

# **A Criminological Study on the Dark Figure of Crime as a Socio-ecological Bulk of Victimization**

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## **Abstract**

This epidemiological research was carried out especially on victim taking data from both primary and secondary sources using non-probability purposive sampling with 70 respondents from Tangail Sadar, Bangladesh. Among them 50% became victimized within last one year while 78.57% were male and 55.7% were Farmer with 65.71% married. Most of them were victimized by assault (34.28%) while 24.28% didn't lodge General Diary regarding the crime occurrence and 66.66% wanted to avoid criminal justice system for the sake of taking bribery by police (26.08%). The study also found 74.2% victimization occurred in house while 68.57% at night. Most of them were victimized for land or property dispute (31%), 11% for dowry and 9% were instinctive victimizer. Average Dark Figure of Crime was 6.25 (per thousand) while respondents (45.7%) suggested strict law enforcement, (30.0%) legislative administration and public awareness rising and (24.30%) developing relationship between public and police can reduce victimization.

## **Keywords**

Dark Figure, Crime, Victimization, Socio-Ecological Bulk, Criminological Study

## **1. Introduction**

Crime causes loss of life and property as well as overwhelming fear of insecurity. These have serious consequences for democracy, economic development, social capital and associational life [1]. Bangladesh has witnessed upsurge in crimes during the past two decades. Increasing incidence victimization has led to a paralyzing fear which has in turn affected economic and social life in the country [2]. To effectively combat crime comprehensive socioeconomic development planning aimed at effective and equitable social services delivery as well as efficacious citizen political participation is necessary. But these cannot even be achieved without reliable and valid data [3]. Victimization is the process of being victimized or becoming a victim [4]. Victimization also refers to harm caused by human agents acting in violation of social norms [5, 6]. Criminal victimization has serious consequences for the citizens and

society [7]. Individual and societies aspirations for democracy, development, human rights, high standard of living are undermined by high level of criminal victimization [8]. In order to bridge the data-gap, this study surveys the extent and pattern of victimization, victims of crime and perceptions of crime. Along with murder and rape, a variety of other violent behaviors go on inside families. Domestic or intimate violence is perhaps the most common form of interpersonal harm [9-11]. Time magazine reported that 6 million wives are abused every year. The number of actual, unreported cases may be four to five times higher [12]. Child abuse is an area of victimization law that grew out of "cruelty to animals" provisions [13]. Most of the crime victimizations are committed by intimates or acquaintances but an increasing amount of crime is being committed by strangers [14]. The most common motive for stranger violence is robbery where seven out of ten robberies are committed by strangers [15-17]. Each year, about 600,000 robberies occur in the United State, accounting for about 5% of all reported

index crimes. The number of murders in the United States is 20,000-25,000 annually [18] and 25% of murders remain unsolved. In 2004, 3.5million Dutch citizens were the victims of 4.6 million offences but only 1.3 million were reported to the police and recorded. National Crime Victimization Survey (NCVS) said that only about 35% of crimes on average are reported to the police and The British Crime Survey estimated that 40% of offences reported to the police were not recorded [19-21]. The dark figure of crime is a term employed by criminologists and sociologists to describe the amount of unreported and undiscovered crime, which calls into question the reliability of official crime statistics. It means actual crime is the contraction of recorded crime into police and the amount of crime which is not recorded by the police administration [22-26]. People say, the criminal justice system (Police, Court and Correction) is not congenial to them so, a good number of crimes remain unreported to the police. For the sake of unreported crime the victims don't get their proper remedy, support and justice. Therefore, the current study was conducted to assess dark figure of crime and to explain the causation and characteristics of victims of various crime.

## 2. Methodology

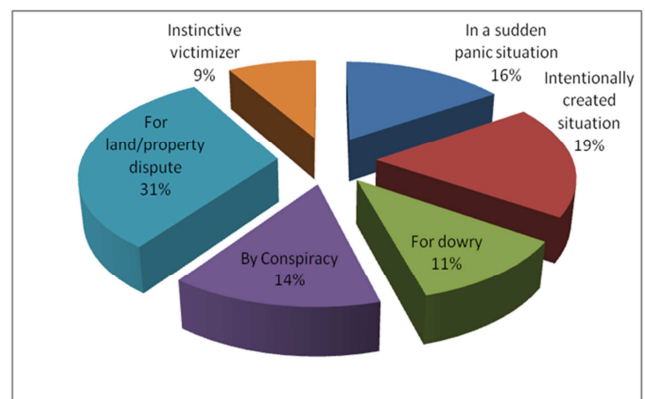
The epidemiological study was piloted at Sadar Upazila (Mogra and Karatia Union) of Tangail district in Bangladesh framing a sum of 70victimsapplying the non-probability purposive sampling method from April, 2011 to April, 2012. To carry out the study both primary and secondary data sources were used. Secondary data was collected from police records, database and newspapers. Primary data was collected from the selected respondents. A planned questionnaire was developed containing both the closed and open ended query to collect data. The questionnaire was pretested in areas far away from the sample areas and revised according to the feedback gained in the field level. The questionnaire was formed to obtain the relevant information considering personal, household, social and economic and victimization details. The data were processed to undergo statistical analysis using SPSS 16 windows program. MS Word, MS Excel were used to represent the tabular, graphical and chart icon and the data were edited in case of sighting discrepancy (doubt entry, wrong entry etc.).

## 3. Results

It was observed that most of the victims (32.9%) belonged to the age group 31 to 40 years while 78.57% were male and religion of 97.14% was Islam. It is also found that most of them were married (65.71%) while 62.85% from nuclear family and education of 35.7% were up to PSC and 55.7% were Farmer while 42.85% victims earned 3000BDT to 6000BDT monthly (table 1).

*Table 1. Socio-demographic characteristics of the victims.*

Parameters	Frequency	Percentage
Age (years)		
<20	8	11.4%
21-25	10	14.3%
26-30	20	28.6%
31-40	23	32.9%
>40	9	12.9%
Sex		
Male	55	78.57%
Female	15	21.43%
Religion		
Islam	68	97.14%
Hindu	2	2.86%
Marital status		
Married	46	65.71%
Unmarried	18	25.71%
Widow	6	8.57%
Family type		
Nuclear	44	62.85%
Extend	26	37.14%
Educational status of the victim		
Illiterate	17	24.3%
PSC	25	35.7%
SSC	15	21.4%
HSC	9	12.9%
>HSC	4	5.7%
Occupation of the victim		
Farmer	39	55.7%
Service holder	7	10.0%
Business	11	15.7%
Housewife	8	11.4%
Student	5	7.1%
Monthly Income (BDT)		
<3000	10	14.2%
3000-6000	30	42.85%
7000-10000	22	31.42%
11000-20000	7	10.0%
>20000	1	1.43%



*Figure 1. Causes of victimization.*

Figure 1 showed that, most of the people (31%) victimized for land or property dispute, 19% for intentionally created situation, 14% conspiracy, 11% for dowry and 9% were instinctive victimizer.

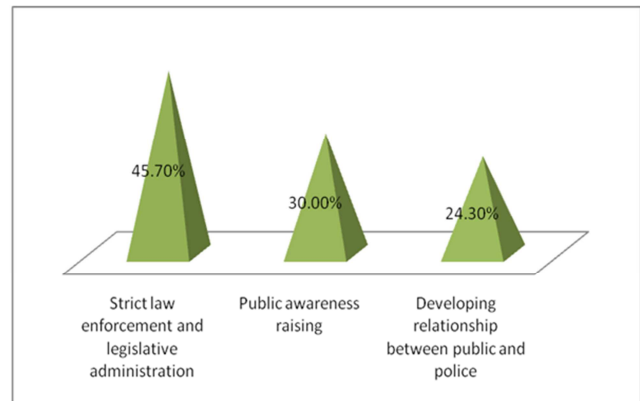
Table 2 presented that, most of the victims (34.28%) were victimized by assault and half of them were victimized in the last one year while 24.28% don't lodged General Diary regarding the crime occurrence and 66.66% want to avoid criminal justice system. The study also showed 74.2% victimization occurred in house where 68.57 at night and all of them said that there was no relationship with the offenders.

**Table 2.** Victimization phobia of the respondents.

Parameters	Frequency	Percentage
Types of crime which victimize the victim		
Assault	24	34.28%
Theft	22	31.43%
Domestic violence	10	14.29%
Dacoity	4	5.71%
Fraud	7	10%
Hijacking	3	4.29%
Victimization occurrence happened in the last one year		
Yes	35	50.0%
No	35	50.0%
Lodging General Diary by Victim		
Yes	23	65.71%
No	12	24.28%
Reason for not lodge of the General Diary		
Demand bribe	2	16.66%
Avoid criminal justice system	8	66.66%
Avoid harassment	2	16.66%
Relationship between victim and offender		
Yes	0	0.0%
No	35	100.0%
Place of victimization		
House	36	74.2%
On street	6	17.1%
On vehicles	3	8.5%
Time of victimization		
Day	11	31.43
Night	24	68.57
After lodging crime report to the Police; they carry on their proper duty		
Yes	51	72.85
No	19	27.14
Reasons for not carry on Police's duty		
Take bribe	6	26.08
Don't work properly	9	39.13
Silly cause	8	34.78
Causes of not lodge crime report to police by victim		
Solve the problem socially	7	53.84
Don't want to meet with police	6	46.16

According to figure 2 information, 45.7% respondents suggested strict law enforcement and legislative administration can reduce victimization while 30.0%

suggested public awareness rising and 24.30% suggested developing relationship between public and police.



**Figure 2.** Suggestions to reduce victimization.

#### Victimization Rate:

There were 477 crimes committed in Tangail SadarThana and 17 crimes committed in two unions' last one year.

Population of two union of Tangail Sadar is 69202 according to the census survey of 2011.

Mogra: Victimization rate is 7.01 (per thousand)

Karatia: Victimization rate is 6.26 (per thousand)

Average victimization rate 6.64 (per thousand)

#### Dark Figure of Crime

Mogra: dark figure of crime is 6.81 (per thousand)

Karatia: dark figure of crime is 5.69 (per thousand)

Average Dark Figure of Crime is 6.25 (per thousand)

Dark Figure of crime of Mogra is higher than other union. The important issue is level of schooling also less in Mogra.

**Table 3.** Measurement of the dark figure of crime.

Sectors	Primary Data and Secondary Data information	Primary data	Secondary data	Dark figure
Mogra Union	Mogra population is 35639, only 7 crimes committed according to police data in last 1 year and Total victim of 19 crimes is 250 according to primary data source.	$(250 \div 35639) \times 1000 = 7.01$	$(7 \div 35639) \times 1000 = 0.20$	6.81
Karatia Union	Karatia population is 33,563 only 10 crimes committed according to police data source in the last 1 year and total victim of 16 crimes is 210 according to primary data source.	$(210 \div 33563) \times 1000 = 6.26$	$(10 \div 33563) \times 1000 = 0.30$	5.69

Table 4 proved that 31 to 40 and 40 up people are in vulnerable condition where 67% belonged in that age group and 33% young people were victimized with several kinds of offences. So, there is a relationship between age and victimization.

**Table 4.** Relationship between age of the respondents and victimization.

Range		Victimize in the	Total	Percentage
		last one year		
		Yes		
Age of the respondent	21-25	4	4	11.43%
	26-30	6	6	17.14%
	31-40	12	12	34.29%
	>40	13	13	37.17%
Total		35	35	100%

**Table 5.** Relationship between marital status of the respondents and victimization.

Variable		Victimize in the last one year	Total	Percentage
		Yes		
Marital status of the respondent	Unmarried	8	8	23%
	Married	20	20	57%
	Widow	7	7	20%
	Total	35	35	100%

Table 5 presented that 57% married people were victimized which was more than others.

**Table 6.** Relationship between time of occurrence and victimization.

Variable		Victimize in the last one year	Total	Percentage
		Yes		
Time of occurrence	Day	11	11	31.43%
	Night	24	24	68.57%
Total		35	35	100%

Table 6 showed the relationship between time of occurrence and victimization while most of the victimization occurred at night (68.57%). So, it can be said time was an important factor regarding crime causation and victimization.

## 4. Discussion

Criminal victimization is increasing alarmingly day by day for various reasons around the globe [27]. From the current study observed that 32.9% victims belonged to the age group 31 to 40 years while 78.57% were male and religion of 97.14% were Islam. It is also found that most of them were married (65.71%) while 62.85% from nuclear family and education of 35.7% were up to PSC and 55.7% were Farmer while 42.85% victims earned 3000BDT to 6000BDT per month. Another study supported the present study [28]. The study showed most of the victims (34.28%) were victimized by assault and half of them were victimized in the last one year while 24.28% don't lodged General Diary regarding the crime occurrence and 66.66% want to avoid criminal justice system. The study also showed 74.2% victimization occurred in house where 68.57 at night and all of them said that there was no relationship with the offenders and 26.08% said police didn't do their duty wanting bribery while another study found 30% people were victimized by assault and most all took place in their own homes and 36% were reported to police which support the present study [29]. From the study found most of the people (31%) victimized for land or

property dispute, 19% for intentionally created situation, 14% conspiracy, 11% for dowry and 9% were instinctive victimizer while 45.7% respondents suggested strict law enforcement and legislative administration can reduce victimization while 30.0% suggested public awareness rising and 24.30% suggested developing relationship between public and police. A study showed that family factors such as family conflicts and marital problems played a role in victimization [30]. Considering the overall study, it was felt that human lives should be exploitation free and safer to figure out criminal victimogenesis which can be possible by public awareness and proper help of the concerned governmental sector [31-37].

## 5. Conclusion

Victimization survey is very significant in the field of criminological study. This study paper exposes some essentials matter of fact, which is relevant with victimization such as time of occurrence, fear of crime etc. Moreover, dark figure of crime is more than actual crime figure which deprived the victims to get remedy and justice. Therefore, besides public awareness the government should analyze these things and take appropriate remedial measures by making policy and applying on concrete level along with all stakeholders to curb victimization.

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