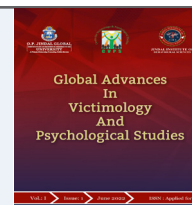


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Global Advances in Victimology and Psychological Studies



Same, Same but Different: Preventing Crime and Preventing Victimisation

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Abstract

In 1985, the international community agreed tackle the causes of crime to prevent victimisation. Since then, that community has identified the reduction of crime and violence as integral to achieving the sustainable development goals. Contrary, factors associated with globalisation and the pandemic have led to increases in certain crimes, thus increases in criminal victimisation. Preventing crime is necessary to prevent victimisation. Prioritising people's safety, so they do not become victims, is crucial, and given should be a greater priority internationally and domestically. Drawing on findings from crime prevention programmes designed to prevent victimisation, the author argues that victim assistance must be a key element of preventive activities. However, while crime prevention and preventing victimisation, on the one hand, are 'same, same', on the other hand, they are 'different'.

Keywords: Crime Prevention, Domestic Violence, Preventing Victimisation, Repeat Victimisation Crime Victims' Rights, Residential Burglary, Victim Assistance

1. Introduction

On an international level the United Nations has convened an annual commission and a 5-yearly congress on crime prevention and criminal justice. These focus on, among other items, crime prevention strategies and practices. In 1985, the congress recommended the United Nations General Assembly endorse the Declaration of Basic Principles of Justice for Victims of Crime and Abuse of Power. The preamble in this declaration

recommends "collaborative action-research on ways in which victimisation can be reduced and victims aided, and to provide aid designed to "curtail victimisation and alleviate the plight of victims" (United Nations, 1985).

More recent, via the Sustainable Development Goals, the international community seeks a future for all in which violence and crime are reduced (hopefully eliminated) and social and economic barriers that serve in equality are removed. Governments have agreed, for instance, to end intimate partner violence (Moreno, 2021), child

abuse and to tackle the nexus between organised crime, terrorism and development as well as eradicate corruption (Stelzer, 2021).

Despite member-states agreeing with the SDGs and implementing strategies intended to achieve them, too many are nowhere near achieving them. Globalisation has created cracks and vacuums of power and increasingly porous geo-political borders (O'Connell, 2020). The international community has witnessed, and still does, the influx of people such as refugees and migrants, on the move from armed conflict and economic woes (Pitsuwana, 2011). At the COP26, much was said on the plight of those impacted by climate change, including victims of environmental crime. The pandemic has exacerbated some crimes, such as violence against women, and there is evidence of increased violence across diverse settings and populations (Me, 2021). According to O'Connell (2020, p1), "Lost income and employment, and social isolation are among factors that have contributed to increase the risk of violence."

Trafficking in humans has not abated although many countries have closed their borders to legitimate travellers. The pandemic, said UNODC Executive Director Ghada Waly (2021), "has increased vulnerabilities to trafficking in persons while making trafficking even harder to detect and leaving victims struggling to obtain help and access to justice". Moreover, once identified, victims are often reluctant to cooperate because of not identifying themselves as victims, lacking trust in criminal justice personnel and justice processes, and perceiving cooperation as contrary to their best interests (Bales & Lize, 2007; UNGIFT 2008; Farrell, Owens & McDevitt, 2014; Gallagher & Karlebach, 2011).

The more common types of tech-abuse (such as harassment and surveillance) have also increased during the pandemic (Powell, Flynn & Sugiura, 2021). The Australian Competition and Consumer Commission (ACCC) (2021), for instance, reported an increase in 2020 in phone calls to deceive people and acquire their personal information, which the ACCC attributed to more people staying in their homes during the covid-pandemic. As well, the ACCC recorded an 84 percent increase in the number of reported scams in 2020 compared with 2019 (McAlister & Franks, 2021) who reported a decrease in

misuse of personal information in 2020 compared to 2019 in Australia).

Whatever form it takes, crime is unacceptable in any community and in any culture. It is apparent that, despite the commitments made, nowhere is immune from crime and the resultant victimisation of its people. The author argues for prioritising people's safety through preventive activities, so they do not become victims. He also asserts that victim assistance is a necessary element if crime prevention activities are to intended results—preventing people becoming victims of crime.

2. Causes of Criminal Victimisation

Over more than one half of a century of research, data analysis etc has contributed to an impressive volume of knowledge on the causes of and risk factors for crime and criminal victimisation (Waller, 2019), and as well how to effectively prevent crime and reduce victimisation (Sherman, Farrington, Welsh & MacKenzie, 2006; Waller, 2019). Because criminal victimisation is not a unidimensional concept, there are also many theories about its causes. Many factors, either alone or in combination, have been put forward to explain crime and apparent changes in the rates of crime. For example, there is a correlation between economic hardship and crime. High poverty levels and unemployment—both highlighted in the targets underpinning the SDGs—also tend to inflate the crime rate.

2.1 The Rationale for Crime Prevention

The acquired knowledge shows better prevention is economically sensible (Homel, 2009) and indeed essential (Waller, 2019). It also shows that simply labelling a programme preventive does not prove it prevents crime (Welsh & Farrington, 2007). There are gaps, however, in our knowledge. In a relative sense, there is a paucity of sound evaluations of victimisation prevention programmes (Fox & Shjarback, 2016). Indeed, some of programmes that have existed or exist are influenced by anecdotal information, over-attention to the so-called squeaky wheel, trends or programme favourites of the month, and political imperatives as well as ideology (Sherman *et al.*, 2006; Sutton, Cherney & White, 2014).

Why is this omission important? Knowing 'what works' in reducing victimisation has direct implications for improving people's quality of life; raising people's awareness of victimisation and its effects; improving ways to assist victims that, for instance, help them cope adaptively and crucially, to 'do no more harm'.

2.2 The Rationale for Preventing Victimisation

In a recent meta-analysis of over eighty victimisation prevention programmes (Fox and Shjarback, 2016), the researchers found that the mostly effective programmes were those targeted at children and adolescences. Several anti-bullying programmes, for instance, that involved a variety of participants, and a variety of programme components reduced bullying among school-aged children. Several school-based programmes addressing beliefs and attitudes to counter intimate partner violence were also effective in raising awareness about healthy relationships, encouraging positive communication within relationships and instilling beliefs and attitudes intolerant of violence. Furthermore, several 'creative component' programmes raised awareness among children.

The researchers concluded, however, that there is a significant deficit in our knowledge, and this is particularly so regarding 'what works' to reduce victimisation among adults (O'Connell, 2020). In the fields of victimology and criminal justice, acknowledgment of this omission is not new, but dates back several decades. In 1988, for example, the South Australia Commissioner of Police, David Hunt, released a discussion paper titled 'Victims Past: Victims Present' in which he espoused the desirability of "pre-emptive efforts aimed at minimising the risk of people becoming victims of crime ... [Furthermore] reducing the risk of crime, is of major significance." Like Fox and Shjarback (2016), Hunt (1988) noted that only a few victimologists had focused on the prevention of victimisation; instead, the greater attention had been paid to the victim's plight in the criminal justice system and preventing secondary victimisation (Shapland, Willmore & Duff, 1985; Bard & Sangrey, 1986; Gardner, 1990).

3. The Case for Preventing Victimisation

Preventing victimisation requires a multifaceted approach that not only tackles the physical environmental and/or situational contexts in which crime occurs but also the root causes of crime. Environmental preventive measures incorporated crime prevention through environmental design. Situational approaches favour neither physical nor social measures because, Weatheritt (1986) explains, crime results from the interplay of circumstantial and motivational factors, and the balance of these varies with different crimes. Hence, it is necessary to draw on both physical and social measures. Consistent with this approach to crime prevention, projects to reduce repeat victimisation of residential burglary victims were run in several Australian jurisdictions in the late 1990s, early 2000s. Proponents asserted that the phenomena of repeat victimisation afforded policy makers and practitioners with opportunities to direct resources at areas or groups 'at risk' and potentially have a 'high impact effect' (Farrell & Pease, 1993). Furthermore, they proposed that victims could play a constructive role in making their homes and their communities safer.

Projects in the Queensland and South Australia (Henderson, 2002), and later in the Australian Capital Territory (ACT) (Holder, Payne & Makkai, 2004), tested different types of intervention. The Queensland project "aimed to provide an enhanced police response to residential break and enter, with a specific focus on repeat victimisation" (Henderson, 2002, p14); whereas the South Australia project "was designed to prevent repeat victimisation through a range of local community resources and services that are alternative and additional to current practice in preventing and reducing residential break and enter" (Henderson, 2002, p14). The ACT project had similar aims to the other projects but, based partly on lessons learnt, "sought to combine and link both enhanced police response and a targeted community response to burglary" (Holder *et al.*, 2004, P11). They all delivered a greater level of information, invited victims to take up preventive interventions and assistance to victims of burglary. Table one gives an overview of the crime

Table 1. Crime prevention and victim support offered

Intervention	Queensland	South Australia	ACT
Crime prevention information offered	Yes – By police	Yes – By trained volunteers	Yes – By police with follow-up offered
Home security audit	Yes –By police	Yes – By trained volunteers	Yes – By police & victims invited to self-audit with checklist provided by police
Home security advice	Yes – By police	Yes – By trained volunteers	Yes – By police with follow-up offered
Home security hardware	Yes – Police loaned a portable alarm	In one of the project areas	Yes – for specific categories
Property marking	Yes – Police offered a kit	Yes – Referrals to volunteers who marked property & available under local Neighbourhood Watch programme	No – but was available under the local Neighbourhood Watch Programme
Victim notified about the project	Yes – By police	Yes – By police	Yes – Initially by police but also by packaged information.
Victim support	Yes – By police referrals	Yes – By trained volunteers and sometimes by police victim contact officer follow-up	Yes – By police
Victim surveys	Yes –By police	Yes –By trained volunteers	Yes – Victim Liaison Officer, Police Crime Prevention Branch

Source: Henderson (2002) and Holder *et al.*, (2004)

prevention and victim support interventions offered by each project.

The meta-evaluation of the Queensland and South Australia projects concluded that they were successful in preventing repeat burglary but not burglary overall (Henderson, 2002). An evaluation of the South Australia project concluded that a lesser number of victims than anticipated took up one or more of the interventions and fewer than expected utilised victim support services. Mid-way through the evaluation of the ACT project it became evident burglary victims also were not taking up the preventive interventions offered, so this became the focus of inquiry (Holder *et al.*, 2004). The findings suggest that victims of residential burglary are “more robust and

self-reliant in how they manage and respond to being victimised” than assumed. On victim resilience, data from a recent survey in Australia about identity crime and misuse shows most victim-respondents changed their behaviour in some way in response to the misuse of their identity or personal data. There was, in addition, “a significant reduction between 2019 and 2020 in the proportion of people being more careful when using or sharing personal information after victimisation” (McAlister & Franks 2021).

Victims in the ACT Residential Burglary project were asked if they had changed their responses to residential burglary (Holder *et al.*, 2004, p43). About two thirds stated that they had made at least one change, and among these

victims, the most stated change was to prevent another burglary: for instance, altering their house-locking patterns. Furthermore, households that experienced repeat burglary were more likely, if they could afford it, to install a burglar alarm. About one fifth of victims stated that they changed their daily movements, such as varying their departure and arrival times. Notably, while about one fifth of victims were willing to receive contact from victims of crime support service, about one third of victims were unwilling to receive such contact. Moreover, victim support was rarely contacted because many did not regard it, as necessary. This finding is consistent with earlier findings after like projects were trialled and tested in the UK.

4. A Cautious Note on Victim Blaming

Across the three residential burglary projects, importantly, data suggests that interventions did not reach, and if they did, they were not taken up, groups in the populations who were most at risk of repeat victimisation. Like other crime prevention strategies, there were concerns not to re-victimise those who became victims of crime, or to be seen to be blaming them. Victim blaming is a contentious issue. Early victimologists theorised that some victims precipitate their own demise or suffering. Out of the early works of von Hentig, Mendelsohn and others evolved the notion of shared or functional responsibility. The concept of the ideal victim, which, like shared or functional responsibility, challenged the innocence of the victim were not intended to blame the victim and exonerate the offender. Yet, the hostility of those who read the theorising as such hampered the legitimacy of victimology as a social science. Preventative strategies focusing directly on victimity (that is the proclivity to be a victim), on the one hand, are likely to attract accusations of victim blaming but, on the other hand, might if done with sympathetic reassurance and such as to nurture trust, might foster wisdom and knowing to avoid future victimisation (Johnston, 1981). The time has come to at least revisit the scientifically sound research on the role victims' play in crime, and seek to retrieve non-judgmental, objective observations that inform ways to prevent crime, rather than fuel assertions of blame. It might also be time to

re-visit the 'blame worthiness' of those who have vested interests, such as secondary victims, and governments that refuse or fail to act in evidence-based ways to protect citizens from becoming victims of crime.

Nearly forty years ago, Karmen (1980) argued that victimology can "inform sound strategies of crime prevention" (p.172) and could do so insightfully without immediate victim-blaming. While not ignoring the early victimologists' theories – the duet, the penal couple, the doer-sufferer – that drew attention only on the 'criminal' and the 'victimal', he proposed that those seeking to prevent crime should also turn their attention to secondary victims who are largely responsible for the plight of the victimal (that is the immediate victim). In relation to motor vehicle theft, for example, Karmen (1980) defined the car manufacturers, the insurers, and the salvagers (or wreckers) as secondary victims. He explained that these victims are often active in the criminogenic setting, which is influenced by their priorities, such as the pursuit of high profit at low risk for them, rather than protecting the victimal. In the context of planning to prevent crime, Karmen's explanation is relevant to Clifford's (1976) assertion that crime prevention planners should always consider who benefits from an intervention and be mindful of vested interests.

South Australia also ran an 'End Domestic Violence' (NDV) project (Millbank, Riches & Prior, 2000). The NDV Project was a partnership between the Attorney-General's Crime Prevention Unit, the police e Child and Family Investigation Unit and locally based domestic violence service providers. The aim is to prevent domestic violence, especially repetition of domestic violence. The NDV Project was grounded on routine activity theory (Cohen & Felson, 1979), which identifies three elements for crime to occur: victim suitability; lack of guardianship; and motivated offender. To prevent crime, it is necessary to focus on one or more of these elements. The NDV Project focused on the decreasing victim suitability victim and demotivating the offender. A series of progressive measures of intervention were used to protect the victim from repeat violence or abuse and to constrain the offender's future violence or abuse.

An active-evaluation methodology was used to monitor and evaluate the project. There was, for instance, ongoing monitoring to collect data on whether calls to

local service providers increased, decreased, or remained stable, because of the NDV project. After 427 police-attended incidents, and four months after the project became operational, there was no discernible increase. Furthermore, service providers indicated strong support for the project, as did victims. Service providers and victims were particularly supportive of the steps taken to hold offenders' accountable and to avoid victim-blaming. In addition, active referrals by police saw more victims being offered support services.

5. Victim Assistance as a Central Element in Preventive Programmes

Active referrals are crucial otherwise victims could end up 'ensnared in a service referral maze' that does not necessarily meet their needs (Lucken, 1999, p. 147) and may 'inhibit victims' coping and readjustment in the aftermath of crime victimisation' (Cook, David & Grant, 1999, p. 40). van Dijk (1999, p. 5) warns that 'vested professionals' might foster a 'culture of therapeutics', while Fattah (1999) says zealots in the victim industry might be causing more harm than good. Helpers' biases and misconceptions, for instance, can seriously undermine the therapeutic value of victim-oriented interventions and unskilled support workers can cause secondary victimisation (Winkel, Blaauw & Wiseman, 1999). In addition, the efficacy of many of the interventions offered to victims is unknown, which might explain why a USA study and a comparative German– USA study found a significant mismatch between crime victims' needs and the types of support offered by many victim assistance organisations.

As well situational measures since the 1990s, social measures have gained greater attention. The social development method of prevention begins from the early childhood and continues till adolescence and youth. The ecological approach that focuses on development phases and key transition points from birth to infancy, infancy to adolescences, youth to adulthood is a prime example. Of particular concern is the need to ameliorate the risk factors that increase the 'probability' of the onset of anti-social and/or criminal behaviour to verses the need to

buttress the protective factors that reduce such probability (O'Connell, 1999).

In 2000, the South Australia Attorney-General launched the Domestic Violence Prevention Fund Grant Programme, which made \$100,000 available through the Crime Prevention Unit, for up to four early intervention and prevention projects. The funds were tied to crime-prevention programmes that aimed to help children and young people address both the short and long-term effects on them of their experiences of domestic violence within their families. Though early indicators suggested positive outcomes, these programmes were not satisfactorily evaluated. Relevant to this chapter, however, is the integration of prevention and victim assistance.

Agencies other than the police have striven to improve their activities that have the potential to reduce crime. Often, however, crime prevention is not the primary aim of those activities. School-based programmes are not commonly identified as crime prevention for worry that students who participate in the programmes could be labelled as 'potential' criminals, thus stigmatised (O'Connell, 2002; Edwards, Carr, Hudson, Harris, O'Connell & Mathews, 2001).

6. Preventing Crime- A Priority to Preventing Victimisation

Returning to the main theme of this article- crime prevention must be taken seriously. Moreover, as Professor Ben Matthews (2021) in Australia recently wrote, "prioritising prevention is an absolute moral imperative". An efficient and effective way of directing crime prevention effort would be to concentrate upon those who have already been victimised (Farrel & Pease, 1993). This would entail, as illustrated above, an integration of victim assistance and crime prevention services. Preventative efforts should not only reduce crime but also reduce victimisation and, whenever practical and ethical, alleviate the extraordinary suffering victims endure.

Multiple actions are required. From a victim-centric perspective, there is in many nations an urgent need for increases in crisis intervention, support services that match victims' needs, and investment in workforce

capacity for those tasked with assisting people who become victims of crime.

Though immediate action is required, we should acknowledge that the gains might not be immediate but long-term (O'Connell, 2020). Governments, business, and civil society accompanied by victims themselves must stay the course (Waller, 2019).

6.1 Steps that should be taken to Prevent People becoming Victims of Crime

So, what needs to be done? Genuine political will is crucial as we are to meet our crime prevention objectives (Bakhtawar, 2020). Contrary, without it we are likely to be locked into cycles of short-term, piecemeal efforts – with changes made as governments change rather than for empirically sound, plausible reasons. Multi-partisan commitment, spanning government, business, and civil society (including faith-based organisations) action is achievable albeit challenging (O'Connell, 2020). Matthews (2021) states that governments should take the lead by quarantining investment as they do elsewhere, for example, their defence budgets.

In South Australia, the Government runs a dedicated Victims of Crime Fund to cover the costs of state-funded victim compensation and to make grants to victim support services. Money from the fund can also be used to pay for crime prevention programmes that also prevent criminal victimisation. As well in South Australia, applicants for crime prevention grants were required to address certain factors, including reducing victimisation, and the Assessment Panel to determine the successful applicants included the Commissioner for Victims' Rights. Over the years that the grants programme ran, several victim support organisations attained grants to tackle domestic violence in remote Aboriginal communities, child sexual abuse in a regional area and road trauma (in particular reducing the number of deaths and serious injuries as well as the impact of collisions on roads). A youth agency was awarded a grant to develop and implement an art therapy programme for detained young offenders. Through art and therapy, young offenders explored their crimes and the harm done. Many of the young offenders developed empathy for the victims of their crimes but the evaluation

fell short of establishing whether the programme had a preventative outcome.

In accordance with section 15 of the Victims of Crime Act 2001, several Attorneys-General in South Australia have established a Victims of Crime Ministerial Advisory Committee. In 2005, the Hon. Michael Atkinson appointed the former Police Commissioner, David Hunt, to chair the committee and he tasked the Commissioner for Victims' Rights, as an *ex officio* member, to be the administrative officer. The committee members also included a representative for the Victim Support Service, for families bereaved by homicide and a representative for victims of road trauma. The committee reported that it favoured preventing victimisation by implementing a 'values-based' approach to crime prevention. The committee engaged the Attorneys-General Department to conduct an audit of crime prevention programmes, which produced an inventory of almost 120 programmes. Those programmes in health sector, such as child and adolescent protection, tended to have the greater focus on preventing victimisation, whereas those in the youth sector tended to have the greater focus on preventing the onset of criminal behaviour or reducing recidivism. Aspects of victim assistance featured in many of the programmes across all sectors.

6.2 The Three Dimensions of Crime Prevention

A comprehensive plan to prevent crime incorporates all three dimensions of prevention: primary, secondary, and tertiary (Dirga, 2021; Matthews, 2021; Clifford, 1976). Strategies to prevent crime at the primary or population level should serve as the foundation of our preventive efforts (O'Connell, 2020). This includes concrete steps to attain several of the SDGs, such as ameliorating structural gender inequality, making education freely available to all, redressing the norms that tolerate violence, and improving social determinants of health. Access to affordable housing, provision of decent work and adequate healthcare, as well as paying proper attention to legacies of abuse of power, such as slavery and colonisation, plus the resultant intergenerational trauma are some of the initiatives that come to mind and have a sense of universality.

Strategies to prevent criminal victimisation in high-risk populations (that is secondary prevention) must also be a priority. Macro, meso and individual factors intersect to increase the risk of both becoming a perpetrator of crime and a victim of crime (O'Connell, 2020). Like primary crime prevention, secondary level crime prevention should both respond to crime and mitigate its adverse impacts. In relation to victims, adequate services for those most in need require greater investment. Competent victim assistance is crucial for those 'at risk' peoples (O'Connell, 2020). Victims of crime are entitled to practical, material, medical, psychological, and financial assistance that meets their needs; yet, despite increased need, victim assistance in some nations has become the victim of austerity measures.

Thomas Burrows (2021) pointed out, that criminal justice practitioners, especially the police, should undertake like training and education on crime prevention and preventing victimisation. He urged a paradigm shift from police as crime-fighters to police as service-providers. The police as the first responder play a critical role in shaping victims' perceptions of the criminal justice system (O'Connell, 2009). They are central to fulfilling victims' procedural rights. There are different approaches to victim-centricity in policing (Muir, 1986; see also O'Connell, 2009; O'Connell & Hayes, 2019).

Police as service-providers could provide victim assistance, such as crisis intervention, case information, property return, victim impact statements, financial aid, referrals, witness services, and transportation. Victim assistance could be delivered by a specialist unit, by dedicated staff in each major police station, or generically through all officers, or a combination based on the type of crime or category of victims. The police might establish an advisory board, with victims among the members, to guide initially the necessary transition in policing and forge necessary partnerships, and to monitor responses to victims for the purpose of preventing secondary victimisation.

Those who work in the victim assistance field should also be properly trained and educated (O'Connell, 2020). They must be trauma-informed, culturally competent and they must engage in the least-intrusive interventions wherever possible (Pemberton, 2010a, 2010b; Letschert & Pemberton, 2008). The efficacy of training and education

courses for those who encounter victims should be proven by methodologically sound evaluations (Wyatt & Harris, 1999).

Regarding tertiary approaches to crime prevention, research on recidivism and desistance show the value of tailored rehabilitative programmes for perpetrators of much conventional crime. Programmes can focus on internal change and or external change. These programmes can be coupled with programmes that focus on de-stigmatisation. Research shows some of these programmes either alone or linked are promising in relation to deterring perpetrators reoffending, hence reducing crime (O'Connell, 2020)

In the victimological field, problem-solving courts have attracted some attention. In keeping with international developments in the late 1990s, South Australia established a Violence Intervention Programme (VIP) based in the Magistrates Court (that is a court of summary jurisdiction) to improve court-led responses to domestic violence. Collaboration between the police, the Magistrates Courts, Correctional Services and victim assistance services for women, children and men was central to the operation of the VIP. The VIP brought together victim perspectives, programmes for perpetrators and tailored responses from the criminal justice system. A key feature was the attendance of a victim assistance worker to provide support and information to victims (mostly women) who were applying for anti-violence (restraining) orders whenever the Magistrates Court sat as a dedicated domestic violence court. A children's worker would also give voice to the children and report on their safety issues. The Court regarded engagement with victims and children as important. The protection of victims and children was a paramount consideration.

The VIP was reviewed in 2001. Though it was noted that the VIP required further development in relation to funding and service agreements, and training and management structures, the Review found that overall, the VIP was a "highly successful, collaborative and innovative [programme] in reducing domestic violence" (Justice Portfolio undated submission).

While some victims are wedded to retributive justice; others see value in restorative practices, including those that bring them in direct contact with perpetrators (O'Connell & Hayes, 2019). It is apt to point out that

victims' expression of their emotions and their demands for justice are sometimes confused with vengeance. Notwithstanding, whatever approach to justice, it is incumbent on the government and its institutions to maintain the faith of the public, including victims, in the justice system.

6.3 Reticence towards Crime Prevention

What might be done to overcome reticence in relation to participating in crime prevention activities? Crime can lead individuals to perceive a loss of control in their lives. As victims, they may feel helpless and powerless. Psychological research suggests that victimisation can increase apathy due to loss of self-esteem and social cohesion. Some victims may engage in self-derogation to resolve the cognitive dissonance that occurs when they cannot explain their circumstance, which helps them to cope with the notion that their suffering could happen to innocent people.

An attempt to counter victims' sense of helpless and perceived vulnerability was made in South Australia under its Crime Prevention Strategy (Crime Prevention Policy Unit, 1989a; 1989b). The strategy's messaging promoted the concept that individuals can maintain a safe, good quality lifestyle by becoming involved in preventing their re-victimisation and more broadly crime prevention. An evaluation, however, called into question core elements of the strategy, not because they were conceptually flawed but rather because of politics surrounding the strategy's implementation and the lack of resources directed towards populous initiatives rather than evidence-led initiatives (Sutton, Cherney & White, 2014).

6.4 The Ingredients of a Victim-Centric approach to Crime Prevention

If crime prevention strategies are to address the needs of victims and respect victims' rights, they must, wrote Schneider, 1985, p15), "inform potential victims about criminal techniques, diminish or eliminate victim proneness, reduce the number of victimogenic situations and analyse times and places of victimisation to prevent victim concentrations". Schneider's words suggest crime prevention initiatives are more effective at the crime

causation stage of the 'victimisation process', however, as suggested earlier in this chapter, the accessibility, effectiveness and efficacy of victim assistance, such as victim support services, provided in the immediate aftermath of crime and in the long-term are also crucial elements if crime is to be prevented. Thus, in truly comprehensive crime prevention, victimisation prevention strategy, it is necessary to:

- Enhance understanding of the factors that increase the risk of criminal victimisation and make 'potential' offenders more likely to offend.
- Build the capacity within mainstream services, such as the police and generic victim support services, and specialist services, such as domestic violence and sexual assault services, to identify and respond in ways that match victims' needs.
- Improve the accessibility and increase the reach of victim assistance to ensure victims are safe and supports their safety and wellbeing throughout the victimisation process and for as long as needed.

7. Preventing Crime and Preventing Victimisation: Same, Same but also Different

In conclusion, a plethora of feelings of injustice, a sense of being forgotten, and the incidence of criminal victimisation may fairly be factors that drove increasing concern with victims' rights, such as their right to be protected and their right to assistance. This concern has run parallel with the burgeoning interest in crime prevention and consequently reducing victimisation. Victims of crime have a natural interest in preventing themselves and their families becoming victims again or their property, such as their homes, being re-victimised. Research suggests that victims of crime do act on crime prevention advice more readily than do non-crime victims; however, research also reveals a disparity in relation to which victims have the capacity to act on such advice.

A comprehensive approach to planning to prevent crime and actually preventing it as well as reducing its adverse effects must be multi-faceted (Pittaro, 2019) and implemented in an iterative manner, so that adaptations can be made (O'Connell, 2020). The plan should provide

for rigorous measurement of the prevalence of crime, and for the monitoring so we can see if our strategies are making a difference and for whom (Clifford, 1976). Reliable, nuanced data are also essential to inform prevention policy and practice.

Armed with the knowledge on what factors influence the likelihood of crime, efforts must be directed accordingly (for example, providing intensive supports to those with greatest need, whether they are potential perpetrators or potential victims, or both).

There should be proper investment in effective programs to respond to and reduce crime. And these programmes should be informed by the evidence-base and be collaboratively designed to suit local context and priorities.

It is necessary to mobilise multi sectoral talent, engage decision-makers and rally funders, and ensure that the promises to prevent crime are implemented, monitored, and evaluated (Waller, 2019). There must be adequate governance procedures to hold those encharged with preventing crime accountable (Homel, 2006). Furthermore, like our efforts to prevent the onset of criminal behaviour, there still must be reform criminal justice systems, so they contribute to prevention, as well as detection and sanctioning wrong doings, such as crime. Laws that govern our justice systems, like our plans to prevent crime, should be properly designed and implemented as intended. Research in the victimological field, for instance, shows reform faces many challenges (O'Connell, 2015; O'Connell & Hayes, 2019).

The principles in the Declaration of Basic Principles of Justice for Victims of Crime and Abuse of Power have influenced almost all victim-centric policies and practices since 1985. These principles have been replicated or reformulated in other international law (for example, the UNTOC and its Protocols and the UNCAC). Likewise, the principles are fundamental to the proposed model legislation to protect victims of terrorism. Importantly, the Declaration's preamble commits nations to prevent crime and protect victims (including preventing secondary victimisation).

Sometimes, however, crime prevention programmes have unintended by-products, such as victim-blaming that occurs when the victim of a crime is held entirely or partially culpable for the harm that befell him or her (O'Connell, 2020). Though in a clinical, scientific context exploring the role of the victim in crime captivates some researchers; many victim support workers assert that crime prevention programmes ought to mitigate victim blaming, rather than fuel it.

Despite the remarkable pace of legislative reforms and administrative proclamations, the implementation of victim-centric reforms in too many countries has been patchy, so the promise to improve access to justice and treatment, for instance, has not been met for all victims. Reforms have, alas, typically followed convoluted paths. We should strive towards a victim-centricity in the administration of justice, without unduly negating the presumption of innocence and other tenets of the 'rule of law'. Laws should be fair, clear and co-extensive with the triangulation of the victim's, the perpetrator's and society's interests. Similarly, this triangulation must feature in preventive efforts.

Victims and their needs must be a constant item on the crime prevention agenda. The scale of harm they endure must be a prominent as a motivator to be smart on crime prevention (Waller, 2019) and smart on justice¹. Crime prevention and victim assistance: different but also in many ways the same.

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¹Smart on justice requires among other elements safe justice for victims of crime. This concept in theory and practice was a central theme for the Victim Support Europe, Autumn conference held online on 3 December 2021.

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