BJA JRSA

Evaluation News

Expanding Knowledge Through Information Exchange

October 2010

Evaluation News is produced by BJA's Center for Program Evaluation and Performance Measurement at the Justice Research and Statistics Association.

Send questions and comments to bjaeval@jrsa.org

Bureau of Justice Assistance (BJA)
Center for Program Evaluation and Performance Measurement at the Justice Research and Statistics Association
777 N. Capitol St., NE, Suite 801
Washington, DC 20002
(202) 842-9330

To subscribe or unsubscribe to *Evaluation News*, send an email with your request to bjaeval@jrsa.org

This project is supported by Grant No. 2009-DB-BX-K031 awarded by the Bureau of Justice Assistance. The Bureau of Justice Assistance is a component of the Office of Justice Programs, which also includes the Bureau of Justice Statistics, the National Institute of Justice, the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention, and the Office for Victims of Crime. Points of view or opinions in this document are those of the author and do not represent the official position or policies of the United States Department of Justice. Privacy Statement and Disclaimer: www.usdoj.gov/privacy-file.htm.

Evaluation News provides information on the BJA Center for Program Evaluation and Performance Measurement, promotes the exchange of information on evaluation and performance measurement, and publicizes criminal justice research and evaluation

Announcements

The Adult Drug Courts program area of the Center for Program Evaluation and Performance Measurement Website has recently been updated. The updated program area is available at:
http://www.ojp.usdoj.gov/BJA/evaluation/program-substance-abuse/drug-index.htm

We would like to thank all of those that provided us with their feedback on E-News and the Center for Program Evaluation and Performance Measurement Website. The information that you provided will be used as part of our continual effort to improve E-News and the Center for Program Evaluation and Performance Measurement Website.

The American Evaluation Association's annual conference is being held November 10th-13th, 2010 at the Grand Hyatt in San Antonio, Texas. The theme of this year's annual meeting is Evaluation Quality. For more information, please visit the conference website http://eval.org/eval2010/default.asp or contact Membership Director Heidi Nye via email at info@eval.org or telephone at (888) 232.2275 or (508) 748.3326.

Recidivism

Makarios, Steiner, and Travis conducted a study to examine predictors of recidivism among men and women released from prison in Ohio. The study was conducted using data from a larger research project that sought to examine the impact of the Ohio Department of Rehabilitation and Correction's move to graduated sanctioning. The sample of 1,965 offenders was drawn from all offenders placed under the jurisdiction of the Adult Parole Authority during two time periods: October through December and August through October 2005. The authors used two measures of recidivism: *rearrest* and *felony rearrest*. The follow-up period was 12 months and a variety of variables were used to control for potential confounding influences. These included: *static risk* scale, severity of felony offense, violent offense, sex offense, drug offense, property or public order offense. Major barriers to reentry were also examined, including: residential mobility, education, employment, and lack of programming. The results of the analyses indicated that the static risk scale, sex offense, age, and gender all significantly predicted both rearrest and felony rearrest. Felony level and being a parolee were also negatively related to rearrest, and violent offense was negatively related to

Useful resources for criminal justice program evaluation and performance measurement are available at the BJA Center for Program Evaluation and Performance Measurement web site: http://www.ojp.usdoj.gov/BJA/evaluation.

felony rearrest. Including the barriers to reentry significantly increased the predictive power of the models for both measures of recidivism. Consistent with prior research, this study found that a large portion of parolees in Ohio reenter society with major barriers that stand in the way of their successful reintegration. During their first year in the community, parolees in this study had serious problems in the realms of education, work, and housing. The full report: Examining the Predictors of Recidivism Among Men and Women Released from Prison in Ohio, is available at:
http://cjb.sagepub.com/content/early/2010/10/12/0093854810382876.abstract

Crime Prevention

Exum, Kuhns, Koch, and Johnson examined whether the crime control strategies commonly recommended to the convenience store industry were effective at reducing robbery in the fast- food industry. This study was based on a population of convenience stores (*n* = 295) and fast-food restaurants (*n* = 321) in Charlotte, North Carolina. The authors hypothesized that crime control recommendations derived from studies of convenience stores may fail to have their desired effects within fast-food establishments because fast-food establishments commonly have large, indoor seating areas that encourage patrons to remain inside the facility as they consume their purchases. The primary dependent variable was whether the establishment was robbed or not robbed. The independent variables included: operating procedures, environmental design, target hardening, prior year victimization and ecological factors. The findings indicated that the two establishment types were inherently different in terms of operating procedures. However, the authors did not find any significant predictors of victimization or significant neighborhood demographic factors. In addition, most of the target hardening strategies failed to impact robbery rates. Both business types were similar in that prior victimization was found to be the best predictor of robbery. This finding was consistent with previous research that finds certain places are at high risk of repeated criminal activity. The full report: *An Examination of Situational Crime Prevention Strategies Across Convenience Stores and Fast-Food Restaurants*, is available at: http://cjp.sagepub.com/content/21/3/269

Victim Services

Stover, Berkman, Desai, and Marans studied the efficacy of the Domestic Violence Home Visit Intervention (DVHVI). The DVHVI is a partnership between the New Haven Department of Police Services and the Yale Child Study Center. It was developed and implemented with the support of the U.S. Department of Justice, Office on Violence Against Women. The DVHVI involves identification of households where an intimate partner assault has been reported. These households are then visited by specially trained police-advocate teams to receive the DVHVI. This study examined 10 districts in New Haven, five that implemented the DVHVI and five others that received standard community policing. The sample of 107 (52 DVHVI and 55 controls) women were recruited from a pool of 430 women who were eligible to participate in the research evaluation based on screening of police reports generated between November 2004 and October 2005. The study involved the use of interviews to examine women's experiences of IPV and the impact of police and other services. Baseline interviews were scheduled within 6 weeks of the domestic incident that qualified them for the study, and follow-up interviews took place 6 and 12 months later. Overall, women who received the DVHVI had more positive feelings toward the police than women in the control group. The intervention group called the police significantly more times than the control group. This was found to be a reflection of greater reporting of violence by women who received the intervention and not an increase in rates of domestic abuse following the home visits. While there were no significant differences between the DVHVI and control group in engagement in adult therapy, there were significant differences in the number of child therapy sessions attended, with DVHVI cases more likely to engage in individual therapy for their children. Also, the intervention group was significantly more likely to be in therapy at 6

months post incident and to utilize court services than the control group. The full report: The Efficacy of a Police-Advocacy Intervention for Victims of Domestic Violence: 12 Month Follow-Up Data, is available at: http://vaw.sagepub.com/content/16/4/410

Other Reports - Corrections

The Pew Center on the States Public Safety Performance Project seeks to help states advance fiscally sound, data-driven policies and practices in sentencing and corrections that protect public safety, hold offenders accountable and control corrections costs. They recently released two issue briefs on public safety and containing corrections costs in Kentucky and Arkansas. These briefs are available at:

http://www.pewcenteronthestates.org/report_detail.aspx?id=61357

http://www.pewcenteronthestates.org/uploadedFiles/PSPP_Arkansas_Brief_web.pdf

Tip of the Month

Selecting an appropriate statistical test is an important part of any evaluation. Despite its importance, many find this process to be confusing. This decision can be simplified by answering the following questions: What is the underlying research question? What is the nature of the variables? What are the levels of measurement of the variables involved? The answers to these questions will make selecting the appropriate statistical test much easier. For more information on selecting appropriate statistical tests, please see the following resources:

http://faculty.pepperdine.edu/fmadjidi/Stats/How to select inferential stats.pdf

http://www.socr.ucla.edu/Applets.dir/ChoiceOfTest.html

http://bama.ua.edu/~jleeper/627/choosestat.html