VICTIM-OFFENDER RELATIONSHIP IN CRIMES AGAINST SCHEDULED TRIBES

Vikas Kumar Sharma[1], Prof. (Dr.) Mamta Patel[2]
Ph.D. Research Scholar[1], Professor[2]
Department of Criminology and Forensic Science
Dr. Harisingh Gour Vishwavidyalaya (A Central University), Sagar (M.P.)

Abstract

The victims of Scheduled Tribes are the individuals who suffer harm, exploitation, or injustice due to their socio-economic disadvantages, geographical isolation, and historical marginalization. Understanding the relationship between victims and offenders plays a vital role in criminological research, as it reveals the interactions that lead to crime. Factors such as poverty, illiteracy, and a lack of legal awareness make tribal communities more vulnerable, which ultimately hinders their access to justice. As we know, the Indian Criminal Justice System has always been centered around the offenders. However, the rights and rehabilitation of the victim, who has to live with the consequences of the crime, have been rarely overlooked. The System's focus must shift equally from punishing the offender to protecting the victim's rights. Their representation, compensation, and assistance also needed to be given a higher priority. This research was conducted among 304 victims across all twelve tehsils of the Sagar district in Madhya Pradesh. As per the SC & ST (PoA) Act, 1989, all victims were generally victimized in two forms, i.e., heinous or serious in nature. The study aims to find out the victim-offender relationship in the commission of a crime and to reveal the major reasons for the victimization of a crime. The samples were collected using a survey method to gather comprehensive data for the in-depth study. The findings indicate that 31.9% of the victims were criminalized by their neighbors, and 26% of the offenders committed the crime due to personal enmity with the victims. The study suggests that literacy, employment, and legal awareness can help reduce instances of victimization in the tribal regions of India.

Keywords: Crime, Offenders, Scheduled Tribes, Victims, Victimization

CORRESPONDING AUTHOR:	RESEARCH ARTICLE
Vikas Kumar Sharma Research Scholar, Department of Criminology and Forensic Science Dr. Harisingh Gour Vishwavidyalaya (A Central University), Sagar (M.P.) E-mail: cr.vikas1318@gmail.com	

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1. Introduction

In the context of Scheduled Tribes, the relationship between victims and offenders is often influenced by the unique socio-cultural and economic vulnerabilities that these communities usually face. Ullman and Siegel (1993) explained that Scheduled Tribes are among the most marginalized groups and frequently experience exploitation and victimization due to structural inequalities, social discrimination, and economic conflicts. Typically, offenders are individuals or groups from outside the community who exploit their dominant social or economic positions to take advantage of tribal populations. However, there are also instances where the offender is from within the community, reflecting internal conflicts that arise from disputes over resources, land, or personal disagreements (Heller et al., 1983; Chantia & Misra, 2015).

The causes of crime, particularly concerning the victimization of Scheduled Tribes, are rooted in a complex web of social, economic, psychological, and environmental factors that excessively affect these marginalized communities. Socioeconomic disparities, such as extreme poverty, high unemployment rates, and limited access to education, are particularly pronounced among Scheduled Tribes, creating conditions where crime becomes a more prevalent risk (Campbell & Muncer, 1990). These communities often face systemic discrimination and exclusion, which exacerbates their vulnerability to crime. The lack of economic opportunities and social mobility can also lead these individuals within these tribes to resort to illegal activities, either as a means of survival or as a response to the frustrations of being marginalized. This situation results in their victimization, leading to further criminalization (Verdier & Zenou, 2004).

According to German and Patel (2020), the relationship between the victim and the offender is quite complex. The victim is the person who suffers harm, while the offender is the one who causes it. In cases of victimization, there is often a close interpersonal relationship between these two. All offenders who commit crimes against individuals involve direct contact with their victims; however, murder typically entails a higher degree of intensity or a longer duration of contact than is seen in other offenses (Wolfgang, 1958). In addition, Parker (1989) also suggested that families of homicides are more closely related to socioeconomic factors, whereas subcultural factors influence acquaintance homicides. Stranger homicides, on the other hand, are affected by both economic and subcultural factors, depending on the specific circumstances. Although several studies have explored the sentencing of homicide offenders, only a few have focused on the victim-offender relationship as a primary variable (Dawson, 2004, 2012). The growing interest in the relationship between victims and their victimizers indicates that our understanding of crime is evolving (Devasia, 1980).

According to Sharma and Patel (2025), Section 2(wa) of the Criminal Procedure Code, 1973 defines the term victim means "any person who has suffered any loss or injury caused by reason of the act or omission for which the accused person has been charged" and Section 2(1)(y) of the Bhartiya Nagarik Suraksha Sanhita, 2023 also defines the term victim means "a person who has suffered any loss or injury caused by reason of the act or omission of the accused person and includes the guardian or legal heir of such victims". While, victimization means a process through

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which a person or group has made to become a victim of crime; in other words, victimization is when individuals, communities, and institutions suffer considerable harm or injury (Sharma, 2013). Crime against Scheduled Tribes, also termed as hate crimes against minorities, refers to unlawful, violent, threatening, or destructive conduct against a vulnerable or socially backward class group of people. It becomes a serious concern when the crime pattern has a drastic impact on the victim's life and well-being (Mohanty, 2017).
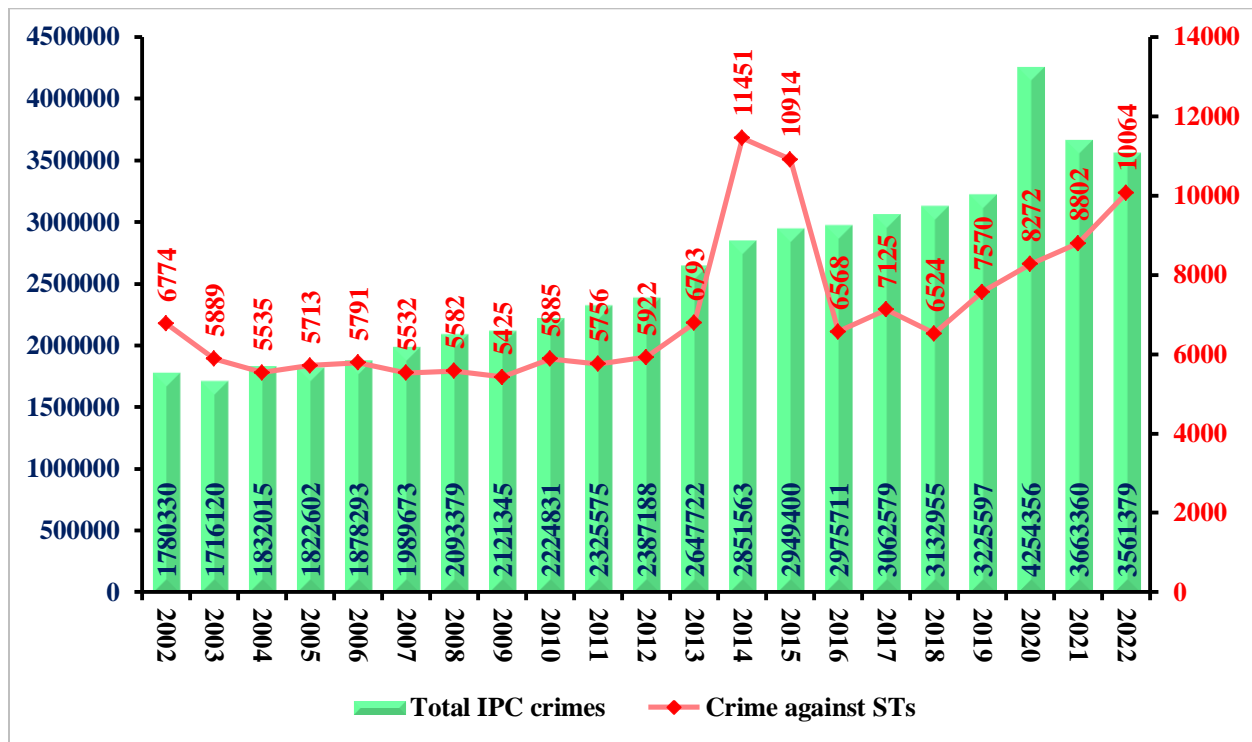
2. Victimization Typology

Sellin and Wolfgang (1964) have identified five typologies of victimization, such as:

1) **Primary Victimization:** This refers to a type of personal victimization. When an actual person or group of people becomes a firsthand victim of a crime, they are targeted, personalized, and treated as individual victims. Ex: First and direct victim of a crime, victim of an acid attack.

2) **Secondary Victimization:** Persons who are immediately suffering because of the suffering of direct/firsthand victims. Ex: Kin and Kith of a crime victim, Wife of a murder victim.

3) **Tertiary Victimization:** A diffuse victimization that extends to the larger community, which includes offences against social harmony and social order. Ex: when a large population who experienced mental trauma due to witnessing a severe form of victimization, witnessing the damaged face of a victim of an acid attack on television, observing pictures of dead bodies of a bomb blast in a newspaper.

4) **Mutual Victimization:** When a criminal is retaliated against their own will and becomes a victim him/herself. Ex: Parties of crime attacking/victimizing each other, adultery, and transmitting sexual diseases to each other.

5) **No Victimization:** It is a form of crime that does not involve victimization, which is why it is also known as a victimless crime. Ex: Growing marijuana plants, juveniles running from homes, and prostitution.

3. Crime Trends

In India, all crimes are divided into two broad categories such as, cognizable and non-cognizable. Cognizable crimes require prompt action and active police involvement, whereas the police cannot take any action without the prior permission of a magistrate in the case of non-cognizable crimes. Cognizable crimes are subdivided into two sub-categories, i.e., crimes under the Indian Penal Code (IPC) and crimes under State and Local Laws (SLL) (NCRB, 2022). This paper relies on the analysis of IPC data in the 21st century and State and Local Laws (SLL), especially the SC & ST (PoA) Act, 1989. The analyzed crime trend data are shown and explained below.

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Figure 1: Incidents of total IPC crimes and crimes against Scheduled Tribes in India

According to the NCRB, IPC crimes have been increasing rapidly since the beginning of the 21st century (Figure 1). Hence, the total number of IPC crimes has increased by 100%, from 1.78 million in 2002 to 3.56 million in 2022. The trends in crime against Scheduled tribes (STs) need careful analysis. This shows that 6774 cases of violation of the Atrocity Act were registered in 2002, which remained almost consistent till 2013. The incidence of crimes against STs witnessed an upward trend after 2013, which appears to be due more to the modified scheme of categorizing crimes under various heads. It concludes that the crime against Scheduled Tribes has increased by 48.56% from 2002 to 2022 (Crime in India, 2002-2022).

4. Victim and Offender Relationship

Mendelsohn's initiative marks a significant step in understanding the relationship between victims and offenders, which he referred to as the "Penal Couple". In contrast, Hannis (2015) primarily focused on the role of the victim rather than the offender, but was later recognized as a pioneer in guiding research on the relationships between victims and offenders. Feigelman et al. (2000a) define victimology in their book as the scientific study of victimization, which encompasses the interactions between victims and offenders. A complete understanding of this relationship is essential for fulfilling the objectives of victimological research. In many cases, offenders are known to their victims, often being relatives or friends, which indicates that most sexual offenders are familiar with their victims (Veneziano et al., 2000; Lundrigan & Mueller-Johnson, 2013). Additionally, McQuade et al. (2013) have concluded that in crimes of assault, victims and offenders often share similar demographic characteristics and exhibit comparable

responses to perceived threats, whether physical or psychological; Chressanthis (1988) analyzed data from the 1982 British Crime Survey and noted a strong interrelationship between offending and victimization. Meanwhile, German and Patel (2020) also described the relationship between the victim and the offender as complex. In an intimate relationship, the victim encounters harm from the offender, illustrating victimization.

5. Review of Literature

Heller et al. (1983) conducted a study on the relationships between victims and offenders and the severity of the victim's injuries. The research aimed to determine whether closer, more personal relationships between criminal offenders and their assault victims were related to the extent of the victim's injuries. The study reviewed case records of 328 pretrial defendants and presentence offenders at a Court Psychiatric Clinic over a seven-year period. These records contained information about victim relationships and injuries, as reported by the psychiatrist conducting the interviews. The findings revealed that when a closer relationship existed between the victim and the offender, the severity of the victim's injuries after the crime also increased. It concluded that the correlation remained consistent regardless of the offender's age, gender, or diagnosis, as well as the victim's age or gender.

Ullman and Siegel (1993) examined the effect of the victim-offender sexual assault relationship on women's psychological symptoms through a randomized community survey. Among a sample of 240 women, 14.5% reported experiencing a sexual assault in their adulthood. The research utilized chi-square tests and two-way analyses of variance to investigate attacks by strangers, acquaintances, and close friends. Variations were found in sexual assault experiences based on the victim-offender relationship. The offender's aggression was curvilinearly related to the closeness of the victim-offender relationship, while victim resistance remained constant. As per findings, psychological symptoms revealed that assaults by intimate partners caused sexual discomfort, whereas assaults by strangers resulted in fear and anxiety.

Cao et al. (2008) conducted a study on homicides focusing on the victims-offenders relationship. The research analyzed individual-level data from a Taiwanese prosecutor's office using multinomial logistic regression to identify the correlates associated with various types of murder connections. The findings confirm that distinguishing between types of murder reveals correlations that might otherwise remain hidden. The study illustrates that sociodemographic and situational factors are significant correlates of these homicide crimes, although the strength of these correlations varies by types of crime. Factors such as crime premises and age influence murder differently depending on the victim-offender relationship. Notably, premeditation is associated with acquaintance homicides but not with intimate homicides. Additionally, a prior conviction is linked to intimate murders but not to acquaintance homicides.

Weller et al. (2012) focused on police and public perceptions of stalking, emphasizing the role of the victim-offender relationship. They found that one in five women was stalked. The study suggested lifetime prevalence rates of 12% to 32% for women and 4% to 17% for men. Stalkers

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were frequently known to the victims. They studied victim-offender relationships and police stalking beliefs. Three stalking scenarios with ex-intimate, work acquaintance, or stranger victims were read among police (n=132) and laypeople (n=225). Both studies showed that prior victim-offender relationships affected stalking, with stranger stalkers being more acceptable. Officer stalking lowered the victim's blame. Eliminating stalker myths requires more training. Police training and public awareness campaigns must grasp how victim-offender relationships affect police and lay behavior.

German and Patel (2020) worked on the victim-offender relationship and post-traumatic stress disorder in incarcerated murderers. This study was conducted on 374 convicted murderers. Out of these, 31 offenders with PTSD symptoms were selected for the study. This study aims to explore the victim-offender relationship with post-traumatic stress disorder in offenders. The data was collected from Central Prison, Sagar, through the random sampling method. Traumatic events were assessed by using the psychological scale and interview schedule. The findings indicate that more than half of the offenders were convicted of the murder of their family members. The study suggested that the offenders need psychological treatment to overcome the mental trauma.

Lantz (2021) examined the consequences of crime within a company, including co-offending, victim-offender relationships, and the quality of violence. A total of 11,53,011 samples were used from the NIBRS offender, offence, and victim segments for the 2003-2012 period. The quantitative research method was used in this study. This empirical research describes the situational context as a driving force behind the offending behavior. It also provides strong evidence that larger groups are related to increased severity of violence, predicting both weapon use and injury. This study examines how the presence of co-offenders influences the severity of offenses, with a particular focus on weapon use and victim injury. The findings indicate that 66.3% of crimes were committed by young offenders (under the age of 30 years). Meanwhile, it concludes that crimes committed by groups tend to be more severe than those committed by individuals.

Semenza (2021) worked on gender disparities in both online and offline youth violence, focusing on victim-offender relationships. The study involved 5,647 middle and high school students from New York, Pennsylvania, and New Jersey. The study was conducted using a paper-and-pencil survey through a convenience sampling method. The descriptive data revealed significant gender differences in both bullying and teen dating violence (TDV) victimization and perpetration. A multivariate regression analysis showed that the nature of the victim-offender relationship varies depending on the type of aggression and the mode of interaction. The study concludes the need for gender-sensitive approaches in youth violence prevention strategies for both online and offline peer interactions.

Choubey and Patel (2022) worked on a new perspective on sexual murderers. This study was conducted on 400 convicted rapists in all central prisons of Madhya Pradesh. Out of these, 49 cases were found to have committed twin crimes, i.e. rape along with murder. This study aims to know about the victim-offender relationship of offenders and understand patterns of killing victims by the offenders. The samples were selected using the purposive sampling method. The findings revealed that 12.25% of respondents who raped and murdered the victim did not choose the age of

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the victim for the commission of a crime. The study concludes that these crimes were often the result of circumstantial factors and a lack of control over mental impulses related to the fulfillment of sexual desire.

Mwangi et al. (2022) explored how the relationship between victims and offenders influences the reporting of property crimes in Gilgil Ward, Nakuru County, Kenya. A mixed-methods research approach was employed, utilizing questionnaires and interview schedules. The sample consisted of 96 participants selected through a combination of stratified random sampling, purposive sampling, and snowball sampling techniques. The findings indicated that the victim-offender relationship affected various types of property crimes and their reporting. Most respondents felt that this relationship influenced their decision to report incidents of robbery and theft "to a small extent". However, many participants indicated that the victim-offender connection did not significantly affect their choice to report incidents of house-breaking or burglary. The research suggests that educating residents of Gilgil Ward about the importance of reporting property crimes to the police could enhance policing efforts in the area.

Chen et al. (2025) investigated the social distance hypothesis for rape sentencing in China by examining the sexual distance in victim-offender relationships. It utilized 7,152 first-trial criminal sentence documents for rape charges in China from 2014 to 2019, sourced from the Chinese Judgements Online website. According to victim-offender relationships (VORs), intimate partners are the closest, followed by friends, acquaintances, and strangers, while family members are the farthest. The findings indicate that sexual distance, rather than social distance, positively affects rape punishment. As the sexual distance between the victim and offender decreases, from family to intimate partners, the offender's punishment also decreases. It concludes that offenders who are sexually distant from their victims, particularly family members, receive harsher punishments.

Sharma and Patel (2025) worked on victimization and the psychological impacts of crime against Scheduled Tribes. The study's objective was to analyze the worst ordeal faced by the victims of a crime and examine the impacts of crime on the victim's lives. A total of 304 victims were interviewed for the study, and 142 victims were found to have been impacted psychologically. The study universe was the Sagar District in Madhya Pradesh, and the survey method was used for an in-depth study. The study found that most of the late adolescent victims were mainly victimized by adult offenders. However, mental stress and psychological impacts were major circumstances observed in the victims. The study concluded that the victims who were criminalized by serious crimes faced more psychological impacts due to differences in the affective and cognitive processing of victimization situations.

6. Objectives of the Study

1) To find out the victim-offender relationship in the commission of a crime.
2) To reveal the major reasons for the victimization of a crime.

7. Research Methodology

The present study has adopted a quantitative data analysis method. A total of 376 cases were registered from 2020 to 2022, and 304 victims were interviewed for the study. The universe of study was Sagar District in the state of Madhya Pradesh, which encompasses 235 villages and 12

tehsils, including Sagar, Bina, Khurai, Malthone, Banda, Shahgarh, Rahatgarh, Jaisinagar, Garhakota, Rehli, Deori, and Kesli. The primary data was collected through a survey method with the help of an interview schedule. Before the interview, the interview schedule was pre-tested and standardized by the pilot study. The data were analyzed both descriptively and inferentially using SPSS statistical software. The cross-tabulation (a comparison of two or more variables) method was also used in this study. The final analysis of the data was converted into various tables and figures. The study design also employed statistical tools to analyze the association between variables. The variables were examined using the Chi-square test, and the obtained value was compared with the significance level. The study adhered to proper ethical norms and conditions when collecting research data.

8. Result

The detailed information about the victim and offender relationship, which was responsible for the commission of a crime, is shown below in various tables and figures as follows:

Table 1: Demographic profile of the victims

Variables	Descriptions	Frequency	Percent
Gender	Male	210	69.1
	Female	94	30.9
	Total	**304**	**100.0**
Religion	Hindu	290	95.4
	Christian	14	4.6
	Total	**304**	**100.0**
Marital status	Unmarried	94	30.9
	Married	200	65.8
	Divorced	1	0.3
	Widow/Widower	9	3.0
	Total	**304**	**100.0**
Residence	Rural	235	77.3
	Urban	69	22.7
	Total	**304**	**100.0**
Family status	Nuclear	223	73.4
	Joint	81	26.6
	Total	**304**	**100.0**
Educational status	Primary	12	3.9
	Middle	53	17.4
	High School	60	19.7
	Higher Secondary	18	5.9
	Graduate	11	3.6
	Postgraduate	3	1.0
	Illiterate	147	48.4
	Total	**304**	**100.0**

Table (1) describes the demographic profile of the victims. In the gender overview, 69.1% of the victims were male, followed by 30.9% who were female. In the religion overview, 95.4% of the victims were identified as Hindu, followed by 4.6% who were Christian. Marital status is also important for the analysis of victimization; according to the data given in the table, the highest 65.8% of the victims were married, followed by 30.9% unmarried. Only 3% of the victims were found to be widows or widowers, while a marginal 0.3% of the victims were found to be divorced. Based on their residence, the majority (77.3%) of the victims were from rural areas, while the remaining 22.7% belonged to urban areas. Related to this, the study in Chicago also found that the rise in crime due to social changes is often reflected in and accommodates the regions where offenses have occurred (Choubey & Patel, 2022; as cited in Sharma & Patel, 2025). Based on family status, the highest of 73.4% of the victims belonged to nuclear families, and the rest, 26.6% of the victims, belonged to joint families. Educational status of the victims reveals that out of the total, 48.4% of the victims were found to be illiterate, followed by 19.7% of the victims who had completed high school, and 17.4% who had a middle school education. Only 3.6% of the victims were found to be college graduates, and the rest of the 1.0% of the victims had achieved post-graduation qualifications. Related to this, Sharma and Patel (2024) also explored that due to illiteracy and limited education, many victims do not raise their voices. As a result, they face numerous challenges in seeking proper justice.

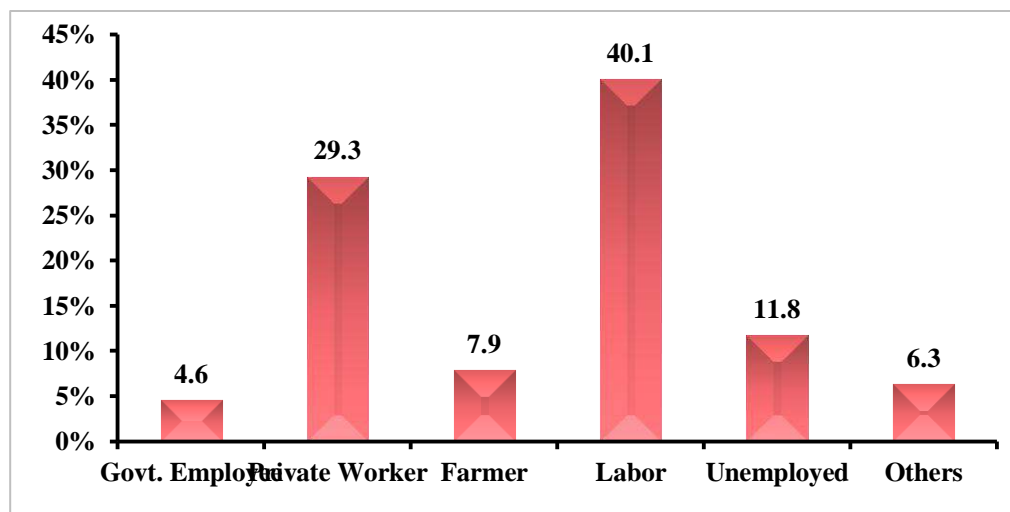**Figure 2: Occupation of the victims (in percent)**

Figure (2) shows the occupation of victims. Out of all the total victims, a maximum of 40.1% of the victims were laborers, followed by 29.3% of the victims were private workers, and 11.8% of the victims were unemployed. Whereas a minimum of 4.6% of the victims were government employees. The data analysis explains that the highest number of victims who were victimized by the crime were found to be laborers.

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Figure 3: Age of the victim and offender at the time of the commission of a crime (in percent)
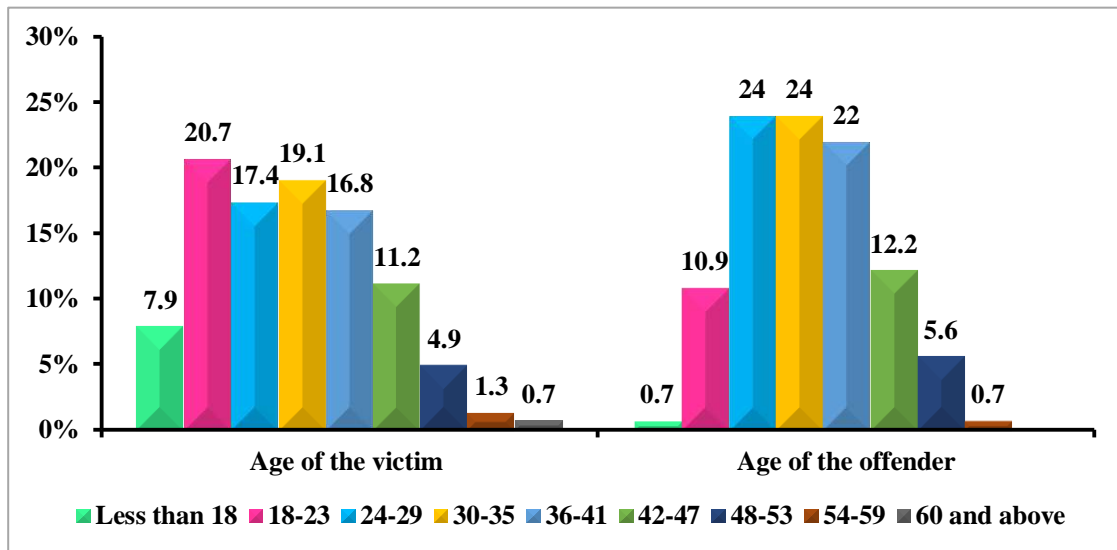

Figure (3) depicts the age distributions of the victim and the offender. According to the data given in the figure, a maximum of 20.7% of the victims were found to be between the ages of 18 to 23 years, while a minimum of 0.7% of the victims were found to be 60 years and above at the time of the commission of a crime. While the offender's age shows, the highest of 24% of the offenders were found to be similarly 24 to 29 years and 30 to 35 years of the age group; however, the lowest of 0.7% of the offenders were found to be similarly less than 18 years and 54 to 59 years of an age group during the time of the commission of a crime. The analysis of the data shows that 1/5th of the victims were found to be in the late adolescent stage, while nearly half of the offenders were found to be in the adult age groups. Related to this, a study suggested that most of the offenders belonged to the young age (below 40 years) who had committed the murder (German, 2022). Similarly, Sharma and Patel (2025) conducted a study among the victims of Scheduled Tribes, where they found that most of the offenders belonged to the adult age group who had committed various types of serious and heinous offenses against the victims who belonged to the marginalized communities. Meanwhile, Rawat (2017) also suggested that older criminals generally victimize younger victims because of their easy accessibility and susceptibility during the time of the commission of a crime, this is particularly evident in cases involving crimes against women and children, such as rape and sexual assault (Semenza, 2021; Choubey & Patel, 2022).

Table 2: Correlation analysis between the age of the victims and the age of the offenders

Variables	Items	Age of the victims	Age of the offenders
Age of victims	Pearson Correlation	1	0.562[**]
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.000	0.000
	N	304	304
Age of the offenders	Pearson Correlation	0.562[**]	1

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Sig. (2-tailed)	0.000	0.000
N	304	304

**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

The correlation analysis examines the relationships between two variables, i.e., the age of the victims and the age of the offenders, using data from 304 cases. The result indicates a strong, statistically significant positive correlation between the age of the victims and the age of the offenders ($r = 0.562$, $p = 0.000$), suggesting that late adolescent victims are more likely to be victimized in crimes with young adult offenders (Table 2).

Figure 4: The main reason for the commission of a crime (in percent)
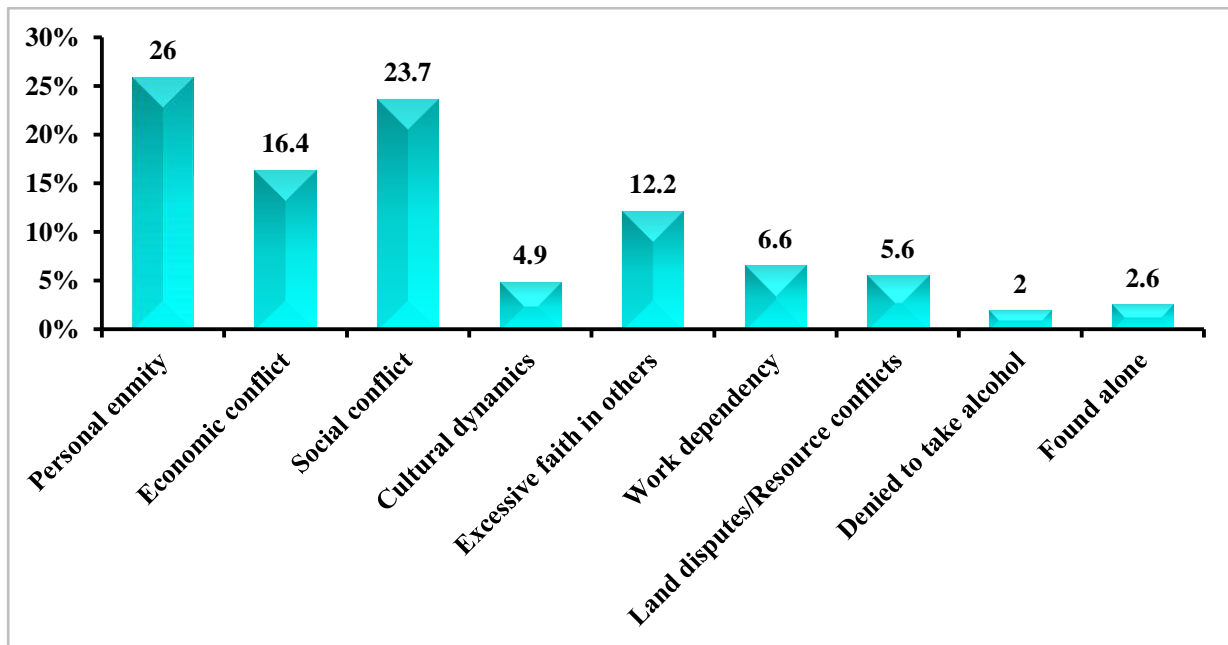
No person commits a crime unintentionally, but there is some reason behind their criminal act, which leads them towards wrong actions or unlawful acts. Figure (4) shows the main reason for the commission of crime. According to the data given in the table, a maximum 26% of the offenders committed the crime due to personal enmity with the victim, 23.7% of the offenders committed the crime due to social conflict, 16.4% of the offender committed the crime because of economic conflict, 12.2% of the offenders committed the crime due to excessive faith in others, 6.6% of the offenders committed the crime because of work dependency, 5.6% of the offender committed the crime due to land disputes/resource conflicts with the victim, 4.9% of the offender committed the crime due to cultural dynamics, 2.6% of the offender committed the crime because the victims were found alone at the scene of a crime. However, a minimum of 2% of the offenders committed the crime because the victims were denied to take alcohol from them. The analysis of the data explains that most of the victims were victimized because of personal enmity.

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Table 3: Crime head and the victim-offender relationship

Crime head	Victim-offender relationship					Total
	Friend	**Neighbor**	**Employer**	**Person from the same locality**	**Stranger**	
Murder	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.3%	0.3%
Attempt to murder	0.7%	0.3%	0.3%	1.0%	0.3%	2.6%
Kidnapping	1.3%	0.3%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	1.6%
Rape	2.6%	3.0%	0.0%	0.3%	0.3%	6.3%
Arson	0.0%	0.7%	0.3%	0.7%	0.0%	1.6%
Grievous hurt	0.0%	0.0%	0.3%	0.0%	0.0%	0.3%
Simple hurt	18.8%	19.1%	8.2%	12.8%	4.9%	63.8%
Damage of property	1.0%	0.7%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	1.6%
Sexual assault	2.0%	6.3%	2.0%	0.3%	0.3%	10.9%
Riots	0.0%	0.3%	0.7%	1.0%	0.3%	2.3%
Cheating	0.0%	0.3%	0.0%	0.3%	0.3%	1.0%
Others	2.0%	1.0%	2.6%	1.0%	1.0%	7.6%
Total	**28.3%**	**31.9%**	**14.5%**	**17.4%**	**7.9%**	**100.0%**

Table (3) describes the relationship between the crime head and the victim-offenders. Among all the total individuals, the highest 31.9% of the victims were criminalized by their neighbors, among them, most of the 19.1% of the offenders committed simple hurt. Compared with 28.3% of the offenders who were friends, and 17.4% of the offenders who were persons from the same locality. Meanwhile, the lowest 7.9% of the offenders were strangers who had committed the crime against the victims of Scheduled Tribes. These findings lead to a significant conclusion that the majority of crimes were not committed by unknown individuals but by those closely acquainted with the victims. This includes neighbors, friends, and the persons from the same locality, people who are well-versed in the daily routines, vulnerabilities, and personal circumstances of the victim's lifestyle and surroundings. The familiarity and access that known offenders possess enable them to exploit situations and commit offenses more easily and with less suspicion. This pattern highlights the deeply rooted issue of trust betrayal within tribal communities. It also reveals how proximity and social ties can paradoxically become sources of victimization rather than protection.

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Table 4: Chi-square test between the crime head and the victim-offender relationship

Items	Value	df	Asymptotic significance (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	77.801[a]	44	0.001
Likelihood Ratio	76.546	44	0.002
Linear-by-Linear Association	1.849	1	0.174
N of Valid Cases	304		
a. 48 cells (80.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 0.08.			

Table (4) explains the Chi-square test between the crime head and the victim-offender relationship. The Pearson Chi-square value was found to be 77.801[a] with 44 degrees of freedom and with a p-value of 0.001, which is less than 0.005, indicating a significantly strong association between the crime head and victim-offender relationship at the 5% significance level. The findings not only affirm that this relationship is not due to chance but also emphasize that certain types of crimes are more likely to be committed by specific categories of offenders, often those known to the victims. This strengthens the argument that the social proximity and personal familiarity between victims and offenders play a crucial role in the dynamics of criminal incidents. For instance, crimes such as simple hurt or abuse are more frequently observed in cases where the offender shares a prior connection with the victim, such as being a neighbor, friend, or a person from the same locality. This statistically validated relationship calls for a deeper examination of social structures within tribal and rural communities, where personal relationships may inadvertently facilitate criminal opportunities. It underlines the need for more community-focused awareness programs, improved surveillance within close-knit societies, and the promotion of trust-building mechanisms supported by local governance and law enforcement.

Table 5: Crime head and the place of victimization

Crime head	Place of victimization				Total
	Victim's house	Criminal's house	An isolated place	Public place	
Murder	0.0%	0.0%	0.3%	0.0%	0.3%
Attempt to murder	0.7%	0.0%	0.7%	1.3%	2.6%
Kidnapping	0.3%	0.0%	0.3%	1.0%	1.6%
Rape	2.0%	1.3%	1.0%	2.0%	6.3%
Arson	1.6%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	1.6%
Grievous hurt	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.3%	0.3%
Simple hurt	10.5%	4.9%	16.1%	32.2%	63.8%
Damage of property	0.0%	0.0%	0.3%	1.3%	1.6%
Sexual assault	5.9%	0.3%	3.9%	0.7%	10.9%

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Riots	0.7%	0.0%	0.0%	1.6%	2.3%
Cheating	0.0%	0.3%	0.0%	0.7%	1.0%
Others	1.6%	2.0%	0.7%	3.3%	7.6%
Total	**23.4%**	**8.9%**	**23.4%**	**44.4%**	**100.0%**

Table (5) presents the crime head and the place of victimization. Among all crimes, a maximum of 44.4% of the crimes were committed in public places; usually, most of the victims were laborers who had some form of contact with the offenders in these areas, that is why many of the crimes occurred in such locations. In contrast, 23.4% of the crimes were committed at the victim's house and in an isolated place. However, a minimum of 8.9% of the crimes were committed in the criminal's house. The findings emphasize that the place of a crime significantly influences both the likelihood and nature of victimization. Environmental factors such as isolation, lack of surveillance, inadequate lighting, and the socio-economic conditions of an area can increase the risk of criminal activity. Certain locations, such as inadequately monitored urban neighborhoods, remote rural areas, or heavily crowded public spaces, may provide more opportunities for the offenders to act with a lower risk of detection or intervention. As a result, the geographical and physical context in which a crime occurs plays a crucial role in determining the vulnerability of potential victims and the strategies employed by perpetrators.

**Table 6: Chi-square test between the crime head and the place of victimization**

Items	Value	df	Asymptotic significance (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	81.966[a]	33	0.000
Likelihood Ratio	85.464	33	0.000
Linear-by-Linear Association	0.624	1	0.430
N of Valid Cases	304		
a. 37 cells (77.1%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 0.09.			

Table (6) explains the Chi-square test between the crime head and the place of victimization. The Pearson Chi-square value was found to be 81.966[a] with 33 degrees of freedom and with a p-value of 0.000, which is less than 0.005, indicating a significantly strong association between the crime head and the place of victimization at the 5% significance level. The findings underscore that the place of the commission of a crime plays a crucial role in the victimization of a crime. Certain types of crimes tend to occur more frequently in specific environments, such as homes, workplaces, public spaces, or isolated areas, where varying levels of accessibility, opportunity, and vulnerability exist. For example, crimes like domestic violence or simple hurt may be more likely to occur in private settings, where victims may be isolated and offenders feel less risk of being caught or reported. Conversely, crimes such as theft, assault, or intimidation may occur more often in public or semi-public locations, exploiting the lack of surveillance or social accountability. In conclusion, the strong statistical linkage between the crime head and the place of victimization reinforces the

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importance of spatial analysis in criminological research. It suggests that crime prevention efforts must go beyond individual and relational factors to include environmental design, geographic profiling, and localized community safety initiatives, particularly in areas inhabited by marginalized communities such as Scheduled Tribes.

Figure 5: Post-victimization experiences by the victims after the commission of a crime
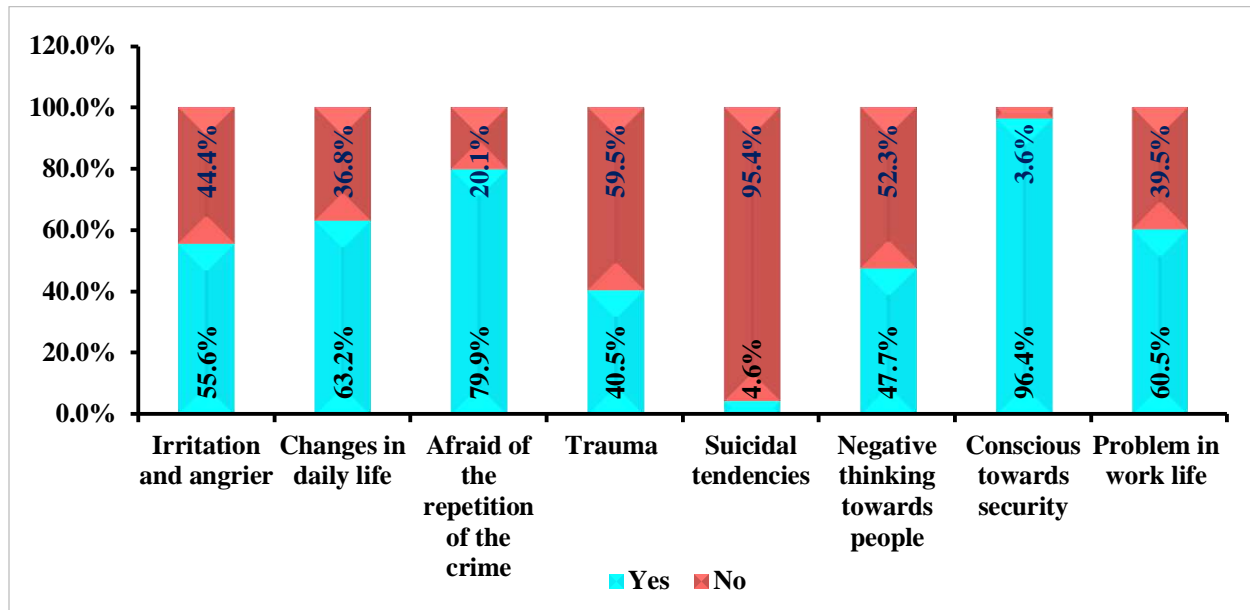
Post-victimization experiences refer to the physical, emotional, social, economic, and legal impacts that the victims undergo after the commission of a crime. Victims often face trauma, fear, anxiety, and feelings of helplessness, which can lead to long-term psychological issues such as depression or PTSD. Socially, they may experience stigma, isolation, or blame from their community or even family. Victims often face delays, a lack of assistance, or secondary victimization by police or courts throughout the criminal justice process. Figure (5) describes the status of post-victimization experiences of the victims after the commission of a crime. Among all the total victims, the highest 96.4% of the victims were conscious towards security, compared to 79.9% of the victims who were afraid of the repetition of the crime, 63.2% were experienced with changes in their daily life, 60.5% of the victims were faced problems in their work life, 55.6% were faced irritation and angrier after the commission of a crime, 47.7% were experienced negative thinking towards people, while 40.5% were faced trauma symptoms after the commission of a crime. Furthermore, the lowest 4.6% of the victims faced suicidal tendencies after the commission of a crime. These findings underscore the importance of establishing victim-centered legal and psychological support systems that address the complex aftermath of victimization and aid in the holistic recovery of the victims. Holistic rehabilitation programs, timely counseling services, and trauma-informed legal procedures must be made accessible, particularly for these vulnerable groups, to ensure comprehensive care and long-term support for the victims of a crime.

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9. Discussion

This research shows that most of the victims were male and belonged to the Hindu religion, while the highest 65.8% of the victims were married, and most of 77.3% of the victims were residing in rural areas. Notably, most of the victims who belonged to a nuclear family were found to be illiterate. Furthermore, the majority of those victimized by the crime were found to be laborers. As we know, the relationship between victims and offenders plays a crucial role in the commission of a crime. In this research work, the researcher has used the correlation test to analyze the age factor for the commission of a crime, and it was found that there is a strong, statistically significant positive correlation between the age of the victims and the age of the offenders ($r = 0.562$, $p = 0.000$), suggesting that late adolescent victims are more likely to be victimized in crimes with young adult offenders. Regarding the major reasons for committing a crime, the highest, 26% of the offenders, committed the crime due to personal enmity with the victim. While the highest 31.9% of the victims were criminalized by their neighbors, and a most of 44.4% of the crimes were committed in public places. Meanwhile, the highest 96.4% of the victims were conscious of security in their lives, and 79.9% of the victims were afraid of the repetition of the criminal incidents again in their future.

10. Conclusion

The study concluded that most of the victims were found to be illiterate, usually doing labor work, and they were always dependent on others for employment, which led to more victimization against these vulnerable communities. From this, it was observed that there is a greater need to provide systematic education and create awareness of the major impacts of crime among the victims of Scheduled Tribes, which can bring them away from criminality. However, it was analyzed that personal enmity was the major reason for the commission of a crime. The study found that most crimes were committed by individuals known to the victim, as these individuals are often familiar with the victim's lifestyle and surroundings, which provides them with opportunities to commit the crime. Regarding the crime head and place of the victimization, it reveals that most of the crimes were committed in public places; usually, most of the victims were laborers who had some form of contact with the offenders in their working areas, that is why many of the crimes occurred in such locations. The post-victimization experiences of the victims after the commission of a crime reveal that most of the victims were conscious of security in their lives because they had somehow feared the occurrence of the same offence in their future again.

To reduce crime against Scheduled Tribes, it is important to deal with both the reasons why people become victims and the ways that victims and offenders interact with each other. Strengthening education, livelihood opportunities, and land rights can reduce the economic and social vulnerabilities that make Scheduled Tribes communities easy targets for the crime. There should be strict enforcement of laws protecting tribal rights, along with the establishment of fast-track courts to ensure timely justice. Community policing and sensitization programs can help improve trust between tribal communities and law enforcement, while also discouraging local-level exploitation by familiar offenders. Promoting awareness about legal protections, along with the

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establishment of village-level grievance redressal mechanisms, can empower communities to report crimes without fear. Lastly, integrating culturally appropriate restorative justice practices with official legal systems can make it easier to deal with conflicts and crimes, especially when victims and offenders are related within the intra-community.

11. Acknowledgment

12. Conflict of Interest

The author(s) declared no conflict of interest in this research work.

13. Abbreviations

1) **CII:** Crime in India

2) **NCRB:** National Crime Records Bureau

3) **NIBRS:** National Incident-Based Reporting System

4) **PTSD:** Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder

5) **TDV:** Teen Dating Violence

6) **VOR:** Victim-Offender Relationship

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