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## The Causes of Underreporting of property and personal Crimes in Brazil

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### Abstract

The research focuses on finding the main causes of the underreporting of crimes in Brazil using the PNAD 2009 data and statistical inference to do this.

### Key words:

*Underreporting, victimization, heckman probit.*

### Introduction

It is possible to look at every act as a economic decision. People buy goods maximizing the utility they can get with the money they can spend. Investors take risks maximizing the probability of winning giving their risks preferences. In crime we can assume the agents will take rational decisions as well. The first one to relate Crime to economic decision was Becker(1968), who proposed that potential criminals would participate in a criminal activity if the return expect from the illegal activity exceed the costs of committing a crime, probability of being caught and apprehended and their moral convictions. Some authors argue that the decision of reporting the crime is rational as well as the decision of committing it. One of the first authors to appoint that were Myers(1980) and Goldberg and Nold(1980), followed by MacDonald( 2001) and Allen (2007) and finally, the paper that we use as base in this article, Justus and Scorzafave(2014).

The reporting of crime affects several factors, starting by the official crime statistics, which will can be less precise. The uncertainty of the data affects the identification of hot spots, of the crime reducing politics effectiveness and makes the police unwarned of criminals, since it is impossible to identify a criminal if the crime is not reported. Since the importance of the reporting data, and if it is a rational decision, we can see which variables can make each person be more likely to register a crime, and how we can identify these characteristics

### Results and Discussion

We have seen that several aspects affects how people report crimes in Brazil, as the literature has focused before. The Heckman probit helped us to analyze those factors and see if they really affect the propension to report by someone and how is it done.

### Conclusions

As the results, we saw that there are several factors that affect how people report the crimes they suffered. Property crimes, such as robbery and theft, do not change a lot how people will report, and are affected more by if the person works, by age, income, and other personal variables.

Personal crimes, in other hand, depend much more on how the crimes was committed, since the person aggressed will react differently if the aggressor was a know person or if there is another factor involved, such as the place, the way, and even the sex of the aggressor.

So personal crimes depends much more on how the crime was committed, and property crimes depends more on how likely is the person going to report, by his income or job.

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