



The Hispanic Victim

National Crime Survey Report SD-NCS-N-16A, NCJ-67706

Advance Report, June 1980

Hispanics in the United States generally have higher victimization rates than non-Hispanics, but, in most cases, their rates of reporting crimes to the police are not different from those for the non-Hispanic population. With few exceptions, estimated crime rates in the Hispanic community in recent years have evidenced no significant upward or downward trend. Despite the prevalence of comparatively higher rates for Hispanics, moreover, the distribution of violent crime within that population is not unlike the distribution among the non-Hispanic majority.

These are but a few of the general findings of a forthcoming National Crime Survey (NCS) report entitled *The Hispanic Victim: A Comparative Study of Criminal Victimization Against Hispanics and Non-Hispanics*.¹ The study, based upon a representative sample of persons age 12 and over living in approximately 60,000 households across the country, will assess the relative impact of criminal victimization on Hispanics and provide a comprehensive collection of statistical estimates on crime characteristics.

As measured by the NCS during a 6-year interval (1973-1978), households headed by a Hispanic person had higher average rates for residential burglary and larceny, as well as for motor vehicle theft.² Differences also existed for some of the more serious forms of household crime. Hispanics experienced relatively more forcible entry burglaries and completed motor vehicle thefts than did non-Hispanics, and, although not statistically significant, the rate for household larcenies of \$50 or more appeared to be higher for Hispanics (Table 1).

For personal crimes, there were no significant differences in the rates for rape or assault, but individuals of Hispanic origin had a higher robbery rate than did non-Hispanics. The overall violent crime rates for the two groups were not significantly different.

In contrast to these findings, non-Hispanics were more likely victims of personal larceny without contact. Pocket-pickings and purse-snatchings (the components of personal larceny with contact) appeared to be more common to Hispanics, but this result was not statistically significant and did not appreciably affect the overall rate for personal crimes of theft, which is largely determined by the non-contact form of larceny.

The annual crime victimization rates for Hispanics fluctuated during the 6-year interval, but there were few noteworthy trends during the period (Table 2). An excep-

tion was personal larceny without contact, which rose by about 30 percent between 1973 and 1978. The rate for all personal crimes of theft also exhibited a significant upward trend.

As for the reporting of crimes to the police, NCS findings did not identify a general pattern of higher or lower reporting by Hispanics relative to non-Hispanics. There was some indication that non-Hispanics were more likely to inform the police about personal crimes of theft; the overall proportion of violent crimes reported by the two populations did not significantly differ.

Variations in police notification were most pronounced in cases of household larceny. Non-Hispanic households were better reporters of total larcenies, as well as completed ones, whether valued at under \$50 or at \$50 and over. The reporting rates for residential burglary and motor vehicle theft were not statistically different.

An important characteristic of violent crime is whether or not a weapon is displayed or used by the offender. In approximately two-fifths of all crimes involving Hispanics, one or more guns, knives, or other weapons were wielded. There was some indication that weapons were more likely to be present during a personal robbery than an assault, and when the offender was a stranger rather than a non-stranger (Table 3).

Detailed information on crime rates among Hispanics distinguished along sociodemographic lines will be presented in the forthcoming report. However, a preliminary examination of the data for Hispanics reveals several striking features (see chart). Hispanic men were much more likely than women to be victims of violent criminal attack. Furthermore, young persons age 12-19, irrespective of their sex, had a much higher violent victimization rate than the elderly. As shown in the chart, these disparities by sex and age paralleled similar differences evident for the non-Hispanic majority. Within both populations, moreover, comparatively high violent crime rates existed for the poor, the unemployed, and the divorced or separated.

The NCS is designed and carried out for the Bureau of Justice Statistics by the U.S. Bureau of the Census. *The Hispanic Victim* will have a comprehensive set of data tables and a description of the survey methodology, including a discussion of the sampling error, as well as definitions and other technical information.

¹Hispanics are defined as persons who identify themselves as Mexican-Americans, Chicanos, Mexicans, Mexicanos, Puerto Ricans, Cubans, Central or South Americans, or other Spanish culture or origin, regardless of race. Persons who report their culture or origin as other than Hispanic are classified as non-

Hispanic.

²Unqualified differences referred to in this report are statistically significant at a 95-percent level of confidence. Differences qualified by the expression "some indication" are significant at a 90-percent confidence level.

Table 1. Personal and household crimes: Victimization and police reporting rates, 1973-78 average

Sector and type of crime	Victimization rates		Police reporting rates ¹	
	HISPANIC	NON-HISPANIC	HISPANIC	NON-HISPANIC
Personal sector²				
Crimes of violence	37.1	32.9	46.3	46.5
Rape	1.0	0.9	70.3	52.2
Robbery	*8.7	6.4	46.1	53.5
Robbery with injury	**3.1	2.1	54.7	64.8
Robbery without injury	**5.6	4.3	41.4	48.0
Assault	27.4	25.6	45.5	44.5
Aggravated assault	11.8	9.8	56.4	53.7
Simple assault	15.6	15.7	37.3	38.8
Crimes of theft	*86.6	95.9	**21.6	25.0
Personal larceny with contact	4.1	2.9	25.8	35.1
Purse snatching	1.6	0.9	34.1	44.8
Pocket picking	2.5	2.0	20.6	30.7
Personal larceny without contact	*82.5	93.0	21.4	24.7
Household sector³				
Burglary	*100.9	89.5	46.2	48.0
Forcible entry	*39.7	29.6	69.0	71.4
Unlawful entry without force	35.5	39.9	34.7	38.1
Attempted forcible entry	**25.7	20.0	26.9	32.9
Household larceny	*140.5	119.9	*18.7	26.0
Less than \$50	**83.8	72.3	*8.6	15.0
\$50 or more	41.6	35.0	*39.2	50.1
Amount not available	6.1	4.3	17.5	19.6
Attempted larceny	9.0	8.3	19.3	23.9
Motor vehicle theft	*27.6	17.6	68.6	68.4
Completed theft	*17.0	11.2	**94.3	88.2
Attempted theft	*10.7	6.5	27.9	34.1

NOTE: Detail may not add to total shown because of rounding.

*Significantly different from the rate for non-Hispanics at the 95-percent confidence level.

**Significantly different from the rate for non-Hispanics at the 90-percent confidence level.

¹Percent of victimizations reported to the police.

²Victimization rates per 1,000 persons age 12 and over.

³Victimization rates per 1,000 households.

Table 3. Personal crimes of violence: Percent of incidents in which offenders used weapons, by type of crime and victim-offender relationship, 1973-78 average

Type of crime	HISPANIC			NON-HISPANIC		
	All incidents	Involving strangers	Involving nonstrangers	All incidents	Involving strangers	Involving nonstrangers
Crimes of violence	42.0	46.3	33.0	36.4	40.0	30.3
Rape	28.6	35.3	*9.1	26.2	30.0	*16.8
Robbery	52.1	54.3	34.4	47.5	50.7	33.8
Robbery with injury	55.7	58.6	*36.3	45.4	46.9	39.7
Robbery without injury	50.1	51.9	*32.9	48.6	52.6	30.4
Assault ¹	39.1	42.8	33.5	34.0	36.6	30.3
Aggravated assault	96.2	96.8	95.2	94.2	95.4	92.1

¹Includes data on simple assault, which by definition does not involve the use of a weapon.

²Estimate, based on about 10 or fewer sample cases, is statistically unreliable.

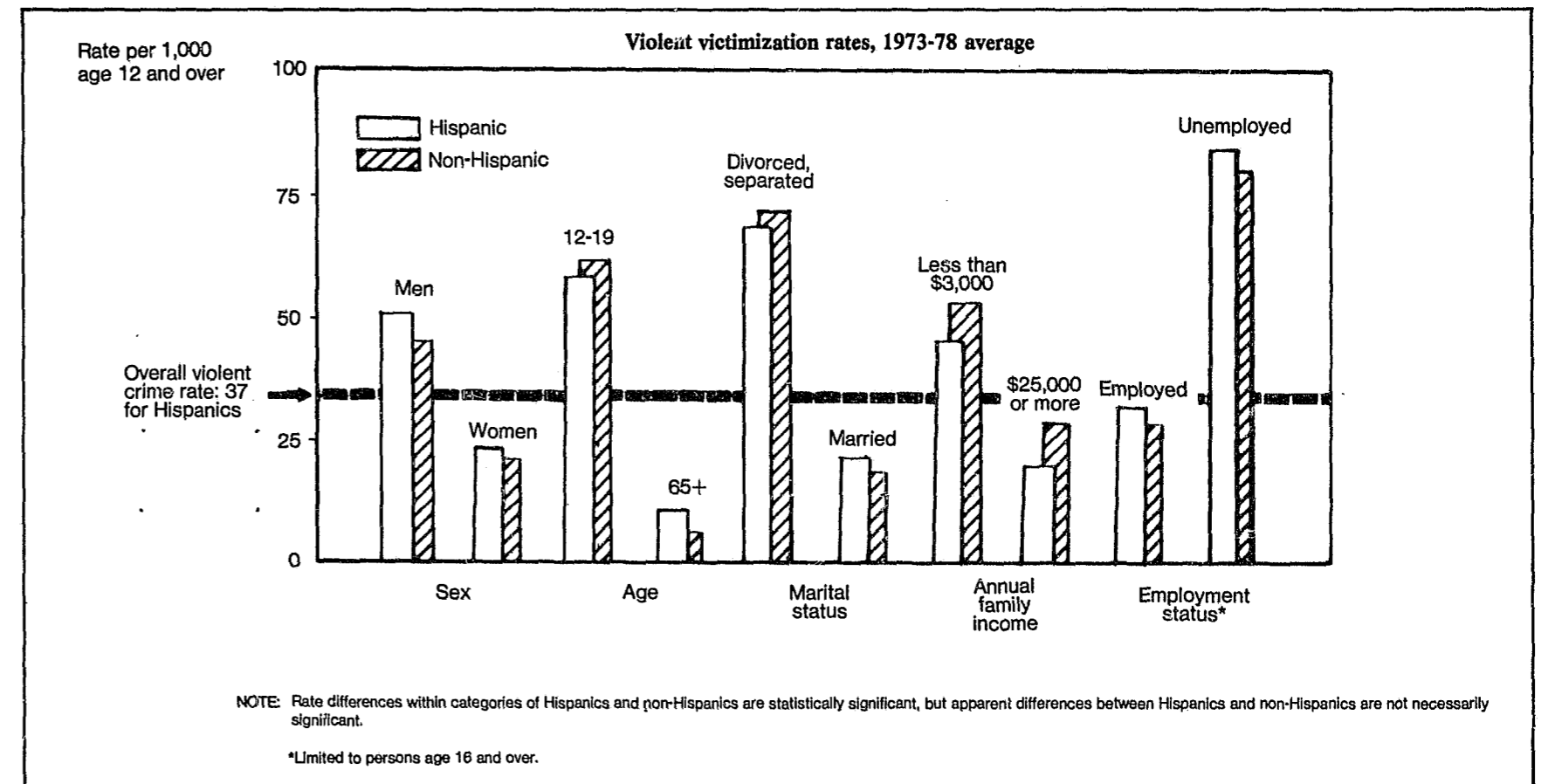
Table 2. Personal and household crimes: Number of victimizations and victimization rates, by type of crime, 1973-78

(Numbers in thousands, rate per 1,000)

Sector and type of crime	HISPANIC						NON-HISPANIC					
	1973	1974	1975	1976	1977	1978	1973	1974	1975	1976	1977	1978
Personal sector²												
Crimes of violence	266	263	314	284	336	334	5,032	5,189	5,225	5,276	5,538	5,576
Rate	36.5	34.1	39.6	34.7	40.1	37.4	32.4	32.8	32.5	32.4	33.6	33.6
Rape	5	4	9	10	16	5	149	154	144	134	137	167
Rate	0.6	0.5	1.1	1.3	1.9	0.5	1.0	1.0	0.9	0.8	0.8	1.0
Robbery	62	67	79	58	63	93	1,036	1,127	1,064	1,044	1,014	943
Rate	8.5	8.6	10.0	7.1	7.5	10.4	6.7	7.1	6.6	6.4	6.2	5.7
Assault	199	193	226	216	257	237	3,848	3,908	4,017	4,099	4,387	4,466
Rate	27.3	25.0	28.6	26.4	30.7	26.6	24.8	24.7	25.0	25.2	26.6	26.9
Aggravated assault	97	89	82	99	93	113	1,542	1,624	1,538	1,538	1,639	1,585
Rate	13.3	11.5	10.4	12.1	11.0	12.7	9.9	10.3	9.6	9.7	10.0	9.5
Simple assault	102	105	144	117	165	124	2,306	2,284	2,479	2,515	2,748	2,881
Rate	14.0	13.5	18.2	14.3	19.6	13.9	14.8	14.5	15.4	15.5	16.7	17.3
Crimes of theft	535	693	613	737	753	861	14,302	15,070	15,559	15,688	16,080	16,119
Rate	73.4	89.6	77.4	90.1	89.8	96.4	92.1	95.4	96.9	96.4	97.7	97.0
Personal larceny with contact	29	27	32	36	27	48	468	491	485	460	433	501
Rate	3.9	3.5	4.1	4.4	3.2	5.3	3.0	3.1	3.0	2.8	2.6	3.0
Personal larceny without contact	507	666	581	701	726	813	13,834	14,579	15,074	15,228	15,647	15,618
Rate	69.5	86.2	73.3	85.7	86.6	91.0	89.1	92.3	93.9	93.6	95.0	94.0
Total population age 12 and over	(7,289)	(7,735)	(7,924)	(8,177)	(8,387)	(8,936)	(155,351)	(158,033)	(160,585)	(162,693)	(164,648)	(166,209)
Household sector												
Household burglary	272	285	300	314	345	375	6,116	6,372	6,404	6,304	6,373	6,284
Rate	98.5	96.5	97.5	98.5	105.2	107.7	91.6	93.0	91.6	88.5	87.8	85.0
Household larceny	323	408	457	437	479	530	7,136	8,432	8,696	8,802	8,873	8,779
Rate	117.2	138.2	148.4	137.2	146.0	151.9	106.8	123.0	124.4	123.5	122.3	118.7
Motor vehicle theft	91	84	81	75	89	98	1,244	1,265	1,338	1,148	1,201	1,266
Rate	33.0	28.5	26.4	23.4	27.2	28.0	18.6	18.5	19.1	16.1	16.6	17.1
Total number of households	(2,759)	(2,955)	(3,081)	(3,186)	(3,282)	(3,486)	(66,788)	(68,559)	(69,901)	(71,255)	(72,575)	(73,947)

NOTE: Detail may not add to total shown because of rounding.

¹Estimate, based on about 10 or fewer sample cases, is statistically unreliable.



U.S. Department of Justice
Bureau of Justice Statistics

Official Business
Penalty for Private Use \$300

Postage and Fees Paid
U.S. Department of Justice
Jus 436



Washington, D.C. 20531

END