

Fact Sheet

Victimization, Safety, and Confidence in the Police in East Baton Rouge Parish: An Update

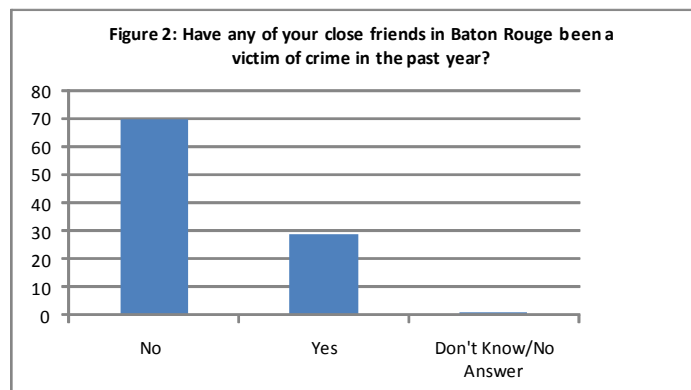
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This report serves as a partial update to Caper Fact Sheet #4 issued in August 2006 which detailed public opinion on crime and safety in East Baton Rouge Parish (EBRP). In 2007 and 2009, random digit dial public opinion surveys were conducted each spring by students in the Sociology Department at Louisiana State University. Because these surveys are compiled based on the students interest and contemporary social events in consultation with the course professor, there is not complete continuity in the survey items used each year. Nevertheless, each year there are some questionnaire items available to inform the analysis of crime and public safety related public opinion in EBRP. A descriptive analysis of pertinent items is provided below. Where possible, comparisons to national estimates are made as a way to contextualize the results.

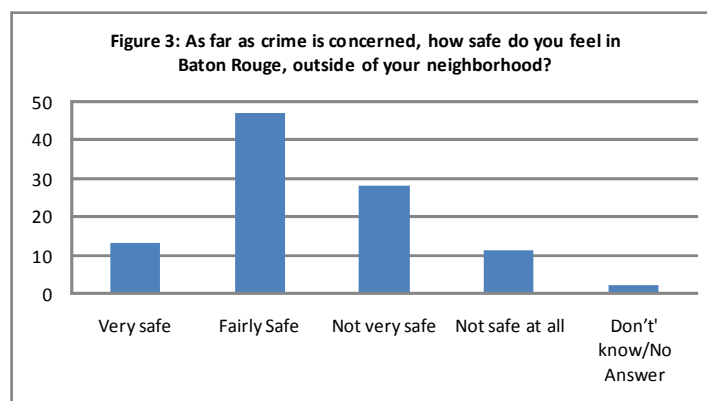
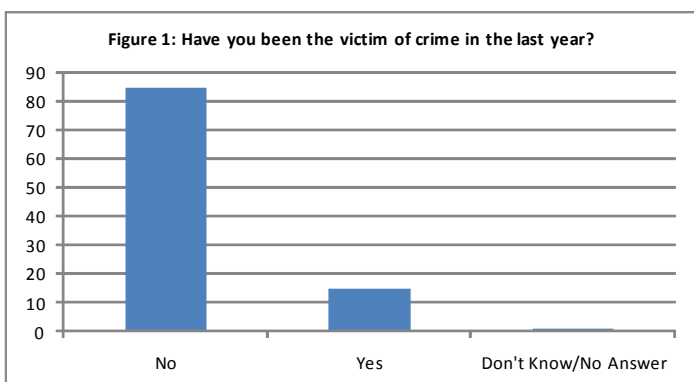
Victimization

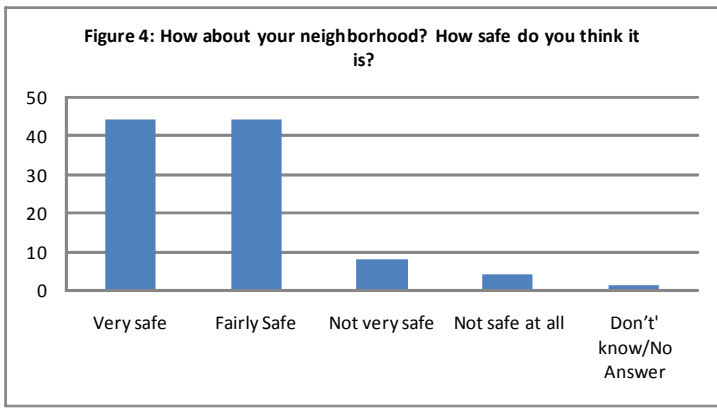
The 2007 version of the survey (n=344) queried respondents on whether or not they had been the victim of a crime in the last year. Fifteen percent of respondents indicated they had. It is notable that this figure is almost exactly the same as the estimates of household victimization from the 2005 National Crime Victims Survey (13.9%), suggesting that the EBRP experience is not much different from the national average. Not surprisingly, when respondents were asked whether any of their close friends in Baton Rouge had been the victim of a crime, the percentage increases substantially to 29%.



Feelings of Safety

In the 2007 survey, respondents were also asked how safe they felt their neighborhood was, and how safe they felt in Baton Rouge outside of their neighborhood. Sixty percent of respondents indicated they felt Fairly Safe or Very Safe outside of their own neighborhood in Baton Rouge, a statistical majority. However, when the frame of reference is actually the respondent's neighborhood, this figure increases dramatically to 88% reporting they feel Fairly or Very Safe. This suggests that EBRP residents have a very high level of comfort in their immediate environs.





CAPER is an interdisciplinary group of scholars who examine issues related to crime, law, and public policy at Louisiana State University. The research presented in this fact sheet was conducted by the authors. The views expressed here are solely those of the authors, and do not represent the views of other CAPER members, or Louisiana State University. Visit CAPER on the web at www.lsu.edu/capergroup/

For more information regarding the survey data on which this fact sheet is based, please see <http://members.cox.net/fweil/s2211guide-prevsurveys.html>

Confidence in the Police

In the 2009 version of the survey (n=360), respondents were asked “How much confidence do you have in the ability of the police to protect you from violent crime: a great deal, quite a lot, not very much, or none at all?” Fifty nine percent of respondents indicated that they had a great deal or quite a lot of confidence in the police. A 2006 Gallup Poll which asked this same question to a random sample of just over 1,000 adults nationwide found almost exact correspondence: Sixty one percent of the respondents in the national poll reported a great deal or quite a lot of confidence in the police to protect them from violent crime. This close correspondence to the national estimate may be taken as a sign that the EBRP experience is not particularly distinctive in either a negative or positive way.

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