

# **A QUALITATIVE EXPLORATION OF THE EFFECTS OF CRIME VICTIMIZATION FOR VICTIMS OF PERSONAL CRIME**

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Previous literature suggests crime victims' experiences or reactions to crime run on a continuum from little or no effects to extreme effects. Participants in this study reported minor to serious effects from criminal victimizations. Additionally, this study found that talking with the offender may be a helpful component to the victim's recovery, and highlights the need for more research.

The study of victimology and victims' issues are relatively new fields. Although interest in victimology dates back to the 1940s, it was not until the 1960s that a heightened concern with human rights issues elevated the issue (Karmen, 2001). In the past three decades there has been significant investigation into many different victims' issues, including the effects of criminal victimization on individuals (Gaboury, 1992; Karmen, 2001; Rock, 2002; Shapland, 2000). This study addresses the effects of victimization on psychological and daily life functioning. Additionally, the study investigates recovery from victimization, that is, how social support contributes to healthy coping and recovery and how interactions with the offender could contribute to recovery. Whereas the majority of studies on victims' experiences rely on quantitative information, this study utilizes qualitative information to provide a more in-depth assessment of the experiences of victimization.

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### **CURRENT PREVALENCE OF VICTIMIZATION**

Although only 10-15% of the public will be victimized in any given year, it is suggested that everyone will experience a criminal victimization some time in their lives (Ellingworth, Farrell, & Pease, 1995; Karmen, 2001). According to Klaus (2004), in the year 2002 15% of households surveyed through the National Crime Victimization Study (NCVS) indicated they were victims of at least one violent or property crime, with theft (10%) being the most frequently reported crime. The NCVS measures violent crime as "rape, sexual assault, robbery, aggravated assault, and simple assault," property crime as "burglary, motor vehicle theft, and theft," and personal thefts as "pocket picking and purse snatching" (Rennison & Rand, 2003, p. 1). In the United States, both violent and property crime occurred in 16 million households (Rennison & Rand, 2003). This is a decline of 54% from the 1994 NCVS figures. Though it appears that victimization rates are low, when viewed year to year, Karmen (2001) suggests that everyone will be a victim of some type of crime in their lifetime. Because surveys that identify victims most often ask for instances of victimizations within the past year, it is difficult to assess victimization patterns across lifetimes.

#### *Primary versus secondary victims.*

The information in the NCVS focuses on the individual to whom the offense actually occurred; however crime victimization is not limited to the primary victim (Karmen, 2001). Secondary victims are unintended persons whom the crime affects, such as parents, family members, or friends of persons victimized by criminal acts (Karmen, 2001).

#### *Psychological effects.*

The psychological effects of criminal victimization can be non-existent to extreme, and can range from short- to long-term (Wallace, 1998), depending on the type of victimization, amount of loss incurred, and trauma suffered. Additionally, both primary and secondary victims are equally likely to suffer from psychological disruptions (Schneider, 2001). When more intense psychological

reactions occur the most common include: "fear, resentment, anger against offender and CJ system, and humiliation" (Williams, 1999, p. 51). Additionally, Williams (1999) states that people may react to crime by working proactively to prevent further crime, making no change, or withdrawing from regular activities. Crime victims may have trouble sleeping, concentrating, may be easily startled, may not participate in activities they once enjoyed, and may experience lowered self-esteem. Petersen and Walker (2003) suggest that "(p)sychological distress . . . can result in an inability to cope with the world around us and if severe enough it can lead to psychological disorders such as depression and posttraumatic stress disorder (PTSD)" (p. 68). Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) is not uncommon among crime victims (Freedy, Resnick, Kilpatrick, Dansky, & Tidwell, 1997; Williams, 1999). Williams (1999) reports that individuals affected by property crimes were still experiencing difficulty 4-10 weeks after the offense occurred. Norris and Kaniasty (1997) found crime victims showed symptoms of "depression, anxiety, somatization, hostility, and fear" (p. 276) 3 months following the victimization.

*Reactions to Victimization and the Importance of Social Support*

Petersen (2003) suggests that extreme stress can "shatter the very basic assumptions victims have about themselves and the world around them" (p. 97; see also Winkel & Denkers, 1995). Gintner (2001) proposes that this may be even more evident with homicide survivors. Their core beliefs that bad things do not happen to good people, or that the world is just, are adversely impacted (Gintner, 2001; Schneider, 2001). Because victims can suffer from psychological distress, social support is helpful in dealing with the effects of the victimization. Gintner (2001) states that availability of positive support can help victims with grief and emotional functioning. Kaukinen (2002) asserts that "(s)eeing help from family and friends suggests that victims are actively engaged in a process of attempting to deal with the aftermath of crime" and "help from informal networks provides social support, comfort, and other tangible resources to crime victims" (p. 451). Kaukinen (2002) proposes that victims who know their offenders tend to rely on family and friends more than the criminal justice system, whereas victims of stranger-offenders tend to rely on the

criminal justice system. Winkel and Denkers (1995) found that the social network offered empathetic responses to victims, though that support tended to decline when victims repeatedly sought support for the same circumstance.

Additionally, victims report that their friends may tire of hearing about the crime event and may avoid them (Williams, 1999). This can have deleterious effects on victims, as they may have no source of support to help cope with the aftermath of the victimization. In order to combat this, homicide survivors may involve themselves in support groups and rally for the rights of survivors as a reactive coping response to their own loss. Participation in self-help groups and other community groups committed to affecting change for victims' rights can help one cope with a criminal victimization (Office for Victims of Crime (OVC), 1998).

There is little research on post victimization reactions to crime and actions taken to prevent future victimizations. Dugan (1999) found that victims of both property crime and violent crime chose to relocate when the criminal victimization was closer to home. However, it was found that the decision to move was not always made directly after the victimization; therefore, she proposes that victims may try alternative prevention methods before leaving their home.

#### *Offender-Victim Interaction and its Impact on Recovery*

Because the crime victim is removed from the criminal justice process (aside from being a witness) it is important to assess whether interacting with the offender may actually be necessary to recover fully from the victimization (Masters & Smith, 1998; Umbreit, Coates, & Vos, 2001). Removal from the process may not offer opportunities for the victim to request what he or she needs to fully recover, such as an apology or a better understanding of why the crime occurred. Though there is scant research on the actual need for offender-victim interactions to improve victim recovery, an area somewhat related to this issue is offender-victim mediation.

According to Rytterbro (2003) the purpose of mediation is for the victim and offender to meet and discuss the crime and to determine how the offender will make amends to the victim. Victim-offender mediation tends to be utilized most often in front-end diversionary programs, though there are some programs that specialize in violent crime situations (Umbreit, Coates, & Vos, 2001). In a study of 38 victim-offender mediation programs across the United States, Canada, England, Scotland, and New Zealand, it was found that victims participated in victim-offender mediation for numerous reasons, including, to understand why the crime occurred and to express how the crime has effected them (Umbreit, Coates, & Vos, 2001). Though not all victims express positive feelings as a result of the mediation, most “reported being satisfied with the opportunity to share their stories and their pain resulting from the crime event” (Umbreit, Coates, & Vos, 2001, Client Satisfaction section, ¶ 10). Masters and Smith (1998) suggest that the area of relational justice, and its implementation through victim-offender mediation, highlights the necessity to include victims in the criminal justice process to serve their needs best. This requires a drastic change in the current criminal justice system and the willingness of victims and offenders to join in the mediation process. It appears that victim-offender mediation, and perhaps on a smaller scale, victim-offender interaction, may be a step towards a healthy recovery from the criminal victimization.

## METHODOLOGY

This research examines the effects of criminal victimization on both primary and secondary victims. Specifically, this study focuses on: the characteristics of the victimization, the effects of crime on the individual's psychological well-being and lifestyle (job, living situation, support system), social support from family and friends, assistance in recovery needed from the offender, and one's attribution for the cause of the crime. This is an exploratory study utilizing focused interviews to assess the experience of victimization as expressed by victims in a more in-depth manner to understand the victimization experience. As a result, the findings from this study are not intended to be generalized to the general

victim population, but instead will form the basis for future research.

### *Participants*

To gather a diverse sample, two methods were used to garner participants. Both sample frames relied on convenience samples of individuals either willing to engage in a follow-up interview or respond to a solicitation to share their experiences.

*Sample frame A.* The first sample of both personal and property crime victims came from a previous study conducted by the Crime Victims' Institute (CVI) at Sam Houston State University and the Public Policy Research Institute at Texas A&M University. The initial study was a random telephone survey measuring participants experience with property and personal crime and was conducted in the Fall (September and October) of 2003. One thousand participants were chosen through random digit dialing within Texas. Of the identified crime victims (N = 152), 43 (28.2%) agreed to a return phone call at a later date to further discuss their victimizations, and 4 participated in interviews.

*Sample frame B.* The second group of participants (n=32) called a toll free number for the Crime Victim's Institute to arrange an interview. The toll free number was available through public service announcements sent to 100 radio stations across Texas, through an announcement on the Texas Department of Criminal Justice Victim Services Division outgoing message, and through an e-mail sent to members of the support agency Texans for Equal Justice. Additionally, business cards with a description of the project were mailed to multiple district attorneys offices around the state, and other victim service providers. Participants who phoned the toll free number were directed to a voice mail message asking for their name, contact information, and the best time to reach them. The message indicated someone from the Crime Victims' Institute would call them within 24 hours to set up an interview time. This convenience sample of voluntary participants included both primary and secondary crime victims who suffered from any type of crime. Males and females aged 18 and older were included in this

project. As this is an exploratory investigation, convenience samples are appropriate to assess crime victims' perceptions of the victimization experience.

#### *Procedure*

Telephone interviews were conducted with each participant depending on when the respondent chose to participate in the actual interview. A first phone call consisted of reacquainting the participant with the purpose of the study and how it connects with the initial study done by CVI or, for those participants calling in to the toll free number, a description of the study was given. Additionally, the participants were informed of their rights as a research participant and were advised that the study was confidential and voluntary and they could refuse to answer any questions with which they were uncomfortable. Furthermore, because discussing victimizations can be distressing to the participants they were provided with two toll free numbers for crime victims' hotlines, (the National Center for Victims of Crime and the Texas Department of Criminal Justice, Victim Services Division). Each provided services that could address victims' distress issues and, in the event they could not meet the participant's need, had good referral services. Telephone interviews were conducted at the convenience of the participant, either during the first phone call or during a second scheduled phone call. The author responded to and conducted all phone calls and interviews, thereby eliminating problems of inter-rater reliability. Experimenter bias was limited by asking probing questions when responses were vague or unclear and by limiting interpretation to the facts presented.

#### *Instrumentation*

A structured interview instrument was utilized with both open- and closed-ended questions to elicit responses specific to the topic of the criminal victimization. The bulk of information was collected in a qualitative form with the interviewer recording verbatim the victimization experiences and opinions of participants as to the effects of the incident from which they suffered.

The instrument included questions from two surveys: the British Victims of Crime Survey (BVCS) (Applied Criminology Group, 2004) and the National Crime Victimization Survey (NCVS) (United States Department of Justice, 2004). Questions from the NCVS were used in the current victimization and effects section. Questions from the BVCS were used in current victimization and effects, victim perceptions of offender, and offender's role in recovery sections. Specific questions were chosen from each instrument (NCVS and BVCS) that best suited the section under review. Current victimization, effects of victimization, social support; perceptions regarding offender, offender-victim interaction and recovery, and causal attributes regarding the crime were examined.

## RESULTS

### *Sample demographics*

Thirty-six respondents participated in this study. Four respondents were from the Crime Victim's Institute general crime poll (sample frame A) and 32 respondents called in to the Crime Victim's Institute to participate in the study (sample frame B). Participants were predominantly female ( $n = 33$ ), between 31 and 53 years old ( $n=26$ ), and Caucasian ( $n=26$ ). The vast majority of participants had a high school education or above ( $n = 33$ ).

### *Sample Differentiation by Victimization Characteristics*

Twenty participants were secondary victims (SV) and sixteen were primary victims (PV). Nineteen participants were survivors of homicide victims (SV), three were victims of assault (PV), two were sexual assault victims (PV), two were victims of attempted homicide and kidnapping (PV), and the remaining categories have one participant each (a) sexual assault and theft (PV), (b) attempted kidnapping and assault (PV), (c) attempted murder and kidnapping (PV), (d) suicide (SV), (e) attempted break-in (PV), (f) arson and robbery (PV), (g) kidnapping and sexual assault (PV), (h) vandalism and theft from car (PV), (i) attempted robbery and assault with a vehicle (PV), and (j) gunshot wound (PV).



Twenty-two participants' reported that the incidents occurred at the victim's home. The majority of incidents took place between 6:01 p.m. and 6:00 a.m. (n = 22) with the greatest amount occurring between 6:01 p.m. and midnight (n = 12).

Twenty-six participants knew the offender before the offense occurred, eight reported not knowing the offender and two reported "don't know" because the offender had not yet been apprehended. For those who reported knowing the offender (n = 26), 11 reported the offender was a current or former partner, spouse, or significant other, eight were acquaintances, two were relatives, two were neighbors, one was a friend and two were ex-tenants.

*Effects of Criminal Victimization on Psychological Well-Being and Lifestyle Changes*

Table 1 illustrates reactions to victimizations, which include emotional and psychological responses and effects on daily lives from all respondents (N = 36). Statements indicating the highest levels of agreement included: "I was angry with the offender" (n = 29), "I have had to take time off work as a result of the incident" (n = 25), "I have suffered from panic/anxiety/other psychological disorders as a result of the incident" (n = 24), "My work has been affected as a result of the incident" (n = 22), "I felt isolated and alone" (n = 19), "I was afraid a similar offense may happen again" (n=19), "I felt unsafe in my home alone" (n = 19), and "The incident has affected relationships with my family and friends" (n = 19). Those who reported suffering from psychological disorders recounted the contemplation of suicide, diagnoses of panic and anxiety, depression or post-traumatic stress disorder. Additionally, in response to how friends and family reacted, a common theme of respondents was that friends tended to turn away after victimization because they did not know how to respond.

Chi-square analysis was performed comparing primary and secondary victims and those with and without knowledge of the offender to assess different reactions to criminal victimizations. No significant differences were noted between primary and secondary victims or for those with knowledge of or no knowledge of the of-

fender's identity in relation to statements on reactions to the victimization (see Table 1).

Respondents were asked what types of changes they made in response to the incident that occurred. Anecdotal comments indicated that some respondents changed their behaviors, such as not leaving their homes after dark, not leaving their homes at all, no longer participating in activities that were once enjoyed, and having difficulty trusting other people, sometimes in general, sometimes a specific sex or race. One respondent indicated that because of the victimization she suffered (the loss of multiple family members at the hand of a drunk driver), she re-examined her own drinking and driving behavior and eliminated it completely.

For those experiencing more traumatic effects of victimization, psychological well-being after a criminal victimization can be affected by the level of social support one receives to help cope with the incident. Family and friends were reported to be fully supportive with 17 of the respondents, with an additional three indicating limited support. However, seven reported receiving no support from family members. Mixed information was found regarding helpfulness of counselors. Fifteen respondents acknowledged seeking support from a counselor and nine individuals reported full support from them. However, the remaining six respondents indicated that counselors provided limited or no support. Additional comments revealed that oftentimes counselors would request that the participant examine other areas of his or her life while ignoring the criminal victimization. Respondents felt that counselors were not equipped to deal with persons who suffered from a criminal victimization.

Finally, respondents were asked whether they felt they had recovered from the incident. Seventeen respondents indicated they definitely had not recovered, 9 responded that they felt they had recovered and 10 responded that they were unsure. Primary victims

Table 1  
Reactions to Victimizations

Reaction statement N=36	Strongly agree/Agree	Disagree/Strongly disagree	Unknown or not ap- plicable	Chi- square (df = 1)
I was angry with the of- fender	29	6	1	2.503 $p = .056$
I was critical with myself	17	13	6	1.339 $p = .123$
I felt isolated and alone	19	10	7	.276 $p = .30$
I was afraid of retaliation by the offender	14	10	12	1.254 $p = .132$
I was afraid a similar of- fense may happen again	19	8	9	.000 $p = .586$
I wanted revenge	16	10	10	2.926 $p = .042^*$
I felt unsafe in my home alone	19	9	8	.068 $p = .396$
I had to leave my home as a result of the incident	9	16	11	.875 $p = .176$
I have suffered from panic/anxiety attacks/other psychological disorders as a result of the incident	24	6	6	.208 $p = .326$
The incident strained the relationship with my partner	16	5	15	.000 $p = .550$
The incident ended the relationship with my partner	7	12	17	2.991 $p = .04^*$
I have experienced problems in my sexual relationships	5	6	25	.160 $p = .348$
The incident has affected relationships with my family and friends	19	9	8	.000 $p = .50$
I have had to take time off work as a result of the incident	25	2	9	.817 $p = .188$
My work has been affected as a result of the incident	22	3	11	1.034 $p = .158$
I have found the offense very difficult to cope with	16	7	13	.000 $p = .663$
I have made changes in the way I live because of the offense	17	8	11	1.294 $p = .128$
I have been drink- ing/smoking/using drugs more often since the offense	6	17	13	.022 $p = .435$
The incident has affected my physical health	9	6	21	.012 $p = .455$
The incident physically disabled me for a time	4	6	26	.000 $p = .667$
The incident physically disabled me permanently	1	9	26	.000 $p = .70$

\* = statistically significant, but operationally meaningless

were significantly more likely to indicate that they had recovered than secondary victims. Primary and secondary victims were compared to assess if there was a difference in stated recovery and a statistically significant difference was found for recovery between the two sub-sets [ $\chi^2(2, N=36) = 6.544, p = .038$ ].

*Respondents' Needs in Relation to Offenders, Punishment Versus Rehabilitation, and Attributions for Explaining the Incidents*

Respondents were asked to rate how important it was for offenders to be remorseful, to explain why the incident occurred, to get help, to be imprisoned, and to know how the crime affected the participant. Most often, participants could answer in relation to an apprehended offender (n = 34), though for two respondents the questions were somewhat more abstract, in that their offenders had not yet been apprehended. Table 2 illustrates the responses to these questions.

Table 2  
Perceptions Regarding Offenders in the Aftermath of Crime

Statement N=36	Very important/important	Unimportant/very unimportant	Do not know/not applicable
Understand why it happened	17	9	10
Inform offender how crime affected you	20	5	11
Offender receive help	11	7	18
Offender be committed to prison	20	4	12
Offender say he/she is sorry	12	5	19

Twelve respondents were interested in receiving an apology (n = 12) or concerned with the offender receiving help as a part of the sentence (n = 11). Respondents often indicated an apology would not be meaningful, (even if it was desired), suggesting respondents were somewhat ambivalent. Respondents were more concerned with offenders understanding the impact of their behavior than receiving help. In this sense, punishment appeared to be one of the more important desires of respondents.

Additionally, respondents were asked about the helpfulness of attending a meeting with the offender to discuss the crime. Thirteen respondents indicated a meeting would not be helpful whereas three indicated it would be somewhat helpful and five indicated it would be very helpful. Thirteen respondents did not comment. For those individuals who indicated a meeting would be helpful the majority indicated they would ask the offender why the offense occurred.

Table 3 illustrates the affirmed responses for attributions of cause. Respondents were allowed to include as many explanations as they thought fit, so the total for all responses will be greater than 100%. The most highly affirmed causal explanations for incidents included:

1. Offender's temper, history of violence or crime ( $\chi^2 (2, N=36) = .900, p = .638$ ),
2. Mention of drugs or alcohol ( $\chi^2 (2, N=36) = .823, p = .663$ ),
3. Personal history between offender and victim ( $\chi^2 (2, N=36) = .823, p = .663$ ), and
4. Victim specifically targeted ( $\chi^2 (2, N=36) = .927, p = .629$ ).

Chi-square analysis was used to assess attributions for the cause of the victimization between primary and secondary victims on the four most highly affirmed causal explanations. No significant findings were discovered.

## DISCUSSION

This study explores the victimization experience from the victim's perspective. Although these results should not be generalized to the larger population of crime victims because of the small number and convenience nature of participants, the information provided can stimulate focused investigation into areas identified by this study's participants. Additionally, results can add to the discourse on the punishment preferences of victims and the attitudes of victims about offenders.

Table 3  
 Attributions for Crime Causation

<b>Proposed explanation</b> <b>N=36</b>	<b>Affirmed</b>
Negligence/carelessness on the part of respondent or someone else	1
Due to personal relationship/history between the victim and the offender	11
Offender wanted money or property	8
Victim/property was specifically targeted by offender	10
Opportunist/spur of the moment/offender took advantage of situation	7
Mention of young people/kids/teenagers/mindless vandalism/for fun/something to do/boredom	2
Any mention of offender being drunk/ on drugs	11
Was part of a series of incidents in area	2
The location of the car/house/property/person made it an easy target	2
The respondent/victim being victimized or picked on due to their race/ ethnicity/ skin color or religion	1
The respondent/victim being victimized or picked on for being different in some way	1
The offender had a bad temper/intolerant attitude/ tendency for violence/ history of crime	14
Offender had mental health problems	2

All respondents indicated some change in their lives post victimization. All changes seemed to be related to fear. The range of changes included: (a) no longer parking in the assigned apartment parking slot for fear that future potential offenders may associate the car with the victim and target her for other crimes; (b) no longer trusting people, sometimes specific groups of people; and (c) fear of revictimization or retaliation from offenders or offender's familiars to the extent of murder.

Almost all respondents reported that their lives had changed forever. In terms of psychological effects, some respondents contemplated suicide, others were diagnosed with depression, panic, or anxiety disorders and some were diagnosed with Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder, which is consistent with previous research (Freedy et al., 1997; Williams, 1999). Additionally, many respondents reported feelings of paranoia directly after the crime and for some, paranoia was a continuous effect. One respondent

was adamant that she will be killed when her ex-husband is released from prison, and not only suffered from a permanent seizure disorder because of the assault she experienced, but was in constant fear of continued retaliation from her ex-husband's (the offender's) family and friends. Criminal victimizations can take a toll emotionally and psychologically on those it affects. Because this study is based predominantly on personal crime victims it is not surprising that a large number of respondents reported emotional and psychological effects from crime.

Continual support from family and friends helped individuals cope with victimizations (Gintner, 2001; Kaukinen, 2002). Contrary to previous literature, the level of support did not have an effect on whether or not respondents reported recovering from offenses. Perhaps this is an artifact of the sample in the study. Respondents were primarily survivors of homicide victims and in the literature on homicide survivors it is stressed that peoples' lives change, meaning they learn to live different lives, rather than recovering from the victimization per se (Williams, 1999). Therefore, because of the type of victimizations experienced by a great number of respondents and the added grief component resulting from the loss of a loved one, the effect of social support may not be the same for primary and secondary victims. This should be explored in future research efforts in order to best serve different populations of victimized persons.

Consistent with the literature, this study found that many individuals reported abandonment, avoidance by friends after victimizations, or both (Williams, 1999). One respondent declared that talking about her victimization was like "throwing a wet blanket on the conversation." Another respondent stated she saw her friends cross the street to avoid her. Respondents believed that people just did not know how to react. This information is important for personnel working with crime victims to understand. If it is understood that there may be some breakdown in support systems for crime victims, personnel working with them can suggest additional, "outside" support services and simply make crime victims aware of that potential reaction from their support systems.

Respondents offered that their lives changed in some respect after the victimizations. Indeed, only one respondent in this study reported that the crime did not have a long-term effect. Many stated that they no longer went out after dark. Respondents indicated that they could not trust anyone anymore, became withdrawn, and no longer found joy in activities in which they once participated. Whereas, before the crime many believed they were impervious to victimizations, after the crime many reported feeling paranoid and felt hypersensitive about being victimized again. Additionally, respondents' reported disruption in their jobs, as they needed time off to recover and to work with the different components of the criminal justice system to resolve the case.

Criminal victimizations took a toll on some individuals who felt they needed to move from their current surroundings or purchase security devices to lower their risk of repeat victimizations. In this sense, these respondents seemed to be taking control of their situations perhaps to feel normal again and to contribute to their own well-being and feelings of safety. Many individuals reported having a shift in their worldviews and lowering their risk by enhancing security seemed to be one physical way of acknowledging this paradigm shift.

#### *Victim-offender Interaction*

Oftentimes, the lack of consideration for the victims' needs by the criminal justice system exacerbates the effects of the victimization. In this study, respondents reported a need to understand why the offense occurred, to inform the offender how the crime affected them, and to penalize the offender. Respondents who participated in victim-offender mediation found it to be very helpful both for themselves and the offenders and expressed that it contributed to recovery.

#### *Limitations*

This study is based on a small convenience sample of victims who were willing to contact the researcher and share their experiences. However, to better assess victimization experiences across diverse cultures a stratified random sample of crime victims should be utilized in future research. Additionally, the majority of



respondents in this study were personal crime victims or secondary victims of personal crime, therefore, future studies should focus on a more representative sample of both personal and property crime, as well as primary and secondary victims.

## CONCLUSION

Crime can have a life-altering effect on the lives of victims, influencing emotions, occupations, relationships, and daily activities. Crime victims (and in particular, personal crime victims) do not believe they are immune to crime; instead their lives seem to revolve around the resolution of the criminal event. Additionally, some victims may have a need for offender mediation, an expression of remorse, or a simple conversation post-sentencing, in order to recover. This victim-offender interaction should be further explored to assess benefit for some victims.

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