

“WHAT AILS VICTIMOLOGY?” REVISITED

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ARE YOU A VICTIMOLOGIST?



“AILS” - to be CLEAR, what do we mean?



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EDITORIAL

What ails Victimology?

K. Jaishankar

More than sixty years have passed, since Frederick Wertham, Benjamin Mendelsohn and Hans von Hentig introduced the concept of 'Victimology', nevertheless, till date victimology has not been recognized as a distinct academic discipline. In 1985, Cressey declared that, victimology is "*a non-academic programme under which a hodgepodge of ideas, interests, ideologies and research methods has been rather arbitrarily grouped*" (cited in Elias, 1994, p.9) and he also felt that victimology should be merged with criminology, if it does not possess proper orientation. Dutch criminologist Nagel (1959, 1963) also pointed the same view before Cressey (cited in Djik, 1999, p.1). Sarre (1994) and Sneider (2001) are also of the opinion that victimology is a part of criminology. Rock (1994) argues that victimology is a "*relatively amorphous discipline*" (Cited in Fattah 2000, p.24). There are also strong critics like Elias (1994) and Fattah (2000) who feels that victimology should be streamlined.



MANUSCRIPT

Beichner-Thomas, D. James, C. and Piason, B. (2025). “What ails victimology?” revisited: Assessing the growth and development of victimology as an academic discipline. *Temida*, 28(1), 127.162.



JAISHANKAR'S MAIN POINTS #1

- Lack of strong theoretical orientation



THEORETICAL PERSPECTIVES IN VICTIMOLOGY (TAKAHASHI & JAMES, 2018)

Theoretical Perspectives in Victimology	
Theory	Author/s
Lifestyle-Exposure Theory	Hindelang, Gottfredson & Garofalo (1978)
Routine Activity Theory	Cohen & Felson (1979)
The Opportunity Model	Cohen, Kleugel & Land (1981)
The Differential Risk Model of Criminal Victimization	Fattah (1991)
The Social Learning Theory	Akers (1973)
Extended Low Self-Control Theory	Schreck (1999)
Extended Control Balance Theory	Piquero & Hickman (2003)



JAISHANKAR (2008) MAIN POINTS #2

- More focus on victim rights and assistance



Exploratory Content Analyses - P1

128 books published 2008 - 2024 (English language only)

Only 6% victim support, victim assistance, or victims' rights in the title



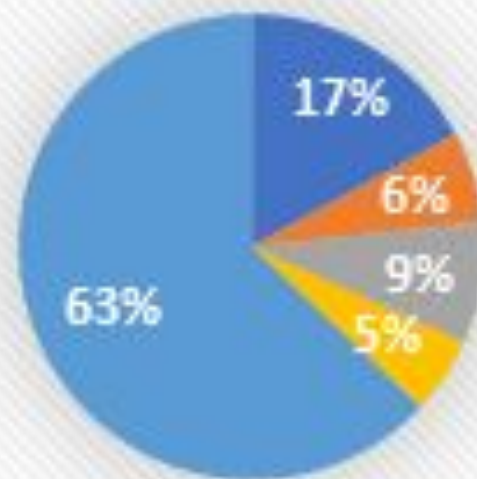
Exploratory Content Analyses P2:

Peer-reviewed journal articles 2008 - 2023

Boolean search phrase	Resulting articles
Vict*	English only 53,459
Vict* and theor*	9,076
Vict* and assis*	3,377
Vict* and caus*	4,516
Vict* and offen* and relatio*	2,835



Boolean Search Results



■ vict* and theor*

■ vict* and assis*

■ vict* and caus*

■ vict* and offen* and rel*

■ other vict* articles



JAISHANKAR'S (2008) MAIN POINTS #3

- Lack of adequate teaching content and cutting the umbilical chord from mother criminology



IS VICTIMOLOGY ITS OWN DISCIPLINE?

Kirchoff (2008)



WSV POST-GRADUATE CERTIFICATE COURSES



- Jaishankar (2008) mentioned courses in Japan, Croatia, and South Africa
- Criticism: 2 week course, but teaching content for only 8 days



Teaching Content

- ❑ Minimum standards
- ❑ Africa, Asia, Europe (then) + Central and South America, India, North America
- ❑ EXAMPLE - 66 hours total Europe (lecture + contact)



CURRICULAR DEGREE PROGRAMS (N=12)

- Anna Maria College (USA)
- Bemidji State U (USA)
- Bridgewater State U (USA)
- Fresno State U (USA)
- University of Portsmouth (England)
- Sam Houston State University (USA)
- Seattle U (USA)*
- Stockton University (USA)
- Tokiwa University (Japan)*
- University of Gronigan (NL)*
- University of New Haven (USA)*
- Walden University (USA)*



CERTIFICAT PROGRAMS (N=35)

See Appendix 2 p. 148-150

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JAISHANKAR'S (2008) MAIN POINTS #4

- Lack of acceptance from the international community and need for nurturing victimology in universities



CERTIFICATE & DEGREE PROGRAMS

Then = International Victimology Institute
(INTERVICT - The Netherlands) & Tokiwa
International Victimology Institute (Japan)

Now = 11 degrees & 35 certificates



JAISHANKAR'S (2008) MAIN POINTS #5

- Need to expand the scope of Victimology



VICTIMOLOGY JOURNALS THEN (N=3) (JAISHANKAR, 2008)

International Perspectives in Victimology

International Review of Victimology

Tamida (Serbia)



VICTIMOLOGY JOURNALS NOW (N=12) (BEICHNER-THOMAS, JAMES & PIASON 2025)

- Indian Journal of Victimology (India)
- International Journal of Ethics, Trauma and Victimology (India)
- International Review of Victimology (UK)
- Journal of Australasian Society of Victimology (Oceania)
- Journal of Behavior Analysis of Offender and Victim (Ireland)
- Journal International De Victimologie (France & Canada)
- Journal of Victimology and Victim Justice (India)
- Revista de Victimologia (Spain)
- Revista di Criminologia, Vittimologia e Sicurezza (Italy)
- Temida (Serbia)
- Victims and Offenders (USA)
- Violence and Victims (USA)



EXAMPLES FROM THE XXXIX IUC COURSE

- Drs. Gueta & Klar-Chamish “...Collective War Trauma”
- Dr. Wolfgang Form “Transitional Justice and the Balkan Conflict”
- Dr. Wang “Torture & Rehabilitation”



CONCLUSIONS

- Most of what *ailed* Victimology seems to be resolved.
- Many countries around the world have victimology certificate/specialization programs, academic journals...growth in scholarship
- Room for additional growth in theoretical perspectives + graduate-level academic programming



Thank you!

