent the actual sequence of questions within the module. An example:

VO1b. Do you know who {the offender was/the offenders were}?

2. Module VO: Victim-offender Relationship

The Instrument Redesign made several changes to the Victim-offender Relationship (VOR) questions, including who is asked which questions, the sequence of questions, how they are worded, and changes to response categories, as well as adding and deleting content. Condition 1 asked the VOR questions only about incidents where either the victim or another household member was present during the incident. Condition 2 asked them about all incidents. Both conditions included separate sets of questions once it was determined whether there was one or more than one offender.

As discussed in the Topline Report (Cantor et al., 2022), the Presence questions were significantly revised in the Instrument Redesign, including changing the definition of Presence. Effects of these changes may also be seen in the VOR series.

2.1 Who Was Asked About the VOR

If no household member was present, Condition 1 asked:

Q56. Do you know or have you learned anything about the offender(s) – for instance, whether there was one or more than one offender involved, whether it was someone young or old, or male or female?

Q57. (If Yes to Q56:) How sure are you of this information? Do you have a suspicion, are you fairly sure, or are you certain?

Q58a. How did you learn about the offender(s)?

If the response to Q58a was “Respondent saw or heard offender” or “From other member of household who was eyewitness,” the interviewer attempted to resolve the discrepancy (since no household member had been reported as present), either by changing the response to the Presence question or by instructing the program to ignore the inconsistency. In the Field Test, there were 12 responses of “Respondent saw or heard offender,” or 2.9% of the CIRs where no one in the household was reported present during the incident. The interviewer did not change the Presence response for any of these incidents.

Condition 1 incidents where no household member was present then skipped out of the module. They also skipped over the Offender Characteristics questions regardless of the response to Q56.

Both Condition 1 (when a household member was present) and Condition 2 began asking about the VOR the same way:

Q60./V01. Was the crime committed by only one or by more than one offender?

Condition 2 asked V01 of all incidents except those identified only as Attempted Theft and those already determined not to be an NCVS crime. If the respondent was not present during the incident, Condition 2 added the introductory phrase “To the best of your knowledge.”

Another change to Q60 was dropping the explicit “Don’t know” response for incidents where a household member was present. The “Don’t know” response was shown when the respondent was not present. In 6.7% of Condition 2 incidents where the respondent was present, the VO1 response was missing. This compares with 26.6% of Condition 1 incidents where the explicit “Don’t know” response was selected. Where the Condition 2 response to VO1 was missing and the respondent was present, a follow-up question gave respondents a second chance to answer the question (VO1a); only 4 out of 100 gave a substantive response.

Recommendation 2-1: Drop VO1a but retain the display of “Don’t know” in VO1 only for incidents where the respondent was not reported as being present.

One question is whether the change to which incidents were asked the full set of VOR items resulted in increased information. In the Field Test, 34.6% (unweighted) of incidents where a household (HH) member was not present and VO1 was asked provided a substantive response. These incidents would not have received Q60 in Condition 1. While those not present were much less likely than those present to know the number of offenders, as one would expect, more than a third of Condition 2 incidents where a household member was not present were able to give a response.

For 26.3% of Condition 1 incidents where a household member was present, respondents indicated “Don’t know,” as compared with 6.9% of such Condition 2 incidents. This difference is likely due to the changes in the Presence module.

If the respondent knew whether there was one or more than one offender, Condition 2 went on to ask:

VO1b. Do you know who {the offender was/the offenders were}?

There was no corresponding Condition 1 question. Overall, in 46.5% of CIRs where the question was asked, the respondent knew who the offender(s) was/were. For incidents where no household member was present and the question was asked, 39.5% of the offenders were known.

Both Condition 1 (if the respondent did not know whether there was one or more than one offender) and Condition 2 (if the respondent did not know who the offender(s) was/were) continue:

Q61. Do you know anything about one of the offenders?

VO2. Do you know anything about {the offender/any of the offenders}, such as whether they were young or old, male or female, etc.?

Note that the Condition 2 question added examples, similar to Q58 above, but here Condition 1 did not include examples. For Condition 2 incidents where no household member was present and this question was asked, in 15.9% of CIRs the respondent reported knowing something about the offender(s).

When VO1b or VO2 was answered “Yes” and the incident was not an attack or sexual assault, Condition 2 continued with a question similar to Q58a:

VO3a. {[If VO2 = “Yes”: How did you learn what you know about the offender(s)? / [If VO1b = “Yes”: How did you find out who the {offender was/offenders were}]}?

Condition 1 did not ask this question about incidents where a household member was present. A similar question, Q58a above, was asked about incidents where a household member was not present. In Condition 2 incidents where a household member was present, 52.9% of CIRs had “You saw or heard the offender(s)” selected, as compared with 11.8% of CIRs where a household member was not reported as being present. The latter set represents 3.2% of all CIRs where no household member was reported as being present, a comparable percentage to that for Q58a (2.9%). This comparison suggests that inconsistent reporting of Presence persisted to some extent in Condition 2, since seeing or hearing the offender is part of the Condition 2 definition of Presence. However, routing in the Condition 2 CIR and TOC coding was much less dependent on Presence than in Condition 1.

A review of “Other” response to VO3a revealed two responses mentioned several times each: surveillance or “doorbell” video recordings, and someone else who was not an eyewitness (the category dropped from Q58a).

Recommendation 2-2: Retain the Condition 2 approach for what incidents are asked about the VOR.

Recommendation 2-3: Add “Surveillance or ‘doorbell’ videos” and “Someone else who was not an eyewitness” to VO3a response categories.

2.2 Defining the VOR

After Q61 and VO3a, both instruments split into two parallel paths, one for a single offender and one for multiple offenders, with only slight changes in wording. The single-offender questions in Condition 1 were as follows:

- Q62. *Was the offender someone you knew or a stranger you had never seen before? [VO6]*
- Q63. *Would you be able to recognize the offender if you saw him/her? [VO7]*
- Q64. *How well did you know the offender – by sight only, casual acquaintance, or well known? [VO8]*
- Q65. *Would you have been able to tell the police how they might find the offender, for instance, where he/she lived, worked, went to school, or spent time? [VO9]*

The distribution of responses was very similar between Conditions 1 and 2 across all of these questions.

The most significant change in how the questions were asked was separating each of the Condition 1 direct relationship questions (one for a single offender and one for multiple offenders) into two questions for Condition 2, as follows:

- Q66. *How well did you know the offender? For example, was the offender a friend, cousin, etc.? [18 response categories]*
- VO10. *At the time of the incident, how did you know the offender? [5 response categories]*

VO10a. Specifically, how did you know the offender at the time of the incident?
[23 response categories, but only a subset displayed based on the response to VO10]

These questions were asked if the respondent knew the offender casually or well. The formulation of Q66 does not match the answer categories, which was part of the reason for changing the question-wording. The intent of the change from one to two questions was to be more thorough in identifying intimate partners, and to make the question easier for respondents to self-administer.

Table 2-1 shows the reported VOR in summary categories for violent crimes. The questionnaire responses leading to those summary categories are shown in Table 2-2. The difference in rates for intimate partner crime (Condition 1: 9.6 per 1,000 persons, Condition 2: 3.8 per 1,000 persons, $p < .10$) was in the opposite direction of what was expected, given the intent of the questionnaire changes and that many more Rapes and Sexual Assaults were reported in Condition 1 than in Condition 2. A review of respondent narratives and interview recordings indicated that some apparent intimate partners were not reported as such in VO10, and so the detailed intimate partner responses in VO10a were not displayed.

Condition 2 had significantly more reports of violent crimes than did Condition 1 by “other non-relatives” (i.e., persons known well or casually, 32.7 vs. 0.3 per 1,000, $p < .05$) and by “Strangers” (persons known by sight or not all, 46.0 vs. 27.9 per 1,000, $p < .05$). Some Condition 2 intimate partners apparently were marked in these categories (e.g., boy- or girlfriends reported as “Friend”) when the intimate partner categories were not displayed.

Recommendation 2-4: Drop VO10 but retain the revised wording for VO10a, with all response categories displayed.

Table 2-1. Victim-offender relationship for violent crimes, Conditions 1 and 2

Victim-offender relationship	Condition 1			Condition 2			Significance test	
	Unwtd number	Weighted number	Rate per 1,000	Unwtd number	Weighted number	Rate per 1,000	t-value	p-value
All violent crime	152	17,285,030	-	236	25,650,406	95.3	-	-
Intimate partner ^a	27	2,592,680	9.6	14	1,025,030	3.8	1.76	0.09
Other relative ^b	5	1,251,435	4.6	21	1,346,303	5.0	-0.11	0.92
Other non-relative ^c	1	69,616	0.3	63	8,813,430	32.7	-4.74	0.00
Stranger	63	7,515,086	27.9	118	12,378,643	46.0	-2.10	0.05
Unknown offender	5	374,667	1.4	5	636,789	2.4	-0.55	0.59
Missing	51	5,481,547	20.4	15	1,450,210	5.4	3.46	0.00

Source: 2019-2020 NCVS-R Field Test.

^a "Intimate partner" includes Condition 1 response options "Spouse at time of incident," "Ex-spouse at time of incident," and "Boyfriend or girlfriend, ex-boyfriend or ex-girlfriend," and Condition 2 response options "A spouse or ex-spouse," "Someone you were romantically involved with, dating, or casually seeing at the time of the incident," and "An ex-boyfriend, ex-girlfriend, { former fiancé(e), } or someone you were no longer dating or seeing" from VO10, as well as "A husband or wife," "an ex-husband or ex-wife," "A live-in partner," "A fiancé(e)," "A boyfriend, girlfriend, or dating partner," "Someone you were casually seeing," "An ex-boyfriend, ex-girlfriend, or former fiancé(e)," and "Someone you were no longer dating or seeing" from VO10a.

^b "Other relative" includes Condition 1 response options "Parent or step-parent," "Own child or step-child," "Brother/sister," and "Other relative," and Condition 2 response options "A parent or step-parent," "A child or step-child," "A brother, sister, step-brother, or step-sister," and "Some other relative."

^c "Other non-relative" includes Condition 1 response options "Friend or ex-friend," "Roommate, boarder," "Schoolmate," "Neighbor," "Customer/client," "Patient," "Supervisor (current or former)," "Employee (current or former)," "Co-worker (current or former)," "Teacher/school staff," and "Other non-relative," and Condition 2 response options "A friend or ex-friend," "An acquaintance or ex-friend," "A roommate or boarder," "A schoolmate," "A neighbor," "A customer or client," "A patient," "A supervisor or former supervisor," "An employee or co-worker or former employee or co-worker," "A teacher or other school staff," and "Some other non-relative."

Table 2-2. Questionnaire responses leading to Table 2-1 summary relationship categories, Conditions 1 and 2

Condition 1	Condition 2
Intimate partner	
Spouse at time of incident	{A HUSBAND OR WIFE}
Ex-spouse at time of incident	{AN EX-HUSBAND OR EX-WIFE}
-	{A LIVE-IN PARTNER}
-	{A FIANCÉ(E)}
Boyfriend or girlfriend, ex-boyfriend or ex-girlfriend	{A BOYFRIEND, GIRLFRIEND, OR DATING PARTNER}
-	{SOMEONE YOU WERE CASUALLY SEEING}
-	{AN EX-BOYFRIEND, EX-GIRLFRIEND, OR FORMER FIANCÉ(E)/AN EX-BOYFRIEND OR EX-GIRLFRIEND}
-	{SOMEONE YOU WERE NO LONGER DATING OR SEEING}
Other relative	
Parent or step-parent	{A PARENT OR STEP-PARENT}
Own child or step-child	{A CHILD OR STEP-CHILD}
Brother/sister	{A BROTHER, SISTER, STEP-BROTHER, OR STEP-SISTER}
Other relative – Specify	{SOME OTHER RELATIVE _____}
Other non-relative	
Friend or ex-friend	{A FRIEND OR EX-FRIEND}
Roommate, boarder	{AN ACQUAINTANCE OR A FRIEND OF A FRIEND}
Schoolmate	{A ROOMMATE OR BOARDER}
Neighbor	{A SCHOOLMATE}
Customer/client	{A NEIGHBOR}
Patient	{A CUSTOMER OR CLIENT}
Supervisor (current or former)	{A PATIENT}
Employee (current or former)	{A SUPERVISOR OR FORMER SUPERVISOR}
Co-worker (current or former)	{AN EMPLOYEE OR CO-WORKER OR FORMER EMPLOYEE OR CO-WORKER}
Teacher/school staff	{A TEACHER OR SCHOOL STAFF}
Other non-relative – Specify	{SOME OTHER NON-RELATIVE _____}
Stranger/sight only	
Q62 = “Stranger”	VO6 = “Complete stranger”
Q77a = “Stranger”	VO8 = “By sight only”
	VO15 = “All complete strangers”
	VO17 = only “By sight only”
Unknown offender	
Q62 = “Don’t know”	VO2 = 2
Q77a = “Don’t know”	-
Missing	
Otherwise	Otherwise

2.3 Other Aspects of the Relationship

Condition 2 continued with three new questions:

VO11. What was your connection, if any, to this person? [If VO7=No or VO8=Yes or missing]

VO12. Had you ever lived with this person? [All responses from VO10a except “a live-in partner” or “a roommate/boarder”]

VO13. Were you living with this person at the time of {this/the} incident {in {MONTH/YEAR}}? [If VO10 was missing, VO10a=“a live-in partner” or “a roommate/boarder,” or VO12=“Yes”]

These questions appear to have added useful information. VO11 was asked if the victim knew the offender by sight only or would be able to recognize the offender. Of responses to VO11, 17.5% were coded into one of the listed categories, and another 11.0% were “other;” the remainder were complete strangers (69.7%) or missing (1.8%). There was no particular pattern to the “other” responses.

Of those asked VO12, 33.2% said “Yes,” and of those, 70.6% said that they were living with the person at the time of the incident in VO13.

There were far fewer responses in the series for multiple offenders, and no notable differences from the patterns observed among the single-offender questions.

Recommendation 2-5: Retain VO11, VO12, and VO13.

3. Module OC: Offender Characteristics

Both Condition 1 and Condition 2 included a separate series of questions about Offender Characteristics for single offenders and multiple offenders, and both collected information about the following:

- Gender;
- Age;
- Race/ethnicity;
- Street gang membership; and
- Drug and alcohol use.

With the exceptions noted below, the questions were identical.

3.1 Offender Age

Condition 1 asked one question about age for incidents with only one offender, with the response categories largely focusing on offenders under 30.

Q68. How old would you say the offender was?

*Under 12
12-14
15-17
18-20
21-29
30 or older
Don't know*

Condition 2 changed the response categories to capture more detail among offenders 30 or older, and added a second question to get detailed age for offenders under 18.

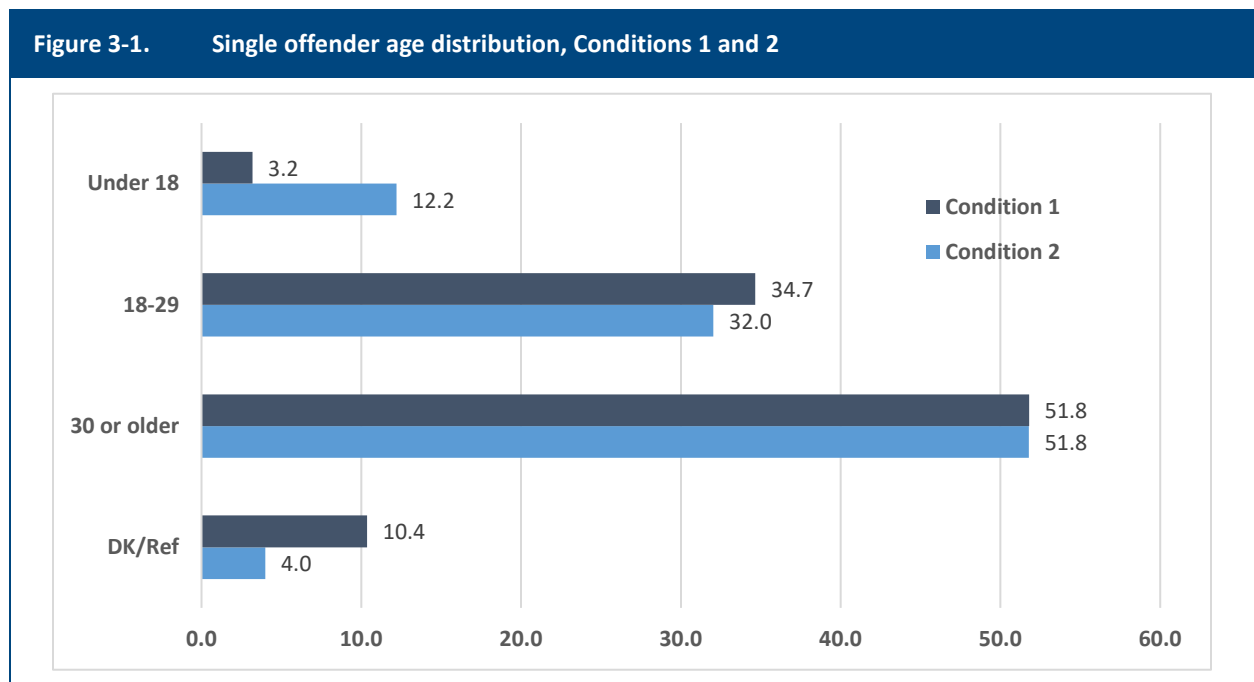
OC2. How old would you say the offender was?

*Under 18
18 to 24
25 to 34
35 to 54
55 or older
Don't know*

OC2a. Would you say the offender was ...?

- Under 12
- 12 to 14
- 15 to 17
- Don't know

Figure 3-1 shows the unweighted response distribution of reported single offender ages in Condition 1 and Condition 2. To match the disparate categories between conditions, the “25 to 34” category in Condition 2 was split evenly between “18-29” and “30 or older” in Figure 7-1. The striking differences are for “Under 18” (3.2% Condition 1 vs. 12.2% Condition 2) and “Don’t know/Refused” (10.4% vs. 4.0%). It appears that respondents had more trouble answering within the smaller age breaks for young offenders in Condition 1 (Q68) than in Condition 2 (OC2). Of those choosing “Under 18” in OC2, only 3.4% did not provide the finer breakdown in OC2a.



Source: 2019-2020 NCVS-R Field Test.

For incidents with multiple offenders, both conditions asked about the age of the youngest and the oldest. The patterns of response for these questions are very similar to that in Figure 7-1.

Recommendation 3-1: Retain the Condition 2 age items. There was less item nonresponse and more representation of younger offenders in Condition 2.

3.2 Condition 1 Questions Dropped

The Condition 1 Offender Characteristics series concluded with the following questions, both for single-offender and multi-offender incidents:

Q72a. Was the offender drinking or on drugs, or don't you know?

Q72b. Which was it? (Drinking or on drugs?)

Q73. Was this the only time this offender committed a crime against you or your household or made threats against you or your household?

Q72b and Q73 were not included in Condition 2. Neither has received much use in NCVS-based research. The combined rate of missing response for Q72a and 72b was 59.0% in Condition 1, and 48.8% in the 2019 NCVS. Further, some researchers are skeptical about victims' ability to identify the effects of drinking versus drug use.

4. Module SP: Self-Protection

The NCVS Self-Protection questions cover the following topics:

- Protective actions taken by the victim;
- Timing of the protective actions;
- Consequences of the victim’s protective actions;
- Actions of others present during the incident;
- Consequences of others’ actions;
- Harm to others present during the incident; and
- Who initiated threats or attacks.

Many of these questions have been analyzed extensively in other contexts. This research generally falls into two categories. One is the effects of self-protective actions (Kleck and Delone, 1993; Clay-Warner, 2002; Hemenway and Solnick, 2015). These analyses are widely cited, and the NCVS questions get considerable attention in the literature, particularly for studies of rape and sexual assault (e.g., Ullman, 2007). The other main area of research is estimating the prevalence of defensive use of guns (e.g., Lauritsen and Lentz, 2019; Powers and Bleeker, 2022).

In the NCVS Instrument Redesign, this module underwent several changes. Dr. Colin Loftin assisted the Westat team in revising the questions. The review of the items led to discussion to collect more information on passive reactions (e.g. doing what they were told; freezing) and to simplify questions that asked for sequential information (which actions were first, second, etc.). The module underwent two rounds of cognitive testing.

4.1 Protective Actions

Condition 1 asked about Self-Protection for all incidents where the respondent/victim was present during the incident, beginning with the following questions:

Q41a. Did you do anything with the idea of protecting YOURSELF or your PROPERTY while the incident was going on?

Yes (Go to 42a)

No/took no action/kept still

Q41b. Was there anything you did or tried to do about the incident while it was going on?

Yes

No/took no action/kept still (Go to next section)

Q42a. *What did you do? MARK ALL THAT APPLY.*

Attacked offender with gun; fired gun
Attacked with other weapon
Attacked without weapon (hit, kicked, etc.)
Threatened offender with gun
Threatened offender with other weapon
Threatened to injure, no weapon
Defended self or property (struggled, ducked, blocked blows, held onto property)
Chased, tried to catch or hold offender
Yelled at offender, turned on lights, threatened to call police, etc.
Cooperated, or pretended to (stalled, did what they asked)
Argued, reasoned, pleaded, bargained, etc.
Ran or drove away, or tried; hid, locked door
Called police or guard
Tried to attract attention or help, warn others (cried out for help, called children inside)
Screamed from pain or fear
Other – specify

The Self-Protection Work Group (see Methodology Report, Appendix 10) recommended minor changes in the list of protective actions in Q42a. Because the list of response options was very long for a self-administered questionnaire, the group also suggested an “unfolding” approach, breaking the list into two questions. There were also modifications to pick up more information about non-proactive responses (e.g., freezing, doing what the offender asked). The Instrument Redesign team also added an introduction to the module, both as a segue and to reduce the possibility of stigma associated with saying that one froze or did nothing.

The revised set of questions for Condition 2 was as follows:

These next questions are about what you did when {this/the} incident {in {MONTH}} occurred. {READ FOR FIRST INCIDENT. READ ONLY IF NEEDED FOR INCIDENTS 2+: People may react differently to certain situations and there’s not a wrong or right way to react. Everyone is different and every situation is different.}

SP1. Which of the following describes how you reacted during the incident? MARK ALL THAT APPLY.

Did you not do anything, freeze, or not move? (Go to next section)

Did you do what the person told you to do? (Go to next section)

Did you do something or try to do something to protect yourself or your belongings?

Did you do or try to do something else during the incident?

SP2. You said that you took some action during the incident. What did you do? MARK ALL THAT APPLY.

- You threatened or attacked the offender{s}
- You ducked or tried to avoid the offender{s}
- You chased or warned the offender{s} off
- You argued, reasoned, or pleaded with the offender{s}
- You got away or tried to get away, hid, or locked a door
- You called the police or a guard
- You tried to get someone else's attention
- You held onto your belongings
- You stalled or distracted the offender{s}
- Something else

SP2A. What did you do to attack or threaten the offender{s}? MARK ALL THAT APPLY.

- You attacked the offender{s} with a gun or fired a gun
- You attacked the offender{s} with another weapon
- You hit, kicked, or attacked the offender in some other way
- You threatened the offender{s} with a gun
- You threatened the offender{s} with another weapon
- You threatened the offender{s} in some other way
- Something else

To better capture non-proactive responses, Condition 2 combined Q41a and Q41b and added two categories in a “mark all” question (SP1) where the interviewer was to read each response as a question. The third and fourth response options of SP1 correspond fairly closely to “Yes” responses to Q41a and Q41b, respectively.

Field Test Results

Table 4-1 compares the unweighted frequencies of Q42a with those of SP2 and SP2A, arranged under the Q42a response headings. As noted above, the responses do not align exactly between Condition 1 and Condition 2. Where they do align, the response distributions are fairly similar between Condition 1 and Condition 2. One Condition 2 response, “You chased or warned the offender(s) off,” corresponds to Condition 1 responses under two different headings—“Resisted or captured offender” and “Scared or warned off offender.” One response category in each condition has no counterpart in the other: “Screamed from pain or fear,” which was selected in 4.0% of Condition 1 CIRs, and “You held onto your belongings,” selected in 5.4% of Condition 2 CIRs.

Table 4-1. Unweighted frequencies of reported self-protective actions, Conditions 1 and 2

Condition 1			Condition 2		
Q42a	Number	Percent	SP1, SP2, and SP2a	Number	Percent
USED PHYSICAL FORCE TOWARD OFFENDER			You threatened or attacked the offender{s}	47	18.1
Attacked offender with gun; fired gun	1	0.6	You attacked the offender{s} with a gun or fired a gun	2	0.8
Attacked with other weapon	1	0.6	You attacked the offender{s} with another weapon	1	0.4
Attacked without weapon (hit, kicked, etc.)	8	4.6	You hit, kicked, or attacked the offender{s} in some other way	17	6.6
Threatened offender with gun (14)	3	1.7	You threatened the offender{s} with a gun	6	2.3
Threatened offender with other weapon	3	1.7	You threatened the offender{s} with another weapon	5	1.9
Threatened to injure, no weapon	5	2.9	You threatened the offender{s} in some other way	12	4.6
-			Something else	2	0.8
RESISTED OR CAPTURED OFFENDER			RESISTED OR CAPTURED OFFENDER		
Defended self or property (struggled, ducked, blocked blows, held onto property)	25	14.4	You ducked or tried to avoid the offender{s}	34	13.1
-			You held onto your belongings	14	5.4
Chased, tried to catch or hold offender	7	4.0	You chased or warned the offender{s} off	34	13.1
SCARED OR WARNED OFF OFFENDER			SCARED OR WARNED OFF OFFENDER		
Yelled at offender, turned on lights, threatened to call police, etc.	21	12.1	-		
PERSUADED OR APPEASED OFFENDER			PERSUADED OR APPEASED OFFENDER		
Cooperated, or pretended to (stalled, did what they asked)	14	8.0	You stalled or distracted the offender{s}	12	4.6
-			Did you do what the person told you to do? (SP1)	14	5.4
Argued, reasoned, pleaded, bargained, etc.	27	15.5	You argued, reasoned, or pleaded with the offender{s}	71	27.4
ESCAPED OR GOT AWAY			ESCAPED OR GOT AWAY		
Ran or drove away, or tried; hid, locked door	26	14.9	You got away or tried to get away, hid, or locked a door	52	20.1
GOT HELP OR GAVE ALARM			GOT HELP OR GAVE ALARM		
Called police or guard	28	16.1	You called the police or a guard	55	21.2
Tried to attract attention or help, warn others (cried out for help, called children inside)	11	6.3	You tried to get someone else's attention	25	9.7
REACTED FROM PAIN OR EMOTION			REACTED FROM PAIN OR EMOTION		
Screamed from pain or fear	7	4.0	-		
-			-		
Other – specify	64	36.8	Something else	76	29.3

Source: 2019-2020 NCVS-R Field Test.

In order to compare the Condition 1 and Condition 2 responses across all of these questions, the Instrument Redesign team developed a new set of summary recodes, shown in Table 4-2. To the extent possible, “Other” responses in Q42a and “Something else” responses in SP2 were classified into the summary recodes based on the text entry.

For examination, the self-protective questions incidents are grouped into three types: Attacks (including Sexual Attacks), Face-to-face Threats, and property crimes where the victim reported being present during the incident. The opportunity and need for self-protective action clearly differ across these different kinds of incidents. Table 4-3 presents estimates of the Condition 1 and Condition 2 self-protective action recodes as defined in Table 4-2 for these three types of incidents. The classification of incidents for Table 4-3 is based on the TOC code assigned during processing.

The distribution of self-protective responses is similar between Condition 1 and Condition 2 for Attacks and Face-to-face Threats. In particular, 24.2% of Condition 1 and 20.6% of Condition 2 incidents had a response in the “Did not resist” category.

The distribution in Table 4-2 is very different between the two conditions for property crime incidents where the victim reported being present during the incident. This difference is primarily driven by how presence is defined in the two instruments. Some 87.0% of these incidents in Condition 1 are classified as “Did not resist,” as compared with 24.5% of Condition 2 incidents. There are also about six times as many incidents represented in Condition 1 (almost 10 million) as in Condition 2 (about 1.6 million). As discussed in the Topline Report (Cantor et al., 2022), the Instrument Redesign changed the wording of the Presence question, as follows:

Q21a. Were you or any other member of this household present when this incident occurred?

PR1. Did you {or anyone you live with} see, hear, or have any contact with the offender(s) as the incident was happening?

More Condition 1 than Condition 2 respondents indicated they were present during the incident. Someone asleep in an upstairs bedroom during a burglary may have said “Yes” to Q21a, for example, but would likely have said “No” to PR1. In 36.9% of Condition 1 incidents coded as property crimes, the respondent reported being present, as compared with 6.6% of Condition 2 incidents coded as property crimes. Thus, the difference in response to the self-protection questions is strongly related to the difference in who was reported as present and subsequently asked the questions.³

³ The change in how Presence is defined is discussed further in a separate report on “Measuring Crime in the NCVS.”

Table 4-2. Recodes for self-protective actions from Condition 1 and Condition 2 responses

Condition 1 Responses ¹	Condition 2 Responses ²
1. Physical force or threats	
-	You threatened or attacked the offender{s} ³
Attacked offender with gun; fired gun	SP2a: Attacked with a gun or fired a gun
Attacked with other weapon	SP2a: Attacked with another weapon
Attacked without weapon (hit, kicked, etc.)	SP2a: Hit, kicked, or attacked in some other way
Threatened offender with gun	SP2a: Threatened the offender{s} with a gun
Threatened offender with other weapon	SP2a: Threatened the offender{s} with another weapon
Threatened to injure, no weapon	SP2a: Threatened the offender{s} in some other way
2. Tried to prevent incident or chased offender	
Defended self or property (struggled, ducked, blocked blows, held onto property)	You chased or warned the offender{s} off
Chased, tried to catch or hold offender	You held onto your belongings
3. Verbally resisted	
Argued, reasoned, pleaded, bargained, etc.	You argued, reasoned, or pleaded with the offender{s}
-	You stalled or distracted the offender{s}
4. Scared or warned off offender	
Yelled at offender, turned on lights, threatened to call police, etc.	(Ucode from text response only)
5. Did not resist	
Q41b="No/took no action/kept still"	SP1: "Did you not do anything, freeze, or not move?" = "Yes"
Q42a="Cooperated, or pretended to (stalled, did what they asked)"	SP1: "Did you do what the person told you to do?" = "Yes"
6. Escaped or got away	
Ran or drove away, or tried; hid, locked door	You ducked or tried to avoid the offender{s}
-	You got away or tried to get away, hid, or locked a door
7. Got help/gave alarm	
Called police or guard	You called the police or a guard
Tried to attract attention or help, warn others (cried out for help, called children inside)	You tried to get someone else's attention
8. Other action	
Screamed from pain or fear	Something else

¹ Condition 1 responses from Q42a unless otherwise noted.

² Condition 2 responses from SP2 unless otherwise noted.

³ If SP2= "You threatened or attacked the offender{s}," SP2A was asked, which included the six responses in the Condition 1 column for this recode.

Table 4-3. Rate of violent crime victim response, recode of Field Test questions by type of crime, Conditions 1 and 2

Type of crime/victim response	Condition 1			Condition 2			Significance test	
	Unwtd number	Weighted number	Percent of incidents	Unwtd number	Weighted number	Percent of incidents	t-value	p-value
Attack (including Sexual Attack)	90	9,173,586	-	163	16,914,307	-	-	-
1. Physical force or threats	14	1,545,963	16.9	37	3,279,295	19.4	-0.35	0.73
2. Tried to prevent incident or chased offender	22	2,632,986	28.7	28	3,435,419	20.3	0.85	0.40
3. Verbally resisted	19	2,155,259	23.5	47	4,425,119	26.2	-0.36	0.72
4. Scared or warned off offender	11	987,807	10.8	0	0	0.0	-	-
5. Did not resist	24	2,216,260	24.2	39	3,477,448	20.6	0.50	0.62
6. Escaped or got away	16	1,542,972	16.8	48	3,688,879	21.8	-0.86	0.40
7. Got help/gave alarm	20	2,232,730	24.3	19	3,625,180	21.4	0.26	0.80
8. Other action	7	615,019	6.7	9	1,051,283	6.2	0.11	0.91
Face-to-face Threat	41	5,741,403	-	58	7,546,401	-	-	-
1. Physical force or threats	1	83,258	1.5	8	797,144	10.6	-1.63	0.11
2. Tried to prevent incident or chased offender	1	74,434	1.3	6	594,812	7.9	-1.79	0.08
3. Verbally resisted	6	612,482	10.7	11	920,375	12.2	-0.19	0.85
4. Scared or warned off offender	2	168,084	2.9	2	84,161	1.1	0.86	0.40
5. Did not resist	15	2,665,554	46.4	16	3,691,943	48.9	-0.22	0.83
6. Escaped or got away	7	620,511	10.8	10	587,947	7.8	0.38	0.71
7. Got help/gave alarm	10	1,677,858	29.2	7	1,116,529	14.8	1.67	0.11
8. Other action	2	175,302	3.1	1	97,776	1.3	0.57	0.58
All property crime	130	9,891,130	-	35	1,649,074	-	-	-
1. Physical force or threats	3	177,058	1.8	2	67,213	4.1	-0.64	0.53
2. Tried to prevent incident or chased offender	5	289,208	2.9	7	436,357	26.5	-3.06	0.00
3. Verbally resisted	3	203,875	2.1	2	174,206	10.6	-0.98	0.34
4. Scared or warned off offender	0	0	0.0	1	47,121	2.9	-	-
5. Did not resist	111	8,604,675	87.0	10	404,385	24.5	7.29	0.00
6. Escaped or got away	0	0	0.0	2	78,468	4.8	-	-
7. Got help/gave alarm	3	148,720	1.5	4	187,753	11.4	-1.90	0.07
8. Other action	3	302,861	3.1	3	141,063	8.6	-0.95	0.35

Source: 2019-2020 NCVS-R Field Test.

Note: Unweighted numbers may not sum to totals because of multiple or missing responses.

Altogether, in 23.3% of Condition 2 CIRs where SP1 was asked, the respondent said “Yes” to either “Did you not do anything, freeze, or not move?” or “Did you do what the person told you to do?” A review of narratives and interview recordings for those choosing the first option revealed that some people actually did something, including walking away, calling the police, or asking the offender to stop or leave. Only 5 CIRs had “Yes” in both “Did not resist” and “Took some action.”

Among the “specify” responses to Q42a and SP2, the following were noteworthy:

- A number of both C1 and C2 responses appeared to describe actions after the fact, such as taking precautions or reporting the incident to someone in authority.
- Several respondents said that they recorded the incident.
- Many responses indicated that the victim did something to avoid the offender, such as moving away or backing off, which are milder than the C1 category “ran or drove away” or the C2 category “You got away or tried to get away.”
- Some respondents reported saying no or asking the offender to leave, which could be construed as arguing with the offender.

Discussion and Recommendations

The new question SP1 included the concepts of both Q41a and Q41b and added two other concepts in one “mark all” question. The four response options were read to the respondent in the form of questions, but only “Yes” responses were recorded. After listening to some of the recorded interviews, the Instrument Redesign team concluded that this construction was somewhat awkward in many interviews. Of 359 CIRs where SP1 was asked, 35 (9.7%) had none of the four response options marked. SP1 was conceived as a self-administered question, where the respondent could see all of the response options before marking one or more. Logically, the options are exhaustive—the victim either did something or did nothing. The implication of 35 respondents choosing none of the responses is that the options did not seem exhaustive, or that respondents had a different understanding of the question than what was intended.

Recommendation 4-1: Return to the current NCVS Q41a (new SP1a) and Q41b (new SP1b), and add a question (new SP1c) for those saying “no” or not answering the first two questions: “Did you do nothing, freeze, do what the offender told you to do, or do something else while the incident was going on? (Mark all that apply.)”

The list of actions in SP2 underwent a number of changes from the original set proposed by the Self-Protection Work Group to the final set included in the Field Test, including formatting for self-administration and “unfolding,” or splitting the list into two separate questions. Neither of these changes seems necessary going forward. Further, there seemed to be both advantages and disadvantages to the somewhat different lists of response options in Conditions 1 and 2.

Recommendation 4-2: Return SP2 to the Condition 1 wording format and one-question structure. Use the broad categories in Table 4-2 as headings for the response options in SP2, and use a somewhat revised and expanded list of separate response options under these headings.

As noted earlier, members of the Instrument Redesign team reviewed text responses to Q42a and SP2 to classify into the Table 4-1 broad categories. The three researchers agreed unanimously on

recodes for only about half of the text responses, and the recodes were broader than the response options interviewers had available. Further, some text responses didn't quite fit into the recodes or seemed to indicate actions well "after the fact." Field coded questions such as Q42a/SP2 are generally more difficult than other types for both interviewers and respondents, and Q42a/SP2 seem more difficult than most of the other NCVS field coded questions. Given the diverse responses to these specific questions, SP2 is likely to be among the less reliable questions in the NCVS CIR going forward.

4.2 Timing of Protective Actions

The Field Test questions about the timing of self-protective actions were as follows:

Q43a. Did you take these actions before, after, or at the same time that you were injured?

SP3a. Did you {take that action/take any of these actions} before you were injured, after you were injured, or at the same time you were injured?

Relatively few Field Test incidents included injury, so there is little evidence with which to assess the wording change.

The Self-Protection Work Group recommended adding a question about timing relative to when the victim was first attacked (as opposed to timing relative to injury, as in SP3a), that would be asked of a wider circle of respondents. This item was dropped after cognitive testing. Respondents were confused by the response options (e.g., what does it mean to react "before the attack"), the context of the question, and how they should answer when they took multiple actions.

Recommendation 4-3: Adopt the Condition 2 question.

4.3 Consequences of Protective Actions

The Field Test questions about the consequences of self-protective actions were as follows:

Q43b. Did any of your actions help the situation in any way?

Q44a. How were they helpful? Code all that apply.

Q45. Did any of your actions make the situation worse in any way?

Q46a. How did they make the situation worse? Code all that apply.

SP3b. Overall, do you think that what you did helped the situation, made it worse, or had no impact?

The Self-Protection Work Group made no recommendation regarding these questions. Discussion at the TRP meeting when the Work Group presented their recommendations suggested that the field coded items (Q44a and Q46a) were not particularly helpful in understanding the effects of self-protective actions. Because of this difficulty and to help reduce respondent burden, a decision was made to ask one question (SP3b) about consequences of the victim's actions rather than the four questions in the current NCVS.

One advantage of the Condition 1 approach is that it allows for respondents to say that their actions both helped the situation and made it worse, while the Condition 2 approach asks for a single assessment of the net effect. Of Condition 1 CIRs in which this series was asked, 64.0% (unweighted) said that their actions helped and did not make things worse, 5.7% said made worse and not helped, and 9.1% said both helped and made worse. Also, 14.9% said neither helped nor made worse, and 6.3% said “Don’t know” to one or both of Q43b and Q45. Of Condition 2 CIRs, 50.1% said helped, 11.1% said made worse, 30.9% said neither, and 7.8% had missing responses.

Recommendation 4-4: Adopt the Condition 2 question.

4.4 Actions of Others Present During the Incident

The Self-Protection Work Group recommended enhancing the current NCVS questions:

The actions of others in preventing particular types of violent crimes, in particular sexual assault, is of growing interest to policymakers. Bystander intervention is a particular focus of education programs for prevention of campus sexual assault. The current questions measure the outcomes of an intervention by another person, but do not collect how often actions may have been taken, who took the actions and what those actions were. (Memorandum from Work Group to BJS.)

Responding to this recommendation, the Field Test questions about the actions of other persons age 12 or older who were present during the incident were as follows:

- Q47. Was anyone present during the incident besides you and the offender? (Other than children under age 12.)
- SP4. Besides you and the offender{s}, was anyone ELSE present during the incident? (Only include those age 12 or older.)
- SP5. Did anyone else do or try to do anything to help you while the incident was going on?
- SP6. Who took these actions? MARK ALL THAT APPLY.
- Someone who was with you
 - Someone who was with the offender{s}
 - Someone else
- SP7. What did the person or people try to do to help you? MARK ALL THAT APPLY.
- They attacked or tried to attack the offender(s)
 - They defended you or your property without physically attacking the offender(s)
 - They chased or warned off the offender{s}
 - They argued, reasoned, pleaded or bargained with the offender{s}
 - They tried to get help
 - They did something else (Specify)

In both Condition 1 and Condition 2, respondents reported that others were present in almost exactly half (unweighted) of CIRs where the question was asked. In 47.1% of incidents where someone else was present, someone tried to help (SP5); 60.2% of those who tried to help were people with the respondent, 13.6% were with the offender, and 34.1% were others.⁴ The responses to SP7 ranged widely, with 40.9% being coded as “Other.” Several of the text responses mentioned calling the police or 911, which the interviewer did not code as “They tried to get help.” SP7 response categories also did not include a place to indicate that someone else threatened the offender.

A review of narratives and recorded interviews indicated some awkwardness with the placement of “(Only include those age 12 or older.)” in SP4, and then whether SP5 should include the actions of any children present.

Recommendation 4-5: Revise SP4 to “. . . was anyone ELSE, age 12 or older, present . . .” and revise SP5 to “Did anyone else, age 12 or older, do or try to do . . .”

Recommendation 4-6: In SP7, change the fifth response category to “They tried to get help/Called police or a guard.”

4.5 Consequences of Others’ Actions

The Field Test questions about the consequences of actions by other persons age 12 or older who were present during the incident were as follows:

Q48. *Did the actions of [this person/any of these people] help the situation in any way?*

Q49a. *How did they help the situation?*

Helped avoid injury or greater injury to victim

Scared or chased offender off

Helped victim get away from offender

Protected property

Protected other people

Other – specify

Q50. *Did the actions of [this person/any of these people] make the situation worse in any way?*

Q51a. *How did they make the situation worse? Code all that apply.*

Led to injury or greater injury to victim

Caused greater loss of property or damage to property

Other people got hurt (worse)

Offender got away

Made offender angrier, more aggressive, etc.

Other – specify

SP8. Overall, did the actions of this person or people help the situation, make it worse, or have no impact?

⁴ The percentages add to more than 100 because of a small number of multiple responses.

As with the earlier questions on the consequences of the victim's actions, the four Condition 1 questions were replaced with one question in Condition 2, in part to compensate for adding other questions. Of Condition 1 CIRs in which this series was asked, 31.4% (unweighted) said that their actions helped and did not make things worse, 6.9% said made worse and not helped, and 2.3% said both helped and made worse. Also, 59.4% said neither helped nor made worse, and 5.7% said "Don't know" to one or both of Q43b and Q45. Of Condition 2 CIRs, 69.3% said helped, 5.7% said made worse, 23.9% said neither, and 1.1% had missing responses. The much larger proportion of Condition 2 (69.3%) than Condition 1 (33.7%, including those that said both helped and made worse) CIRs where the actions of others were considered helpful was the opposite of the earlier questions on the respondent's actions, which had 73.1% helpful in Condition 1 and 50.1% helpful in Condition 2.

Recommendation 4-7: Adopt the Condition 2 question.

4.6 Harm to Others Present during the Incident

The Field Test questions about harm to other persons present during the incident were as follows:

- Q52. *Not counting yourself, were any of these persons present during the incident harmed, threatened with harm, or robbed by force or threat of harm? (Do not include yourself, the offender, or children under 12 years of age.)*
- Q53. *How many?*
- Q54. *How many of these persons are members of your household now?*
- SP9. {Not including the offender{s}, was/Was} anyone who was there during the incident under the age of 12?
- SP9a. Not counting yourself, the offender(s), (or children under 12), were any other people harmed, threatened with harm, or have any belongings taken or damaged in {this/the} incident?
- SP10. Thinking just about the other persons who were present during the incident who were harmed, threatened with harm, or had property taken or damaged ... How many of these persons live with you now?

Two of the current NCVS questions were dropped: Q53 and Q54b, not shown above, in which the interviewer recorded the line numbers of other household members who were present during the incident. SP9 was added to help clarify SP9a; the parenthetical phrase "or children under 12" would be displayed only if the response to SP9 was "Yes." In 12.8% of incidents where SP9 was asked, a child under 12 was reported as being present.

Recommendation 4-8: Adopt the Condition 2 questions.

4.7 Who Initiated Threats or Attacks

The Self-Protection Work Group recommended dropping the last question in the current NCVS series on self-protection:

Q55. Who was the first to use or threaten to use physical force – you, the offender, or someone else?

A review of NCVS frequencies showed that virtually none of the victims report that they attacked first. This question was not included in any of the other developmental work. In the Field Test, one of 16 Condition 1 respondents asked this question said that they had been the first to use or threaten force.

5. Module PI: Police Involvement

The Instrument Redesign tested a number of changes to the Police Involvement questions, including dropping and adding questions, changing wording, and changing response categories. However, the topics covered were fairly similar between Condition 1 and Condition 2. They included the following common elements:

- Whether and how the police found out about the incident;
- If the police did not find out about it, why the incident was not reported to the police;
- Timing of and actions involved in the police response; and
- Follow up of the initial response.

Condition 1 included two topics not covered in Condition 2: whether the victim filed a complaint and whether an arrest had been made. For incidents reported to police, Condition 2 included a new topic, the respondent's perceptions of how well the police performed.

Additionally, a new topic was added to both Condition 1 and Condition 2: whether the respondent considered the incident to be a crime. This topic was not part of the NCVS at the time of the Field Test.

5.1 Whether and How the Police Found Out About the Incident

Here are the questions determining whether a victimization was reported to the police:

Q115. Were the police informed or did they find out about this incident in any way?

PI1. Did the police find out about {this/the} incident?

Conditions 1 and 2 asked similar follow-ups if the police had learned of the incident:

Q116a. How did the police find out about it?

Respondent

Other household member

Someone official called police (guard, apt. manager, school official, etc.)

Someone else

Police were at scene

Some other way – Specify

PI4. Who informed the police? If more than one person, choose the first response that applies.

- You informed the police yourself
- Someone you live with
- {A school employee or School Resource Officer}
- Someone such as a security guard or a building manager
- The police were at scene
- Someone else told the police {Who?/Specify:} _____

For incidents reported to the police, Condition 1 continued with the following question, which was dropped in Condition 2:

Q119a. Besides the fact that it was a crime, did YOU have any other reason for reporting this incident to the police?

Condition 2 added these questions for incidents reported to the police:

PI16b. (IF RESPONDENT THOUGHT THE INCIDENT WAS A HATE CRIME:) Did you tell the police that you believe the incident was a hate crime?

PI5. How did {you first/they} notify the police?

- {You/They} called the police
- {You/They} approached an officer or police car
- {You/They} went to the police station
- {You/They} used the internet or a social media app
- Some other way – specify
- Don't Know

PI9. Which of the following BEST describes when the police were first contacted?

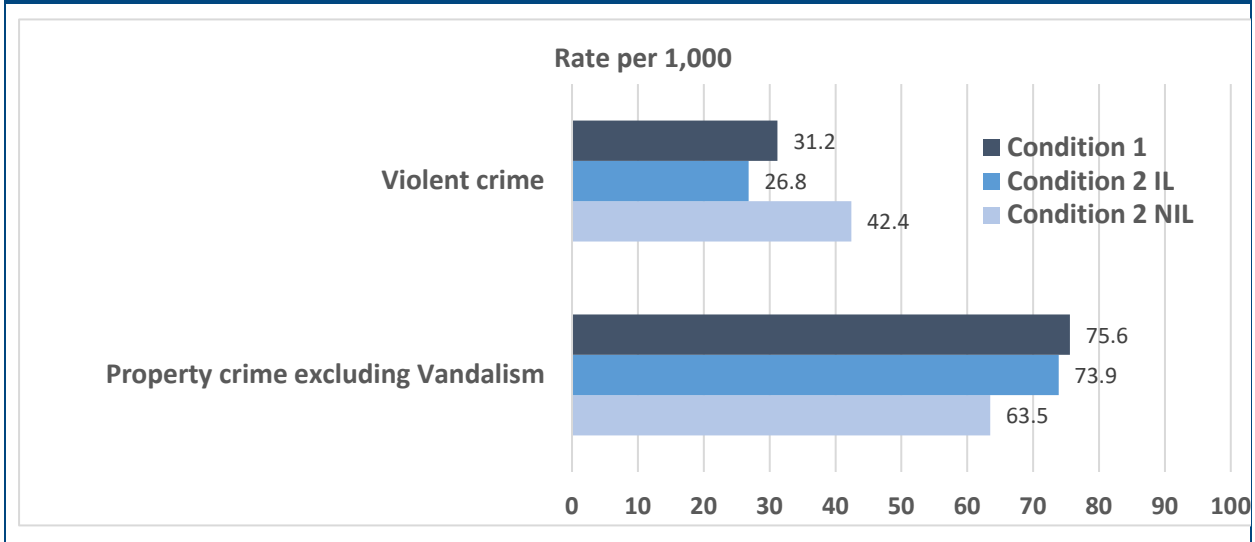
- While the incident was happening
- Within 10 minutes after the incident occurred
- Within an hour after the incident occurred
- Within 24 hours of the incident
- Longer than a day after the incident occurred

Field Test Results

Estimates of both violent and property crimes reported to the police are summarized in Figure 5-1. There are no significant differences in the rates of violent or property crimes reported to police between Condition 1 and either of the Condition 2 questionnaire treatments.

Figure 5-2 shows estimates of violent and property crimes not reported to the police. All Condition 2 estimates are significantly higher ($P < .05$) than the corresponding Condition 1 estimates. The Topline Report concluded that Condition 2 respondents reported more “less memorable” or less serious incidents than did Condition 1 respondents, which would account for the relative differences in estimates between crimes reported and not reported to the police. It is also possible that some of the difference may be due to Instrument Redesign changes in the question about whether the police found out about the incident.

Figure 5-1. Rate of violent and property crime reported to the police, Condition 1 and Condition 2 IL and NIL



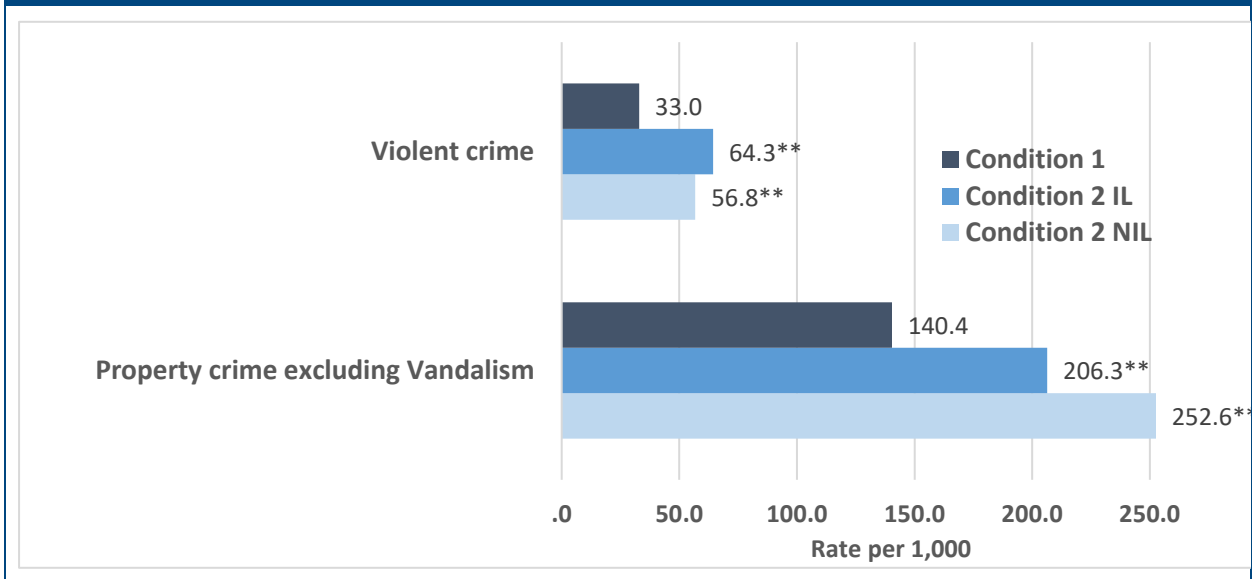
Source: 2019-2020 NCVS-R Field Test.

For more detail, see Toplevel Report (Cantor et al., 2022), Tables A4-7 and A4-8, Appendix A.

Rate of violent crime is per 1,000 persons 12 or older.

Rate of property crime is per 1,000 households.

Figure 5-2. Rate of violent and property crime not reported to the police, Condition 1 and Condition 2 IL and NIL



Source: 2019-2020 NCVS-R Field Test.

Rate of violent crime is per 1,000 persons 12 or older.

Rate of property crime is per 1,000 households.

**Significantly different from Condition 1 estimate ($p < .05$)

Fewer Condition 2 incidents identified the respondent as the one notifying the police in PI4 (59.5% of responses) and more identified another household member (12.6%) than was the case in Condition 1 (Q116a, 71.2% “Respondent,” 5.6% “Other household member”). Also, “Someone else told the police” accounted for 18.0% of Condition 2 responses while “Someone else” and “Some other way” together accounted for 13.5% of Q116a responses. Almost half of the Condition 2 “Specify” responses, or 7.8% of all PI4 responses, were neighbors.

In incidents where PI16b (tell the police it was a hate crime) was asked, 30.8% of respondents said “Yes.” Of the responses given to PI5 (how the police were notified), 86.4% called the police, and 7.3% went to the police station. Only 2.5% said “Don’t know.” The most common response to PI9 (when the police were first contacted) was “Within 24 hours” (36.1%). Each of the first three responses was selected between 15% and 20% of the time.

Discussion and Recommendations

Condition 2 estimates of violent and property crimes not reported to the police are significantly higher than Condition 1 estimates. While it is likely that these differences are due in part to Condition 2 respondents reporting more “less memorable” incidents, the difference in question wording may also have contributed.

Recommendation 5-1: Return to the current NCVS question.

The Condition 2 question about who told the police (PI4) matches the summary response categories more closely than the Condition 1 question (Q116a), and seemed to lead to better differentiation among the respondent, other household members, and other situations. Neither condition had many responses that did not have something to do with someone telling the police about the incident.

Recommendation 5-2: Retain the revised wording and response categories from Condition 2.

PI16b provided useful information and was not problematic in the Field Test. Responses to PI5 showed little variation, but over time the Internet or other communication modes may become more common. There were no observed problems with PI9, and the response distribution provided useful information.

Recommendation 5-3: Retain these three new questions.

5.2 Why the Incident Was not Reported to the Police

Both conditions asked why incidents were not reported to the police, although the question text was somewhat different, specifically in the use of passive (Condition 1) versus active (Condition 2) voice. The Condition 2 question explicitly makes the assumptions, which may or may not be warranted, that the respondent (1) considered reporting the incident to the police and decided not to, and (2) can now recall the reasoning behind that decision. The use of the passive voice in Condition 1 is less explicit about these assumptions, but still asks “Why not?”

The response categories of these field coded, “Mark all that apply” questions were also different between the two conditions and were listed in a different order, so direct comparison is limited. The Condition 2 categories were developed after review of NCVS frequencies, including “Specify” responses. They also include new options of research or policy interest and were reworded in

anticipation of self-administration. Table 5-1 shows the six summary response categories. “Other” text responses were also assigned to the appropriate recodes in Table 5-1 where applicable.

Table 5-1. Field Test questions and response codes for why incidents were not reported to the police, Conditions 1 and 2, with recode categories	
Condition 1	Condition 2
117a. What was the reason it was not reported to the police?	PI2a. Why did you decide not to contact the police?
1. Minor matter, not worth it	
Minor or unsuccessful crime, small or no loss, recovered property	You didn't think it was important enough to report
Child offender(s); “kid stuff”	-
Not clear that it was a crime or that harm was intended	You weren't sure it was a crime
No insurance, loss less than deductible, etc.	-
Didn't find out until too late	You didn't find out until it was too late to report (PI2b)
Could not recover or identify property	-
Could not find or identify offender, lack of proof	You weren't sure who did it
Did not want to or could not take time – too inconvenient	It would have been too much trouble to report it (PI2b)
2. Too personal, took care of it myself	
Private or personal matter or took care of it myself or informally; told offender s parent	It was too personal to report
-	You took care of it yourself
3. Reported to someone other than police	
Reported to another official (guard, apt. manager, school official, etc.)	You reported it to an official other than the police
-	{You told a parent or other adult relative}
4. Reason related to police	
Police wouldn't think it was important enough, wouldn't want to be bothered or get involved	You didn't think the police would do anything about it
Police would be inefficient, ineffective (they'd arrive late or not at all, wouldn't do a good job, etc.)	You didn't think the police would believe you
Police would be biased, would harass/insult respondent, cause respondent trouble, etc.	You didn't want to get into trouble with the police
Offender was police officer	You didn't trust the police (PI2b)
5. Reason related to offender	
Did not want to get offender in trouble with the law	You didn't want the offender to get in trouble or face harsh consequences
Afraid of reprisal by offender or others	You were worried the offender might get back at you
6. Other reason	
Was advised not to report to police	You thought someone else would contact the police (PI2b)
Other – specify	Some other reason (PI2b)

Note: The Condition 2 question was split into two screens (PI2a and PI2b) for self-administration. PI2b was displayed if “Other reason” was selected in PI2a.

Among the “minor matter” responses in Table 5-1, the five Condition 2 response options correspond fairly closely with Condition 1 responses, but three Condition 1 responses were dropped: “Child offender,” “No insurance, etc.,” and “Could not recover or identify property.” Condition 2 separated “Took care of it myself” and “Personal matter” into two categories and added a category for youth respondents, “Told a parent or other adult relative.” Both conditions have four police-related response options, but they are focused differently. All of the Condition 1 responses have to do with police effectiveness or culpability, while only one of the Condition 2 responses has this focus. The other three are more about the respondent’s perceptions of their relationship with the police, which is consistent with the way PI2a is worded (“Why did you decide . . .”).

Field Test Results

Table 5-2 shows the distribution of responses to these two questions into the recode categories of Table 5-1, separately for violent and property crimes. For violent crimes, Condition 2 had higher percentages of “Minor matter, not worth it” (49.1%) and “Too personal, took care of it myself” (24.4%) responses than did Condition 1 (42.7% and 15.8%, respectively), which is consistent with the notion that Condition 2 respondents reported more “less serious” crimes than Condition 1 respondents. However, this pattern does not hold for property crimes. Condition 1 violent crime incidents were more likely not to be reported to the police because they were “Reported to someone other than the police” (18.5%) or for a “Reason related to the offender” (19.1%) than were Condition 2 violent crime incidents (5.2% and 4.1%, respectively). Again, this pattern does not hold for property crimes.

Discussion and Recommendations

Understanding why people don’t report crimes to the police is important for public policy, but responses to these “Why not” questions can be difficult to interpret and coding them is imprecise, whether done by the interviewer or in post-processing. For example, if someone says “The police wouldn’t do anything about it,” they could be saying “It wasn’t important” or “The police just wouldn’t be interested in helping me,” two very different interpretations. Also, as noted earlier, respondents may not have made a conscious decision or been aware of why if they did.

As shown in Table 5-1, Condition 2 made some changes to both the question-wording and response categories in asking why incidents were not reported to the police. The changes in response options reflect the recommendations of the Instrument Redesign team, including the TRP. For the Field Test, the list of response options was split into two parts in anticipation of self-administration. A comparison of responses recoded into broader categories showed few differences in how they were distributed, and the changes in wording and response options make it difficult to draw conclusions.

Recommendation 5-4: Retain the revised wording and response categories from Condition 2. Combine the response options from PI2a and PI2b into one list.

Table 5-2. Field Test questions and response recodes for why incidents were not reported to the police, by type of crime, Conditions 1 and 2

Victim response	Condition 1			Condition 2		
	Unwtd number	Weighted number	Weighted percent	Unwtd number	Weighted number	Weighted percent
All violent crime	75	8,142,168		145	15,899,540	
1. Minor matter, not worth it	29	3,479,924	42.7	81	7,802,407	49.1
2. Too personal, took care of it myself	12	1,290,288	15.8	41	3,885,392	24.4
3. Reported to someone other than police	8	1,502,450	18.5	11	820,878	5.2
4. Reason related to police	16	1,545,910	19.0	31	3,988,371	25.1
5. Reason related to offender	16	1,557,762	19.1	9	644,678	4.1
6. Other reason	11	992,107	12.2	17	3,201,212	20.1
All property crime excluding Vandalism	208	16,075,004		603	28,497,789	
1. Minor matter, not worth it	130	10,467,390	65.1	395	17,421,828	61.1
2. Too personal, took care of it myself	22	2,507,894	15.6	70	3,266,255	11.5
3. Reported to someone other than police	13	961,274	6.0	28	1,174,891	4.1
4. Reason related to police	53	3,870,586	24.1	179	9,641,895	33.8
5. Reason related to offender	4	298,006	1.9	25	1,197,495	4.2
6. Other reason	24	1,810,082	11.3	49	2,121,776	7.4

Source: 2019-2020 NCVS-R Field Test.

Percent is the percentage of CIRs with a response recoded in that category.

Percentages may add to more than 100 because of multiple responses within a CIR.

5.3 What the Police Did

Condition 1 started asking about the police response with this question:

Q121. Did the police come when they found out about the incident?

Condition 2 expanded the scope of this question as follows:

PI10. What did the police do when they found out about the incident? (MARK ALL THAT APPLY.)

Come to you

Tell you to go to a police station

Take a report over the phone

Deal with it through the mail

Deal with it through the Internet or a social media app

Something else_____

{IF R VOLUNTEERS: THE POLICE DID NOTHING}

Both conditions asked about the timing of the police response. Here is the Condition 1 question:

Q122. How soon after the police found out did they respond? Was it within 5 minutes, within 10 minutes, an hour, a day, or longer?

Condition 2 changed the focus of this question to the respondent's satisfaction with the response time, and added several other questions about the response:

PI11. How satisfied were you with how the phone report was taken?

PI12. Do you think the police should have come to you when they were contacted?

PI13. How satisfied were you with the time it took the police to get to you after they were contacted?

PI14. Had the police told {you/the person who contacted them} how long it would take them to get there?

Both conditions continued with this question, whose response options are shown in Table 5-3:

Q123a. What did they do while they were (there/here)?

The Condition 2 question (PI15) made slight wording changes to the responses, added a response, "Made a list of what was taken," and dropped the "Other" response, replacing it with "Did not do any of these things."

Condition 2 added this question as a follow-up to PI15, with response options shown in Table 5-3:

PI16. Did the police do any of the following other things while they were there?

For incidents occurring at school, on school property, or on a school bus, the Instrument Redesign also asked whether the incident was reported to a school official or School Resource Officer.

Field Test Results

In Condition 1, respondents said that the police came in 75.2% of incidents (Q121), 2.1% had a “Don’t know” response, and in 3.7% of incidents the respondent volunteered that they went to the police. “Come to you” was selected in 54.7% of Condition 2 incidents where PI10 was asked. In 21.0% of incidents, the “Something else” response was selected; in more than half of these, it could not be determined from the text entry whether the police had come or not.

Among the CIRs where the respondent provided an answer to Q122, 89.1% of response times were within an hour, and only 1.1% were more than one day. Among CIRs where respondents provided an answer to PI13, 73.8% of responses were completely or mostly satisfied with the time, while 15.7% were mostly or completely dissatisfied. See Figures 5-3 and 5-4 later in this chapter for details on the two new satisfaction questions (PI11 and PI13).

In 38.9% of incidents where the police knew of it but did not come, respondents reported that they felt the police should have come (PI12). Finally, in 34.2% of incidents where the police did come and the respondent answered PI14, respondents indicated that the police did say how long it would take. In 19.8% of CIRs where PI14 was asked, the respondent didn’t know if they had said how long it would take or there was no response recorded.

As shown in Table 5-3, the response distributions to what the police did while they were there (Q123a and PI15) were very similar between the two conditions, with no significant differences in the percentages. In each condition an average of 2.2 responses was selected per administration.

The added Condition 2 response “Made a list of what was taken” was chosen in 14.2% of CIRs where PI15 was asked, which was more than the 9.9% of Condition 1 CIRs where the response “Took evidence (fingerprints, inventory, etc.)” was selected. “Took evidence, such as fingerprints” was selected in 8.3% of Condition 2 CIRs. Of the 32 CIRs with “Made a list of what was taken” and the 19 with “Took evidence (fingerprints, inventory, etc.),” 6 had both selected. At least one of these two responses was selected in 24.7% (unweighted) of CIRs where the question was asked, as compared with the (unweighted) 12.6% with “Took evidence” selected in Condition 1.

The most common response was “They did not do anything (else)” (35.8%), but each of the other responses was selected in between 3.0% and 25.4% of CIRs where the question was asked. “Did something else to help” was selected in 15.2% of CIRs, as compared with Condition 1’s 22.3% “Other” in Q123a. No response was selected for PI16 in 14.3% of CIRs where the question was asked. Omitting the CIRs where there was no response or “They did not do anything (else),” respondents selected an average of 2.0 responses per CIR in PI16.

The other added Condition 2 response in PI15, “Did not do any of these things,” was selected in 8.3% of CIRs where the question was asked. Nine of these 12 CIRs had only “Did not do anything (else) to help” selected in PI16, and one had no PI16 response selected. Only one of the Condition 1 “Specify” responses indicated that the police did nothing.

Table 5-3. Field Test questions and response codes for what police did when they came, Conditions 1 and 2

What police did when they came	Condition 1			Condition 2		
	Unwtd number	Weighted number	Weighted percent	Unwtd number	Weighted number	Weighted percent
Q123a/PI15 Responses	203	20,959,888		182	13,770,181	
Took report	150	14,186,489	67.7	156	11,497,065	83.5
Searched/Looked around	70	6,307,164	30.1	74	5,085,311	36.9
Took evidence (fingerprints, inventory, etc.) ^a	23	2,084,501	9.9	19	1,149,802	8.3
Questioned witnesses or suspects	48	4,585,391	21.9	52	3,672,809	26.7
Promised surveillance	24	2,146,073	10.2	11	844,308	6.1
Promised to investigate	28	2,689,234	12.8	35	2,241,425	16.3
Made arrest	17	1,675,517	8.0	16	1,102,037	8.0
Made a list of what was taken ^a	-	-	-	32	1,950,802	14.2
Did not do any of these things	-	-	-	12	1,148,770	8.3
Other	33	4,674,845	22.3	-	-	
Missing/Don't know	7	759,262	-	1	76,215	-
PI16 Responses				154	11,787,295	
Calmed people down				38	2,991,356	25.4
Resolved the conflict				34	2,686,195	22.8
Gave advice about insurance				15	955,904	8.1
Gave information about rights as victim				45	2,989,980	25.4
Gave information about victim services				27	1,761,924	14.9
Contacted victim services on your behalf				6	351,606	3.0
Contacted emergency medical services				8	597,304	5.1
Did something else to help				25	1,787,813	15.2
Did not do anything {else} to help				52	4,215,697	35.8
Missing				28	1,982,886	-

Source: 2019-2020 NCVS-R Field Test.

Percent is number of incidents of that type with the response divided by the number of incidents where the police came.

Percentages add to more than 100 because of multiple responses.

^a These responses were combined in Condition 1.

Two “Specify” responses of what the police did came up several times across Q123a and PI16: taking pictures and giving advice about home security.

A total of 22 incidents were asked whether the incident was reported to a school official or a School Resource Officer, with five positive responses.

Discussion and Recommendations

Condition 1 started asking about the police response with this question:

Q121. Did the police come when they found out about the incident?

Condition 2 expanded the scope of this question as follows:

PI10. What did the police do when they found out about the incident? (MARK ALL THAT APPLY.)

In Condition 1, 75.2% of incidents had a “Yes” response, as compared with 54.7% of Condition 2 incidents where “Come to you” was selected. In 21.0% of Condition 2 incidents, the “Other” response was chosen, and many of the write-in responses were ambiguous. PI10 was not well focused, and seems not to have identified all of the incidents with in-person police response.

Recommendation 5-5: Return to the current NCVS question (Q121). Add a new question with the other PI10 response categories to be asked if the police did not come.

Condition 2 replaced a question about how soon the police responded (Q122) with one about the respondent’s satisfaction with the response time (PI13), as part of an overall initiative to learn more about the public’s perceptions of the police. Along the same lines, an added question (PI12) asked whether the respondent thought the police should have come when they didn’t. Also added was a question asking whether the police said how long it would take them to get there. All of these questions worked as expected, and provided additional information.

Recommendation 5-6: Retain the new questions about the police response (PI11-PI14).

Condition 2 made a few changes to the response categories for Q123a/PI15, “What did [the police] do while they were (here/there),” notably the following:

- “Took evidence (fingerprints, inventory, etc.)” became “They took evidence, such as fingerprints” and “They made a list of what was taken.”
- “Promised surveillance” became “They promised to watch over the crime scene.”

In both cases, the intent was to simplify the language. With the first change, about twice as many Condition 2 respondents selected one or both of the two new categories as compared with Condition 1 respondents selecting the combined category. From anecdotal evidence, it seems that “surveillance” is a widely known term, and that “watch over the crime scene” does not mean the same thing as “surveillance.”

Condition 2 followed up with a new question (PI16) asking about other things the police may have done. Almost three-quarters of CIRs had a positive response to one or more of the PI16 list of possible police actions.

Recommendation 5-7: Retain PI16 and the new PI15 response category “They made a list of what was taken.” Revert to the current response category “Promised surveillance.”

Condition 2 added a question for incidents occurring at school, on school property, or on a school bus, about whether the incident was reported to a school official or School Resource Officer. This question was added in two places (PI2c and PI16a) for different circumstances, which does not seem necessary.

Recommendation 5-8: Retain PI16, drop PI2c, and add those who would have been asked PI2c to the PI16a universe.

5.4 Later Contact with the Police

Both conditions continued with this question:

Q124. Did you (or anyone in your household) have any later contact with the police about the incident?

Q124 was asked only about incidents that the police found out about (Q115). The Condition 2 question, PI17, was asked about all incidents.

For incidents with later contact with the police, both conditions asked this question:

Q125a. Did the police get in touch with you or did you get in touch with them?

The Condition 2 question, PI18, added the introductory phrase, “Thinking about these later contacts . . .”

Both conditions asked what the police did on these re-contacts:

Q127a. What did the police do in following up this incident?

*Took report
Questioned witnesses or suspects
Did or promised surveillance/investigation
Recovered property
Made arrest
Stayed in touch with respondent/household
Other – specify
Nothing (to the respondent’s knowledge)
Don’t know*

PI19. What did the police do to follow up on this incident?

They took a report or asked you questions about what happened
They questioned other witnesses or suspects
They watched over or promised to watch over the crime scene
{They got some or all of your belongings back}
They made one or more arrests
They stayed in touch
They contacted victim services on your behalf
They did something else (specify) _____
They did not do anything to your knowledge

Field Test Results

Q124 was answered “Yes” in 32.2% of CIRs where it was asked, as compared with 24.6% of Condition 2 CIRs where PI1 (Did the police find out about this incident?) was answered “Yes.” In CIRs where PI1 was not answered “Yes,” only 3 of 845 responses to PI17 were positive.

The response distributions to Q125a and PI18 were fairly similar (data not shown), with fewer than 100 responses in each condition.

The response distributions to Q127a and PI19 were also similar between the two conditions; in 4.3% of Condition 2 CIRs where PI19 was asked, the new response option “They contacted victim services on your behalf” was selected. Several of the “Specify” responses in Q127a mentioned adding to or reviewing the crime report.

Discussion and Recommendations

For the Field Test, the Instrument Redesign changed who was asked about later contacts with the police. In the current NCVS (Q124), it is asked only for incidents that the police found out about. In Condition 2 (PI17), it was asked for all incidents. Only 3 of 845 CIRs (0.4%) where the incident was not reported to the police had positive responses.

Recommendation 5-9: Do not ask PI16 for incidents not reported to the police.

Several of the “Specify” responses in Q127a (what the police did to follow up) mentioned adding to or reviewing the crime report.

Recommendation 5-10: Change the first response category in PI19 from “They took a report or asked you questions about what happened” to “Took, reviewed, or added to a report.”

5.5 Satisfaction with the Police Response

Condition 2 added the following questions assessing the police response for relevant incidents:

- PI11. How satisfied were you with how the phone report was taken? [Asked if the police did not come when they learned of the incident and took a report over the phone.]
- PI13. How satisfied were you with the time it took the police to get to you after they were contacted? [Asked if the police came when they learned of the incident.]

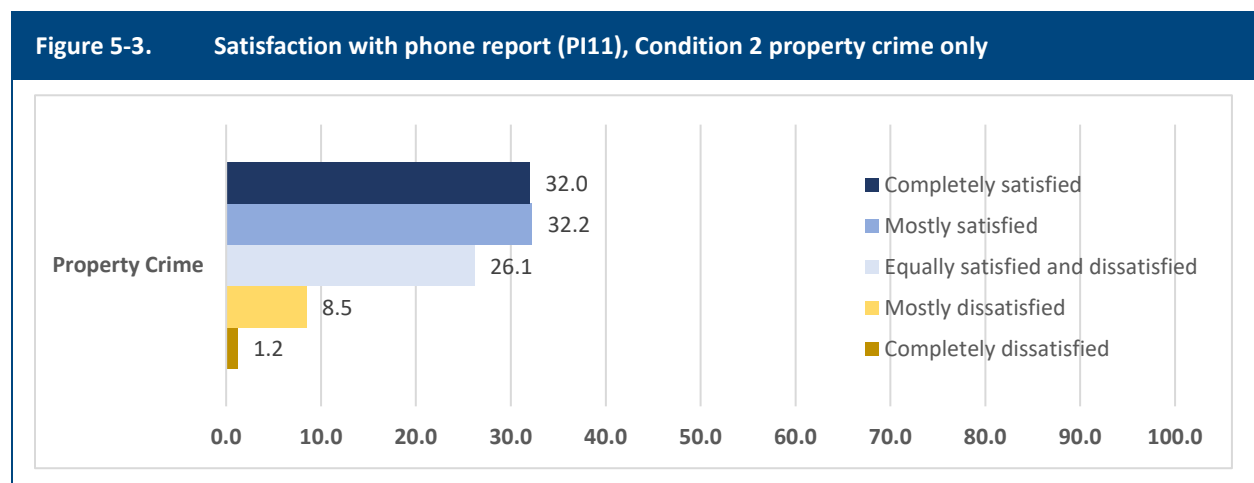
- PI20. If more than one officer was involved, please think about how you would rate them as a group. How respectfully did the police treat you? [Asked if the police learned of the incident at the time (PI1) or later (PI17).]
- PI21. How satisfied were you with the amount of time the police gave you to tell your story? [Asked if the police learned of the incident at the time (PI1) or later (PI17).]
- PI22. How satisfied were you that the police did everything they could? [Asked if the police learned of the incident at the time (PI1) or later (PI17).]
- PI23. Taking the whole experience into account, how effectively did the police handle the incident? [Asked if the police learned of the incident at the time (PI1) or later (PI17).]

Each of these questions had a 5-point response scale with a neutral middle category.

Field Test Results

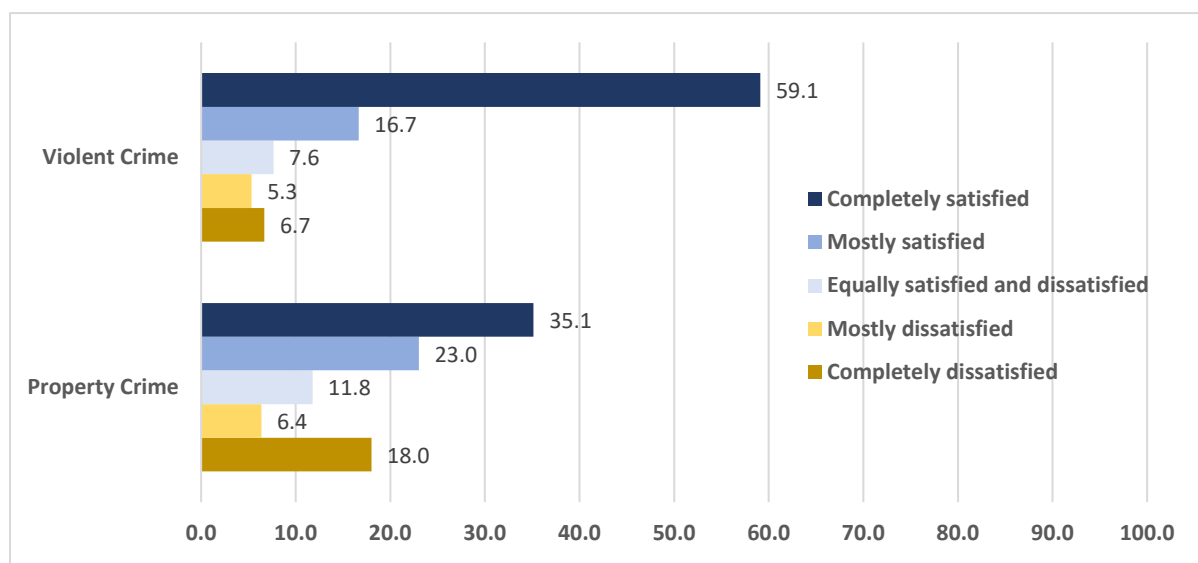
The weighted proportions of these responses are shown in Figures 5-3 through 5-8. Figure 5-3 includes only property crimes, as very few phone reports were mentioned for violent crimes. A majority (64.2%) of those answering the question about a property crime were either completely or mostly satisfied with how the telephone report was taken, as compared with 9.7% who were completely or mostly dissatisfied.

Beginning with Figure 5-4, two overall patterns emerge: (1) ratings for property crimes are generally lower than for violent crimes; and (2) ratings tend to cluster at the extremes of the scale, and more so at the high end than at the low end.



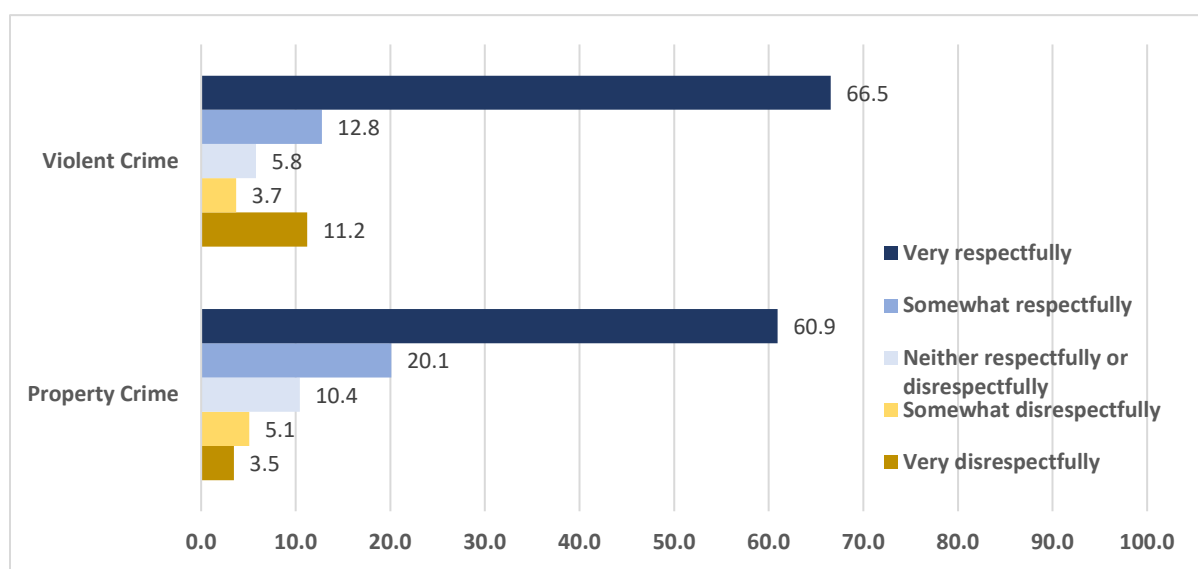
Source: 2019-2020 NCVS-R Field Test; percentages are weighted.

Figure 5-4. Satisfaction with response time (PI13) by type of crime, Condition 2



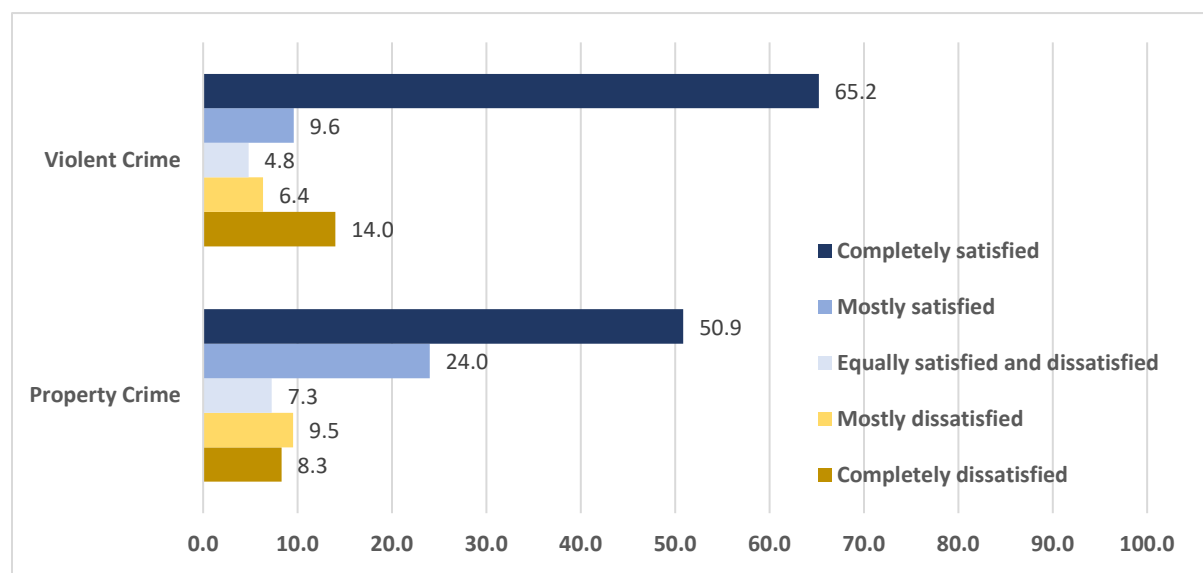
Source: 2019-2020 NCVS-R Field Test; percentages are weighted.

Figure 5-5. How respectfully police treated victim (PI20) by type of crime, Condition 2



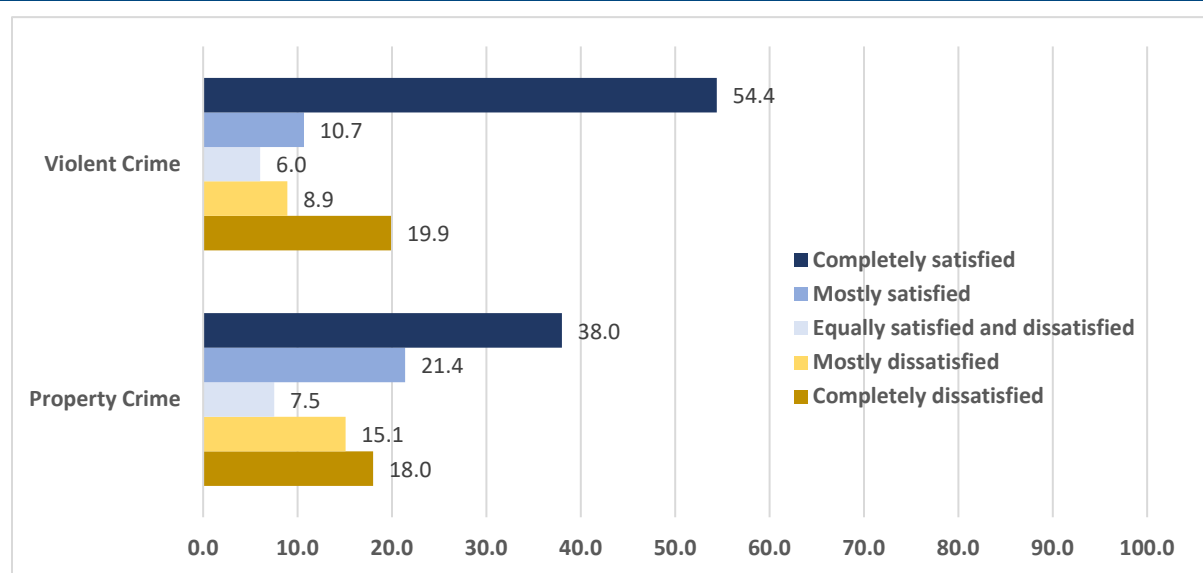
Source: 2019-2020 NCVS-R Field Test; percentages are weighted.

Figure 5-6. Satisfaction with time to tell victim's story (PI21) by type of crime, Condition 2



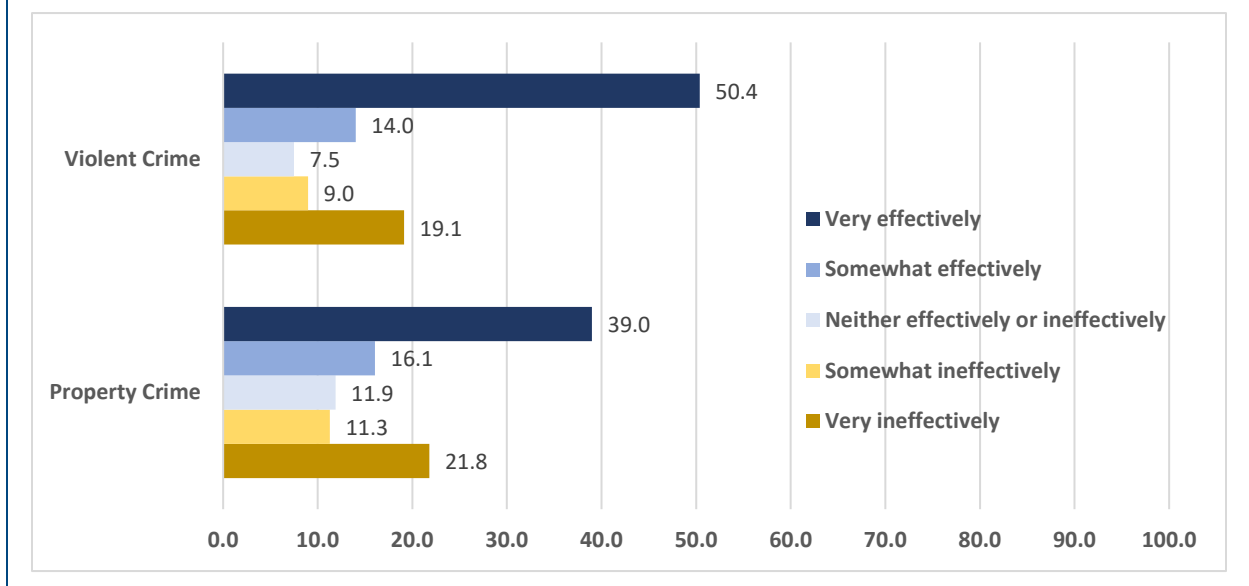
Source: 2019-2020 NCVS-R Field Test; percentages are weighted.

Figure 5-7. Satisfaction that police did everything they could (PI22) by type of crime, Condition 2



Source: 2019-2020 NCVS-R Field Test; percentages are weighted.

Figure 5-8. Perception of police effectiveness (PI23) by type of crime, Condition 2



Source: 2019-2020 NCVS-R Field Test; percentages are weighted.

Discussion and Recommendations

Condition 2 added 6 questions (PI11, PI13, and PI20-PI23) asking victims to assess the police response to their incidents. PI11 and PI13 dealt with specific aspects of the response (how the phone report was handled and in-person response time), while PI20-PI23 represent different components of procedural justice. PI20 and PI21 represent Respect and Voice, respectively. PI22 represents Trust. PI23 is meant to be a summary measure. There was variation in the response patterns across the questions, although less so between PI20 and PI21 and between PI22 and PI23.

Recommendation 5-11: Retain the six new questions. Monitor the results, especially against the Police Ask-All module, to track what new information they are adding.

5.6 Whether Incident Considered a Crime

The Field Test included the following two questions, asked in both Conditions 1 and 2, which were not in the current NCVS:

PI24. At the time, did you consider this incident to be a crime?

PI25. Now, looking back, do you consider this incident to be a crime?

In Condition 2, these questions were asked about all reported incidents except those determined earlier not to be an NCVS crime or reported as only Attempted Theft. In Condition 1, they were asked only about incidents reported to the police.

Table 5-4 shows the proportion of incidents reported to the police that the respondent considered a crime either at the time of the incident or at the time of the interview. Overall, there was little difference between the responses to PI24 and PI25 for these incidents, so this discussion will focus on PI24. In Condition 1, respondents considered 95.8% of violent incidents reported to the police to be crimes, as compared with 73.8% of Condition 2 violent incidents reported to the police. This difference is statistically significant ($p < .05$), and is mostly due to the difference in incidents coded as Simple Assaults, where 95.8% of Condition 1 Simple Assaults and 47.8% of Condition 2 Simple Assaults were considered crimes, which is also a significant difference ($p < .05$). There are no significant differences and there is no clear pattern of differences between Condition 1 and Condition 2 in incidents classified as property crimes.

A review of the Condition 2 Simple Assault CIRs reveals that those where the police found out about the incident but the respondent did not consider it a crime were almost all from different respondents, so the difference is not due to repeated incidents. Another possible explanation is that someone other than the respondent reported the incidents not considered to be crimes. However, while more of the incidents considered to be crimes were reported to the police by the respondent (PI4, 54.5%) than were incidents not considered crimes (42.9%), the difference is relatively small. A review of the incident narratives did not reveal any consistent pattern of circumstances in these incidents.

Table 5-5 shows whether respondents considered incidents a crime at the time of the incident (PI24) or at the time of the interview (PI25) for Condition 2 incidents that the police did not find out about. Among violent crimes, the percentage of incidents considered a crime is considerably higher for violent crimes excluding Simple Assault (80.1% at the time of the interview) than for Simple Assault (21.7%). The percentage of property crime incidents considered to be crimes (85.9% at the time of the interview) is higher than that for violent crime excluding Simple Assault. This difference may reflect the ambiguous circumstances often associated with violent crime (e.g., relationship to offender; who started the attack; degree of harm) seen in the incident narratives, which may be less common for property crimes, especially when the victim is not present during the incident.

As noted above, there was little difference between the PI24 and PI25 percentages for either Condition 1 or Condition 2 incidents the police did find out about. In Table 5-5, the PI25 percentages are consistently higher than the PI24 percentages, indicating that some people changed their minds at some point between the incident and the interview for crimes not reported to the police.

Table 5-4. Whether respondent considered the incident a crime at the time of the incident or the time of the interview by type of crime, crimes the police found out about only, Conditions 1 and 2

Type of crime	Condition 1			Condition 2			Significance test	
	Unwtd number	Weighted number	Weighted percent	Unwtd number	Weighted number	Weighted percent	t-value	p-value
All violent crime	70	8,412,493		86	9,362,068			
Considered a crime at the time	67	8,060,661	95.8	65	6,907,998	73.8	2.83	0.01
Considered a crime now	67	8,013,836	95.3	66	6,966,589	74.4	2.85	0.01
Violent crime excluding Simple Assault	35	3,236,621		49	5,484,850			
Considered a crime at the time	34	3,103,606	95.9	42	5,054,950	92.2	0.65	0.52
Considered a crime now	35	3,236,621	100.0	44	5,182,475	94.5	1.72	0.10
Simple Assault	35	5,175,872		37	3,877,218			
Considered a crime at the time	33	4,957,055	95.8	23	1,853,048	47.8	4.49	0.00
Considered a crime now	32	4,777,215	92.3	22	1,784,113	46.0	4.41	0.00
All property crime (Excluding vandalism)	136	9,135,131		169	8,296,323			
Considered a crime at the time	126	8,488,769	92.9	158	7,703,061	92.8	0.02	0.98
Considered a crime now	132	8,827,942	96.6	160	7,788,509	93.9	1.00	0.32
Property crime excluding Other Theft	50	3,130,400		66	3,210,402			
Considered a crime at the time	43	2,709,315	86.5	63	3,124,456	97.3	-1.60	0.12
Considered a crime now	48	3,016,201	96.4	62	3,079,161	95.9	0.11	0.91
Other Theft	86	6,004,731		103	5,085,921			
Considered a crime at the time	83	5,779,453	96.2	95	4,578,605	90.0	1.40	0.17
Considered a crime now	84	5,811,741	96.8	98	4,709,348	92.6	0.88	0.39

Source: 2019-2020 NCVS-R Field Test.

Table 5-5. Whether respondent considered the incident a crime at the time of the incident or the time of the interview by type of crime, crimes the police did not find out about only, Condition 2

Type of crime	Unwtd number	Weighted number	Percent
All violent crime	145	15,899,540	
Considered a crime at the time	52	5,109,334	32.1
Considered a crime now	74	6,987,001	43.9
Violent crime excluding Simple Assault	65	6,051,162	
Considered a crime at the time	36	3,960,828	65.5
Considered a crime now	48	4,848,780	80.1
Simple Assault	80	9,848,378	
Considered a crime at the time	16	1,148,506	11.7
Considered a crime now	26	2,138,221	21.7
All property crime (Excluding vandalism)	514	24,516,611	
Considered a crime at the time	410	18,929,527	77.2
Considered a crime now	456	21,065,758	85.9
Property crime excluding Other Theft	64	3,888,728	
Considered a crime at the time	52	3,279,998	84.3
Considered a crime now	59	3,654,991	94.0
Other Theft	450	20,627,882	
Considered a crime at the time	358	15,649,529	75.9
Considered a crime now	397	17,410,767	84.4

Source: 2019-2020 NCVS-R Field Test.

Table 5-6 shows, for Condition 2 incidents not reported to the police, the reason it was not reported by whether the respondent considered the incident a crime at the time. Refer to Table 4-1 for the response categories and recodes for reasons for not reporting to the police. The largest differences in the reasons for not reporting between those that considered the incident a crime and those who did not are related to the police (e.g., police wouldn't think it was important, wouldn't do anything about it). For violent crime, police-related reasons were selected in 51.1% of incidents the respondent thought were crimes and 12.0% of incidents not thought to be crimes. For property crimes, the Table 5-6 percentages are 36.2% and 22.2%, respectively.

Table 5-7 compares the Condition 2 IL and NIL treatments on whether respondents considered incidents a crime at the time of the incident or at the time of the interview. This table includes all violent and property incidents whether the police found out about them or not. NIL respondents consistently were more likely than IL respondents to say an incident was a crime. The differences for all violent crime are significant ($p < .05$) both for PI24 (56.1% vs. 36.3%) and PI25 (64.6% vs. 42.8%). The difference for property crime is significant ($p < .10$) only for PI25 (82.6% vs. 75.6%).

Table 5-6. Reason for not reporting incident to the police by whether considered it a crime at the time of the incident by type of crime, Condition 2

Type of crime/victim response	Considered a crime at the time			Not considered a crime at the time		
	Unwtd number	Weighted number	Percent	Unwtd number	Weighted number	Percent
All violent crime	52	5,109,334		94	10,845,910	
1. Minor matter, not worth it	22	2,545,106	49.8	58	5,232,765	48.2
2. Too personal, took care of it myself	13	756,448	14.8	27	3,083,137	28.4
3. Reported to someone other than police	0	0	0.0	10	775,071	7.1
4. Reason related to police	17	2,610,834	51.1	13	1,304,310	12.0
5. Reason related to offender	4	290,330	5.7	4	308,540	2.8
6. Other reason	1	29,843	0.6	2	96,930	0.9
All property crime (including vandalism)	476	22,466,541		130	6,643,749	
1. Minor matter, not worth it	290	12,463,613	55.5	99	4,673,817	70.3
2. Too personal, took care of it myself	55	2,560,344	11.4	15	705,911	10.6
3. Reported to someone other than police	17	715,806	3.2	0	0	0.0
4. Reason related to police	156	8,141,901	36.2	22	1,473,302	22.2
5. Reason related to offender	18	825,164	3.7	7	372,331	5.6
6. Other reason	9	414,197	1.8	2	73,453	1.1

Source: 2019-2020 NCVS-R Field Test.

Table 5-7. Whether respondent considered the incident a crime at the time of the incident, all incidents by type of crime, Condition 2 IL and NIL

Victim response	Condition 2 IL			Condition 2 NIL			Significance test	
	Unwtd number	Weighted number	Percent	Unwtd number	Weighted number	Percent	t-value	p-value
All violent crime	118	24,528,577		118	26,724,999			
Considered a crime at the time	54	8,912,129	36.3	63	14,991,789	56.1	-2.07	0.05
Now considered a crime	67	10,503,953	42.8	73	17,257,978	64.6	-2.41	0.02
Attacks^a	88	14,598,527		90	21,461,881			
Considered a crime at the time	45	7,764,656	53.2	52	13,291,171	61.9	-0.77	0.45
Now considered a crime	56	9,111,791	62.4	57	14,539,248	67.7	-0.47	0.64
Threats	30	9,930,049		28	5,263,118			
Considered a crime at the time	9	1,147,473	11.6	11	1,700,618	32.3	-1.89	0.07
Now considered a crime	11	1,392,161	14.0	16	2,718,730	51.7	-3.16	0.00
All property crime including Vandalism	413	39,420,406		472	45,344,232			
Considered a crime at the time	303	28,072,296	71.2	349	33,768,464	74.5	-1.58	0.13
Now considered a crime	322	29,820,992	75.6	388	37,453,163	82.6	-2.00	0.06

Source: 2019-2020 NCVS-R Field Test.

^a Includes Sexual Attacks.

Discussion and Recommendations

Both Field Test conditions included these two questions, which were not in the current NCVS:

PI24. At the time, did you consider this incident to be a crime?

PI25. Now, looking back, do you consider this incident to be a crime?

Among almost all types of incidents reported to the police, the vast majority were considered by respondents to be crimes, both at the time of the incident and at the time of the interview. The exception was for Simple Assaults in Condition 2, where only 47.8% of incidents were thought to be crimes at the time, significantly different ($p < .05$) from the 95.8% of Condition 1 Simple Assaults considered to be crimes at the time. There is no clear explanation for this difference. It may be related to Condition 2 respondents reporting “less serious” incidents, as discussed elsewhere in this report, but these incidents were all reported to the police. The sample size is relatively small, so it may just be an anomaly.

Looking just at Condition 2 incidents,⁵ it is not surprising that incidents not reported to the police were less likely to be considered crimes than those that were reported to the police. The other difference for incidents not reported to the police is the difference between PI24 (considered a crime at the time of the incident) and PI25 (considered a crime at the time of the interview). Unlike incidents reported to the police, these incidents were more likely to be thought of as a crime at the time of the interview than at the time of the incident. It seems likely that being asked about these incidents in a crime survey influenced respondents’ perceptions.

The final comparison for these questions on their own was between Condition 2 IL and NIL, for all incidents. NIL respondents consistently were more likely than IL respondents to say an incident was a crime. Again, there is no obvious explanation for this difference. As discussed in the Topline Report (Cantor et al., 2000), NIL respondents were more likely than IL respondents to report the complex crimes of Robbery and Burglary because of the additional follow-up probes. Perhaps the additional probes also caused respondents to think more deeply about what they had experienced.

One additional analysis examined the relationship between whether an incident was considered a crime and the reason it was not reported to the police. The most striking differences are in reasons related to the police (e.g., police wouldn’t think it was important, wouldn’t do anything about it). For violent crime, police-related reasons were selected in 51.1% of incidents the respondent thought were crimes and 12.0% of incidents not thought to be crimes. There was a smaller difference for property crime, but in the same direction. Reasons more associated with incidents not considered a crime were “Too personal, took care of it myself” (28.4% vs. 14.8%) for violent crime, and “Minor matter, not worth it” (70.3% vs. 55.5%) for property crime.

Recommendation 5-12: Retain the new questions about whether the respondent considered the incident a crime.

⁵ The “was it a crime” questions were not asked about incidents not reported to the police in Condition 1.

6. Module CS: Socio-Emotional Consequences

The Instrument Redesign made several changes to the NCVS questions about socio-emotional consequences of victimization, including who was asked the questions, question-wording, and some additions and deletions.

6.1 Who Was Asked about Socio-Emotional Consequences

Both Condition 1 and Condition 2 used previous responses about the victimization in defining the universe for this series of questions:

- Condition 1 limited the series to incidents where an Attack, Attempted Attack, or Threatened Attack (including Rape and Sexual Assault) was identified in the CIR.
- Condition 2 included all incidents other than Attempted Theft and those determined not to be an NCVS crime, based on responses to the Victimization Screener and CIR.

The first three questions of the series in each questionnaire served as a screener for the remainder of the series. Only those reporting problems at work, at school, or with family or friends, and those who found the incident “moderately” or “severely” distressing (Condition 1) or upsetting (Condition 2) were asked the remainder of the series.

Table 6-1 shows the number and proportion of responses to these three questions that led to the remainder of the series being asked, for incidents classified as violent crimes only. There is not a consistent pattern of differences between Condition 1 and Condition 2, and none of the differences is statistically significant.

Table 6-2 provides the same information for Condition 2 incidents classified as property crimes. These questions were not asked about property crimes in Condition 1. Comparing the Condition 2 percentages in Tables 6-1 and 6-2, we see that the proportions of incidents causing problems with work or school, or with family or friends are much smaller for property crime (3.8% and 6.7%, respectively, Table 6-2) than for violent crime (19.4% and 27.9%, respectively, Table 6-1). However, the proportion of property crimes reported as moderately or severely upsetting (36.9%) was almost identical to the proportion of violent crimes reported as moderately or severely upsetting (36.8%).

Recommendation 6-1: Retain the expanded universe for the Socio-Emotional Consequences questions.

Table 6-1. Number and percent of incidents classified as violent crimes that resulted in problems at work or school, problems with family or friends, or moderate or severe distress, Conditions 1 and 2

Type of crime/consequence	Condition 1			Condition 2			Significance test	
	Unwtd number	Weighted number	Percent	Unwtd number	Weighted number	Percent	t-test	p-value
All violent crime	152	17,285,030		236	25,650,406			
Problems at work or school	40	3,797,318	22.0	28	4,974,453	19.4	0.32	0.75
Problems with family or friends	43	4,028,518	23.3	57	7,145,425	27.9	-0.50	0.62
Moderately or severely distressing ^a	75	7,839,442	45.4	93	9,440,296	36.8	1.18	0.25

Source: 2019-2020 NCVS-R Field Test.

^a "Moderately or severely upsetting" in Condition 2.

Table 6-2. Number and percent of incidents classified as property crimes that resulted in problems at work or school, problems with family or friends, or moderate or severe distress, Condition 2

Type of crime/consequence	Unwtd number	Weighted number	Percent
All property crime	885	42,396,849	
Problems at work or school	27	1,613,805	3.8
Problems with family or friends	61	2,850,757	6.7
Moderately or severely upsetting	301	15,636,666	36.9

Source: 2019-2020 NCVS-R Field Test.

6.2 Detailed Emotional and Physical Consequences

For incidents that met the above criteria to continue with the module, both conditions asked about a series of possible emotional responses. Condition 2 expanded on the Condition 1 time frame and changed some of the adjectives describing the emotional responses.

Q37. Still thinking about your distress associated with being a victim of this crime did you feel any of the following ways for A MONTH OR MORE? Did you feel . . .

- a. *Worried or anxious?*
- b. *Angry?*
- c. *Sad or depressed?*
- d. *Vulnerable?*
- e. *Violated?*
- f. *Like you couldn't trust people?*
- g. *Unsafe?*
- h. *Some other way?*

CS4. I am going to read a list of things you may have felt because of the incident. For each, please tell me whether you didn't feel this way at all, you felt this way for less than a month, or you felt this way for a month or longer.

- a. Angry?
- b. Shocked?
- c. Fearful?
- d. Depressed?
- e. Anxious or panicked?
- f. Less confident?
- g. Sad?
- h. Annoyed?

Condition 1 followed with a similar question about physical symptoms:

Q38. Did you experience any of the following physical problems associated with being a victim of this crime for A MONTH OR MORE? Did you experience . . .

- a. *Headaches?*
- b. *Trouble sleeping?*
- c. *Changes in your eating or drinking habits?*
- d. *Upset stomach?*
- e. *Fatigue?*
- f. *High blood pressure?*
- g. *Muscle tension or back pain?*
- h. *Some other physical problem?*

The TRP discussion about this item questioned its value but stopped short of recommending that it be cut. In the interest of reducing burden, it was reduced to the following in Condition 2:

CS5a. Did you have difficulty sleeping because of the incident?

Yes, for less than 1 month

Yes, for 1 month or more

No

Field Test Results

Figures 6-1a-b compare “Yes” responses in Q37 and to “Yes, for one month or more” responses in CS4. Only two Condition 1 items, “Angry” and “Sad or depressed,” appeared in both questions, so these responses are compared directly. “Sad” and “Depressed” are separate items in Condition 2, so each of the Condition 2 items are compared to the same Condition 1 item. The other comparison is for the average (mean) percentage of “Yes” responses across all emotions, a total of seven in Condition 1 (excluding “Other”) and eight in Condition 2.⁶ These comparisons are shown separately for all violent crime and for violent crime without Simple Assault.

For all violent crime (fig. 6-1a), the Condition 1 percentages are higher than the Condition 2 percentages for all comparisons, but none of the differences is statistically significant. For violent crime without Simple Assault (fig. 6-1b), the Condition 2 percentages for “Angry,” “Sad,” and “Depressed” are higher than those for Condition 1, while the Condition 1 percentage across all items is still higher, but the difference is smaller than for all violent crime. Again, none of the differences for violent crime are significant.

⁶ Significance tests were not performed for the mean measures.

Figures 6-2a-b show the percentage of “Yes” responses in Q37 and CS4 in rank order for Condition 1 and in rank order of “Yes, for 1 month or more” responses for Condition 2 for incidents coded as violent crimes. “Angry” has the highest percentage of “Yes, for 1 month or more” responses for Condition 2 (48.3%), while it ranks third on the Condition 1 list (64.7%). “Sad” ranks fifth and “Depressed” third out of eight emotions in Condition (33.6% and 40.6%), as compared with last on the Condition 1 list (49.6%). The range for the Condition 1 list is between 49.6% and 72.8%, as compared with 23.9% to 48.3% for the Condition 2 “1 month or more” list and 11.2% to 41.7% for the “Less than 1 month” list.

Some of the emotions in CS4 may seem nearly synonymous with another in the list, for example, “Angry” and “Annoyed,” “Sad” and “Depressed,” and “Anxious or panicked” and “Fearful.” For each of these pairs, the responses agree exactly in about two-thirds (unweighted) of the CIRs coded as violent crimes where the question was asked. “Less confident” agreed exactly with “Anxious or panicked” and with “Fearful” at about the same rate. Complete agreement between other pairs of responses ranges from about 34% to 59%.

Another way to look at Figures 6-2a-b is to focus on the difference between the two Condition 2 responses. The largest difference is for “Depressed” (40.6% “1 month or more,” 11.2% “Less than 1 month”), which is a longer-term state of mind. The difference is much smaller for “Sad” (about 11 percentage points versus almost 30 points for “Depressed”). For two emotions, “Shocked” and “Fearful,” the percentage of “Yes, for less than 1 month” responses was slightly higher than the percentage of “Yes, for 1 month or more” responses, so these are the shorter-term states of mind. As compared with that relationship for “Fearful,” the difference for “Anxious or panicked” is about 13 points, with “Yes, for 1 month or more” being higher. The relationship between the two positive responses for “Angry” and “Annoyed” is very similar.

Figure 6-1a. Emotional reaction to violent crime for one month or more, by all violent crime, Conditions 1 and 2

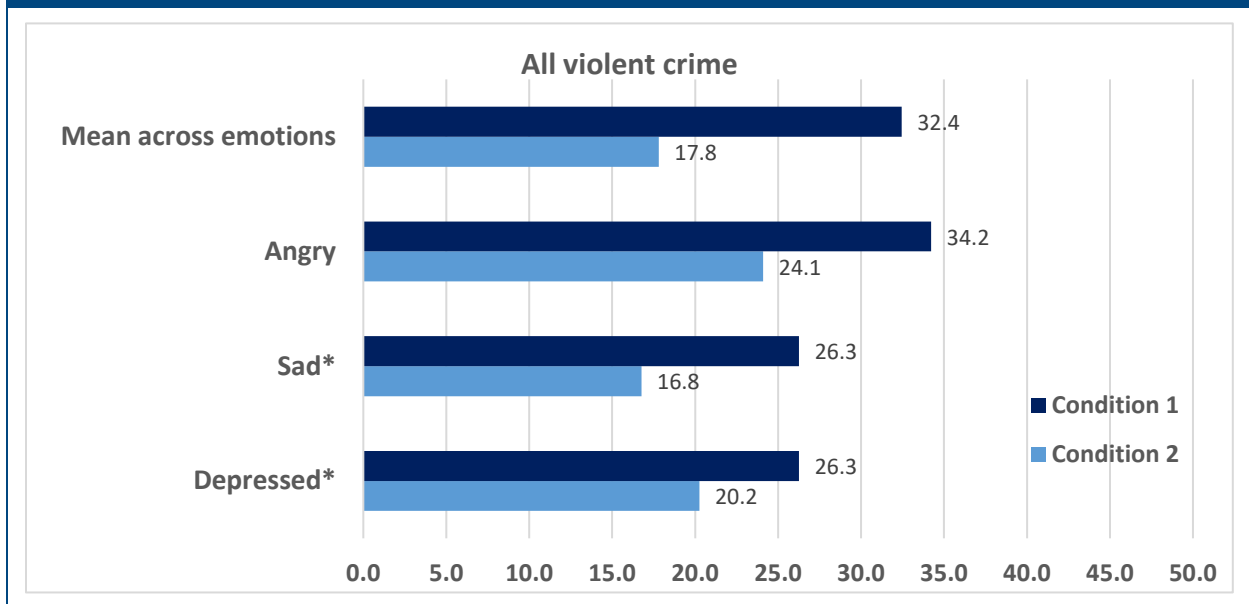
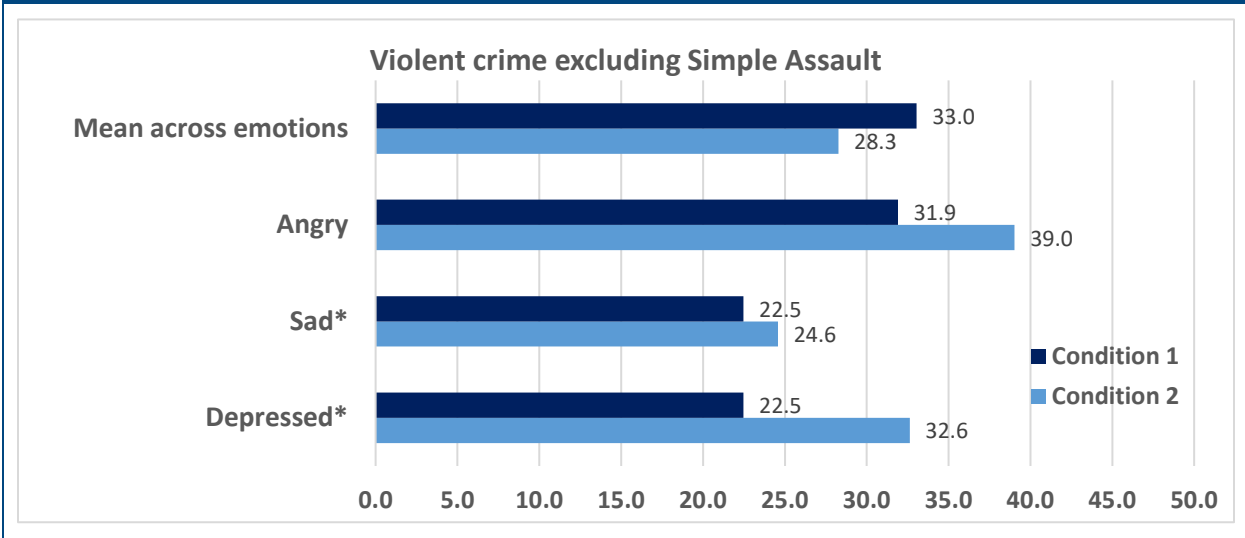


Figure 6-1b. Emotional reaction to violent crime for one month or more, by violent crime excluding Simple Assault, Conditions 1 and 2



Source: 2019-2020 NCVS-R Field Test.

* "Sad or depressed" was a single item in Condition 1.

Figure 6-2a. Percent "Yes" response for emotional reactions to violent crime, Condition 1 (1 month or more)

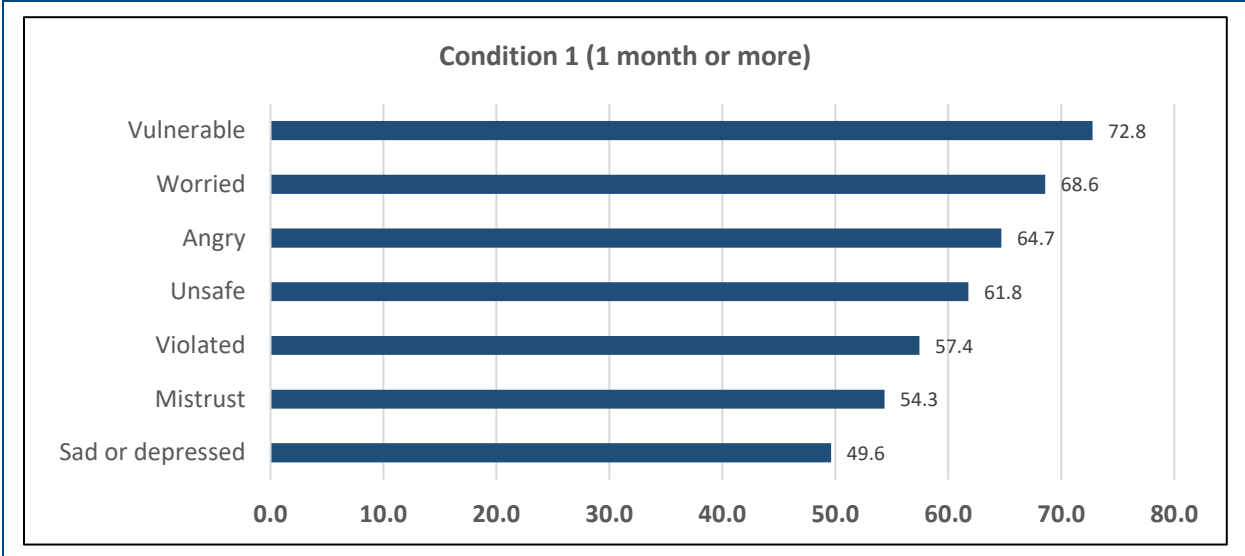
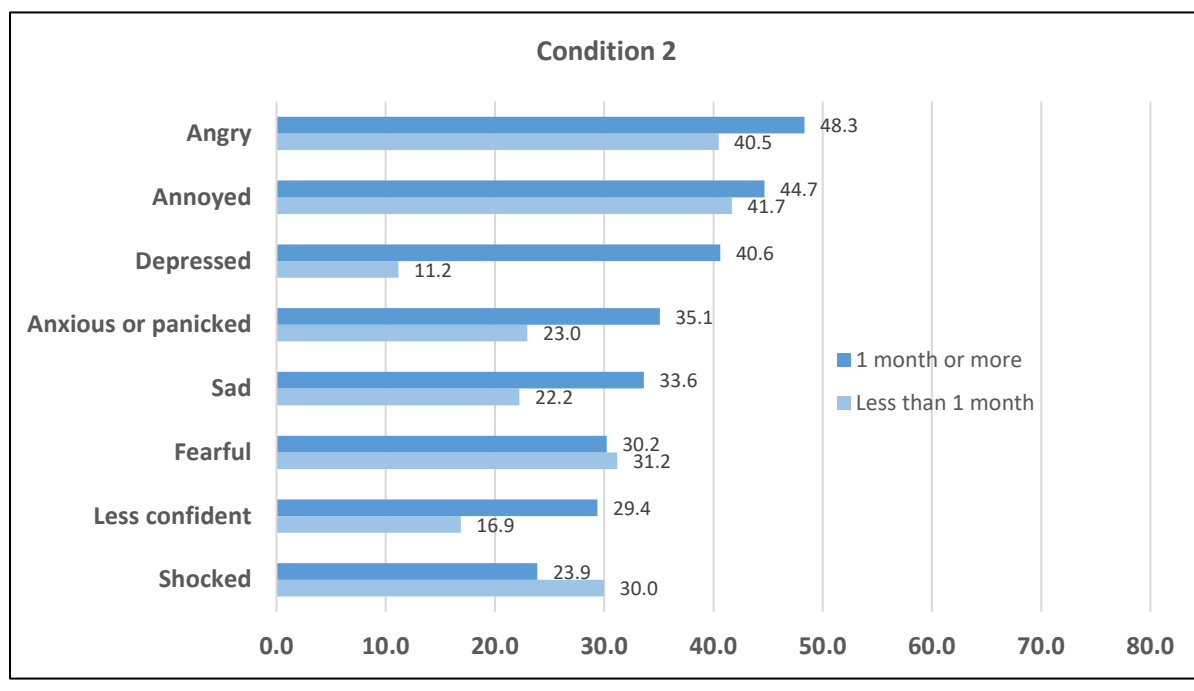


Figure 6-2b. Percent “Yes” response for emotional reactions to violent crime, Condition 2 (1 month or more and Less than 1 month)

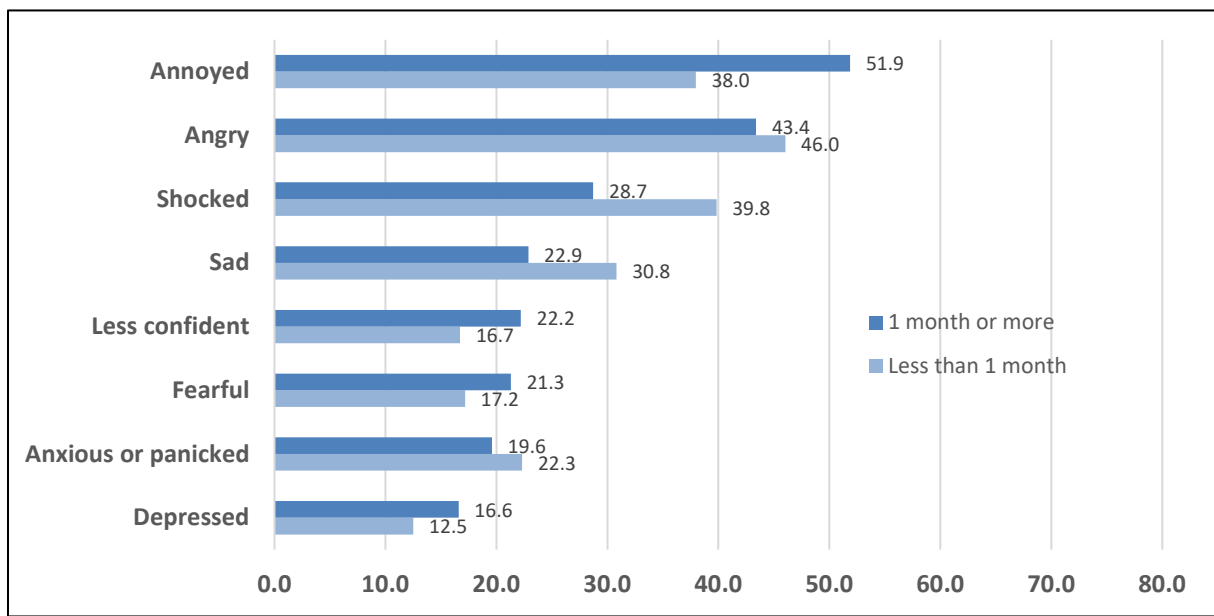


Source: 2019-2020 NCVS-R Field Test.

Figure 6-3 shows the percentage of “Yes” responses in CS4 in rank order of “Yes, for 1 month or more” responses for Condition 2 incidents coded as property crimes. Recall that, as with violent crimes, these questions were asked only if the incidents led to trouble with school or work, trouble with family or friends, or moderate or severe distress. Violent crime victims were more likely to report being “Depressed” or “Anxious or panicked” for 1 month or more (40.6% and 35.1%, respectively) than were property crime victims (16.6% and 19.6%). “Depressed,” third in the violent crime rank order (Figure 6-2b), is eighth in the property crime list. “Shocked” moved in the opposite direction, from eighth in violent crime to third in property crime.

One other notable difference between Figure 6-2b and Figure 6-3 is that for violent crime there are two items with more “Less than 1 month” than “1 month or more” responses, while for property crime there are four and the differences are larger. This difference indicates that, overall, emotional responses to victimization may be longer-lasting for violent than for property crime.

Figure 6-3. Percent “Yes” responses for emotional reactions to property crime, Condition 2 (1 month or more, one less than 1 month)



Source: 2019-2020 NCVS-R Field Test.

Discussion and Recommendations

In Figure 6-1, the Condition 1 estimate for all violent crimes is consistently larger than the Condition 2 “1 month or more” estimate. All other things being equal, one might expect the two sets of estimates to be roughly the same, however, all other things are not equal.

1. The list of emotions was different in Condition 1 and Condition 2, with an unknown effect on the overall means.
2. When presented with an expanded list of response options, survey respondents are less likely to pick one of the extremes (see, for example, Schwarz et al., 1985). This effect suggests that some Condition 2 respondents who chose “Yes, for less than 1 month” might have said “Yes” if only asked about “1 month or more.”
3. The Topline Report (Cantor et al., 2022) concluded that Condition 2 respondents reported more “less memorable” or “less serious” incidents, which one would expect to result in milder emotional response.

For violent crime excluding Simple Assault, the percentage of Condition 2 respondents saying “Yes, for more than 1 month” is higher than in Condition 1 for the common items, which is consistent with observation 3 above. However, the Condition 1 percentage remains higher than Condition 2 for the mean across items, which suggests that the Condition 2 list of emotions may be less prevalent than the Condition 1 list (point 1 above).

The rank ordering of “1 month or more” responses between Conditions 1 and 2 in Figure 6-2b provides more evidence suggesting that the new set of prompts overall represents somewhat less prevalent emotions than the Condition 1 set. Both of the two common prompts, “Angry” and “Sad,” rank higher in Figure 6-2 for Condition 2 than for Condition 1. The combination of a new set of items and the additional response option (“For less than 1 month”) in Condition 2 yields a much larger spread of “Yes” responses than in Condition 1. Further, the new response option allows assessment of short-term versus long-term effects. For victims of violent crime, anger and depression are likely to linger, while annoyance and lack of confidence appear more transitory.

Section 6-1 noted that victims of property crime were somewhat less likely than violent crime victims to report socio-emotional problems and thus to be asked the detailed consequences questions. Those who were asked, however, provided a similar range of “Yes” responses to those of violent crime victims. The emotional effects were somewhat different, however. For example, anger and shock are among the most transitory effects for property crime victims, while depression is less prevalent among property crime victims than among violent crime victims. While none of these observations is too surprising, they do point to the value in expanding the set of incidents for which the Socio-Emotional Consequences questions are asked.

Recommendation 6-2: Retain the Condition 2 list of emotions and the added response category. Both appear to add analytic value. While some of the new items appear very similar to others just examining frequencies, other analyses point to differences, such as between “Sad” and “Depressed.”

6.3 Seeking Professional Help

For incidents with any “Yes” response in Q37a-h (68.2% of CIRs where Q37 was asked) Condition 1 followed up as follows:

Q37k. Did you seek any kind of professional help for the feelings you experienced as a result of being a victim of this crime?

Q37l. [IF YES:] What kind of professional help did you seek?

Counseling/therapy

Medication

Visited doctor or nurse

Visited ER/hospital/clinic

Other

Of Condition 1 CIRs where Q37k was asked, 35.2% (unweighted) had “Yes” responses, and of those 83.8% mentioned counseling or therapy in Q37l. Condition 1 asked similar follow-up questions for the list of physical symptoms, of which only “trouble sleeping” was retained in Condition 2. Condition 2 had a similar question to Q37k, which was asked for every incident where CS4 was asked:

CS6. Have you talked to a psychologist, psychiatrist, counselor, or other mental health professional about this incident?

Because of the different universes for CS6 and Q37k, the next comparison will be limited to incidents coded as violent crimes. For Condition 1, 34.1% of such CIRs where Q37k was asked had “Yes” responses. For Condition 2, 38.6% of CIRs where at least one item in CS4 was answered “Yes, for 1 month or longer” had positive responses to CS6. Of those CIRs coded as violent crimes where at least one CS4 item was answered “Yes, for less than one month” and none was answered “Yes, for 1 month or more,” only 15.4% had a “Yes” response in CS6.

“Yes” responses to CS6 were followed with questions about related economic consequences:

CS7. Did you have any out-of-pocket expenses for your mental health care, that is, expenses that you do not expect to get paid back from insurance or some other source?

CS8. [IF YES:] How much were these out-of-pocket expenses?

Less than \$100

\$100 to less than \$500

\$500 to less than \$1000

\$1000 to less than \$5000

\$5000 or more

Of those asked CS7, 16.9% (unweighted) said “Yes,” and all were able to provide a response in CS8.

Recommendation 6-3: Retain the Condition 2 revisions. There were no apparent problems, and the responses to CS6 followed the expected pattern, with incidents causing emotional reactions of 1 month or more resulting in a comparable proportion of seeking treatment as in Condition 1.

7. Module CE: Economic Consequences

The Economic Consequences module includes two major sections, Value of Stolen or Damaged Property, and Lost Work and Wages, each of which underwent significant change in the Instrument Redesign. Those sections are further subdivided below.

7.1 Value of Stolen Property

Condition 1 began asking about stolen property as follows:

Q104b. What was the value of the PROPERTY that was taken? Include recovered property. (Exclude any stolen (cash/checks/credit cards.) If jointly owned with a nonhousehold member(s), include only the share owned by household members.)

\$ _____

Q105a. How did you decide the value of the property that was taken? Enter all that apply.

*Original cost
Replacement cost
Personal estimate of current value
Insurance report estimate
Police estimate
Don't know
Other*

Condition 2 made several changes:

- Dropped Q105a, which has not seen much use in analysis of NCVS data;
- Asked about the value of stolen motor vehicles, typically the largest dollar amounts, separately from that of other stolen items;
- Revised the wording to make the questions more conversational;
- Added response categories (dollar ranges);
- Included cash in the total value; and
- Dropped the stipulation about property owned jointly with nonhousehold members.

The location of the stolen property value questions was changed as well. In Condition 1, they were interspersed with the Theft questions (what was taken, etc.). In Condition 2, they were toward the end of the CIR, while the Theft questions were near the beginning.

The Condition 2 questions looked like this:

CE1. What would you estimate was the value of the vehicle that was stolen or taken without permission? {READ CATEGORIES AS NEEDED}

Less than \$500
\$500 to less than \$1,000
\$1,000 to less than \$5,000
\$5,000 to less than \$10,000
\$10,000 or more

CE4. Earlier you said some items were stolen along with the vehicle. What was the value of these other items, including the value of anything you got back? {READ CATEGORIES AS NEEDED.}

Less than \$25
\$25 to less than \$50
\$50 to less than \$100
\$100 to less than \$500
\$500 or more

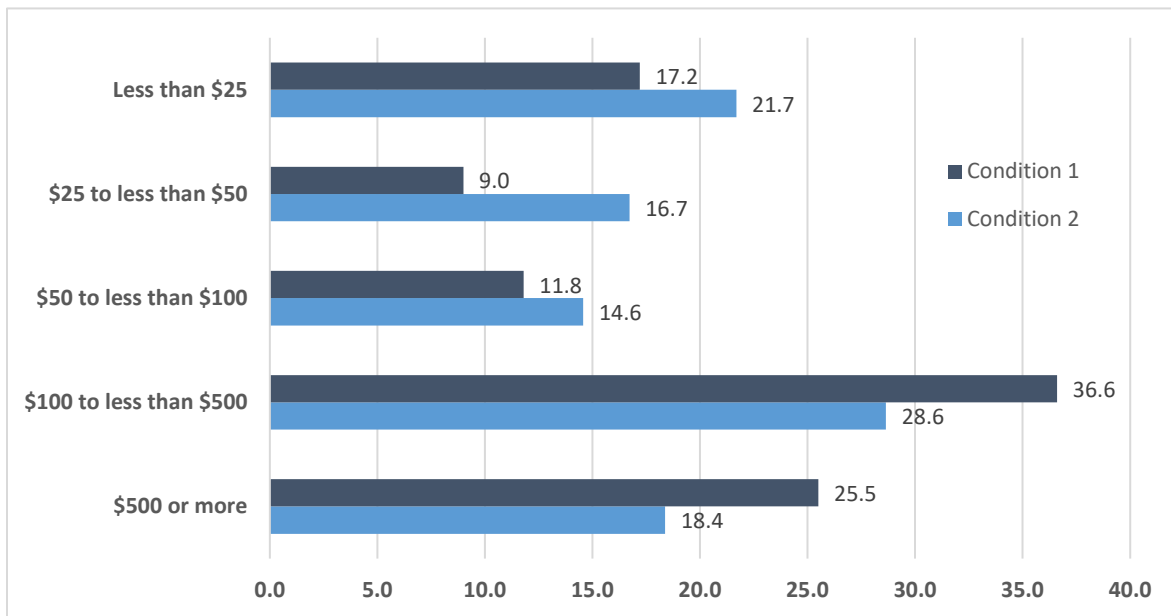
CE5. (Including cash) what would you estimate was the total value of the stolen items, including the value of anything you got back? {READ CATEGORIES AS NEEDED.}

Less than \$25
\$25 to less than \$50
\$50 to less than \$100
\$100 to less than \$500
\$500 or more⁷

To compare the dollar value responses between Condition 1 and Condition 2 (CE5), one has to (1) remove incidents with motor vehicles stolen, (2) add the amount of cash stolen (if any) in the incident to the Q104b response, and then (3) assign the total to one of the Condition 2 response categories. The (unweighted) results are shown in Figure 7-1. A larger proportion of Condition 2 than Condition 1 responses are in the three lowest dollar value categories, and vice versa for the two highest categories. This pattern is consistent with the idea expressed in the Topline Report (Cantor et al., 2022) that Condition 2 respondents reported more “less serious” crimes than did Condition 1 respondents.

⁷ The intended responses for CE5 included “\$500 to less than \$1,000” and “\$1,000 or more”; a programming error resulted in the CE5 responses being the same as the CE4 responses. This error will be corrected before the redesigned NCVS instrument is implemented in the field.

Figure 7-1. Dollar value of stolen property, including cash and excluding motor vehicles, Conditions 1 and 2



Source: 2019-2020 NCVS-R Field Test.

Note: Bars are unweighted percentages in each category from CIRs with responses.

7.2 Recovered Property

Condition 1 questions about recovered stolen property included the following:

Q106. Was all or part of the stolen (money/property) recovered, not counting anything received from insurance?

- All*
- Part*
- None*

Q107a. What was recovered?

- Cash*
- Purse*
- Wallet*
- Credit cards, checks, bank cards*
- Car or other motor vehicle*
- Property other than the above*

Q107c. Did the recovered (purse/wallet) contain any money?

Q107d. How much cash was recovered?

\$ _____

Q108. *Considering any damage, what was the value of the property after it was recovered?*

\$ _____

Q109. *Was the theft reported to an insurance company?*

Condition 2 dropped Q107a, Q107c, Q107d, and Q109, and revised Q106 and Q108 as follows, along the same lines as the revisions to the value questions above:

CE2. Did you get the vehicle back?

CE3. Was the vehicle damaged in any way?

CE6. {Apart from the stolen vehicle did/Did} you get any of the stolen (money) (or) (items) back?

CE7. {Apart from the cost of the vehicle, what/What} would you estimate was the total value of the (other) items you got back? {READ CATEGORIES AS NEEDED.}

Less than \$25

\$25 to less than \$50

\$50 to less than \$100

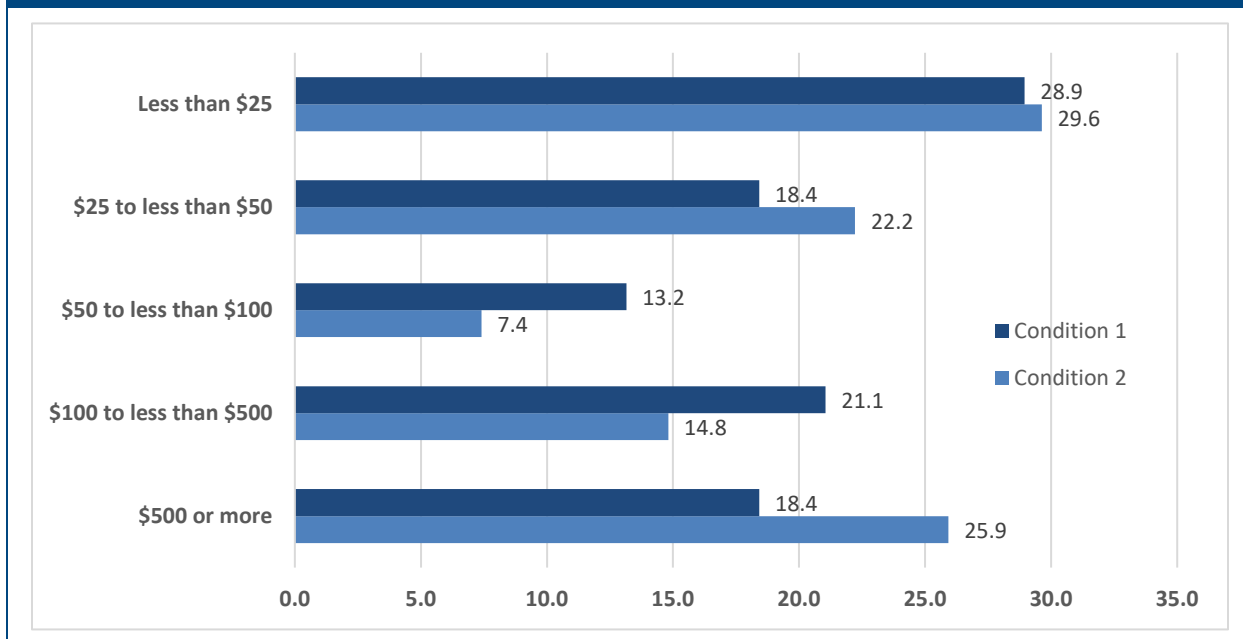
\$100 to less than \$500

\$500 to less than \$1,000

\$1,000 or more

The proportion of incidents where all or some of the property (including motor vehicles) was recovered was similar between Condition 1 and Condition 2. In Condition 1, all of the property was recovered in 13.6% of incidents, part in 6.3% of incidents. The Condition 2 percentages are 12.1% "All" and 4.3% "Some." Figure 7-2 compares the reported value of the recovered property, calculated in a similar way to the value categories in Figure 7-1. Unlike Figure 7-1, there is no particular pattern of difference between the questionnaire conditions in Figure 7-2. Overall, the dollar values are somewhat smaller for the recovered property than for the stolen property, at least in part because in some incidents only part of the stolen property was recovered and in others, the recovered property may have been damaged.

Figure 7-2. Unweighted dollar value of recovered stolen property, including cash and excluding motor vehicles, Conditions 1 and 2



Source: 2019-2020 NCVS-R Field Test.

Note: Bars are unweighted percentages in each category from CIRs with responses.

Comparing the initial value of the stolen property with the value of recovered property, in all 38 Condition 1 CIRs with reported values for both, the initial value was in the same or a higher category than the recovered value. Of 26 Condition 2 CIRs with values in both, there were two incidents where the recovered value was in a higher category than the initial value, an indication of response error.

The change from open-ended questions about property value to close-ended questions was motivated by a desire to reduce interviewer keying error, particularly when entering large dollar amounts. A review of all entries of \$1,000 or more in Q104b against the report of what was stolen revealed no obviously implausible amounts. Other than motor vehicles, the most common kinds of property associated with these large dollar amounts were jewelry, electronic equipment including cameras, and tools, machines, or office equipment.

Recommendation 7-1: The revised questions on property value and recovered property appear to have worked well generally. However, it is not clear whether the decision to use range categories instead of open-ended dollar amounts is supported. While entering a single number for a category is easier for interviewers—and respondents often do not know exact amounts—there was no obvious evidence of interviewer or respondent error with the dollar amounts in the Field Test. Further, there were only two inconsistencies with the categorical responses in Condition 2, and there could have been inconsistencies with the open-ended responses. One advantage of the open-ended responses is that they can be converted to any set of range categories a researcher desires. However, open-ended responses may be collapsed into ranges during data processing disclosure review for public- or restricted-use files. Open-ended responses can also be combined or compared across questions more easily and precisely than ranges. Given these advantages and disadvantages

of each approach, there is no clear evidence from the Field Test to support either. BJS may wish to reconsider the switch from entering dollar amounts to the range categories.

7.3 Damaged Property

Both Condition 1 and Condition 2 asked about property damage associated with victimization incidents. The Condition 1 questions were as follows:

Q110. *(Other than any stolen property) was anything that belonged to you or other members of the household damaged in this incident?*

Q111. *[Was/Were] the damaged item(s) repaired or replaced?*

Q112. *How much would it cost to repair or replace the damaged item(s)?*

Q113. *How much was the repair or replacement cost?*

Less than \$100

\$100 to less than \$500

\$500 to less than \$1,000

\$1,000 to less than \$5,000

\$5,000 or more

Q114a. *Who (paid/will pay) for the repairs or replacement?*

Items will not be repaired or replaced

Household member

Landlord or landlord s insurance

Victim s (or household s) insurance

Other – specify

Either Q112 or Q113 was asked, depending on the answer to Q111. Condition 2 dropped Q111 and Q114a, and added questions about the nature of the damage, as follows:

CE8. *{Other than any stolen property was/Was} anything that belonged to you or someone you live with damaged or destroyed in {this/the} incident?*

CE9. *What was damaged or destroyed (other than any stolen property)? {Anything else?}*

A vehicle (including parts)

Something inside your home or apartment

A mailbox

Something outside of your home or apartment, such as doors, windows, or walls

Fences, walls, gates or items in a garden

A garage, shed, greenhouse or other structure on your property

An animal such as a pet or livestock

Other Specify _____

- CE10. Was any of the damage a result of the offender trying to get into the vehicle?
- CE11. Was any of the damage to your house or apartment a result of the offender trying to get inside?
- CE12. Was any of the damage to your garage, shed, greenhouse or other structure on your property a result of the offender trying to get into the structure?
- CE13. {Excluding any costs you have already mentioned, what/What} was the total value of the damage done {in this vandalism}? If you don't know the exact amount, please give your best estimate. {READ CATEGORIES AS NEEDED.}

- Less than \$100
- \$100 to less than \$500
- \$500 to less than \$1,000
- \$1,000 to less than \$5,000
- \$5,000 or more

The most common responses to CE9 were “A vehicle” (mentioned in 39.3% (unweighted) of CIRs where the question was asked), “Something inside your home or apartment” (16.4% of CIRs), and “Other” (36.1% of CIRs). Most of the “Specify” responses could be upcoded into the existing categories, some of which are very broad. “A mailbox” and “An animal such as a pet or livestock” were not selected in any CIRs.

CE10, CE11, and CE12 were intended to shed further light on the type of crime the incident represented, motivated in part by the addition of Vandalism to the list of NCVS crime types. CE11 and CE12 could also be indications of Burglaries otherwise not reported as such. Of 4 CIRs where CE11 was asked, two had “Yes” responses; the only response to CE12 was also “Yes.” All three of these “Yes” responses wound up with a Burglary TOC code without the need for the CE11 or CE12 response. CE10 was asked in 24 CIRs, with 10 “Yes” responses, of which two wound up with MV Theft and five with Other Theft TOC Codes. Again, the CE10 response did not contribute to the assignment of a TOC code in any of these CIRs.

Recommendation 7-2: The utility of the new questions on property damage (CE9 through CE13) is not clear from the Field Test. They are associated with other Instrument Redesign changes, notably the addition of Vandalism as an NCVS crime and new questions intended to clarify ambiguous incidents involving motor vehicles, which will be discussed in the report on measuring crime in the NCVS. BJS should continue to monitor the use of these items in coding and research to assess their utility.

Condition 2 also added the following question:

- CE14. Did you need to stay somewhere else or move to a new home as a result of {this/the} incident?

This question was answered positively in 4.4% (unweighted) of CIRs where it was asked.

Recommendation 7-3: Retain CE14, which appears to provide information on a significant economic consequence of victimization.

7.4 Lost Work

The Condition 1 lost work series was asked about incidents where the respondent reported being employed at the time. It began by asking about time lost from work because of injury, if any was reported as part of the incident.

Q143. *Did YOU lose time from work because of the injuries you suffered in this incident?*

Q144. *How much time did you lose because of injuries?*

Q145. *During these days, did you lose any pay that was not covered by unemployment insurance, sick leave, or some other source?*

Q146. *About how much pay did you lose?*

\$ _____

Condition 1 then went on to ask about time lost from work for other reasons related to the incident.

Q147a. *Did YOU lose any (other) time from work because of this incident for such things as cooperating with a police investigation, testifying in court, or repairing or replacing damaged or stolen property?*

Police-related activities

Court related activities

Repairing damaged property

Replacing stolen items

Other – specify

None – (did not lose time from work for any of these reasons)

Q148. *How much time did you lose altogether because of (name all reasons marked in Q147a)?*

_____ *number of days (Enter 0 if time lost was less than one day.)*

Q149. *During these days, did you lose any pay that was not covered by unemployment insurance, paid leave, or some other source?*

Q150. *About how much pay did you lose?*

\$ _____

Q151. *Were there any (other) household members 16 years or older who lost time from work because of this incident?*

Q152. *How much time did they lose altogether?*

_____ *number of days (Enter 0 if time lost was less than one day.)*

Condition 2 made several changes to this series:

- Dropped the distinctions among different reasons for losing time (injury, police-related activities, etc.), which are not widely used;
- Asked as well about time off from school;
- Replaced “lose time” with “take any time off;” and
- As with the property value questions, replaced the open dollar entry with categories, and the same for the number of days.

The Condition 2 lost work series was asked about incidents where the respondent was either employed or a student at any time during the reference period, somewhat expanded over the Condition 1 universe. Here are the questions replacing Q143–Q152:

CE15. Have you taken any time off from work or school because of this incident?

- Yes, time off from work
- Yes, time off from school
- Yes, time off from both work and school
- No

CE16. How many days did you take off work or school?

- Less than one day
- 1 or 2 days
- 3 days to less than one full week
- 1 full week to less than a month
- A month or more

CE17. Did you lose any pay for the time you took off?

CE18. About how much pay did you lose? {READ CATEGORIES AS NEEDED.}

- Less than \$100
- \$100 to less than \$500
- \$500 to less than \$1,000
- \$1,000 or more

Of Condition 2 incidents where CE15 was asked, the respondent reported taking time off from work in 5.0% (unweighted), and time off from school in 0.9%. By comparison, the respondent reported losing time from work in 11.5% of incidents for one or more reasons other than injury where Q147a was asked.⁸ As noted, the Condition 2 universe was somewhat larger than that of Condition 1, and in general Condition 2 respondents seemed to report more “less serious” incidents. Both of these are possible explanations for the difference in time off between Condition 1 and Condition 2.

⁸ Time lost due to injury was reported in only 2 CIRs out of 401 where the Condition 1 lost work series was asked.

Another possibility is that the list of reasons in Q147a served as memory cues, leading Condition 1 respondents to more “Yes” answers.

Among Condition 1 incidents where Q148 was asked, 42.3% had reports of less than one day (an entry of “0 days”), as compared with 11.1% of Condition 2 CIRs where CE16 was asked. While the sample sizes are relatively small (Condition 1: 54, Condition 2: 60 CIRs), this is a very large difference. Two possible reasons for the difference come to mind:

- **Question-Wording.** Condition 1 asked “How much time . . .,” Condition 2 “How many days . . .” While “less than one (whole) day” is an appropriate answer to both, it fits the Condition 1 wording better. The Condition 2 question could be heard as “On how many days . . .,” in which case 1 hour off could be reported as “one day.”
- **Wording of the Previous Question.** As just noted, Condition 1 respondents reported a higher percentage of incidents with work loss than did Condition 2 respondents, which might be due to the reasons for losing time acting as memory cues. If that is the case, then it is likely that Condition 1 respondents would report less memorable time off, like an hour or 2.

Condition 1 respondents reported losing 1 day or more of work in 6.6% of incidents where the question was asked, as compared with 5.4% of incidents with such responses in Condition 2.

Recommendation 7-4: Add the examples from Q147a to CE15.

Recommendation 7-5: Change “How many days” to “How much time” in CE16.

Condition 2 added the following questions on work or school loss:

CE19. Did you lose your job or have to give up work, or withdraw from school as a result of {this/the} incident?

CE19a. Did you have to change your job or school as a result of {this/the} incident?

CE19 was asked for any incident where the respondent reported taking time off from work or school; 22.2% of these incidents had a “Yes” response. Of incidents with a “No” response in CE19, 7.1% had a “Yes” response in CE19a.

Recommendation 7-6: Retain CE19 and CE19a, which add an important economic consequence.

8. Module VS: Victim Services

The current NCVS CIR (Condition 1) asks about services the victim may have received following questions about police involvement, for all incidents.

Q130. Did you (or someone in your household) receive any help or advice from any office or agency—other than the police—that deals with victims of crime?

Q131. (IF YES TO Q130) Was that a government or private agency?

Of incidents where Q130 was asked, 7.6% had “Yes” responses, and of those 62.3% had “Government” selected in Q131. (Multiple responses were not allowed in Q131.)

There was considerable interest in getting more information about the kinds of services victims received, satisfaction with these services, and what services they sought or felt they needed. Previous BJS cognitive testing of questions in the NCVS Supplemental Victimization Survey (i.e., stalking supplement) included an expanded set of questions about victim services (Martinez et al., 2017). Starting with these questions, the Instrument Redesign team developed a series of questions about victim services for the Field Test.

8.1 Which Incidents Were Asked about Victim Services

For purposes of the Field Test, the number of CIRs in which a given Condition 2 respondent would be asked the Victim Services (VS) module was limited. It was asked only in the first CIR for each person, and only if the incident involved an Attack (including Sexual Attack) or was reported as being “Severely upsetting” in CS3 (see Chapter 6).

Of the CIRs that thus qualified for the Condition 2 VS module based on previous responses, 42.5% (unweighted) were not asked the series because they were not the first CIR for that person. Of the CIRs where the VS series was asked, 60.8% were classified as personal crimes (violent crime or personal theft), 21.2% as property crimes, and 18.0% as not an NCVS crime. To put that last percentage in perspective, across all CIRs the percentages coded as “not an NCVS crime” were 27.7% IL, 13.8% NIL, and 27.7% Condition 1.

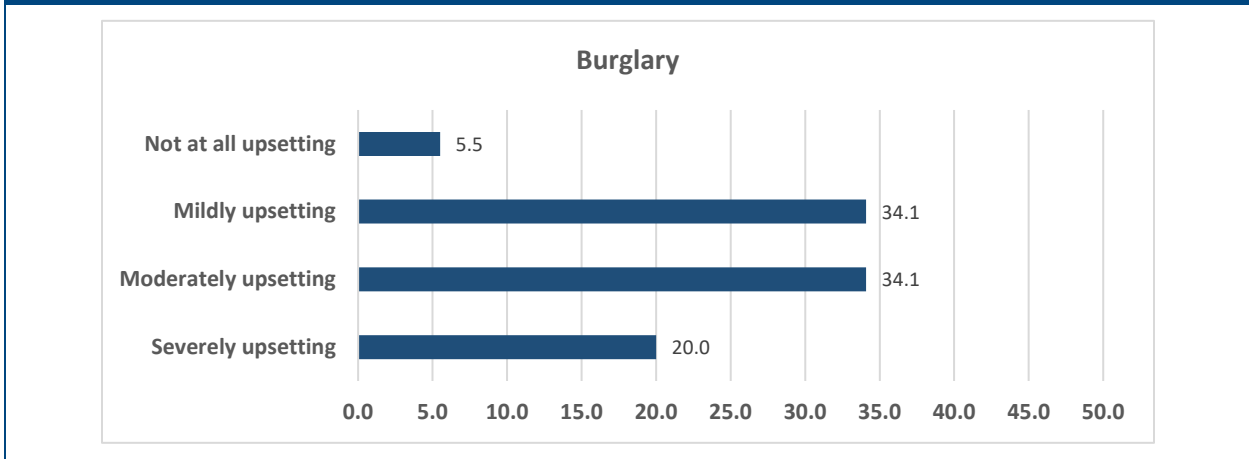
To get an idea of what proportion of incidents not involving an Attack were asked about VS, Figures 8-1a–d show the overall unweighted distribution of responses to CS3 (“How upsetting?”) by type of property crime. Half or more of Burglaries and Motor Vehicle Thefts were judged as “Moderately upsetting” or “Severely upsetting,” as compared with about a third of Other Thefts and Vandalisms.

Since the Condition 2 VS series is so different from what is in Condition 1, there is no question of comparability between the two conditions. The decision to limit the VS series to the first CIR for each person in Condition 2 was based solely on reducing respondent burden during the Field Test. It was never intended to be a strategy going forward.

Recommendation 8-1: Ask the VS series for all qualifying incidents, using the Field Test Condition 2 criteria. While this will increase respondent burden, there will be offsetting recommendations later in this chapter. If there is a need to reduce burden further, limit the

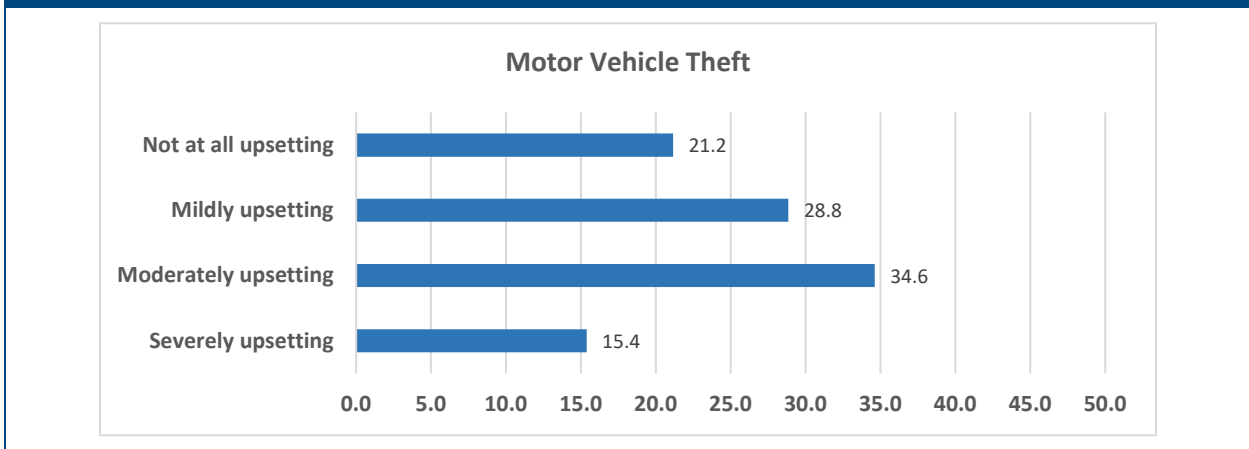
property crimes for which the VS series is asked to incidents reported as Burglaries and Motor Vehicle Thefts.

Figure 8-1a. Distribution of responses to “How upsetting” the incident was, by Burglary, Condition 2



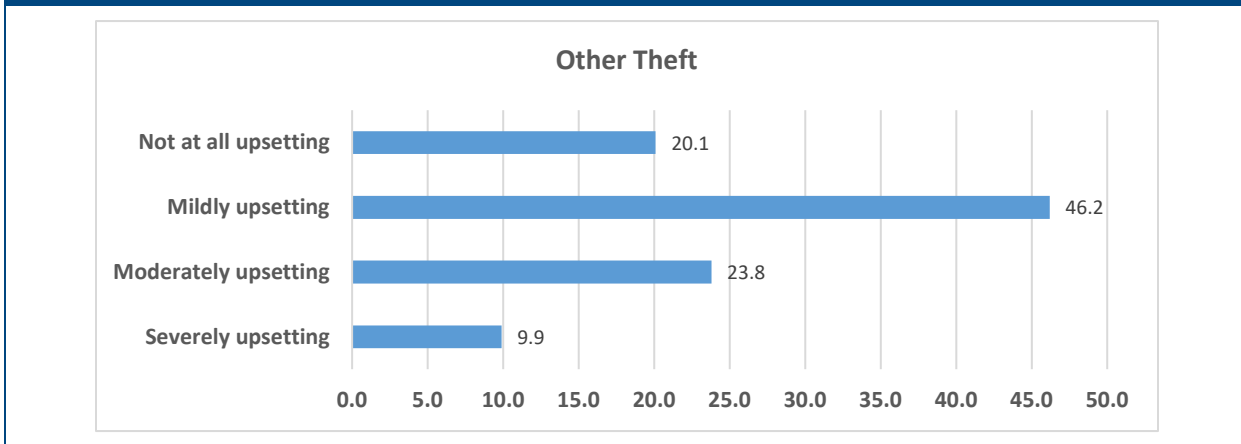
Source: 2019-2020 NCVS-R Field Test.

Figure 8-1b. Distribution of responses to “How upsetting” the incident was, by Motor Vehicle Theft, Condition 2



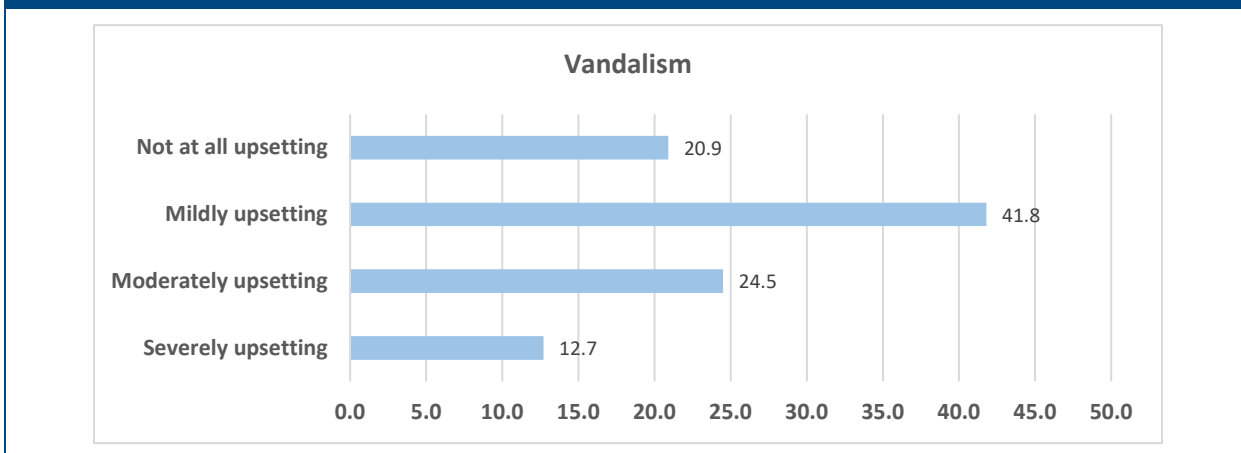
Source: 2019-2020 NCVS-R Field Test.

Figure 8-1c. Distribution of responses to “How upsetting” the incident was, by Other Theft, Condition 2



Source: 2019-2020 NCVS-R Field Test.

Figure 8-1d. Distribution of responses to “How upsetting” the incident was, by Vandalism, Condition 2



Source: 2019-2020 NCVS-R Field Test.

8.2 Who the Victim Told about the Incident

The Condition 2 VS series began by asking whom the victim had told about the incident:

- VS1A. Have you told any family, friends, co-workers, {IF STUDENT: classmates} or neighbors about the incident?
- VS1B. {Other than {the police or} family/friends, have/Have} you told anyone in the following positions about the incident who you thought might be able to help you? (MARK ALL THAT APPLY.)

IF STUDENT: Teacher, school counselor or school administrator

IF AGE 16 OR OLDER: Employer, supervisor, or human resources personnel

Medical or mental health professional

Representative of a religious or community organization

Security guard or personnel, other than the police
Other person in a leadership or professional position (SPECIFY:) ____
No, have not told anyone in any of these positions

There were no comparable questions in Condition 1. The intent was to learn about possible sources of informal help. Of those asked VS1A and VS1B, 77.1% (unweighted) said “Yes” to VS1A, and 40.6% said “Yes” to one or more of the positions in VS1B. The most common VS1B responses were work-related positions (16.6% of CIRs), medical/mental health professionals (9.1%), and other leadership/professional positions (7.2%).

Recommendation 8-2: Retain VS1A and VS1B moving forward. These questions worked as intended and provided useful information.

8.3 What Kinds of Services Were Received

Condition 2 asked up to 11 questions about receiving VS, as follows:

- VS2. Besides any help you might have gotten from friends or family, have you received the following kinds of services because of the incident?
- a. Hotline, helpline, or crisis line intervention?
 - b. IF NOT REPORTED EARLIER: Counseling, therapy, support groups, or help from a mental health provider?
 - c. IF INJURY REPORTED: Help or advocacy with medical care or medical exams, including accompanying you to a medical exam?
 - d. IF SEXUAL ASSAULT REPORTED: Sexual assault exam by a doctor, nurse or other medical professional?
 - e. Free or low-cost legal services from an attorney?
 - f. Help with the legal process, such as with police interviews, preparing for or going to court, or enforcement of your rights?
 - g. Help filing for a restraining, protection, or no-contact order?
 - h. IF 18 OR OLDER: Help applying for victim compensation?
 - i. IF 18 OR OLDER: Short-term or emergency financial assistance?
 - j. IF 18 OR OLDER: Housing, shelter or safe house services?
 - k. IF 18 OR OLDER: Any other help or services because of the incident?

Field Test Results

There was at least one positive response to each of the VS2 questions, with most having 2% positive responses or fewer (unweighted) among incidents where it was asked. The most frequently received services were “Sexual Assault exam” (VS2D, 5.3% of incidents where VS2D was asked), “Help or advocacy with medical care or medical exams” (VS2C, 5.1%), “Help applying for victim compensation” (VS2H, 4.2%), and “Help with legal process” (VS2F, 3.5%).

The first set of columns in Table 8-1 shows the estimated rates of receiving VS and the weighted proportion of positive responses to Q130 for Condition 1 incidents. The second set of columns shows the estimated rates and the proportion of incidents where VS2 was asked and there was at least one positive response for Condition 2 incidents coded as violent crimes or coded as property crimes and reported as being “severely upsetting.”

For violent crimes, the rate estimates are remarkably similar between Condition 1 (8.3 per 1,000 persons for all violent crimes, 6.9 per 1,000 for Attacks, and 1.3 per 1,000 for Face-to-face Threats) and Condition 2 (8.2, 7.2, and 1.0, respectively). The Condition 1 percentages (12.9%, 16.2%, and 6.3%) are all higher than the corresponding Condition 2 percentages (10.2%, 12.8%, and 4.3%). For property crimes, the Condition 1 rate (4.9% per 1,000 households) is higher than that for Condition 2 (2.0 per 1,000 households), but the Condition 1 percentage (2.3%) is lower (6.4% for Condition 2). The difference for property crime is that the Condition 2 VS questions were asked only of property crime incidents the respondent reported to be “severely upsetting.” None of the differences for either rates or percentages is statistically significant.

Table 8-1. Receipt of victim services by type of crime, Condition 1 and Condition 2

Victim response	Condition 1				Condition 2				Significance tests			
	Unwtd number	Weighted number	Rate per 1,000	Percent	Unwtd number	Weighted number	Rate per 1,000	Percent	Rate		Percent	
									t-value	p-value	t-value	p-value
All violent crime	152	17,285,030			187	21,742,270						
Received victim services	26	2,231,177	8.3	12.9	24	2,208,641	8.2	10.2	0.02	0.98	0.47	0.64
Attacks ^a	111	11,543,627			139	15,099,754						
Received victim services	22	1,868,402	6.9	16.2	21	1,926,004	7.2	12.8	-0.05	0.96	0.17	0.86
Face-to-face Threats	41	5,741,403			48	6,642,517						
Received victim services	4	362,775	1.3	6.3	3	282,638	1.0	4.3	0.32	0.75	0.43	0.67
Property crime ^b	353	26,100,656			52	3,715,455						
Received victim services	11	588,336	4.9	2.3	2	236,851	2.0	6.4	1.06	0.30	-0.77	0.45

Source: 2019-2020 NCVS-R Field Test.

Percent is percentage of incidents of that type where VS were received.

Rates are per 1,000 persons age 12 or older (violent) or per 1,000 households (property).

^a Includes Sexual Attacks and Attempted Attacks.

^b Condition 2 includes only property crime incidents the respondent considered "severely upsetting."

Discussion and Recommendations

The Condition 1 and Condition 2 estimates of incidents where VS were received are based on completely different questions, asked about somewhat different sets of incidents, so the conclusions one may draw from comparing them are limited. However, the similarity between Condition 1 and Condition 2 estimates of rates of receiving VS for violent crime suggests that the Condition 1 and Condition 2 questions are measuring the same phenomenon. The difference in the percentage of violent crime incidents where VS was received is consistent with the Topline Report (Cantor et al., 2022) assessment that Condition 2 respondents mentioned more “less serious” incidents. That is, victims are probably less likely to seek services for less serious incidents, so one would expect the Condition 2 percentage of incidents where services were received to be smaller than for Condition 1.

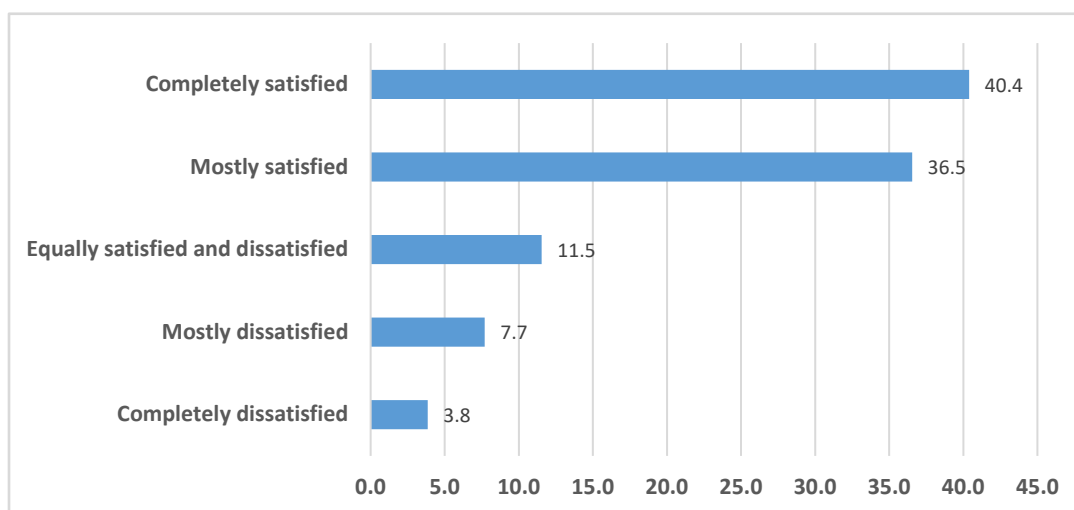
To reduce respondent burden, the Condition 2 VS questions were asked about property crime incidents only when the respondent reported that they were “severely upsetting.” As a result, the Condition 2 rate estimate for receiving services was lower than that for Condition 1, and the proportion of incidents where services were received was higher, with the denominator being only “severely upsetting” property crime incidents.

Recommendation 8-3: Retain VS2A-K. The list of victim service types elicited a range of responses for an important policy area, and the comparison with Condition 1 did not raise any particular issues.

8.4 Satisfaction with Services

For each positive response in VS2A-K, a follow-up (VS3A-K) asked how satisfied the respondent was with the services received. Figure 8-2 shows the distribution of responses across all follow-up items. There is insufficient sample for meaningful analysis of each item. There is a good spread of responses, with 76.9% being either completely or mostly satisfied.

Figure 8-2. Response distribution (unweighted) for questions about satisfaction with victim services received across all service types, Condition 2



Source: 2019-2020 NCVS-R Field Test.

Recommendation 8-4: Retain VS3A-K. These questions provide useful information and involve relatively little burden because they are not asked often. With the larger NCVS production sample, the sample sizes will be sufficient to generate meaningful estimates.

8.5 Services the Victim Tried to Get but Could Not

Condition 2 continued with this question:

VS4. Were there any types of services that you TRIED to get BUT WERE UNABLE TO GET?

Only 1.7% of CIRs where VS4 was asked had a positive response. Those respondents were then asked (VS5) which of the services in VS2 they tried to get but could not, as well as the following question:

VS6. Were any of the following reasons why you didn't actually get the services you needed after the incident?

The services you needed were not available in your area?

Program was full, or there was a long waitlist?

You did not think you were eligible for services, or you were told you were not eligible?

You did not have transportation {or childcare}?

You could not take time off work or school?

The services were not available in your language?

You didn't want to get the offender in trouble or face harsh consequences?

You were worried about the consequences for yourself or your family?

Some other reason? (SPECIFY:) _____

There was only one response to VS6, an "Other reason."

Recommendation 8-5: Given the yield on these questions and the respondent burden of the Field Test VS module, drop VS4, VS5, and VS6.

8.6 Services the Victim Wanted but Did Not Try to Get

In CIRs where the respondent did not get or try to get any services, the VS series continued with these questions:

- VS7. You said you didn't try to get any services. Did you want any services?
- VS8. (IF YES TO VS7) Please indicate whether or not each of the following were reasons why you did not try to get any services:

You did not know what help or services were available

You did not think you were eligible for services, or you were told you were not eligible

You did not have transportation {or childcare}

You could not take time off work or school

You didn't want to get the offender in trouble or face harsh consequences

You were worried about the consequences for yourself or your family

You did not feel services were appropriate to meet your needs

Some other reason (SPECIFY:) _____

There were positive responses to VS7 in 6.9% of CIRs where it was asked, and all of the reasons in VS8 were selected at least three times. On average, respondents saying "Yes" to VS7 mentioned 2.1 reasons in VS8.

Recommendation 8-6: Retain VS7 and VS8. These questions appear to provide useful information and involve relatively little burden. If VS4, VS5, and VS6 are dropped, ask VS7 about all incidents where no services were reported in VS2 and delete the words "try to" from the question.

9. Series Crimes in the CIR

As described in the Topline Report (Cantor et al., 2022), Condition 2 moved the identification of series crimes (6 or more incidents,⁹ similar in detail, which the respondent cannot distinguish among) from the beginning of the CIR to the Victimization Screener. For either Condition 1 or 2, only one CIR was collected for a series crime, about the most recent incident.

Condition 2 also dropped the following questions, asked at the end of the CIR for the first incident in the series:

- Q154a. You have told me about the most recent incident. How many times did this kind of thing happen to you during the last 6 months?*
- Q154b. Is that because there is no way of knowing, or because it happened too many times, or is there some other reason?*
- Q155. In what month or months did these incidents take place?*
- Q156. Did all, some, or none of these incidents occur in the same place?*
- Q157. Were all, some, or none of these incidents done by the same person(s)?*
- Q158a. What (was/were) the relationship(s) of the offender(s) to you? For example, friend, spouse, schoolmate, etc.?*
- Q159a. Did the same thing happen each time?*
- Q159b. How did the incidents differ?*
- Q160a. Is the trouble still going on?*
- Q160b. What ended it?*

Since Condition 2 moved where series crimes were identified to the screener, these questions were dropped because they are redundant and analysts have also not often used them. They were asked 11 times in Condition 1. Note that in Condition 1 the number of incidents in the series was asked at both the beginning and end of the CIR.

⁹ To reduce burden in the Field Test, the threshold was lowered to 4 incidents.

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