Journal Article Questions

Chapter 2: Measuring Crime

Article 1: Lynch, J., & Jarvis, J. (2008). Missing data and imputation in the Uniform Crime Reports and the effects on national estimates. Journal of Contemporary Criminal Justice, 24(1), 69–85. Retrieved from

http://journals.sagepub.com/stoken/default+domain/SQVSztYwWdzZ6Mca8qqu/full

The Uniform Crime Reporting (UCR) program has been a major source of data on crime since 1929. These data were long considered authoritative, but lately, questions have arisen about their accuracy. Maltz has documented the magnitude of missing data in the series and demonstrated their import for research on policy issues. Maltz’s work focuses on agency-level estimates for specific months, but the UCR program was never meant to provide estimates for this unit or time period. So, although Maltz’s work is important, it has not addressed the consequences of missing data for the principal purpose of the UCR program—providing annual national estimates of the level and change in crimes known to the police. This article complements Maltz’s work by assessing the magnitude and distribution of missing data nationally and their effect on national-level and change estimates. It also examines the effects of the FBI’s imputation practices on these estimates

Questions that apply to this article:

1. What is the overall research question of the paper?

2. What do the authors say about Maltz’s work?

3. What is the magnitude of missing data in the UCR?

Article 2: Huff-Corzine, L., McCutcheon, J., Corzine, J., Jarvis, J., Tetzlaff-Bemiller M., & Landon, M. (2014). Shooting for accuracy: Comparing data sources on mass murder. Homicide Studies 18(1), 105–124. Retrieved from

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Although researchers have questioned their coverage and accuracy, the media routinely are used as sources of data on mass murder in the United States. Databases compiled from media sources such as newspaper and network news programs include the New York Police Department’s Active Shooters file, the Brady Campaign Mass Casualty Shootings data set, and the *Mother Jones* database. Conversely, official crime data have been underutilized by researchers who study mass murder (for exceptions, see Duwe, 2007; Fox & Levin, 1998). In this study, we compare similarities and differences for mass murder cases in the United States as portrayed by selected mass media sources. Then, we turn our focus to a comparison of the *Uniform Crime Reports’* (UCR) Supplementary Homicide Report (SHR) and the *National Incident-Based Reporting System* (NIBRS). Our primary focus is on mass murders involving four or more fatalities—not including the perpetrator—that have occurred between 2001 and 2010. Implications for enhancing the comprehensiveness and quality of mass murder data with the goal of increasing their usefulness for guiding prevention and risk mitigation efforts also are discussed.

Questions that apply to this article:

1. What is the purpose of the article?

2. Identify and explain two of the significant findings from this study.

3. What are some of the limitations of the study?

Article 3: Koper, C. (2014). Assessing the practice of hot spots policing: Surveying results from a national convenience sample of local police agencies. Journal of Contemporary Criminal Justice, 30(2), 123–146. Retrieved from

http://journals.sagepub.com/stoken/default+domain/ebAdxuRyHRtQdkNcCDvq/full

This study examined the practice of hot spots policing as reported by a convenience sample of predominantly large municipal police agencies. Police commonly defined hot spots in terms of micro places as well as larger areas, and they emphasized short-term identification and responses to hot spots. Respondents identified problem analysis/solving, targeting offenders, and directed patrol as the most common and effective strategies for hot spots, but there was wide variation in their views of the most effective strategies for different types of hot spots. Current practices could arguably be improved through more a precise geographic focus, a greater emphasis on chronic hot spots and their criminogenic features, and further research to determine optimal strategies, dosages, and proactive uses of hot spots policing.

Questions that apply to this article:

1. How was the data collected for this study?

2. What does the study conclude about “hot spots policing”?

3. Identify at least two limitations of this study.