

# An Alternative to Crime Trend Analysis in India

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The most formidable difficulty in analysing crime trends across a vast country like India is the gap between the incidence and reporting of crime, on the one hand, and the reporting and recording of crime, on the other. It is a well-known fact that not all crimes, or classes of crimes, are reported to the police for various reasons. Some of the reasons are cultural, while certain others are administrative. For example, domestic violence against women and children, unless it is of an extreme nature, goes mostly unreported, as also the demands and realisation of dowry, due to cultural reasons. Many crimes are not reported to the police because of the hostility or harassment likely to be faced at the police stations by the victims or the complainants. Such cultural and administrative factors vary from region to region in the country. Therefore, the reporting of crime does not always reflect the actual incidence of crime. Almost a similar, or perhaps a larger, gap exists between the reporting and formal recording of crime by the police. It is common experience that the police do not record all crime that is reported. In recent years, after crime statistics became a convenient ploy to embarrass elected

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governments, blaming a bad crime situation on them, the tendency to 'manage' crime by not recording a proportion of the reported crime has grown further. This, at least, is the perception of a large section of the people, and no honest official agency should attempt to deny this without clear evidence to the contrary. The extent of suppression of crime may, of course, not be the same in all the States, and it is very difficult to determine the precise extent of correspondence between the official statistics of crime and the actual incidence of crime, either at the all India level or the State or district levels. There is a lack of empirical data and reliable research to arrive at a conclusion in this regard.

Furthermore, official crime trend analysis contains varying information, depending on the necessity of the registering agency. Besides, the data flows through each agency of the criminal justice system and is subject to reductions at each step.<sup>1</sup> Not all criminal events that come to the attention of the police result in an arrest, not all arrests result in a trial, and not all trials result in a conviction.<sup>2</sup> As one commentator notes, "all the crimes committed are not reported to the police, all the reported crimes are not recorded, and all the recorded offences are not processed."<sup>3</sup> Police reports cannot be considered as an accurate account of the number of crimes perpetrated since they are limited, as not all crimes are reported by victims, not all police calls are determined to be crimes that should be reported and not all police departments underscore the importance of crime reports.<sup>4</sup>

Different statistical methods are used as per the requirements of documentation and research within the scope of each department, and the purpose of specific studies. It is a fact that researchers all over the world have primarily focussed on crime, criminals and the aetiology of crime. Victims have hardly been

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<sup>1</sup> K. Chockalingam, "Crime Victimization Survey in Four Major Cities of Tamil Nadu," Paper submitted at the 10<sup>th</sup> International Symposium on Victimology, Motreal, Canada, 2000, [www.aqpv.ca/diffusion/textes/abc\\_t/Chockalingam\\_NK.pdf](http://www.aqpv.ca/diffusion/textes/abc_t/Chockalingam_NK.pdf).

<sup>2</sup> Ibid.

<sup>3</sup> Antilla, I., "Victimology – A New Territory in Criminology", paper presented at the First International Symposium on Victimology, Jerusalem, Israel, 1973.

<sup>4</sup> Chockalingam, Crime Victimization Survey.

the subject matter of research. Although institutional and non-institutional methods are being utilised to curb crime trends all over the world, these do not effectively visualise a clear picture of the crime trend. In fact, legal systems in most countries are offender-oriented and the victim finds little place in the records and processes of the criminal justice system. It has, indeed, always been difficult to comprehend the true nature of crime, as the crime statistics published by different government agencies are considered to be the records of the activities of the criminal justice system, but the neglect of the victim makes this, at best, a partial picture even where other aspects of the record are meticulously kept.

Much interest has recently developed within academia in the evolution a new discipline i.e. Victimology. Benjamin Mendelsohn, one of the pioneers of Victimology, took the first initiative in this field as early as in 1937. The scope of his study comprehended similarities between victims and offenders, and particularly the resistance offered by rape victims at the time of commission of the offence.<sup>5</sup> In his *Patterns in Criminal Homicide*, Marvin Wolfgang showed that one fifth of homicide victims in Philadelphia had precipitated their own victimisation.<sup>6</sup> To understand crime from the victim's viewpoint, a German criminologist, Von Hentig, focussed the world's attention on the role of victims in crime. It was, perhaps, the failure of offender-oriented research, which attracted his attention. He elaborated his ideas on the role of victims in his pioneering work, *The Criminal and his Victim*.<sup>7</sup> In a true sense, these classic works encouraged subsequent studies and gradually the international community accepted this new discipline and its lessons.<sup>8</sup>

There is, consequently, need for abundant caution in blindly accepting the conclusions arrived at solely on the basis of official crime statistics supplied by the States and Union Territories. This must not, however, be taken to be a complete denunciation of the

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<sup>5</sup> B. Mendelsohn, "The Origin of the Doctrine of Victimology," *Excerpta Criminologica*, vol. 3, no. 30, 1963, pp. 239-56.

<sup>6</sup> Marvin E. Wolfgang, *Patterns in Criminal Homicide*, Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1958.

<sup>7</sup> Von Hentig, *The Criminal and his Victim*, Connecticut: Archon Books, 1948.

<sup>8</sup> D R Singh, *Surveying Victims* Bombay: Tata Institute for Social Sciences 1996.

conclusions arrived at on the basis of such official statistics. These, in fact, may legitimately be used as possible warning signals in many cases. However, where the official statistics and their conclusions tend to clash with experiential reality, they should prompt official and non-official agencies to research the apparent discordance, with a view to identifying the reasons and extent of 'suppression' of crime through 'burking' of records. Such apparent discordance may also be taken as a warning signal in another sense: that crime in the concerned area is being 'controlled' the wrong way.

## Limitations of Crime Statistics

The Delhi-based National Crime Records Bureau (NCRB), a Government of India organisation, collects crime data from various State police departments and has a system to standardise the collected data. It has categorised crimes primarily into offences against person and offences against property. The reports from police departments across the length and breadth of the country are collected every year and in addition to the data entries mentioned above, statistics on the volume of crime, rate of crime, rate of arrests, etc., are collected and tabulated. Nevertheless, such statistics do not portray the entire ground reality. In this connection, Sankar Sen remarks, "From the statistics furnished in NCRB publication *Crime in India – 1996*, it is seen that total crime per lakh of population in India in 1993 was 604 whereas in Japan it was 1,509; 10,954 in Canada and in England 5,128. Statistics, however, do not reveal the correct picture of crime situation in a society. The reported crime in Indian context is barely one-fourth of the actual incidence."<sup>9</sup> The Punjab Police Commission (1961-62) stated that it was told by a senior Indian Police Service officer that unreported and unregistered crime was to the extent of 50 per cent of the crime that takes place and the enquiry made by it fully justified this estimate.<sup>10</sup> The Commission also reported that the burking of crime was rampant in Punjab. It

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<sup>9</sup> Sankar Sen, *Police in Democratic Societies*, Delhi: Gyan Publishing House, 2000, p. 42.

<sup>10</sup> *Report of Punjab Police Commission (1961-62)*, Government of Punjab, p. 49.

was of the opinion that the inadequacy of investigating officers, reluctance of dishonest officers to entertain a complaint unless they are adequately gratified as also a tendency to judge the performance of an officer on the basis of decrease in crime figures of his area were the main reasons for the malpractices of non-registration of cases and burking. B.N. Mallik, former Director of the Intelligence Bureau (IB), has mentioned that, with the full support of the Uttar Pradesh Government, a drive was started in that State at the beginning of 1961 to ensure that all crimes of which information was brought to the police station were immediately registered. The effect of this drive was startling. There was a 40 per cent increase in all forms of serious crime registered during the first half of 1961 as compared to the figures of 1960 or 1959 for the same period. He further remarked that the pattern of registration of crime was probably the same in all Indian States. It is needless to mention that the drive in Uttar Pradesh must have petered out quickly. The malpractices of non-registration and burking thoroughly damage police-public relations, embolden criminals and make crime a highly profitable enterprise.

Just as it is a fact that police do not register many cases, it is also a fact that, in many cases, the people do not report offences to the police. In one survey it transpired that a third of the respondents indicated that they did not report the offence to the police because they felt that the offence was not serious enough. This apart, approximately one-third of the respondents felt that there was no use in reporting the matter to the police, as the police could do nothing in the matter. A little less than one-fourth of the respondents solved the problem themselves, and they consequently felt that there was no need to report the offence to the police. In some cases, lodging of a report with the police was not considered appropriate. In other cases, many people also did not report an offence to the police because they apprehended that bringing the matter to the notice of police would lead to needless enmity between them and the offenders.<sup>11</sup>

While looking for crime trends, a reader or scholar may often wish to separately learn about trends in terrorist violence, caste

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<sup>11</sup> D.R.Singh, *Surveying Victims*, 1996, p. 114.

conflicts, communal clashes, left-wing extremist violence, etc. At the macro level, these trends might appear more significant than trends in traditional crimes like murder and rape. However, NCRB does not provide official data in these various categories. Crime data collection and classification takes place on the basis of more objective traditional criteria. A murder is certainly a murder, though it may be difficult to classify a particular incident of murder as a case of terrorist or caste violence unless that is proved during investigation and, perhaps during the trial stage. In spite of these problems of interpretation, certain official agencies do collect and compile their own data from different States based on their own perceptions, though the States concerned may legitimately differ with such databases.

Organised official data in respect of new and emerging forms of criminality is rather inadequate. Crime data is still overwhelmingly collected and analysed in terms of traditional categories as mentioned in the Indian Penal Code (IPC) and other similar statutes. As mentioned earlier, the NCRB is the main repository of crime data in the country and although it keeps revising its data collection format for the States, the task of restructuring the whole data collection format is ridden with complexities. A further difficulty arises when data collection formats are changed to suit the evolving situation, since it then becomes difficult to effect comparisons between any given two periods of time. For the sake of continuity in comparisons and contrasts, it consequently remains convenient and conducive to lay-understanding to undertake crime trend analysis largely on the basis of categories of crime as defined in the IPC, since the Code, unlike the Local and Special Laws of the State, is effective throughout the country.

However, an attempt has been made here to analyse crime trends in India for the period 1995-2000 specifically with the help of official data available with the NCRB. According to the report 'Crime in India-2000', during year 2000, 1.77 million IPC crimes and 3.4 million Special and Local Law (SLL) crimes were reported.<sup>12</sup> Compared to year 1999, there was a four per cent

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<sup>12</sup> *Crime in India – 2000*, NCRB, Ministry of Home Affairs, Government of India, Delhi, 2001, p. 43.

increase in IPC crimes and 7.9 per cent decrease in SLL crimes. The IPC crime rate decreased by 1.2 per cent, whereas a 6.2 per cent increase in SLL crimes was recorded over the previous year. In short, three IPC crimes and six SLL crimes are reported on an average every minute in the country. Among the States, Rajasthan, Assam and Jammu and Kashmir (J&K) were more violent as compared to Punjab, West Bengal and Sikkim. In the case of Union Territories, the National Capital Territory of Delhi reported a high crime rate – 399 per 100,000 population – for all IPC crimes i.e. 2.3 times the national crime rate 176.7.

In cases of crime against women, a 4.1 per cent increase was shown. The highest crime incidence in this category was in the State of Uttar Pradesh (14 per cent) and the highest crime rate in Rajasthan – 24 per 100,000 population – as compared to 14.1 at the All India level. While Punjab reported an increase of 19 per cent in sexual harassment cases over the previous year, 33.7 per cent of child victims of kidnapping and abduction (up to 10 years age) was reported from Delhi.

The scenario of disposal of cases during year 2000 was almost static in comparison to previous years. The report states that while 78.8 per cent of the IPC cases were investigated and 78.4 per cent of them charge sheeted, 15.5 per cent cases were tried and 41.8 of them resulted in conviction.

### **Official Crime Trend (IPC & SLL)**

The crime rate as mentioned in the table given below considerably went down in 1961 in comparison with 1951. However, it increased in 1971 significantly and henceforth, a constant increase in incidence of crime was noticed till the year 1998. Although there was a marginal decrease in the crime rate in 1999, the figure again went up in year 2000. The overall picture magnifies the increasing trend in crime rates in comparison with the growth of population.

Table No. 1  
**Crimes Under Indian Penal Code (IPC)**

Year	Population (Estimated mid year in millions)	Crime Incidence (in 000)	Volume of Crime per 100,000 of population
1951	361.1	650	179.9
1961	437.7	625	142.9
1971	551.2	953	172.8
1981	690.1	1386	200.8
1991	849.6	1678	197.5
1992	867.7	1689	194.7
1998	970.9	1779	183.2
1999	986.6	1765	178.9
2000	1002.1	1771	176.7
Percentage change in 2000 over 1961			
1971	21.2	-3.7	-20.6
1981	25.9	52.2	20.9
1991	25.2	45.4	16.2
1999	23.1	21.1	-1.6

*Source: Crime in India - 1998, NCRB, Ministry of Home Affairs, Government of India.*

In order to assess the crime situation and its trends the table covering both IPC and SLL crime gives a more detailed picture of the scenario. Thus the table represents the rate of cognizable crime under IPC and SLL from the year 1990 to 2000.



Table No.2  
**Rate of Cognizable Crime Under IPC & SLL, 1990-2000**

Year	Estimated Mid-Year Population (in lakh)	Rate IPC	Rate SLL	Total	Percentage of IPC Crimes to Total Cognizable crime
1990	8270	194	398.3	592.3	32.8
1991	8496	197.5	396.8	594.3	33.2
1992	8677	194.7	410.1	604.8	32.2
1993	8838	184.4	430.4	614.8	30
1994	9000	181.7	430.8	612.5	29.7
1995	9160	185.1	469.2	654.3	28.3
1996	9319	183.4	492.2	675.6	27.2
1997	9552	180	491.1	671.2	26.8
1998	9709	183.2	453.4	636.6	28.8
1999	9866	178.9	319.0	497.8	35.9
2000	10021	176.7	338.9	515.7	34.3

Source: *Crime in India - 2000*, NCRB, Ministry of Home Affairs, Government of India.

The total volume of crimes under the IPC as also the total volume of crimes under SLL has been increasing since 1990. However, an exception is noticed in years 1998 and 1999 when the SLL figures decreased. It is important to remember, however that the increase in the figures of crime over the past decades has not been obtained by taking into account other factors, most notably the increase in population. In other words, the volume of crime per hundred thousand of population would be a more appropriate indicator of crime trends in the country.

### **Causes and Origins of Crime**

The causes and origins of crime are an arena of investigation under varied disciplines. Some factors, which are known to affect the volume and type of crime accruing from place to place, are:

1. Population density and the degree of urbanization.

2. Variations in composition of the population, particularly the concentration of youth.
3. Stability of population with respect to residents' mobility, community patterns and transient factors.
4. Economic conditions, including median income, poverty level and job availability.
5. Cultural factors and educational, recreational and religious characteristics.
6. Family conditions with respect to divorce and family cohesiveness.
7. Effective strength of law enforcement agencies.
8. Administrative and investigative emphasis of law enforcement.
9. Policing of other components of the criminal justice system (i.e. prosecutorial, judicial, correctional).
10. Crime reporting practices of the citizenry.

In this paper, population size, police strength and literacy rate are the only correlates of crime that have been taken into account due to the non-availability of systematic sources of data on other variables. However, Table 3 shows comparative figures for IPC, population strength, literacy and density of population.

Table No. 3  
**IPC Crime in Comparison to Population, Literacy & Police Strength, 1971-2000**

S.No.	Head	1971	1981	1991	1997	1998	1999	2000
1	IPC Crime (in 100,000)	38.6	39.3	50.5	64.1	61.8	49.1	51.6
2	Decennial Population Growth	24.8	25	22.1	22.2	21.9	21.5	31.2
3	Police Strength (in 100,000)	129	131	136	134	135	134	129
4	Literacy Rate (per cent)	34.5	43.6	52.2	-	-	-	-

5	Density of Population (Per sq. Km.)	177	216	267	301	307	312	316
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Source: *Crime in India - 2000*, NCRB, Ministry of Home Affairs, Government of India.

The table gives a broad picture of crime trend as compared to literacy rate, police strength, decennial population growth and density of population. The data shows that, although there is a definite correspondence between the crime and the other variables identified, over the period 1971 – 1981, crime appears to have grown at a slower pace than literacy over this period, whereas it grew much faster than literacy in the subsequent periods.

### **Alternative Approach**

A false impression regarding the comparative growth rate of crime and police manpower may be generated if we look at the trends for crime and police strength. The pattern of rise and fall, or the extent of rise and fall in crime rates does not necessarily correspond to the extent of rise and fall in police manpower, but the ratio of police strength to population would obviously affect crime rates. For example, at present a population of 1000 people is policed by one person (1000:1), which is an insufficient strength to cope with the ever-worsening crime situation. The NCRB primarily concentrated on population to calculate the rate of crime, which shows a fragile picture of the crime scenario for the country.

As already mentioned, there are a number of causes that lead to a fluctuation in crime trends. In such a situation, one may assert that the victims of crime have been neglected for a long time. In this context, it is pertinent to note that victimization surveys are now becoming part of the endeavour of several countries, where these are increasingly seen as the true index of crime. It has been established that unofficial counts of crime do help in clarifying the meaning of official statistics. Criminologists most frequently use surveys of victims of crime in their analyses. The matter was raised in various countries including USA, Canada and some

European states, where the primary goal of such surveys was to illuminate the hidden figures of crime and the volume of unreported crime. It would not be out of context to mention that official statistics as shown in the NCRB reports since their inception would be submerged by such victims' surveys.

Victimization surveys help in ascertaining the “dark figure in crime and the opinion of the cross section of the society on matters relating to crime, punishment, their perception of the criminal justice agencies and the method of handling of the offenders and victims.”<sup>13</sup> Researchers in criminology all over the world, over the last two to three decades, have found enormous hidden criminality through the results of victimization surveys in different countries.<sup>14</sup> The United States of America conducted its first survey in the year 1966 under the direction of Ennis Phillip and the National Opinion Research Centre of Chicago University. In its trail, the Law Enforcement Assistance Administration (LEAA) and the United States Census Bureau began a continuing series of victimization surveys in the year 1973. As a result, the US has the longest and the most extensive experience with victim surveys. The National Crime Survey (NCS), now known as the National Crime Victimization Survey (NCVS) series, has been collecting data on personal and household victimization since 1973.<sup>15</sup> An ongoing survey of a nationally representative sample of residential addresses, the NCVS is the primary source of information on the characteristics of criminal victimization and on the number and types of crimes not reported to law enforcement authorities. It provides the largest national forum for victims to describe the impact of crime and characteristics of violent offenders. Twice each year, data is obtained from a nationally representative sample of approximately 49,000 households comprising about 100,000 persons, on the frequency, characteristics, and consequences of criminal victimization in the US. The survey is administered by the U.S. Census Bureau (under the U.S. Department of Commerce) on behalf of the Bureau of

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<sup>13</sup> Chockalingam, *Crime Victimization Survey*.

<sup>14</sup> Ibid.

<sup>15</sup> See National Crime Victimization Survey Resource Guide, [www.icpsr.umich.edu/NACJD/NCVS/#About\\_NCVS](http://www.icpsr.umich.edu/NACJD/NCVS/#About_NCVS).

Justice Statistics (under the U.S. Department of Justice). The NCVS was designed with four primary objectives:<sup>16</sup>

1. to develop detailed information about the victims and consequences of crime;
2. to estimate the number and types of crimes not reported to the police;
3. to provide uniform measures of selected types of crimes; and
4. to permit comparisons over time and types of areas.

The survey categorized crimes as ‘personal’ or ‘property.’ Personal crimes cover rape and sexual attack, robbery, aggravated and simple assault, and purse-snatching/pocket-picking, while property crimes cover burglary, theft, motor vehicle theft, and vandalism. The data from the NCVS survey are particularly useful for calculating crime rates, both aggregated and disaggregated, and for determining changes in crime rates from year to year.

The United Nations Interregional Crime and Justice Research Institute (UNICRI)<sup>17</sup> has explored the feasibility of victim surveys in developing countries.<sup>18</sup> The countries included among the developing nations were India, Brazil, Costa Rica, Egypt, Papua New Guinea, Philippines, South Africa and Tanzania. In India, Mumbai was selected as the venue for the survey.<sup>19</sup>

The subject area of Victimology, unfortunately, has not found favour in academia or otherwise in India. Indeed, no worthwhile initiative has been launched to survey the non-reporting of crime in India, though some limited but noteworthy empirical studies, such as “Victims of Dacoit Gangs in the

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<sup>16</sup> Ibid. For data on NCVS, see U.S. Department of Justice, Office of Justice Programs, Bureau of Justice Statistics; [www.ojp.usdoj.gov/bjs/cvict.htm](http://www.ojp.usdoj.gov/bjs/cvict.htm).

<sup>17</sup> UNICRI was first established in 1968 as the United Nations Social Defense Research Institute (UNSDRI) by Resolution 1086 B (XXXIX) of the Economic and Social Council that requested the Secretary-General to proceed with arrangements to strengthen the United Nations action in the prevention and control of both juvenile delinquency and adult criminality. See [www.unicri.it/index.htm](http://www.unicri.it/index.htm).

<sup>18</sup> See U. Zvekic, *Criminal Victimization in Countries in Transition*, UNICRI publication No. 61, Rome, 1998. Also see A. Alvazzi del Frate, *Victims of Crime in the Developing Countries*, UNICRI publication No 57, Rome, 1998.

<sup>19</sup> Ibid.

Chambal Valley” (1978) done by D R Singh of the Mumbai-based Tata Institute of Social Science, and “Victims of Homicide in Delhi and Bangalore” (1981) by Rajan and Krishna have been conducted. Though the first ever victimization survey took place in Mumbai as part of the International Crime Victim Survey (ICVS),<sup>20</sup> an alternative perspective on crime and victimization remains inadequate in India. This is despite the fact that official and unofficial sources have for long admitted that there exists a gap between the actual volume of crime and that is registered officially. It is, consequently, imperative that more victimization surveys are conducted in India to discern the actual crime index.

## Benefits

There is a general impression that the criminal justice system is on the verge of a collapse. This feeling is shared not only by the public but also by experts and even by the functionaries of the system operating at various levels. It is therefore necessary to take suitable steps to overhaul the system so as to restore public confidence in its effectiveness. For this purpose, the main issues that emerge from trend analysis have to be highlighted so that certain broad indicators can be identified as a basis for the formulation of policies and programmes for action. Some major issues are suggested here:

1. A system of parallel surveys should be established so that non-reported crimes can be brought to light and compensation to victims can be properly judged. Further, comparative data would reveal the bias of official statistics and indicate more appropriate indices.
2. Crime prevention programmes can be modified according to the changing needs of society, and necessary steps can be taken against offenders. Offender-oriented policing can be reshaped to accommodate the imperatives of victim-oriented policing. Moreover, several crime prevention programmes

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<sup>20</sup> See *The International Crime Victim Surveys*, [www.unicri.it/icvs/](http://www.unicri.it/icvs/). The International Crime Victim Survey (ICVS) is regarded as the most far-reaching programme of standardised sample surveys to look at a householders' experience with crime, policing, crime prevention and feelings of unsafety in a large number of countries.

can be organised in the light of the needs of victims as determined by the parallel surveys.

3. Community policing can be adopted more effectively after analysing non-reported crimes. People-friendly policing schemes are already in existence, at one level or the other, in the States of Andhra Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh, Jammu and Kashmir, West Bengal, Delhi, Karnataka, and Assam, among others. Parallel surveys can help in estimating the financial loss, physical damage and psychological impact on the victims, and can also help assess the fear of crime among the rank and file of police.
4. Crime trends will invariably show an upward growth in view of the several causes identified in this paper. These trends are likely to continue in the near future, and are a cause of serious social concern. Besides generating tremendous human suffering, crime also leads to social and economic destruction, in turn, adversely affecting the processes of development itself. Victimization survey data may help in the decision-making process vis-à-vis the development of manpower ratios and profiles by identifying the actual crime trends for law enforcement agencies.
5. The different agencies of the criminal justice system suffer from various inadequacies and shortcomings. There is a distinct need to improve the quality of manpower by upgrading recruitment and various procedural changes; to harness developments in the field of science and technology for crime detection and management; to spare budgetary resources for training and modernisation of the criminal justice system; to design suitable institutional mechanisms or arrangements to prevent external interference in functioning of these agencies; to effect necessary amendments in laws etc. Victimization survey can act as indicators of the working and deficiencies of the criminal justice system. Information collected from victims and non-victims about their experiences with the criminal justice system could be brought to the notice of the concerned authorities. The attitudes of victims towards the police and vice versa could be improved by better information inputs.

6. There has been a considerable increase in the number of illegal firearms available with the people in recent years. This proliferation is primarily due to enhanced smuggling activity, transnational terrorism, laxity in the enforcement of the Arms Act, illicit manufacturing of fire arms, indiscriminate issue of licenses, etc. A victim survey could throw light on the availability of such firearms, the reasons for the proliferation of these weapons.
7. Trend analysis through victim surveys could also expose rising levels of organised violence. Communal tensions, organised criminal syndicates and subversive activity have led to major law and problems in India. Official statistics seldom cite the actual position of such violence, and these would be areas where under-reportage by victims would be at much higher levels as a result of the greater power of organised criminal entities to intimidate victims. Hence, a continuous process of victim surveys may reveal a clearer picture.
8. In India, the approach to rural crime and urban crime is totally different. The incidence of violent crimes as per the NCRB report is particularly high and its percentage to total crimes in rural areas is higher than what it is in urban areas. Due to various factors like the rapid pace of development, improvement in communication facilities, availability of TV programmes through satellite technology, breakdown of traditional value systems and massive development of information and technology, there have been significant changes in the patterns of crime in both urban and rural areas. In the latter, however, a very high proportion of crimes is still not reported and is not covered in the official statistics. Non-reporting crime surveys will consequently help to evolve a strategy on such crimes and criminal activities, as well as methods to ensure greater reportage, and eventually would contribute to devising the necessary steps towards reducing such crimes.
9. Despite rapid advances in science and technology, it is noticed that investigating officers in India still depend largely on traditional methods of investigation. Such a heavy dependence on traditional methods can be ascribed to a lack



of knowledge as well as willingness, the absence of adequate facilities, and the infrastructure for the utilization of modern scientific methods in crime investigation. Victim surveys may create diversified opportunities and scope for innovative investigation, with investigation strategies and techniques undergoing significant transformations as a result of changes in trend analysis.

As a whole, the entire criminal justice system would get a new start if the victim survey method were established as a permanent parallel stream along with the traditional approach to the collection of crime data.