

Crime, Fear and Blame: Does respondent ethnicity make a difference?

Dr Paula Kautt

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(Revised Date!)

Given current public and policy interest in immigration as well as the emergence of new minority identities in the UK, a perception exists that Black and Minority Ethnicities (BME) have very different experiences of criminal victimisation, fear of crime and the criminal justice system (CJS) than their white counterparts. Prominent examples such as ethnic riots (e.g., Brixton, Burnley, Birmingham) or the police handling of the Stephen Lawrence case accentuate and reinforce this view. Since 1982, the British Crime Survey (BCS) has attempted to capture the 'dark figure' of unreported crime as well as respondents' fear of crime and perceptions of the Criminal Justice System (CJS). As such, it may be surprising to learn that BCS data has only rarely been used to investigate the possible influence of BME status over these outcomes and that existing studies largely rely on pre-2001 BCS data. This research uses 2001-2007 BCS data to assess not only which factors (e.g. sex, age, household income) are related to the above outcomes but also shows how their influence differs by both BME group (e.g., Caribbean, Indian) and location (Police Force Area). The implications for both social and criminal justice policy will be discussed and, hopefully, debated.

Paula Kautt is a Senior Research Associate at the Institute of Criminology, University of Cambridge. This research project is funded by the Economic and Social Research Council under the Understanding Population Trends and Processes Programme. Her research interests include advanced quantitative methods, victimization surveys, secondary data analysis, criminal courts and sentencing. Her work has appeared in *The Howard Journal of Criminal Justice*, *Justice Quarterly*, *Criminal Justice Review*, *The American Journal of Criminal Justice* and *The Federal Sentencing Reporter* as well as a number of books. She has also received research grants from the American Statistical Association and the National Institute of Justice.

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