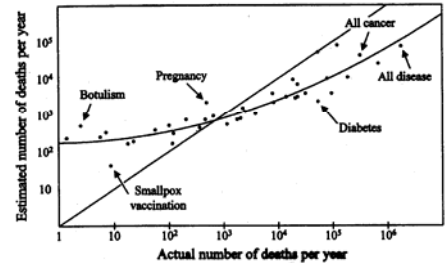


Perceptions of Terrorism Risks
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This project examines public perception of terrorism risks and attempts to model behavioral responses to terrorism events at the national level.

Brief Description:

To assess the economic impacts of terrorism, it is important to understand how the public perceives terrorism risks and reacts to terrorist attacks. CREATE researchers have conducted several pilot studies (biannually since 2006) testing the optimal approach for assessing risk perception as well as its relation to behavioral responses. While much research has been carried out at the collegiate level, little has been done to validate whether these findings can be extrapolated as representative of the economic behavior of the general public nationwide. This project intends to explore whether or not differences exist in risk perception among college students (age: 18-21) and a national sample (age: 21+). This will be done by reviewing existing literature and conducting surveys previously carried out on college students at the national level.



Objectives:

There are two objectives to this study. The first is to assess the perceived risk of terrorism at the national level by comparing the perceived risk of terror and non-terror related disasters. The second is to provide a bridge between the study of terrorism events (risk) and economic impact assessments also at the national level. This is evaluated by considering risk perception as a precursor to actual or intended behavior changes in response to terrorism.

Major Products and Customers:

We expect the main initial customers of this research will be the economic analysts at CREATE and within DHS who will assess the economic impacts of terrorism by incorporating the assumptions from scenarios about behavioral responses of the public.

Technical Approach:

This research relies on survey designed studies. The emphasis of the survey design will be on quantitative measures of risk perceptions as well as measures of actual or intended behavioral changes in response to terrorism. It will serve as an impetus for the application of more behavioral surveys at the national level.

Interfaces to other CREATE Projects:

This work will maintain close interface with the risk analysis and economics projects.

Interfaces to non-CREATE Projects:

This work will explore potential interfaces to the START center.

Major Milestones and Dates:

- National experimental study on terrorism risk perception – Summer 2008
- Publication on risk perception studies – January 2009

Past Milestones and Dates:

- Experimental study on terrorism risk perception (college level) – Spring 2008
- A second experimental study on terrorism risk perception (college level) – Summer 2008
- Publications on risk perception studies – Fall 2008