

AN ABSTRACT OF

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Abstract approved: 

The purpose of the present study was to investigate whether an individual's prior victimization experience and their general fear of crime would predict perceptions of crime seriousness. In contrast to a majority of past research investigating prior victimization, general fear of crime, and perceptions of crime seriousness, the present research utilized a sample that more closely resembled actual crime victims. The demographics of the present sample (i.e., students) matched the characteristics of a high risk population (e.g., youthful age, participation in certain types of social activities, living arrangements, and income level). Although no significant findings were found, implications and future research were discussed.

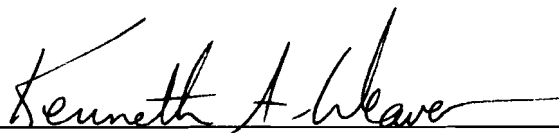
PRIOR VICTIMIZATION
AND GENERAL FEAR OF CRIME
AS PREDICTORS OF
PERCEPTIONS OF
CRIME SERIOUSNESS

A Thesis
Presented to
the Division of Psychology and Special Education
EMPORIA STATE UNIVERSITY

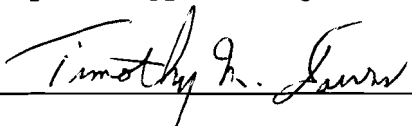
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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

In modern society, criminal activities affect every individual in some way. Subsequently, people form opinions, attitudes, and beliefs about the seriousness of crimes, as well as what punishment should be required for the offender in question. Furthermore, policymakers working within the criminal justice system take the public's views of crime seriously (Brown & Elrod, 1995; Hoffman & Hardyman, 1986). For example, successful implementation of correctional programs, such as the construction of new prisons, depends largely on community acceptance. If policymakers, who are often elected officials, do not assess the public's views accurately, then they often face resistance when implementing certain programs.

Because public opinion shapes criminal justice policy, some policymakers request that researchers conduct studies to assess the public's views on various criminal justice issues (Miethe, 1984; Roth, 1978). However, researchers argue that in order to obtain an accurate assessment of the public's views on issues related to crime, the variables that affect these views must be accurately ascertained (Cullen, Link, & Polanzi, 1982; Hoffman & Hardyman, 1986). One factor that affects an individual's perceptions of crime is the seriousness of the crime itself. In other words, the manner in which individuals view a crime depends largely on

how severe they perceive the crime to be (Sellin & Wolfgang, 1964; Walker, 1978).

Perceptions of Crime Seriousness

Sellin and Wolfgang (1964) conducted the first systematic investigation concerning the public's perceptions of crime seriousness. The study was initiated due to direct criticisms of the methods utilized by the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) to measure and index crimes. Sellin and Wolfgang argued there were flaws in the methods of data collection utilized by the FBI, such as failing to make a distinction between the degrees of harm inflicted on a particular victim and the method of counting index offenses.

The FBI crime index, reported annually in the Uniform Crime Reports (UCR), computes the sum of the reported incidences of seven specific criminal acts. These criminal acts fall into the following categories: burglary, aggravated assault, robbery, forcible rape, murder, motor vehicle theft, and larceny-theft. Due to this method of data collection, the UCR index fails to make any distinction between the degree of harm inflicted on a particular victim. As Wolfgang, Figlio, Tracy, and Singer (1985) have noted "the UCR index gives equal weight to robbery resulting in the victim's hospitalization and to robbery with little or no injury to the victim" (p.1). In other words, the UCR index fails to adequately assess the seriousness of each offense, because researchers, who compute the overall UCR

index, assign each crime, regardless of the offense type or harm inflicted, equal weight. Consequently, Sellin and Wolfgang (1964) argued for a more accurate measurement of criminal behavior and designed The Primary Index Scale to measure the public's perceptions of crime seriousness.

Researchers presently use various forms of the Primary Index Scale (Cullen et al., 1982; Levi & Jones, 1985; O'Connell & Whelan, 1996a; Shoemaker & Bryant, 1987). Crime severity scales usually consist of several criminal descriptions (i.e., short crime scenarios) in which participants judge the seriousness of each offense by circling a number on a Likert-type scale (e.g., 1 = Not at all serious to 11 = Extremely serious). Researchers obtain the seriousness score by summing the item scores. A majority of the studies investigating perceptions of crime seriousness examined the relation between various demographic characteristics and perceptions of crime seriousness.

Demographic characteristics. Several researchers have addressed the issue of whether there is a cross-cultural or international consensus in ratings of crime severity (Miethe, 1982; O'Connell & Whelan, 1996a). Using crime scenarios similar to those used in the original Sellin and Wolfgang (1964) study, Normandeau (1966) asked a sample of Canadian students to evaluate the seriousness of 15 criminal offenses. Results indicated considerable agreement between

Canadian and American-based samples. Utilizing a Puerto Rican-based sample, Velez-Diaz and Megargee (1971) also found considerable agreement between their results and those reported by Sellin and Wolfgang (1964). Therefore, past research provides evidence that cross-cultural differences may have no significant impact on perceptions of crime seriousness.

Several researchers examined age, sex, social class, and educational attainment as predictors of perceptions of crime seriousness. For example, Walker (1978) reported no relation between sex of raters and judgments of crime seriousness. Although several researchers reported similar results (Cullen et al., 1982; Rossi, Waite, Bose, & Berk, 1974), Phillips (1985) found women rated crimes as more serious than men. In a related study, Kormos, White, and Brooks (1992) asked male and female participants to rate the seriousness of several crime scenarios. All participants judged the same offense scenarios; however, one-half of the surveys portrayed a female victim, whereas the remainder of the surveys portrayed a male victim. Results indicated that both men and women rated the severity of the criminal offense higher when the victim was a woman. However, when asked to judge personal harm to the victim, women attributed more personal harm to female than male victims, whereas men rated personal harm equally for both male and female victims.

Researchers have investigated the relation between age and perceptions of crime seriousness. Sellin and Wolfgang (1964) reported that age and judgments of crime severity were not related. However, other researchers report a significant relation between age and perceptions of crime severity (Sparks, Genn, & Dodd, 1977). For example, O'Connell and Whelan (1996a) found that as age of the participants increased, their judgments of the severity of the offenses also increased. The conflicting evidence points to the need for further investigation in these areas.

Although some researchers report that social class and educational attainment relate to perceptions of crime seriousness (e.g., Rose & Prell, 1955; Walker, 1978), other researchers found evidence to the contrary. For example, Rossi et al. (1974) conducted a large scale survey in which they directly assessed the impact of specific individual differences on crime severity ratings. Results indicated that income and educational level were not significantly related to crime severity ratings. Similarly, Cullen et al. (1982) report no differences in severity ratings between participants living in rural areas and participants living in urban areas.

The literature concerning the relation of demographic variables to ratings of crime severity prompts several conclusions. First, research (Normandeau, 1966; Velez-Diaz & Megargee, 1971) indicates that differences in cultural

background do not impact crime severity judgments. However, research regarding the characteristics of age (Sellin & Wolfgang, 1964), sex (Walker, 1978), social class (Rose & Prell, 1955) and educational attainment (Rossi et al., 1974) as predictors of crime seriousness provides mixed results.

Inferences of intent. Research has also investigated the relation of intent or the mental attitudes of the offender at the time a criminal act allegedly took place to perceptions of crime severity. Riedel (1975) conducted the first study to determine whether such cognitive processes entered into the judgments of crime seriousness. He argued that if researchers gave participants information about the circumstances surrounding the offense, this information would impact the severity ratings. To test this prediction, he administered a survey in which the offender was either provoked (e.g., offender's life was depicted as threatened if he did not commit the crime) or intended to inflict harm on the victim (e.g., hostile attitude). Results indicated that the participants were not influenced by these variables and rated the severity of the crime in the same manner. However, other research has yielded positive results.

Sebba (1980) conducted a more focused study in which the researcher provided participants a description of the exact mental state of the offender at the time of the criminal offense. For example, the offender depicted in the offense scenario either knew the offense would inflict harm

or did not foresee any harm to the victim. Participants rated the criminal acts as more severe when the offender intended to inflict harm on the victim.

Although not directly concerned with the issue of intent, Rossi et al. (1974) found that planned killings were rated as more serious than impulsive killings. Banks, Maloney, and Willcock (1975) found similar results when conducting crime severity research for the British government. Furthermore, several researchers reported that an intentional act led participants to recommend more severe penalties for the offender (Horai, 1977; Horai & Bartek, 1978; Velin & Walters, 1988). Because of the strong empirical support, several researchers (Sebba, 1980; Wolfgang et al., 1985) agree that the intentionality of the act should be included in crime severity research.

Prior victimization. Finally, researchers investigated whether prior victimization influences perceptions of crime seriousness. Shoemaker and Bryant (1987) conducted a survey in which several participants judged the perceived seriousness of 22 offenses. Results indicated that persons who experienced prior victimization (i.e., whether they or a member of their family were victimized in the past year by one or more types of crimes), rated the criminal offenses as more severe than did persons who did not experience prior victimization.

On the other hand, other researchers report that prior

victimization does not influence perceptions of crime seriousness. In a nationwide sample of 60,000 adults, Wolfgang et al. (1985) found no relation between experiences of victimization and perceptions of crime seriousness. Levi and Jones (1985) found similar results in a large scale study conducted in Britain. In a related study, Baron and Hartnagel (1996) asked several participants to indicate whether they agreed or disagreed with punitive statements regarding juvenile offenses. Results indicated the participants were punitive in their responses; however, experiences of prior victimization did not affect their judgments. Similarly, Langworthy and Whitehead (1986) found that neither direct nor vicarious victimization predicted an individual's punishment attitudes toward adult offenders. Although past findings indicate that prior victimization may not always impact an individual's judgments of crime seriousness, prior victimization does influence a person's general fear of crime.

Fear of Crime

Several researchers reported that when individuals are victimized, they are more fearful of subsequent crime (Balkin, 1979; Linqvist & Duke, 1982; Stafford & Galle, 1984). Skogan (1987) found a strong relation between prior victimization and measures of worry and concern about crime. Vitelli and Endler (1993) found that prior victimization was a significant factor in the general fear of crime shown by

both men and women. Sprott and Doob (1997) found that victims of crime generally felt that sentencing policies of adult offenders were too lenient.

Other variables related to fear of crime include media influences (O'Connell & Whelan, 1996b) and various demographic characteristics, such as age and sex (Warr, 1984). For example, Chiricos, Eschholz, and Gertz (1997) found that television news consumption regarding crime was significantly related to fear. Keane (1995) reported that younger participants were more fearful of crime and that urban dwellers were more fearful of crime than persons residing in rural areas.

Few projects have investigated the relation among victimization, fear of crime, and perceptions of crime seriousness in college students. This lack of research is puzzling because of the large number of college students and concern about campus safety.

Student Victimization

The lack of student victimization research exists because researchers do not feel that crime committed against college students is a problem needing attention (Smith & Fossey, 1995). On the other hand, several arguments augur effectively for the necessity of student victimization research. First, the general college population matches the demographic characteristics of many crime victims. For example, the Bureau of Justice Statistics (1994), reported

that 16 to 19 year olds and 25 to 34 year olds had the second and third highest victimization rates (12 to 15 year olds had the highest rate). Clearly, both the general student population and crime victims are younger. Furthermore, several researchers found that unmarried and low-income individuals reported higher rates of victimization than married and high-income individuals (Miethe & Meier, 1994; Sampson & Lauritsen, 1990). Because most college students are unmarried and have limited income, Fisher, Sloan, Cullen, and Lu (1998) argued that they are potential crime victims.

The lifestyle and routine activities of students also make them more vulnerable to victimization. For example, Fisher et al. (1998) suggest that proximity to crime, exposure to crime, target attractiveness, and lack of capable guardianship may put some individuals at greater risk for victimization than others. Researchers argue that each of these aspects, viewed in the context of a typical student's lifestyle and routine activities, could lead to student victimization (Miethe & Meier, 1994; Sampson & Lauritsen, 1990).

First, Fisher et al. (1998) define proximity to crime as a person's physical closeness to a large number of potential offenders. For example, researchers found that individuals who live in multiunit dwellings, such as apartments or dormitories, report higher levels of

victimization than individuals living in other types of housing (Massey, Krohn, & Bonati, 1989; Miethe & Meier, 1990). Fisher et al. argued that victimization rates are higher because multiunit dwellings contain numerous anonymous residents and therefore promote lack of interest for another's property. Because many students live in apartments or dormitories, the potential for victimization is exacerbated.

Second, participation in such behaviors as frequenting bars, walking alone, and attending various social activities contributes to higher rates of victimization (Miethe & Meier, 1994; Sampson & Lauritsen, 1990). Because many college students participate in these activities, their potential for victimization increases (Fisher et al., 1998).

Third, target attractiveness (or an individual's perceived economic value) contributes to higher reported rates of victimization. Fisher et al. (1998) argued that because students bring a large volume of desirable property, such as stereos and television sets, to college, they are suitable targets for would-be offenders. Furthermore, because new students arrive on campus each semester, the number of potential targets remains high.

Finally, lack of capable guardianship (i.e., an individual's lack of guarding person or property) contributes to higher reported rates of victimization. For example, many students report that they leave their doors

unlocked, leave personal property unattended, and walk home alone late at night (Fisher et al., 1998). Such behaviors place students and their property at greater risks for victimization.

These considerations argue effectively for research on student victimization (Miethe & Meier, 1994; Sampson & Lauritsen, 1990; Smith & Fossey, 1995). Because a majority of the samples examined by past research do not match the characteristics of actual victims (Fisher et al., 1998; Miethe & Meier, 1990), previous research on victimization and crime severity may not present a complete picture or even a representative picture. Due to these criticisms and doubts concerning the validity of criminal justice research, the present study used a sample of college students that more closely approximated high-risk crime victims.

This study differs from previous studies investigating student victimization (Fisher et al., 1998; Massey et al., 1989; Miethe & Meier, 1990), fear of crime (Chiricos et al., 1997; Vitelli & Endler, 1993), and perceptions of crime severity (Sellin & Wolfgang, 1964; Wolfgang et al., 1985), in that previous researchers have not directly investigated whether student victimization and general fear of crime influence students' perceptions of crime severity.

Based on previous research findings, the following hypotheses were proposed:

Hypothesis 1 (a-f): Because the demographics of the

present sample match the characteristics of a high risk population (e.g., youthful age, participation in certain types of social activities, living arrangements, and income level), it was hypothesized that certain members of the present sample would report higher levels of victimization than others. More specifically, younger students were hypothesized to report more incidences of victimization than older students (Hypothesis 1a). Students who participated in numerous social activities were hypothesized to report more incidences of victimization than those who did not (Hypothesis 1b). Students who resided in multi-unit dwellings were hypothesized to report more incidences of victimization than those who lived in single unit dwellings (Hypothesis 1c). Low-income students were hypothesized to report more incidences of victimization than high-income students (Hypothesis 1d). Male students were hypothesized to report more incidences of victimization than female students (Hypothesis 1e). Finally, Hypothesis 1f predicted that students of a lower academic class (i.e., freshman or sophomore) would report more incidences of victimization than students of a higher academic class (i.e., junior or senior).

Hypothesis 2: It was hypothesized that students who had been victims of crime and scored high on measures of fear of crime would perceive crime as more serious than students who

had not been victims of crime and scored low on measures of fear of crime.

CHAPTER 2

METHOD

Participants

The participants were 122 (85 women and 37 men, M age = 21 years, range = 18 to 52 years) volunteer introductory psychology students from a medium-sized Midwestern university. All participants received research participation credit.

Instruments

Demographic Sheet. A demographic sheet (see Appendix A) was included to determine age, sex, living arrangement, amount of participation in social activities, classification, and income level (personal/family). Participants also indicated the number of times they or a member of their household (e.g., roommate and/or family member) had been victimized in the past two years.

Fear of Crime Measurement. The Fear of Crime Measurement (see Appendix B) ascertains a respondent's fear of 11 different forms of criminal victimization (Lagrange & Ferraro, 1989). The 11 items represent the full range of crime fears reported by past researchers: minor to serious offenses, property offenses, personal offenses, and public order offenses. Lagrange and Ferraro (1989) reported an alpha coefficient of .88, indicating high reliability.

Participants indicate their fear of each crime by circling a number on a 3-point Likert scale

(1 = Not afraid; 2 = Somewhat afraid; 3 = Very afraid).

Researchers calculate a fear of crime score by summing the 11 item scores. The scores range from 11 to 33. Based on the median score from the entire sample, researchers categorize participants as having high fear of crime (scores above the median) or having low fear of crime (scores below the median).

Crime Seriousness Questionnaire. The Crime Seriousness Questionnaire used in this study was constructed from 12 offense scenarios obtained from the 200 scenarios originally used by Wolfgang et al. (1985) in the National Survey of Crime Severity (NSCS) research. The 12 scenarios used in this study include the 12 "core crimes" found most frequently throughout the 12 versions of the NSCS and comprise the primary scale of the NSCS (see Appendix C). Each scenario included information on the type of crime, extent of injury, presence and type of weapon, type of victim (private/commercial/public), and the use of force or intimidation. Wolfgang et al. (1985) reported an interrater reliability coefficient of .88 and an alpha coefficient of .98 for the primary scale of the NSCS.

Participants rate their perceptions of the seriousness of each crime scenario by circling a number on an 11-point Likert scale (1 = Not at all serious; 6 = Of medium seriousness; 11 = Extremely serious). Researchers obtained seriousness scores by summing the individual item scores,

producing a range from 12 to 132.

Procedure

All testing was done in a standard classroom. Following the completion of an informed consent document (see Appendix D), a packet of questionnaires was distributed to each participant. Each packet contained a demographic sheet, Fear of Crime Measurement, and the Crime Seriousness Questionnaire. These questionnaires were administered in counterbalanced order to avoid order effects. All questionnaires were completed within 30 min. Anonymity was maintained in all cases.

CHAPTER 3

RESULTS

Table 1 shows the means and standard deviations for the incidence of victimization, fear of crime, and perceptions of crime seriousness for both men and women. To test Hypothesis 1a and 1b, Pearson product-moment correlations were nonsignificant for the correlation between age and victimization (Hypothesis 1a), $r(120) = .08$, $p > .05$, and the correlation between amount of participation in various social activities and victimization (Hypothesis 1b), $r(120) = -.03$, $p > .05$.

Four separate one-way analyses of variance (ANOVA) were carried out to investigate the influence of sex (men or women), living arrangements (house, apartment complex, sorority or fraternity house, or dormitory), income level (\$0 to \$25,000 or \$40,000 or above), and academic class (freshman, sophomore, junior, and senior) on the reported incidences of victimization. These analyses yielded nonsignificance for living arrangements (Hypothesis 1c; see Table 2), income level (Hypothesis 1d; see Table 3), sex (Hypothesis 1e; see Table 4), and academic class (Hypothesis 1f; see Table 5).

Table 1

Means and Standard Deviations for Incidence of Prior
Victimization, Fear of Crime, and Perceptions of Crime
Seriousness for Men and Women

Variable	n	M	SD
Incidence of Prior Victimization			
Men	37	1.08	1.26
Women	85	.98	1.52
Fear of Crime			
Men	37	18.41	4.51
Women	85	21.35	4.69
Perceptions of Crime Seriousness			
Men	37	96.03	17.03
Women	85	97.18	18.14

Table 2

One-way Analysis of Variance for Reported Incidences of
Victimization by Living Arrangements

Source	<u>SS</u>	<u>df</u>	<u>MS</u>	<u>F</u>	<u>p</u>
Living Arrangements	.98	3	.33	.16	.93
Residual	248.99	118	2.11		
Total	249.97	121			

Table 3

One-way Analysis of Variance for Reported Incidences of
Victimization by Income Level

Source	<u>SS</u>	<u>df</u>	<u>MS</u>	<u>F</u>	<u>p</u>
Income Level	.98	1	4.27	2.08	.15
Residual	245.70	120	2.05		
Total	249.97	121			

Table 4

One-way Analysis of Variance for Reported Incidences of
Victimization by Sex

Source	<u>SS</u>	<u>df</u>	<u>MS</u>	F	p
Sex	.22	1	.22	.11	.74
Residual	249.75	120	2.08		
Total	249.97	121			

Table 5

One-way Analysis of Variance for Reported Incidences of
Victimization by Academic Class

Source	<u>SS</u>	<u>df</u>	<u>MS</u>	<u>F</u>	<u>p</u>
Academic Class	.28	3	.76	.36	.78
Residual	247.69	118	2.10		
Total	249.97	121			

For Hypothesis 2, a 2 X 2 ANOVA was used in order to investigate the effects of prior victimization (victim or nonvictim) and fear of crime (high or low) on perceptions of crime seriousness. High or low fear of crime was determined by the median score from the entire sample (21).

Participants who scored above the median were categorized as having high fear of crime and participants who scored below the median were categorized as having low fear of crime.

This analysis yielded no significant effects (see Table 6).

Table 6

Two-way ANOVA for Crime Seriousness by Fear of Crime and
Victimization

Source	<u>SS</u>	<u>df</u>	<u>MS</u>	<u>F</u>	<u>p</u>
Fear (F)	352.80	1	352.80	1.14	.29
Victim (V)	470.30	1	470.30	1.52	.22
F X V	556.25	1	556.25	1.79	.18
Residual	36616.20	118	310.31		
Total	37995.56	121			

CHAPTER 4

DISCUSSION

The present study examined the relations between student demographics and reported incidences of victimization. The influences of student victimization and fear of crime on perceptions of crime severity were also assessed. Past research supports a positive relation between student demographics and reported incidences of victimization. Past research has assessed relations between victimization, fear of crime, and perceptions of crime seriousness as well. However, there is little research that has investigated the relation between victimization, fear of crime, and perceptions of crime seriousness in college students.

Hypothesis 1

Hypotheses 1a-f predicted relations between various demographic characteristics and reported incidences of victimization. Hypotheses 1a-f were not supported. Determining why the present sample's demographic characteristics did not relate to reported incidences of victimization is difficult. The characteristics of the campus in which the sample was taken may have some bearing on the results. Lizotte and Fernandez (1993) reported that the larger the campus size or the greater number of the students enrolled predicted higher rates of victimization. In a similar study, Fox and Hellman (1985) investigated over

30 different correlates that have been found to influence student victimization rates. Results indicated that only campus size and scholastic quality positively correlated with higher victimization rates. Due to the relatively small size of the campus in which this sample was taken (i.e., approximately 5,400 students; 200 acre campus), campus size may have affected the results.

Lizotte and Fernandez (1993) also reported that as tuition and room and board costs increased, campus crime rates increased as well. Because of the inexpensive tuition (i.e., \$991 per semester for residents; \$3173 per semester for non-residents) and inexpensive room and board (i.e., approximately \$1,780 per semester) of the campus from which this sample was drawn, low costs may have had some bearing on the results.

Some researchers have suggested that campuses that permit access to campus property (e.g., computer labs, study halls, and recreation centers, etc.) day or night (24-hr access) create more opportunities for student victimization (Bromley & Territo, 1990). For example, students allowed late night access to campus facilities, when no or very few other students are present, may be at a greater risk of victimization. The campus where this sample was taken does not allow 24-hr access to campus facilities.

Finally, researchers have reported that male students are victimized at a higher rate than female students (Fox &

Hellman, 1985; Smith & Fossey, 1995). For example, Smith and Fossey reported that men were two times more likely to be victimized by robbery than women. Because of the relatively small sample of men investigated in this study, the true picture of victimization may not have been revealed.

Hypothesis 2

Hypothesis 2 predicted that students who have been victims of crime and score high on measures of fear of crime would perceive crime as more serious than students who have not been victims of crime and score low on measures of fear of crime. Because the results yielded no significant effects, Hypothesis 2 was not supported.

Although past research supports Hypothesis 2, one explanation for the present findings suggests that prior victimization is not fear provoking because most crime is of very little consequence to the victim. For example, Skogan (1987) reported that few assaults lead to injury, most rape and robbery attempts are unsuccessful, and most stolen property is of little value to the victim. He also suggested that the consequences of victimization fade fairly quickly after the experience, subsequently reducing an individual's fear of crime.

With respect to individual variables, several researchers have reported that prior victimization does not influence perceptions of crime seriousness (Baron & Hartnagel, 1996; Langworthy & Whitehead, 1986). For example,

Levi and Jones (1985) and Wolfgang et al. (1985) reported no relation between experiences of victimization and perceptions of crime seriousness in two large scale studies conducted in Britain and the United States. The present study found similar results when examining the influences of prior victimization on perceptions of crime seriousness, therefore adding further support that prior victimization does not influence perceptions of crime seriousness.

Implications

It is a startling but true fact that out of 3,000 colleges and universities located in the United States, only 10% of them report annual campus crime rates on a regular basis (Bromley & Territo, 1990). Unfortunately, campus crime rates are not reported primarily because campuses feel that reporting crime rates may not attract new students. Therefore, the results from this study and similar studies investigating student victimization rates, could provide additional information to prospective college students who are making decisions concerning institutions of higher education. For example, these studies could benefit students by providing information concerning what institutions present a greater risk of victimization than others.

Another application of this study concerns the nature of the study itself. Skogan (1987) suggested that very little research has investigated the general impact of victimization. In other words, most researchers have

investigated only specific variables related to victimization, such as particular crimes (e.g., burglary, rape, and murder) or categories of victims (e.g., burglary victims or rape victims). Skogan suggested that because of the specific nature of most research investigating victimization, past research has left unanswered questions concerning the differences between comparable victim and non-victim populations. The results from this study may help bridge this gap in the research, because both victims and non-victims were examined in this study.

Results of the present study could also provide valuable information to campus administrators, campus security personnel, and student government officials about specific security issues dealing with their campuses. For example, as with past research (Bromley & Territo, 1990), the present study implies that limited access to campus facilities may have some impact on student victimization rates. The campus where this sample was taken does not allow 24-hr access to campus facilities; therefore, reducing the risk of victimization. Finally, due to the small size of the campus in which this sample was taken, results from the present study may provide further evidence that campus characteristics, such as small size and lower costs may attenuate student victimization (Fox & Hellman, 1995).

Future Research

Because of the relatively small number of men investigated in the present study, future replications should evaluate a larger sample of men. This consideration is important because several researchers reported that male students are victimized at a higher rate than female students (Fox & Hellman, 1985; Smith & Fossey, 1995).

Furthermore, logic suggests that individuals who have been victims of crime would subsequently be more fearful of crime, nevertheless the present study did not find an interaction between these two variables. One explanation for the mismatch found between prior victimization and fear of crime could be the passage of time between an individual's victimization experience and their participation in this study. According to Skogan (1987), consequences of victimization fade fairly quickly after the experience, thereby reducing an individual's fear of crime. Future replications should attempt to investigate a victim's general fear of crime shortly after being victimized.

Finally, several researchers have reported that as campus size increases, reported rates of victimization also increase (Fox & Hellman, 1985; Lizotte & Fernandez, 1993). However, little research has examined differences between large and small campuses with regard to student victimization and fear of crime as predictors of perceptions

of crime seriousness. Such comparisons are needed to provide a clearer picture of crime on college campuses.

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Appendix A
Demographics Sheet

1.) Age _____

2.) Sex: Male _____ Female _____

3.) How many times in a 7-day (week) period do you participate in various social activities (e.g., frequent bars; fraternity or sorority parties; other related social gatherings)? _____

4.) Annual Income Level (Please check one):

\$0 to \$14,999 _____
 \$15,000 to \$24,999 _____
 \$25,000 to \$39,999 _____
 \$40,000 or above _____

5.) How many times in the past 2 years have you or a member of your household (e.g., roommate[s] and/or family member[s]) been victimized by a crime? _____

6.) Current living arrangements. Please Check One:

_____ House
 _____ Apartment Complex
 _____ Sorority or Fraternity House
 _____ Dormitory

7.) Grade Classification. Please Check One:

_____ Freshman
 _____ Sophomore
 _____ Junior
 _____ Senior

Appendix B (1)
FEAR OF CRIME MEASUREMENT

Instructions:

Please rate your fear of each scenario below by circling a number from 1 to 3 (1= Not afraid; 2= Somewhat afraid; 3= Very afraid).

HOW AFRAID ARE YOU OF...

1. Being mugged by someone who takes your purse or wallet?

1.....	2.....	3.....
Not	Somewhat	Very
Afraid	Afraid	Afraid

2. Having your car stolen?

1.....	2.....	3.....
Not	Somewhat	Very
Afraid	Afraid	Afraid

3. Having someone break into your home while you are away?

1.....	2.....	3.....
Not	Somewhat	Very
Afraid	Afraid	Afraid

4. Having someone break into your home while you are there?

1.....	2.....	3.....
Not	Somewhat	Very
Afraid	Afraid	Afraid

5. Being raped or sexually assaulted?

1.....	2.....	3.....
Not	Somewhat	Very
Afraid	Afraid	Afraid

Appendix B (2)

6. Being cheated, conned, or swindled out of your money?

1.....	2.....	3
Not	Somewhat	Very
Afraid	Afraid	Afraid

7. Being attacked by someone with a knife, club, or gun?

1.....	2.....	3
Not	Somewhat	Very
Afraid	Afraid	Afraid

8. Being approached on the streets by a beggar or panhandler?

1.....	2.....	3
Not	Somewhat	Very
Afraid	Afraid	Afraid

9. Having rowdy youth disturb the peace near your home?

1.....	2.....	3
Not	Somewhat	Very
Afraid	Afraid	Afraid

10. Being murdered?

1.....	2.....	3
Not	Somewhat	Very
Afraid	Afraid	Afraid

11. Having your property damaged by vandals?

1.....	2.....	3
Not	Somewhat	Very
Afraid	Afraid	Afraid

Appendix C (1) Crime Seriousness Questionnaire

Instructions:

I would like to ask your opinion about how serious you think certain crimes are. Please rate the seriousness of each crime scenario by circling a number from 1 to 11 for each item below (1= Not at all serious; 6= Of medium seriousness; 11= Extremely serious).

1.) With no one else present, an offender takes property worth \$10 from outside a building.

1.....2.....3.....4.....5.....6.....7.....8.....9.....10.....11

not at all serious
of medium seriousness
extremely serious

2.) An offender shoves (or pushes) a victim. The victim does not require any medical treatment.

1.....2.....3.....4.....5.....6.....7.....8.....9.....10.....11

not at all serious
of medium seriousness
extremely serious

3.) An offender breaks into a building and with no one else present takes property worth \$10.

1.....2.....3.....4.....5.....6.....7.....8.....9.....10.....11

not at all serious
of medium seriousness
extremely serious

4.) With no one else present, an offender takes property worth \$50 from outside a building.

1.....2.....3.....4.....5.....6.....7.....8.....9.....10.....11

not at all serious
of medium seriousness
extremely serious

5.) An offender without a weapon threatens to harm a victim unless the victim gives him money. The offender takes the victim's money (\$10) and leaves without harming the victim.

1.....2.....3.....4.....5.....6.....7.....8.....9.....10.....11

not at all serious
of medium seriousness
extremely serious

Appendix C (2)

6.) With no one else present, an offender takes property worth \$100 from outside a building.

1.....2.....3.....4.....5.....6.....7.....8.....9.....10.....11
 not at all of medium extremely
 serious seriousness serious

7.) An offender inflicts injury on a victim. The victim is treated by a physician but his injuries do not require him to be hospitalized.

1.....2.....3.....4.....5.....6.....7.....8.....9.....10.....11
 not at all of medium extremely
 serious seriousness serious

8.) With no one else present, an offender takes property worth \$1,000 from outside a building.

1.....2.....3.....4.....5.....6.....7.....8.....9.....10.....11
 not at all of medium extremely
 serious seriousness serious

9.) An offender with a weapon threatens to harm a victim unless the victim gives him money. The offender takes the victims money (\$10) and leaves without harming the victim.

1.....2.....3.....4.....5.....6.....7.....8.....9.....10.....11
 not at all of medium extremely
 serious seriousness serious

10.) An offender inflicts injury on a victim. The victim is treated by a physician and his injuries require him to be hospitalized.

1.....2.....3.....4.....5.....6.....7.....8.....9.....10.....11
 not at all of medium extremely
 serious seriousness serious

11.) With no one present, an offender takes property worth \$10,000 from outside a building.

1.....2.....3.....4.....5.....6.....7.....8.....9.....10.....11
 not at all of medium extremely
 serious seriousness serious

Appendix D

Informed Consent Document

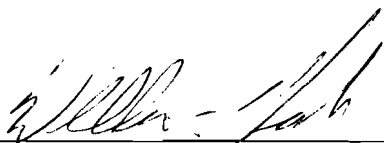
The Division of Psychology and Special Education supports the protection of human subjects participating in research and related activities. The following information is provided so that you can decide whether you wish to participate in the present study. You should be aware that even if you agree to participate, you are free to withdraw at any time. If you do withdraw from the study, you will not be subjected to reprimand or any other form of reproach. You are asked to complete two questionnaires. These questionnaires will assess various attitudes towards crime. A demographic sheet will also be included. The procedure will take approximately 20-30 minutes to complete.

"I have read the above statement and have been fully advised of the procedures to be used in this project. I have been given sufficient opportunity to ask any questions I had concerning the procedures and possible risk involved. I understand the potential risks involved and I assume them voluntarily. I likewise understand that I can withdraw from the study at any time without being subjected to reproach."

Participants Signature

Date

I, William C. Hale, hereby submit this thesis/report to Emporia State University as partial fulfillment of the requirements for an advanced degree. I agree that the Library of the University may make it available to use in accordance with its regulations governing materials of this type. I further agree that quoting, photocopying, or other reproduction of this document is allowed for private study, scholarship (including teaching) and research purposes of a nonprofit nature. No copying which involves potential financial gain will be allowed without written permission of the author.



Signature of Author

7/14/99

Date

Prior Victimization and General Fear of Crime as Predictors of Crime Seriousness

Title of Thesis/Research Project



Signature of Graduate Office Staff

July 15, 1999

Date Received

01.9.99