

THE ROLE OF PROCEDURAL JUSTICE IN VICTIM-POLICE INTERACTIONS AND VICTIMS RECOVERY FROM VICTIMIZATION EXPERIENCES

MD. RAKIBUL ISLAM, MD. ABDUL KADER MIAH, MOSTAK BARI FAHIM

Mawlana Bhashani Science and Technology University, Tangail-1902, Bangladesh

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Abstract

Many people in Bangladesh, especially women and children, suffer from heinous crimes like rape, sexual assault, acid burns, domestic abuse, and human trafficking every day. Victimization of property and violent crimes create negative psychological impact on person's wellbeing. Victims face depression, unsafety, stress and low self-esteem after victimization. The main objective of this study is to find out the role of procedural justice in victim-police contact and victims' recovery from victimization experiences. In this study, a descriptive qualitative research design is used to describe the healing benefits of procedural justice. In-depth interviews of victims were conducted on the basis of semi-structured questions. Victims feel violated after victimization and violation turns into validation during contacting the police. The study discovered that when police officers acknowledged the victimization experiences of victims, it aided in resolving the harmful psychological consequences of the crime, by providing victims with a feeling of closure, empowerment and security. It was crucial for crime victims that the police validated their victimization experiences. This study suggests that police officers' actions can significantly influence victims' recovery from their victimization experiences and procedural justice is a critical component of effective victim services.

Keywords

procedural justice, victims of crimes, victimization experience, victim-police interactions, victims' recovery

Introduction

Victim-police interaction is an essential component of the criminal justice system, and it can significantly affect the recovery of victims from the experience of victimization. As such, it is important to examine the factors that contribute to positive and negative experiences of victim-police interaction and the effects these experiences have on victim recovery. For many years, researchers have been interested in the role that procedural fairness plays in victim-police interactions and victim healing. A fair and reasonable criminal justice system is seen to depend heavily on the procedural justice principles, which include impartiality, transparency, voice, and dignity.

In contemporary democracies, police organizations are increasingly viewed as the service sector as opposed to "the force" (Stenning & Shearing, 2005). "Community policing" (Brogden & Nijhar, 2013) has emerged as the new buzzwords in fundamental police procedures to represent this change. As a result, it seems that the role of police is evolving from its traditional focus on enforcing the law and controlling crime to one that also encompasses promoting safety, security and minimizing harm (Stenning & Shearing, 2005). The concept of

procedural justice, the adequacy of the procedures followed to get results, becomes significant in this context (Elliott et al., 2012). The policing process can contribute to creating a more secure community as research has indicated that interactions with the police are associated with enhanced adherence to the law and greater acceptance of the police's legitimacy (Tyler, 2004).

The experience of victimization can adversely affect a person's well-being (Elliott et al., 2014). According to Kilpatrick & Acierno (2003), individuals who have been subjected to violent acts may develop various psychological problems such as post-traumatic stress disorder, depression, low self-esteem, and substance abuse (Strang, 2002). Even if an individual has experienced a crime that is not explicitly categorized as traumatic, such as a theft or home invasion, the detrimental effects on their well-being can still be significant. These consist of sadness, anxiety, and rage, as well as misgivings about the goodness of the world and the dependability of individuals (Carlson & Dutton, 2003). As the adverse impacts of victimization can be significant, the correlation between victims' participation in the criminal justice system and their psychological well-being becomes more significant. There has been a lot of interest in the study of how the criminal justice system's operations affect victims' mental health (Herman, 2003).

All nations in the modern world, including Bangladesh, have police as their primary means of enforcing the law. Despite the fact that upholding law and order and protecting the protection of people and their property are the primary objectives of the police, they play a significant part in the criminal justice system (Nabi, 2013). The Bangladesh Police is regarded as a reactionary agency that prioritizes public control over community service. In Bangladesh, the public's impression of the police is unfavorable, and it is widely believed that they are corrupt and ineffective. So, the relationship between the police and a crime victim is important to ensure proper justice. Procedural justice can help improve victim-police interaction.

In Bangladesh, crime is viewed as a crucial strategic social issue. Many people in Bangladesh, especially women and children, are victims of horrible crimes every day, such as rape, sexual assault, acid burns, domestic abuse, and human trafficking (Sheikh & Karim, 2013). Bangladesh has experienced a progressive rise in crime over the past few years, with horrifying physical, psychological, and societal repercussions for victims. Every hour, about 19 crimes are committed, and every 3 minutes and 35 seconds, 1 crime is reported to the police (Faruk & Khatun, 2008). As there are typically multiple victims for each crime, more people are victims of crime than commit crimes. According to Faruk & Khatun (2008), 80 people are victims of various crimes every hour. 799,762 people in total were victims of crime in 2007. However, the victim's rights are not given much consideration, and there is not much assistance available to them. So, there is the necessity to provide support to the victim by the police and ensure procedural justice.

Procedural justice may have an impact on a person's psychological health if they interact with the police. This may be especially important for crime victims since they may find that contacting the police and experiences with procedural justice lessen the trauma they have experienced as a result of the incident. The viewpoint of those who use police services is crucial to take into account to enhance procedural justice (Elliott et al., 2012). The perception of procedural justice on victim recovery from victimization experiences in interactions with the police is investigated in this study.

The relationship between victims and the police is often negative, with some marginalized and minority populations experiencing discrimination. Understanding the factors contributing to positive and negative perceptions of procedural justice can help improve the relationship between the justice system and victims. The Crime Index of Bangladesh reveals that 80 people become victims of crimes per hour, with rape, murder, kidnapping, and sexual harassment occurrences against women increasing. Victims of violent crimes face significant

health risks, including post-traumatic stress disorder and psychiatric disorders. Studying the impact of procedural justice in victim-police interactions can help provide support services, counseling, housing, legal help, medical care, and protection from further damage. This study explores the impact of procedural justice on victim recovery from victimization in interactions with the police. It aims to develop evidence-based practices and policies to strengthen bonds between victims and the legal system, encouraging healing. Victim assistance services provide emotional, social, and material support, deal with difficulties effectively, and provide vital information about available services and legal rights.

The purpose of the study is to improve our understanding of how the justice system affects victims and to inform the development of evidence-based policies and practices aimed at promoting positive experiences for victims and promoting recovery from victimization. This study can help to guide the development of policies and practices aimed at enhancing the relationship between the justice system and victims and promoting greater fairness, impartiality, and respect in these interactions by providing a deeper understanding of the role of procedural justice on victim recovery in interactions with the police. Additionally, this research can add to the collection of knowledge on how crime affects victims and the legal system and inform the development of effective strategies for promoting recovery and healing for victims.

Methods

Participants

To obtain information about the function of procedural fairness in victim-police relations, an exploratory research design has been adopted. A qualitative approach has been selected for this study, which is based on primary data. The study was carried out through in-depth interviews. The respondents are those who have been victims of property crimes and violent crimes. For the purpose of collecting information about this study, 21 participants who had been victimized for property and violent crimes from January 2022 to June 2022 were interviewed.

Data analysis methods and techniques

As this study is qualitative in nature, a semi-structured questionnaire was constructed to conduct the data collection. In this semi-structured questionnaire, socio-demographic information-related questions like age, sex, religion, education, occupation, and income are included. Both feelings questions and procedural justice questions were asked during the interview. Participants were questioned about their feelings and emotions before, during, and following their engagement with the police. The Procedural Justice Scale (PJS), created by Elliott et al. (2012), served as the foundation for the procedural justice questions. In order to elicit a comprehensive response from participants, open-ended questions with follow-up questions were also posed. Questions about procedural fairness and emotional questions were combined.

Data was collected through a face-to-face, in-depth interview. The address of the victim was collected from Joydebpur Police Station, Bangladesh, and a lawyer also provided the victim's address. Without creating a panic situation, the purpose of the study was explained to them, and ensured them that no harm would occur to them due to this study. The time was taken at their convenience. A notebook and approval letter were also taken for such data collection. The details of the information provided by the victims were written in the notebook. This study also considered the reputation of the victim's family. In this way, the study conducted semi-structured interviews with 21 participants who had reported crime (property or violent) to the police. It took 30–40 minutes talking with the victims. To establish core categories and subcategories open and axial coding were employed. In this coding system, every code was

constructed for 21 participants with their descriptions. From the statement of the victim, codes were formulated, and then such information about codes were developed in sub-themes. For the analysis of this study, such sub-themes were included under the theme.

Results

In this study, the main objective is to find out the function of procedural justice in victim-police contact and victims' recovery from victimization experiences. In this section, the findings have been analyzed from the collected data. The data has been collected from in-depth interviews, which have been analyzed and interpreted thematically. The findings provide demographic information, ideas about victims, victims feelings of violation during pre-contact with the police, victims feelings of validation during contact with the police, victims feelings of empowerment during post-contact with the police, and the meaning of procedural justice. Several themes and additional sub-themes arose during the coding process.

Socio-demographic information

This study exposes that most of the respondents are victims of property and violent crimes between the age group of 31 to 50 years. Besides, the people belonging to the age group of 11 to 30 years are also victims of violent and property crimes. Among the 21 respondents, 57.1% are male and 42.9% are female. The religion of every respondent is Islam. From 21 respondents, 19 were married and 2 were unmarried. The majority of the victims were housewives, with 6 being businessmen, 4 being employees, 1 being an imam, 1 being a driver, and 1 being unemployed. Most of the victims were illiterate, where 5 were H.S.C passed, 4 were S.S.C passed, 3 were graduates, and 3 were post-graduates. Among the 21 respondents, 12 were victimized for violent crimes, and the rest of the nine were property crimes. The average income of the respondents is almost taka 14000 (see table 1).

Demographic characteristics and type of crime reported	Participants (n)	Percentage (%)
Age (Years)		
11-30	7	33.3
31-50	10	47.6
51-70	4	19.1
Sex		
Male	12	57.1
Female	9	42.9
Religion		
Islam	21	100
Education		
Secondary school	4	19.04
Higher secondary school	5	23.8
Graduation	3	14.28
Post-Graduation	3	14.28
Illiterate	6	28.6
Occupation		
Business	6	28.6
Housewife	8	38.0
Company	4	19.0
Imam	1	4.8
Driver	1	4.8
N/A	1	4.8

Marital status		
Married	19	90.5
Unmarried	2	9.5
Crime		
Violent crimes	12	57.1
Property crimes	9	42.9
Total	21	100

Table 1. Socio-demographic information of the respondent
(Source: Authors)

Ideas of victimization

Most of the victims are victims of violent crimes and property crimes. The incidents of victimization occurred on the victims' way home, some people were victimized for theft at work: *"I was victimized for theft on my way home from university. I was sitting next to the window on the bus. I was talking on the phone when two people grabbed my phone and ran away"* (Case 1, victim of theft). *"I was working in my shop and turning on my phone when I realized it had been stolen"* (Case 6, victim of theft).

Victims in rural areas most of the time are victimized for violent crimes because of enmity over being in a position of power. People who work for institutions are sometimes victimized in their work. It creates a negative impact on them: *"There was a problem over being the president of the mosque, and they came together to attack us. They attacked us in groups"* (Case 11, victim of physical violence). *"During the shipment of products from Gazipur to Chittagong Port, some products were taken away on the way"* (Case 15, victim of theft).

The victims of property and violent crimes are victimized in different situations, such as in their way of coming home, enmity over being in a position of power, at their workplace, etc.

Types of crime

Among the 21 respondents, most were victimized by violent crimes. Twelve respondents were victimized by violent crimes, and the rest of nine were victims of property crimes. Violent crimes include physical violence, threats of violence, and rape. Most of the females were victimized for physical violence because of domestic problems or animosity with others: *"There was a problem about house rent with my sister. It broke out as a fight, and I was physically victimized in the incident"* (Case 16, victim of physical violence).

The victims of cases 19 and 21 were victimized by threats of violence. There was one case where a young girl was victimized for rape. Among the property crimes, every case was a theft case. Theft cases include online theft, institutional property theft, and domestic property theft: *"Four or five people stole my cows at night from my house. They also stole cows from other house in the same night"* (Case 14, victim of theft). *"I have a bKash account, and one day a person called me over the phone and asked me about my bKash account. He technically took my PIN number and took my money from my account"* (Case 8, victim of theft).

Victims faced physical violence, sexual abuse, domestic violence, threats of violence, and theft. This crime can be broadly categorized as violent and property crimes.

Impact of victimization

Victimization can have a significant impact on individuals. The victims of violent and property crimes faced physical injuries, emotional distress, financial loss, disruption of daily life, etc. The individuals experienced physical injuries that were temporary or permanent: *"I felt upset. I felt mentally sick and got admitted to the hospital"* (Case 11, victim of physical

violence).

Victims experience emotional distress such as anxiety, depression, and post-traumatic stress disorder. These psychological effects can be long-lasting and impact a person's quality of life. Some types of victimization, such as theft, can result in financial losses. This can be particularly devastating for individuals who are already struggling financially: *"I felt upset and wanted to commit suicide. I was unable to consume rice. It felt stressful"* (Case 7, victim of physical violence). *"I felt upset and very bad. I am a poor person and it is impossible to me to bear my children with this earning"* (Case 8, victim of theft).

From the above discussion, the findings about the situation of victimization can be concluded in this way: most of the people were victimized for violent crimes. They were victimized by their way of life. The impact of such victimization is so stressful. Some were traumatized, upset, and mentally sick. Victims, in most cases, wanted to end their lives as a result of their victimization.

Pre-contact with the police: violation

It was determined that violation was a key category that captured participants' emotions after the crime when they approached the police. The victim faced physical, psychological, and mental stress from their victimization. These states of victimization can be determined as violation states before contact with the police. The victim's perception of having been wronged and their expectation that reporting the incident to the police would help put things right were related to their sensation of feeling violated: *"I was helpless and unsafe before coming to the police. But I went to the police to get justice"* (Case 9, victim of physical violence).

The victim's view that someone had invaded their personal space and damaged, destroyed, or taken something that was legally theirs was what caused them to feel violated: *"Four or five people stole my cows at night from my house. During the same night, they stole cows from other houses. Then they slaughtered the cows and tried to sell the meat in the market"* (Case 14, victim of theft).

Experiencing a sense of violation was frequently followed by strong feelings of sadness, stress, and frustration. Some victims were angry about their victimization: *"When I recall my victimization, I feel stressed and a desire for vengeance. I always felt I should give them a good listen"* (Case 19, victim of threat of violence).

After victimization, victims faced physical, psychological, and mental stress. This violation stage victim was sad, stressed, and frustrated.

Helplessness

Feeling violated has many components, one of which is helplessness. The overwhelming majority of participants openly said that they felt helpless when they approached the police and that their interactions with the police had an impact on this emotion. The victims did not understand what they should do after victimization: *"I thought that it would be complex and that I would be harassed by police. I felt helpless and unsafe"* (Case 5, victim of theft).

The victim's perception of being denied agency—their incapacity to act as a result of the crime—was at the heart of the helpless emotion. Most frequently, a lack of initiative was caused by a sensation of being out of control and an inability to figure out how to fix the problem: *"It hurts me, and I feel like going to die when I remember my victimization. I felt upset, and I didn't understand what to do"* (Case 16, victim of physical violence).

Most of the victims felt helpless before contacting the police. They did not understand what they should do after being victimized.

Not safe anymore

Another important component of feeling violated was the victim's intense awareness

that they were no longer safe, which appeared as powerful feelings of anxiety and worry: *“They attacked me because of our previous animosity, and they also threatened to kill me. I felt helpless and unsafe for the activity of the offender”* (Case 21, victim of physical violence).

Victims also asserted that they felt unsafe before coming into contact with the police. The feeling of the victims that the offender would attack again: *“Before making contact with the police, I felt unsafe and thought that I couldn’t get help from the police”* (Case 4 victim of physical violence).

Victims felt unsafe before contacting police. They were worried about their victimization and secondary victimization.

Factors of reporting to the police

After victimization, victims faced different types of physical and mental problems. They felt stress and frustration. Most of the victims faced helplessness and uncertainty before police contact. But there were some reasons to report their victimization to the police. The factors involved in reporting to the police include getting help from others, having the courage to get justice, knowing their rights, getting confidence from others, etc.: *“It felt stressful to me, and I thought that I could not get help from the police before making contact with them. But I decided to report it to the police out of my own courage”* (Case 7, victim of physical violence). *“I got confidence from the experience of the person beside me, so I decided to report the incident to the police”* (Case 6, victim of theft).

Some victims thought that the police could help them improve their situation. Victims felt that it was important to report police immediately: *“I thought that the police could help me in this situation. So, I reported it to the police”* (Case 13, victim of theft).

Though the victim felt helpless and unsafe, they reported the crime to the police for a variety of reasons, including getting help from others, having the courage to get justice, knowing their rights, getting confidence from others, etc.

Contact with the police: validation

When participants interacted with the police in a way that they felt was helpful in easing the unpleasant emotions connected to victimization experiences, it was determined that validation was a primary category reflecting participants' feelings. The victim felt deeply violated as a result of the offender's intrusion into her private life. This, in turn, created a demand for them to have their experiences of victimization validated. Many interviewees made it clear that their interaction with the police was mostly about getting their victimization experience validated: *“When I came into contact with the police, they behaved with me politely and showed concern about my rights. Even so, they said they would tell me if there was any problem”* (Case 7, victim of physical violence).

The participants' specific significance in having their victimization experiences validated by police should be recognized. The importance of this perception is further demonstrated by the fact that many participants believed that community opinions were reflected in how the police handled them: *“The behavior of the police was fine, and they supported me by saying that they were with me. They behaved with me politely and showed concern for my rights. They carefully listened to all things and did not interrupt me”* (Case 18, victim of physical violence).

The data allowed for the identification of the following police response tactics that were crucial in helping victims feel that their experiences of victimization were validated: 1) acknowledgement that something wrong happened to the victim, 2) relating to the victim as a person, 3) empathic listening, and 4) taking action.

Acknowledgement that something wrong happened

Police acknowledging that the victim suffered harm when a crime occurred, that what occurred to the victim was, in fact, criminal activity, was one of the crucial components of validating victimization experiences: *“After hearing my words, they acknowledged that something wrong had happened to me. They also assured me that they would find out as part of their responsibility”* (Case 6, victim of theft).

In instances of domestic abuse and child sex abuse, where victims did not receive community recognition that what had happened to them was wrong, it was especially important to acknowledge that the victim had been wronged. For example, the brother of a young disabled girl who alleged sexual assault said: *“After hearing our words, they took it as a serious matter and assured me that they would take action against it. They also told us they were with us and would do everything we asked”* (Case 17, brother of rape victim).

In most cases, police officers considered the harm that was faced by victims. They (police) acknowledged that victims suffered harm when a crime was committed.

Relating to victim as a person

The fact that police treated victims as individuals and not just as a part of the case was also very significant to them. The police treated the victim with respect and ensured the victim's dignity: *“By showing enough respect, they listened to me in detail. After hearing the facts, they considered it and filed a case. They assured me that they would take action against them”* (Case 2, victim of physical violence).

Police responded to the victim after considering the area of occurrence. When they considered the case, the victims felt relaxed: *“At first, they did not take it seriously, but after considering my feelings, they filed the case”* (Case 1, victim of theft).

The police showed respect and dignity to the victim during their contact with them. They ensured victim desire through their action.

Empathic listening

Empathic listening, which allows victims to express their feelings and share their narrative, was another crucial component of validation. Several victims experienced a compelling need for empathic listening throughout their engagement with the police, since feeling violated was accompanied by strong negative emotions: *“I felt stress and frustration. They express sadness about the matter. Through their behavior, they ensured my rights. Then they carefully listened to all of my points”* (Case 5, victim of theft).

The police's ability to listen earned the victim's trust. Victims were also encouraged to take further action in the future: *“They gave me full opportunity to express my feelings. After considering my feelings, they investigated the fact and saw that the fact was true. It made me feel trust on police”* (Case 11, victim of physical violence).

The officer gave the victim ample opportunity to tell their story. This action of the police made the victim trust them.

Taking action

Police taking action to resolve the situation was also a crucial component in giving victims a sense of validity for their experiences of victimization: *“They carefully listened to my feelings and considered what I wanted. They went there right away and arrested one person”* (Case 3, victim of theft).

Police intervention was also seen as useful in reducing victims' sense of powerlessness and giving them a sensation of restored control, authority, and agency. The action of the police made the victim feel relaxed: *“Their prompt action made me feel confident in them. They*

investigated the matter and took action against the offender. Then I felt relaxed” (Case 7, victim of physical violence).

Police activity helped restore the sense of safety that had been lost and gave victims faith that the criminal would eventually be caught because police would keep searching for him or her: *“They investigated the case. Though the offender changed locations frequently, they continued their investigation. Then they discovered the products, which restored my faith in the police. I felt better as I found my products”* (Case 15, victim of theft).

The action of the police against the crime made the victim feel better than before. Because of police action, victims regained their sense of safety, loss, and faith.

Post-contact with the police: empowerment

Their well-being and capacity to handle the victimization experience were significantly impacted by how the police handled the individuals. The behavior of the police made the victim feel safe and strong. The police officer showed sympathy and provided support to improve the victim's situation: *“Police officers assisted and supported me at all times. So, I felt safe and mentally strong”* (Case 4, victim of physical violence).

Because of the encounter with the police, when participants felt as though their experiences of victimization had been validated, empowerment was found to be a key category that best captured how they felt. The victim felt better and happier after coming from the police: *“During post-contact with the police, I felt happy to have learned how to fight for my own rights. They support me to improve my situation”* (Case 18, victim of physical violence).

After contact with the police, the victim feels safe and strong. This feeling of victimhood is the sense of empowerment. The victim felt better and happier after coming from the police.

Closure to society

The victims' experience with the police giving them a feeling of closure with society was a crucial part of empowerment. Police provide advice to improve victim's relationships with society. Police also helped the victim of sexual abuse come back into her life: *“I felt better after contacting the police. They provided us with advice to improve our relationship with society”* (Case 11, victim of physical violence). *“At first, our neighbor blamed my sister, but with the help of the police, we are back to our lives. This activity by the police made them feel better, but not at all”* (Case 17, brother of rape victim).

Police help victims reintegrate into society. They provide support and advice to the victim to improve their relationship with society.

Feeling safer

The victims' subjective feeling of being safer than they were before their engagement with the police was another crucial feature of empowerment resulting from such interaction. Most of the victims feel safe after contact with the police, which creates a positive perception toward police. Some types of victimization, such as theft, can result in financial losses. This can be particularly devastating for individuals who are already struggling financially: *“During post-contact with the police, I felt better because they promised to find out. Their supportiveness made me feel safe, and it creates a positive perception toward police”* (Case 6, victim of theft). *“After contacting the police, I felt better because they had arrested the offender after an investigation. The police helped me improve my situation. This activity by the police made me feel safe”* (Case 14, victim of theft).

Most of the victims feel safe after contact with the police, which creates a positive perception toward police. Victims' feelings of safety make them empowered.

Feeling recover

Feeling recovered is another aspect of empowerment after contacting the police. Victims felt mental stress and frustration after victimization, but after contacting the police, most of the victims got cured. That is mainly because they get the justice they desire: *“They took action against the offender and did the right thing. I felt safe and better than before. They support me to improve our relationship. So, I felt strong and recovered from my victimization”* (Case 9, victim of physical violence). *“Police officers assisted and supported me at all times. So, I felt safe and mentally strong. I felt better and recovered from my victimization experience because of the supportive nature of the police”* (Case 4, victim of physical violence).

Meaning of procedural justice

Procedural justice is the process of fairness. Most of the victims define procedural justice as good service, fair treatment, responsible behavior, immediate action, etc. When victims asked what procedural justice meant to them, they answered as follows: *“I can define procedural justice as good service, ensuring rights, dignity, and respect, and doing their activity properly”* (Case 1, victim of theft). *“Procedural justice means considering the matter before making a decision”* (Case 7, victim of physical violence). *“I refer to procedural justice as immediate action, good behavior, and good advice”* (Case 3, victim of theft).

The procedural justice process has enabled many victims to repair their harm. Victims gain a form of escape from their prior negative experiences of crime through this process. Procedural justice must be conducted fairly to assist victims more effectively.

Discussion

This study provides a framework for understanding the function of procedural justice in victim-police contact and the recovery of victims from their victimization experience. This study also provides knowledge of the victimization situation and how procedural justice increases police legitimacy. The therapeutic role of procedural justice is to reduce victimization experiences and their detrimental psychological effects in victim-police contacts (see **figure 1**). Different studies explore the idea of procedural justice in relation to victim-police interactions (Mazerolle et al., 2013; Stenning & Shearing, 2005; Tyler, 2003). Victim's experiences with the police and other legal systems are provided in different literature (Elliott et al., 2012; Faruk & Khatun, 2008; Sheikh & Karim, 2013).

The situation of victimization includes physical, psychological, and mental consequences. Most of the participants were victims of violent crimes. The impact of such victimization is so stressful. Some victims were traumatized, frustrated, and mentally sick. The victims of physical violence had physical consequences. The perpetrator attacked the victim physically, and they were admitted to the hospital in some cases. Victimization experiences can be understood from previous studies on victim's experiences. For example, the victimization experience can have a serious negative effect on a person's wellbeing (Elliott et al., 2014). According to Kilpatrick & Acierno (2003), many victims of violent crimes run the risk of acquiring post-traumatic stress disorder, as well as other psychological issues such as depression, substance misuse, and low self-esteem (Strang, 2002).

The victim experiences victimization before contact with the police, which feeling can be defined as violation. This experience of violation can be modified as validation during contacting the police. The role of police increases the validation process. Victims feel validated by the behavior of the police. Police conduct includes politeness, respect, responsibility, listening ability, and being proactive in their actions. By relating to the victim as a person, practicing empathic listening, and taking action, police demonstrated that something wrong was done to the victim. The police's actions validated the victims. The idea of procedural justice is

to explain the fairness of the procedure by which decisions are made by authority instead of distributive justice, which refers to the fairness of the judgments themselves. Procedural justice is the process of fairness. Most of the victims define procedural justice as good service, fair treatment, responsible behavior, immediate action, etc. The proper implementation of procedural justice increases victim's satisfaction. Victims are satisfied with police action only when the police are legitimate in their action. According to Jackson et al. (2012), police legitimacy is considered the public's voluntary collaboration with police, and the perceptions of police legitimacy are crucial for police to effectively carry out their mandate of preventing and uncovering crime. Police legitimacy is regarded as a definite means for police to achieve the public's support, collaboration, and satisfaction (Mazerolle et al., 2013).

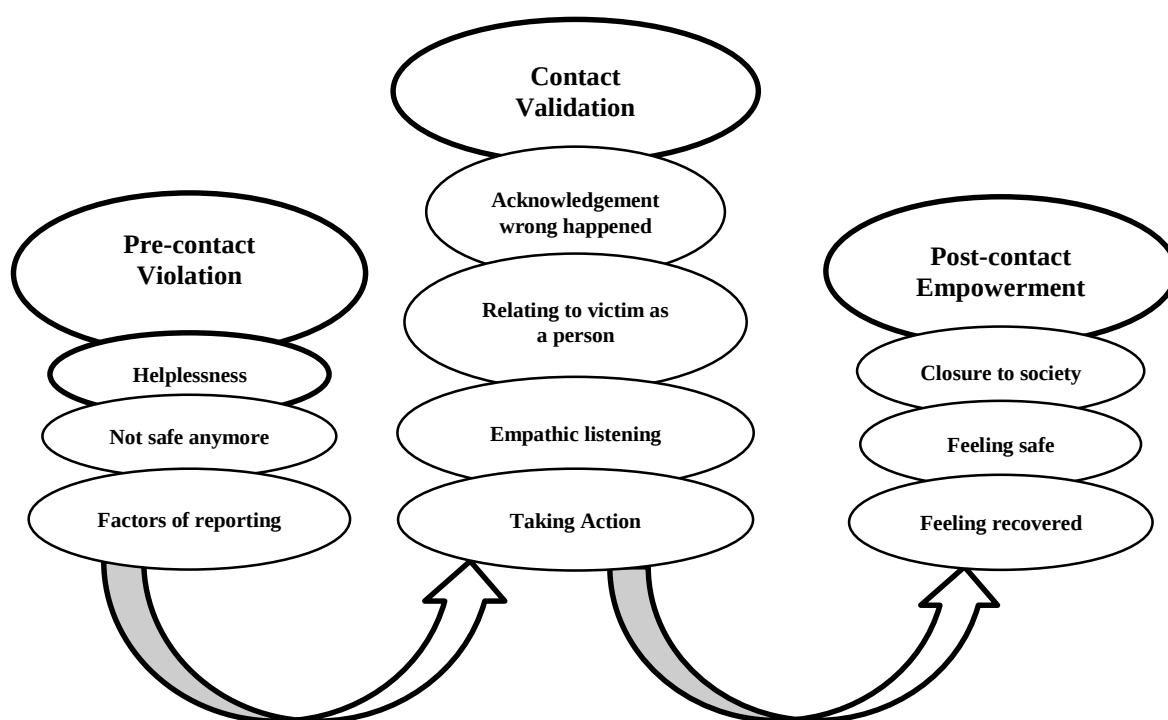


Figure 1. The therapeutic role of procedural justice in victim-police interaction
(Source: Authors)

The validation of the victim's feelings leads toward empowerment after contacting the police. The feelings of empowerment include feeling safe, having closure with society, and feeling recovered. This feeling of recovery indicated the victims' recovery from their victimization experience. Victims reported feeling stronger and better than they had in previous victimization experiences. Thus, procedural justice plays an important therapeutic role for the well-being of victims from their victimization experience. According to Herman (1992), a court of law is particularly good at inducing invasive post-traumatic symptoms. However, it has been discovered that post-trauma adjustment in victims of violence is positively correlated with one's level of satisfaction with the criminal justice system (Byrne et al., 1996). Fair practices, according to several experts, may have therapeutic benefits (Kelly, 1993). In other words, victims recover more quickly from victimization when they perceive that they have received fair treatment.

The findings of this study aligned with Procedural Justice Theory focusing on how procedural fairness influences victim-police relations and the emotional well-being of victims. According to this theory, individuals are more likely to view authorities as legitimate and

deserving of respect when they are treated fairly during their interactions. This perception indicates greater willingness to comply with rules, even when outcomes are unfavorable. Procedural justice rests on four key principles: Voice (ensuring individuals feel heard and considered), Neutrality (ensuring unbiased, consistent decision-making), Respect (ensuring individuals are treated with dignity and equality), and Trustworthy Motives (ensuring authorities act with genuine concern for the public's best interests) (Tyler, 2003). In the context of policing, procedural justice can strengthen public trust and confidence, motivates voluntary compliance with the law, and develops shared values between the police and the community. When victims experience procedural fairness in their interactions with law enforcement, it can significantly contribute to their emotional healing and enhance their overall well-being following their victimization. Procedural justice not only shapes public perceptions of the police but also plays a critical role in the recovery of the victim.

This study also provides knowledge about the attitudes of victims toward police. The findings of the study conclude in such a way that before contact with the police, victim's perceptions were that the police used coercive force, were rude, and could not be helpful. So, victims felt helpless and unsafe. But when victims came into contact with police, they discovered that the behavior of police was very fine. They contacted the victim politely and respectfully. In most of the cases, victim perception toward police was fine, helpful, responsible, doing their action properly, etc. Finally, this study showed that procedural justice has a therapeutic role in victim's recovery from victimization experiences in the context of victim-police interactions. Victims who go through the process of procedural justice have significant changes in their victimization experience.

Conclusions

Procedural justice is a crucial aspect of victim-police interactions, as it significantly impacts victims' experiences of victimization. Victims who feel treated fairly and respectfully by the police are more likely to feel a sense of justice and closure, aiding their recovery. This study, based on in-depth interviews with victims of violent and property crimes, found that procedural justice plays a significant role in their recovery. Victims of violent crimes often suffer from mental illness, frustration, and trauma. Procedural justice is defined as providing good service, treating people fairly, being responsible, and taking quick action. The study concludes that procedural justice is a critical component of effective victim services, and that police actions can significantly influence victims' recovery from their experiences of abuse. This study highlights the importance of procedural justice in victim-police interactions, highlighting the therapeutic role of fair treatment in the victimization experience. It suggests that police should listen to victims' problems, take proper action, maintain trust, and create a good relationship with them. Police should also raise awareness about crime through seminars, workshops, and social media, and be honest and fair in their interactions. They should also maintain the law effectively, ensure victim rights, avoid corruption, and secure citizen life by working closely with community members, responding quickly to emergencies, and holding perpetrators accountable. By doing so, police can promote public trust and create safer communities for all citizens.

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