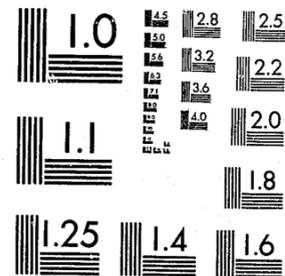


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# VICTIMS OF HOMICIDE

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84653

INSTITUTE OF CRIMINOLOGY AND FORENSIC SCIENCE  
New Delhi-110 055  
1981

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## Problems of Victims of Homicide

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## Problems of Victims of Homicide In Bangalore and Delhi

V N RAJAN  
K P KRISHNA

Institute of Criminology and Forensic Science

NEW DELHI

1981

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The next-of-kin have necessarily to remain unnamed ; but without their indulgence we could not have laid our hands on valuable information as we have been able to do. Similarly, a good many academicians, administrators, journalists and lawyers have responded to our opinionnaire and have offered valuable insight into the phenomena of homicide and compensation.

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V N R  
K P K

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1. The present study is concerned with the victims of homicide, their role in the offence, the problems faced by their next-of-kin and the measures of relief and assistance available to them,
2. In order to secure a comparative profile, two urban centres—Bangalore and Delhi—have been focalised. Apart from a large body of official data, first-hand information has been collected from 143 next-of-kin. A cross-section of the intelligentsia has also been approached and their opinion on related issues has been ascertained.
3. The two urban centres—Bangalore and Delhi—do differ in several demographic aspects. But in terms of law and order problems variations are only marginal. In both the cities crime is showing an upward trend. So is the case with the offence of homicide. Besides, homicide appears to be mainly a single-assailant and single-victim phenomenon, which is committed during the evening hours, using sharp-edged weapons owing to general enmity.
4. Mostly men about 30 years in age, married, in residence in the neighbourhood for more than 13 years have been killed. Unlike religion, caste-factor appears to be important particularly in Bangalore. The proportions of the victims belonging to scheduled castes and scheduled tribes is higher than census-proportions. Victims in Delhi were better educated than those in Bangalore. They were from large households, and mostly engaged in salaried jobs (Delhi) or business (Bangalore). Many of them were the bread-winners. Most of them belonged to lower or middle income-groups.
5. Most of the victims in both the cities died at the hands of relatives, neighbours or even friends. In 88 per cent of the cases in Bangalore and in 58 per cent of the cases in Delhi, the victim and the offender had prior-interaction. It would be recalled that in majority of the cases the motive behind murder was nothing worse than general enmity. This

and similar evidence suggest that in very many cases, victims would have more than a passive role.

6. Most of the victims as also offenders appear to be a part of normal population. Often they were known or related to each other and had prior-interaction. Also, they had little, which could be termed specific, to hold against each other. All this, taken together, hints at the possibility that seeds of violence may be there in the social milieu itself.
7. In the aftermath of the offence, many families have been having grave foreboding. In a few cases, the associates of the offender have threatened them with further violence.
8. The fact that many bereaved families continue to live in the shadow of recurrent fear makes one inclined to focus attention on the functioning of the police in the two cities. Expectedly, the police are often too preoccupied with the natural and legal chores connected with their responsibilities, namely, preparation of the First Information Report, looking out for clues, examining witnesses, sending the dead body for *post mortem* examination, devising methods to arrest the offender and so on, to pay attention to the human and traumatic aspects of the offence. This presumably accounts for the averment on the part of 40% of the next-of-kin in Bangalore and 49% in Delhi that they are dissatisfied with the police functioning. This problem is not special to these two cities or to India in particular. It is common to most countries in the world. It is in this respect that Victim Witness Assistance groups have come to supplement effectively the efforts of the law enforcement agencies in filling the gap as far as popular expectations are concerned. These groups in Europe and America take on themselves in a voluntary way the responsibility to look after the victim/next-of-kin and his or her interests both immediately after the commission of the offence and later still. Helping the next-of-kin to get to the police, ensuring prompt *post mortem* examination, minimising the irksome formalities involved in court attendance and generally proving themselves helpful to the bereaved or injured citizen—these have received considerable attention from Victim Witness Assistance groups in many countries in the West. It should be possible to mobilize interest in this respect on the part of voluntary organisations in India as well.
9. A vast majority of the bereaved families in the two cities have reportedly faced distress and hardship in the post-offence period. What is more specific is the fact that in respect of 14 per cent of the bereaved

families in Bangalore and 10 per cent in Delhi, there is nobody in particular to look after them: The victim was the bread winner and relatives and friends have cut corners.

10. Very few individuals or voluntary organisations have come forward to the help of the needy families. In a few cases, relatives and friends have stayed with the bereaved families. In fewer still cases, small sums have been offered. In all this, voluntary and philanthropic organisations have been conspicuous by their absence, a matter which should attract the attention of the Central and State Social Welfare Boards (CSWB).
11. Insurance does not appear to have caught the popular imagination: only 10 per cent of the victims were insured for modest sums (average insurance amount, Rs. 4,150). The availability of indirect means of relief like the exemption from the payment of tuition-fees of school going children or an alternative job to a grown-up member in the bereaved family, has also been at best limited.
12. Again, the provision of employment on compassionate grounds has been there only in 6 cases in Delhi. In all these cases, the victim was a government servant. It is surprising as to why private sector has not responded to the distress calls of the families of their erstwhile employees.
13. Government has offered cash-assistance to the bereaved families, in only 12 cases. The *ex-gratia* grants have been but nominal (average amount, Rs. 4,468). In this regard, the issue of a lump sum grant versus periodical assistance (pension) needs to be considered. Besides, the scope may be widened to bring in a larger number of families which have nowhere to turn to.
14. To provide succour to the dependents of the victims of homicide, even on a selective basis, a coordinated policy, enmeshing the Departments of Education, Police, Social Welfare, Labour and the CSWB, needs to be evolved. Above all, the police and welfare-functionaries need to be sensitized to the need to deal with the bereaved families in a more humane and effective manner than has been hitherto possible.

## Chapter I

### Introduction

Ever since Cain killed Abel, the offence of murder has been with us. In fact, it may be the oldest form of behaviour involving the offender and the victim which, since the dawn of human civilization, has been disturbing men's living together. Indeed, in the ancient and even in medieval times the social response to the offence has not been always serious. For example, during the times of Hammurabi, the Babylonian King (1900 B.C.), it was the lookout of the aggrieved relatives and friends to capture the murderer and inflict penalty upon him or exact restitution.

In contemporary times, murder or homicide inspires instant horror. Not only is it regarded as offence against the 'State' but also, in terms of gravity, an offence of the first category. Needless to add, the offence is widely distributed both in developed and developing societies. No class, no region and no religious group is immune from this offence. Under Scottish law, it is defined as 'the deliberate killing of a self-existent individual.' In the USA, it is divided into two broad categories: non-negligent killing and man-slaughter. Almost similar is the position in India. The Indian Penal Code differentiates between 'Murder' and 'Culpable homicide not amounting to murder' mainly on the basis of 'intention' behind the commission or omission of a person causing the death of another person. In this connection, it seems relevant to quote Section 299 of the IPC which reads as follows: "whoever causes death by doing an act with the intention of causing death, or with the intention of causing such bodily injury as is likely to cause death, or with the knowledge that he is likely by such act to cause death, commits the offence of culpable homicide".

The concept of crime is intimately linked with the existence of the victim. When a crime takes place a large number of psychosocial factors combine and both the offender and the victim get involved in more ways than one. It

is, therefore, unjustifiable to pay attention only to the offender and bypass the victim. Who is a victim? The Penal Code of the USSR defines the victim as the persons who, owing to an unlawful act, has sustained moral, material or physical damage (quoted by Kalos, 1963). Castro (1969) has emphasized the contributory role of the victim and considers him a crime-producing factor. Focusing on social differentiation in victimisation by decoit-gangs in the Chambal Valley, Khan and Singh have defined victims as "persons who have sustained psychological, physical, material or social damage on account of being the object of depredations..." (1980).

Till recently, attention has been paid only to the offender and not to the victim. But beginning with the publication of 'The Criminal and His Victim' by von Hentig, in 1948, the victim has attracted attention of administrators as well as of academicians, particularly of criminologists. In fact, this has led to the emergence of a new discipline of 'Victimology' as an important offshoot of criminological sciences. While studying biological, sociological, psychological and criminological details about the victim, victimology brings into focus the victim-offender relationship and the role played by the victim in the occurrence of the offence. 'The occurrence of an offence' is viewed as a human phenomenon in which social concern should be not only with the bringing of the offender to book and the maintenance of law and order in society, but also with the victim who has immediately borne the brunt as a result of the offence. Relating to the offences such as assault, burglary, auto-theft and robbery, victimological studies, particularly in the USA, have introduced several new perspectives in criminology. These studies have highlighted the sociopsychological background of the victim, their part in the crime, their own contribution in the offence and the issues involved in providing compensation. The theoretical and operational aspects of the discipline of Victimology have been further enlarged at the triennial International Symposia on Victimology held in Jerusalem, in 1973, in Boston, 1976, and in Munster, 1979. Nonetheless, studies on the victim and his problems, in India, are few and far between.

Likewise, compensation to victim is yet another issue. It refers to the payment by the state to the victim of crime or to his dependents to make up for the loss sustained. It may be mentioned in passing that the term 'compensation' is not used universally. In some of the countries it is known as restitution, damages or reparation. The term 'restitution' is closely related to compensation. Restitution is agreed to by the offender willingly or on being compelled by a court of law. Reparation is obtained from the offender for the victims of crime. On the other hand, the term 'damages' is civil in character

and is awarded mostly by civil courts. Thus compensation differs from reparation in that it does not involve the offenders from restitution and damages as it involves neither the criminal court nor the civil court. The idea that the persons who suffer have a claim upon society is not altogether new. There lies the welfare of the state in the well-being of the citizens, and the two tend to rise and fall together. Moreover, should the victims be left to fend for themselves, it may be reiterated, many of them may digress to anti-social path.

### LITERATURE SURVEY

An exploration into the factors underlying homicide, its victims and their need for compensation is diverse in nature. Studies conducted on victims of homicide in western countries as well as in India span a large number of demographic, situational and personality factors that are in constant interplay. In the present study such issues have been discussed under three broad heads.

*Homicide* : Criminal violence in any shape has social approval in few civilized societies, although some societies appear to tolerate it to some extent. Such violations would include murder, culpable homicide not amounting to murder, rape, dacoity, robbery and riot. Relating to the offence of murder or homicide, several studies have been conducted delineating characteristics of the murderer and the victim. Murder is the most shocking crime against the human body and it ranks as the most serious crime in our penal law (Deb, 1958). The act of murder has the quality of absolute finality rarely associated with other crimes as its consequences for the victims cannot be undone. In civilized society a high premium is placed on the sanctity of human life, so the killing of another human being amounts to the most serious violation of behaviour norms. Consequently, murder holds an unusual fascination as a subject both for fiction and research (Johnson, 1966).

In recent years, focusing on western societies, numerous studies have been reported dealing with homicidal behaviour (Wolfgang, 1958; Blender, 1959; Wolfgang and Ferracuti, 1967; Blackburn, 1969). Relating to the Indian social context also, a few empirical studies have been conducted (Somasundram, 1970; Sethi et al., 1971; Jha, 1971; Gupta and Sethi, 1974; Singh, 1972; Singh, 1979, 1980). These studies based either on clinical observation or on psychological assessment analyse the phenomenon of murder as well as the personality of the murderer.

The act of homicide may be the result of a number of factors. For the present, attention may be paid, however, only on certain prominent factors,

namely, personal antecedents, relationship with the victim, motive for murder, weapons used, and some psychological dimensions. Many studies on the victims contribution to crime (Avison, 1974; Sparks et al., 1977), relationship with the victim (Wolfgang, 1957; Schultz, 1968), motives/issues behind murder (Rasko, 1976; Sylvester et al., 1977), weapons used (Danto, 1972; Vinson, 1974; Sylvester, 1977) and psychological factors causing murder (MacDonald, 1961; Eysenck, 1964) have been conducted. Relating to the Indian social context, only a few empirical studies have been conducted in this context. In a study based on secondary data, Rajan and Krishna (1980) have reported that an overwhelming majority of homicides in Delhi had taken place during night hours—the most charged being the early part of night. Again, sharp edged weapons like sword, knife, and spear have been used in a vast number of cases. Behind most occurrences property and sex have been at the root. Among those who fell to homicide, mostly were men (75%), in the age group of 20-40 years, Hindus, either a *Kshatriya* or a member of backward or scheduled caste, and were from the service class. Singh (1980) has conducted a study on 75 prisoners convicted of murder and 75 prisoners of petty crimes such as theft, excise and narcotic violations and other minor crimes. He has explored the circumstances of murder and found that a majority of murderers commit the offence alone and these are predominantly unplanned. The murdered mostly include family members, followed by neighbours, friends and others. Old family enmity, family quarrels over the division of property and dispute on the agricultural land, according to him, are the main motives behind murder. With regard to personality factors Eysenck and Eysenck (1969) have observed that those imprisoned for homicide are generally extraverted individuals who condition less easily and thus fail to socialize properly. Singh (1980) has also found that murderers are significantly more psychotic, more neurotic and more anxious than other offenders. These findings, more or less, corroborate earlier studies (Eysenck 1964; Singh, 1972; Yadav, 1976; Singh, 1979).

*Victim/Victimology* : The emphasis on focalising the victim and his problems is a dire one. If the victim in the wake of an offence is left to himself, in many cases it may lead to situations which would hardly be in the long-range interest of peace and tranquillity in society. The likelihood cannot be overlooked that the fall-out of the offences spawns conditions conducive to vengeance, antisocial or criminal behaviour on the part of the victim (s). It is hardly necessary to add that in the event of a violation of law by the erstwhile victims under strain, the criminal justice system is not only constrained to intervene but also is obliged to shoulder the responsibility of these law violators, during the period when they are in custody or undergoing imprisonment. This further underscores the need for timely and effective preventive measures including succour to the victims of crime.

Likewise, the emphasis on the scientific study of the victim and related issues also offers several added advantages. Firstly, the gravity of the offence can be better determined by ascertaining as to how the victim feels about it. This is what is generally missed in the process of 'labelling', based on legal codes. Secondly, since the focus is on the victim, his background and the situation contributing to the crime, dependable generalisations about the causes behind the crime become possible to make. Thirdly, by evaluating the personality and behaviour of the victim, and by looking into the offender-victim relationship, it is possible to broadly identify individuals or groups who are the likely targets of the crime or similar crimes. Fourthly, victimological studies provide a more reliable estimate of the crime-situation obtaining in a given community by gathering information not only on the crime reported to the police but also on the unreported ones. Fifthly, such studies are likely to bring about a balance into research on crime problems by dispensing with the stereotypes commonly associated with the criminal and his victim. Sixthly, such studies serve valuable heuristic, diagnostic and prognostic functions. Lastly, victimological studies facilitate the chalking out of a viable preventive policy as it would provide valid and comparative estimates of the gravity of different offences and the ensuing damages. It may be pointed out that the criminal justice system, almost everywhere, has so long shown an excessive concern with the offence and the offender. Consequently, crime-prevention policies have been in vogue with some kind of an imbalance. Victimological studies are bound to prove helpful in remedying this situation.

While the victim and his problems have started attracting formal attention only recently, the informal position obtaining in India has been a little different. Should we look back, in ancient and medieval times, the victim of crime was not all that neglected. When a citizen would suffer at the hands of a predator, both the ruler and the community, records Kautilya in his classic work *Arthashastra*, were supposed to rally around him. Necessary funds were to be raised by collecting punitive fines or from the public exchequer to provide relief to those who have suffered owing to the violation of law.

A mention may be made of the 'joint family' system in the country. More than two generations would live under the same roof, eat food prepared on one hearth and share all the assets and liabilities (Karve, 1953). The joint family system used to be a tenacious insurance against hazards and untoward incidents. In the case of death of a bread-winner, his widow and orphans used to be looked after almost normally. Furthermore, it had a capacity to absorb economic and sometimes social-psychological shocks. However, the joint family system has been fast cracking down under the pressure of industrialization and urbanization—yielding place to nuclear family. With the decline of the system, victims of crime have become more isolated.

In relation to the problems of the victim and his relief, a reference may be made to the role of voluntary organisations. Voluntary organisations are an integral part rather than an appendage in society. Their motivation is different and well-meaning, and they are in direct touch with citizens. They are capable of making a perceptible impact on the quality of social life and on the community's ability to maintain stability and to solve its problems including that of the victim. However, the growth of the voluntary organisations in India has been somewhat sluggish. There have been operating in the country organisations like the Young Men's Christian Association, the Young Women's Christian Association, the Rotary Club, the Lions' Club, the JC's and like. The Ramakrishna Mission has been doing laudable welfare work both in rural and urban areas. At the initiative of the Central/State welfare Boards the voluntary efforts and organisations have received much impetus almost throughout the country. Nevertheless, there are few organisations which find a concern with the victim and his plight. Much of this may perhaps be attributed to a lack of public awareness in this regard.

Victimological studies, particularly, those dealing with assault, burglary, larceny, autotheft and robbery have been conducted in large numbers in Europe, America and Australasia. These studies have highlighted the sociopsychological background of the victims, their part in the crime (see Holyst, 1964; Fattah, 1966) their own role in the offence (Schultz, 1968) and, of course, the issues involved in providing compensation (Ziegenhagen, 1977). Nonetheless, studies on the victim and his problems, in India, are at best limited. In 1979, the Bureau of Police Research and Development, New Delhi, brought out a compilation 'Compensation to Victims of Crime'. This document takes a comparative look on the legal provisions relating to victim, his problems, and the victims' compensation in different countries. The only empirical study, so far available on the subject, is the doctoral thesis, 'Victims of Dacoit Gangs in the Chambal Valley' by Daya Ram Singh, accepted by the University of Saugar, in 1978. Using the data generated in this work, a few papers have also been brought out. Among things, these show that the victimisation of the inhabitants of the valley is not a random phenomenon and that certain sections of the population are more vulnerable than others (Khan and Singh, 1980); that 'situation' plays a critical role in the victimization by the outlaws (Singh and Jatar, 1979); and that the victims of dacoity in the valley face numerous problems when they look for succour or compensation (Singh and Jatar, 1980). Without discounting the significance or the relevance of the work under reference, it may be remarked that it deals only with one type of criminal violations and with one small region. Perhaps, many more efforts are called for in order to develop a systematic understanding in this area.

*Victim Compensation* : There are a few areas in which the existence of the victim and his problems have been recognised. For example, in the case of an air-accident all the bonafide passengers are compensated (rupees one lakh to the next-of-kin, in the case of death). So is the case with the passengers on the Indian Railways (rupees fifty thousands, in the case of death) and state transport buses like the U. P. State Road Transport Corporation and the Delhi Transport Corporation. The Motor Vehicle Act also lays down that the vehicles would carry a compulsory 'Third-Party Insurance'; and, should they run over and hurt or kill a road-user, the insurance company is required to pay the compensation. Nonetheless, while such provisions go a long way towards providing relief to those who have suffered, all these hardly suffice institutional arrangements for providing compensation to the victims of crime.

In India, civil laws do provide for such eventualities. The victim or his next-of-kin may file civil suits and claim compensation from those who have been responsible for the loss. However, perpetrators of crime are not always identified; in other cases they may not be solvent; and, above all, the civil suits are usually a long-drawn process and too few people affected can afford the expenses that civil court action involves. Taken together, such provisions in the civil law are far from being satisfactory or adequate.

In a multi-racial, polyglot and multi-religious country, group disturbances or riots are almost a recurring feature. Following an eruption, destruction of property and loss of limb or life is not unusual. In recent times, a few States in the country have also been much caste-strife often culminating in arson and homicide; and, in such eventualities, the victims have been given *ex gratia* grants, but, these are ad hoc measures and therefore their application is neither predictable nor certain.

The state which lays down rules of behaviour should not only punish the crime-doers but also take cognizance of the problems faced by the victims. However, a concerned attention on the victim and his problems is yet to be paid in the country. This is not to say that the criminal justice system in the country has been altogether unresponsive to these issues. Section 357 of the Criminal Procedure Code, 1973 lays down :

- (1) "When a Court imposes a sentence of fine or a sentence (including a sentence or death) of which fine forms a part; the Court may, when passing judgment, order the whole or any part of the fine recovered to be applied —

- (a) in defraying the expenses properly incurred in the prosecution ;
- (b) in the payment to any person as compensation for any loss or injury caused by the offence, when compensation is, in the opinion of the Court, recoverable by such person in a Civil Court ;
- (c) when any person is convicted of any offence for having caused the death of another person or of having abetted the commission of such an offence, in paying compensation to the persons who are, under the Fatal Accidents Act, 1855, entitled to recover damages from the person sentenced for the loss resulting to them from such death ;
- (d) When any person is convicted of any offence which includes theft, criminal misappropriation, criminal breach of trust, or cheating, or of having dishonestly received or retained, or of having voluntarily assisted in disposing of, stolen property knowing or having reason to believe the same to be stolen, in compensating any bonafide purchaser of such property for the loss of the same if such property is restored to the possession of the person entitled thereto.

- (2) "When a Court imposes a sentence, of which fine does not form a part, the Court may, when passing judgment, order the accused person to pay, by way of compensation, such amount as may be specified in the order to the person who has suffered any loss or injury by reason of the act for which the accused person has been so sentenced.
- (3) "An order under this section may also be made by an Appellate Court or by the High Court or Court of Session when exercising its powers of revision.
- (4) "At the time of awarding compensation in any subsequent civil suit relating to the same matter, the Court shall take into account any sum paid or recovered as compensation under this section".

Similar provisions have also been made under Section 5 of the Probation of Offenders Act, 1958. However, these legal provisions barely touch the fringe of the problem. The victim is eligible to receive full or partial compensation only in those cases where a fine has been imposed on the offender ; and in those cases where the offender has not been identified, apprehended,

convicted or is not solvent, the victim would remain unprovided for. Some-time ago, in respect of victims of crime who belong to scheduled castes or tribes, a proposal was mooted by one of the States that under Section 357 of the CrPC that a fine must be imposed upon the guilty and the victim must be provided compensation. It could not be, however, acceded to by the Government of India because it was selective.

### PRESENT WORK

It is worth mentioning that homicide represents a host of sociopsychological problems. When a murder takes place in any locality, a large number of psychosocial factors combine. It is not only the offender or offenders, but also the victims whose psychosocial background needs to be kept in mind. The emerging discipline in Criminology—namely Victimology—offers a viable framework to analyse the role of the victims in commission of crime. Biderman et al. (1967), Ennis (1967), Reiss (1967) Eidsonpenick and Owens (1976), Skogan (1976), Koenig (1977) and several other investigators in the West have surveyed the factors underlying victimization. Fattah (1966), Antilla (1974), Morris and Blom-Cooper (1964), Wolfgang (1967) and several others pointed out that victims may directly or indirectly lend a helping hand in their own victimization.

If explored systematically, this angle is likely to yield a more realistic assessment of the victim-offender relationship as well as sociopsychological variants of victims of homicide. These are some of the areas which the present study intends to investigate.

Keeping the above in view, the present study addresses itself to the following objectives :

- (i) to analyse the crime-situation in general and homicide in particular in the cities of Bangalore and Delhi ;
- (ii) to assess the sociopsychological background of the victims of homicide in the two urban centres ;
- (iii) to ascertain social, psychological and economic loss to the bereaved family of the homicide victims ; and
- (iv) to assess direct or indirect forms of compensation made available to the bereaved family.

*Sampling* : As it is a pilot project, the study has focused itself on victims of homicide. The cities of Bangalore (in Southern India) and Delhi (in Northern India) have been selected so as to develop a comparative profile. The nature and extent of homicide in these two cities provides a perspective on their victims (Table 1.01). Besides, the two cities differ much in terms of habitat, occupation, levels of education, social status, language and several other demographic factors. As can be seen from Table 1.01, one of them over

**Table 1.01** : Incidence of murder in Bangalore and Delhi during the years 1970-1979.

Year	Bangalore		Delhi	
	Source : Crime in India	Source : Police Headquar- ters	Source : Crime in India	Source : Police Headquar- ters
1970	20	9	100	120
1971	22	21	94	121
1972	26	27	99	131
1973	25	33	136	156
1974	26	27	150	172
1975	34	33	149	169
1976	20	28	105	124
1977	43	42	149	191
1978	49	45	157	197
1979	—	59	—	194

the preceding years has been having low incidence of criminal homicide (Bangalore) and the other, a high incidence (Delhi). Keeping this in view, all the cases of homicide committed in Bangalore during two financial years of 1978-1980 and in Delhi during one financial year of 1979-1980 have been studied. As the total number of the cases of homicide has been found to be 115 and 173 in Bangalore and Delhi, respectively, and therefore, within manageable limits, sampling has posed no further problem. All of them have been included in the sample (Table 1.02). However, there was a sizable number of those who either belong to States/Union Territories other than Bangalore and Delhi or whose addresses were unknown or unrecorded. Such cases have therefore been excluded and the targeted sample has been 96 for Bangalore and 154 for Delhi. Next-of-kin of the victims of homicide in each of these cities have been contacted. It may be mentioned in passing that husband/

wife, sons/daughters and other dependents have been included in the category of next-of-kin. Information from these persons has been gathered on the

**Table 1.02** : Study Sample

Location	Total number of cases	Targeted	Completed sample	Sampling fraction
Bangalore	115	96	57	59.37
Delhi	173	154	86	55.84
<b>Total</b>	<b>288</b>	<b>250</b>	<b>143</b>	<b>57.20</b>

sociopsychological antecedents of the victims of homicide and the stresses and strains they might have left behind in the wake of their demise. Besides, the study provides scope for incorporating informed opinion from different sections of population. Towards this, a purposive sample of 300 has been drawn comprising judicial officers, administrators, lawyers, police officers, teachers and voluntary workers. In order to ascertain the topographical aspects of the crime, their spatial distribution in the cities under study has also been considered.

*Tools and Materials* : In the light of the research problem, the objectives of the study and the sample, suitable tools and materials have been developed. The choice of the interview technique for the collection of information relating to the victim, crime, offender as well as the mode of compensation has been obvious. Next, care has been taken to select such tools and materials which are not only reliable and valid but which can also be conveniently administered in individual session within a short duration of time (30 to 40 minutes). With these considerations in view the following tools and materials have been developed.

(i) *Secondary Data Proforma (SDP)* : In order to collect secondary data from police records, proformae have been developed which incorporate such dimensions as incidence of murder in the city of Bangalore as well as in the Union Territory of Delhi, during 1970-1979, as also demographic, social and economic background of the victims, particulars of the offence and the like.

Next, a proforma has been developed to collect information from police stations : case details—FIR number, date, name and address of the victim, and of the next-of-kin to be contacted. This proforma has been developed with a view to securing detailed information for the study purposes.

*Interview Schedule* : To interview the bereaved dependents or near relatives of the victims, an interview schedule has been developed. In this connection, a number of newspapers, periodicals, text books, reference-books and research reports have been consulted. Based on the above sources, a schedule has been drafted and extensively discussed by the project staff. The items of the schedule have been pre-coded to facilitate and speed up interviews. Attempt has been made to give the items as good a logical sequence as possible. The schedule incorporates mainly five broad dimensions; information relating to the victim, details of the crime, offender's characteristics, compensation, and the background of the next-of-kin being interviewed. Following preliminary consultations and edition, the schedule has been pretested on the limited sample (bereaved dependents). The research officers have familiarised themselves with the schedule and have rehearsed it on the tape-recorder so as to standardise the manner of administration. A copy of the schedule is appended at Appendix A.

*Opinionnaire* : To collect informed opinion from judicial officers, administrators, lawyers, police officers, teachers and voluntary workers, an opinionnaire has been developed which raises issues relating to crime, problems of victims and possibilities of providing them succour. The opinionnaire consists of thirteen items covering several relevant issues and is placed at Appendix B.

*Data Collection* : There would be little controversy that the data collection is the primary as well as the most important aspect of research. The outcome of any research hinges on the facts collected by the researcher. As the present research problem is a highly sensitive one, it has naturally involved many procedures and technicalities. To facilitate data collection, the police authorities in the Police Headquarter at both the Places (Bangalore and Delhi) were approached in advance for their active cooperation. All the SHOs in police-stations were instructed by the Inspectors-General of Police concerned to render necessary assistance. It may be added that they have cooperated to the maximum extent possible.

To collect secondary data, after formal contacts with the PHQs, the Secondary Data Proformae as well as the Proforma for collecting names and addresses of the victims and the next-of-kin were finalised and mailed to them. After collecting information from police-stations, proformae were returned to us. They have been checked and their figures have been rearranged, tabulated and analysed.

For collecting primary data, research officers have approached SHOs at their respective police-stations. Date of murder, FIR number, IPC Section, name and address of the Victim and next-of-kin to be contacted were verified by research officers at the respective police stations. They also had brief discussions with SHOs on each case. This was done primarily to assess the severity of the situation as well as the socio-psychological details of the victims and their next-of-kin. Then research officers, accompanied by the head-constable or constable familiar with the locality approached victim's next-of-kin. Researchers, introduced themselves and interviewed them in normal home conditions. In no case did the policeman accompany researchers or enter into the house of the next-of-kin to be contacted. Similarly, other members in the victim's family were requested by the interviewers to keep away at the time of interview. This facilitated the interviewee to express his/her views freely and frankly. After the completion of the interview, the research officers recorded their own observations and remarks.

It may be reiterated that informed opinion of judges, police officers, politicians and voluntary workers has been collected. Although mailed-opinionnaire method suffers from several limitations and has low probability of return, its advantages, particularly, in survey research, outweigh its disadvantages. It is rather difficult to approach all persons of eminence, personally. Besides, they may need more time to think over the problems from different angles before expressing their opinion. Keeping these in view, it was considered proper to approach them through an opinionnaire. Towards this, the opinionnaire was sent to them through mail. A covering letter and a self-addressed and stamped envelope were also enclosed.

*Analysis of Data* : The analysis-plan worked out earlier at the planning stage of the study was updated during the progress of data collection, and implemented accordingly. Data collected from secondary sources (mainly from census reports, Police Headquarters and 'Crime in India') involved only classification, tabulation and some computation. These data were analysed using DCM Microsystem 1121 at the ICFS. With the interview-data, the process was a little different. All the completed 143 schedules were arranged checked and edited for omission and ambiguities. In doing so, the attempt throughout was to maintain the respondents' view. Next, numerical symbols were assigned to the responses recorded in the schedules. A total of 79 variables were formed. The codes were verified before being transferred on to code-sheets. The work of electronic data processing was handled by the Council for Social Development, New Delhi. To maximise accuracy, the print out of the computer-cards was compared with the original code-sheets. Finally, the analysis of the data was carried out using the SPSS-Programme.

The analysis of data mainly concerns with the estimation of personal characteristics, demographic attributes and certain psychological characteristics of the victim and victim compensation. Towards this, statistical techniques like percentage, chi-square and correlation were used. Incorporating the data and the analyses, the report is spread over six chapters including that of Introduction. The crime situation in the cities of Bangalore and Delhi is delineated in Chapter Two. Chapter Three attempts to bring the victims and their role and background into focus. Concerned with the problems arising in the aftermath of a homicide in the bereaved family. Chapter Four outlines the background as well as the viewpoint of the next-of-kin. Chapter Five highlights provisions relating to and availability of assistance and compensation to the dependents of the victim. The last Chapter provides a summary of findings and a few suggestions emanating from the study. In order to facilitate the task of interfacing the work with the policy-making process, an executive summary has also been prepared and placed at the beginning of the report. It is expected that the work would provoke thinking among policy-makers and planners, academicians, administrators, sociologists, criminologists and researchers.

## Chapter 2

### The Crime Situation

Although crime has been with us since the very dawn of civilization, it has assumed serious proportions only in recent times. In a way, the processes of industrialization and urbanization have noticeably changed its rate and complexion. What is more ominous, it is showing an upward trend. Taken together, it has been causing a serious imbalance in peaceful social living. Furthermore, one dramatic cost of crime, observes Weinberg (1960), is that it deprives people of elementary safety in the pursuit of their ordinary duties. It follows that when people are unsure of the safety to life, limb and property, they could hardly be expected to fully exploit their energy or talents. This kind of inhibition tends to become acute, should a heinous offence like murder, show an increase.

Like many other offences, homicide is difficult to predict. The bulk of the homicide cases in India are committed in rural areas. Most of them are preceded by petty brawls on issues like the tenancy rights over a patch of land, grazing rights, the drainage-course, the place for stabling cattle, sex-relations and the like. The position with regard to urban areas may not be much different. Initially, the issues and the ensuing dialogues may be commonplace yet some of them may build up emotionally charged situations leading to scuffle, violence and murder. From this flows the element of unpredictability. To some extent, the quantum and rate of homicide can be controlled, but it would be difficult to eliminate them altogether. Along with the relative inevitability of homicide, thoughts must go to the problems faced by the bereaved in the aftermath of the offence.

The present work focuses on the victims of homicide in two urban settings: Bangalore and Delhi. Towards a systematic understanding of the phenomenon of homicide and of the problems the next-of-kin face in the

aftermath, it is deemed proper to examine the crime-situation obtaining in the two cities. By taking a critical look into the relevant population figures, crime-statistics and the viewpoint of the bereaved, an understanding is likely to be developed which would be helpful in appreciating the issues proposed to be analysed later.

Bangalore, the capital of the State of Karnataka is an industrial city as well. The district of Bangalore is situated in the south-eastern part of the State and is bounded on the north and the north-east by Kolar district, on the south-west by Mandya district and on the south-east by the State of Tamil Nadu. It consists of 11 Taluks, 2728 villages and 22 towns including Bangalore city.

As is well known, Delhi has had a chequered history. At the beginning of the present century it became the seat of Government of British-India and ever since has continued to be the national capital. The Union Territory of Delhi is bounded on the north-west and south by Haryana State and on the east by Uttar Pradesh. It consists of two cities-New Delhi and Old Delhi, eight towns and several villages. Apart from being the administrative hub of the country, Delhi has a multitude of commercial establishments and a concentration of medium and small scale industries. Keeping this backdrop in view, an attempt is made to have a closer look at the two cities.

#### DEMOGRAPHIC ASPECTS

A perusal of Table 2.01 would show that the district of Bangalore is much larger in area than the union territory of Delhi. However, the proportion of the urban area in Delhi is nearly double that of Bangalore. This is so for the obvious reasons.

**Table 2.01 : Rural and Urban area.**

	Rural area		Urban area		Total	
	Sq. Km.	%	Sq. Km.	%	Sq. Km.	%
Bangalore	7758	97	245	3	8003	100
Delhi	1039	70	446	30	1485	100

Source : Census 1971.

As per the Census of 1971, Delhi has a much larger population than Bangalore (see Table 2.02). As per the Census 1981 the population in Delhi had risen to 61,94,000. What is more it has a population which is 90% urban as against 55% urban population in Bangalore.

**Table 2.02 : Rural/Urban distribution of population.**

	Rural		Urban		Total	
	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%
Bangalore	1,499,761	45	1,865,754	55	3,365,515	100
Delhi	418,675	10	3,647,023	90	4,065,698	100

Source : Census 1971.

Again, the density of population differs in the two cities : it is 2738 per square kilometre in Delhi as against 421 in Bangalore.

The sex composition of the population in the two cities may be looked into (Table 2.03). In both the cities, men outnumber women. However, the proportion of women in Delhi (44%) is smaller than in Bangalore (48%). This indicates that, comparatively, Delhi has a large number of men who are doing salaried jobs or are engaged in business and are living singly with their families staying behind in other districts or states. This has implications on the crime-situation also.

**Table 2.03 : Sex-wise distribution of population.**

	Men	Women	Total
Bangalore	52	48	100
Delhi	56	44	100

Source : Census 1971.

The age-distribution (Table 2.04) of the population in Bangalore and Delhi shows more or less similar pattern. Only marginally Delhi has more young people and Bangalore, older people. This may be traced to the availability of employment opportunities available to young people in Delhi.

**Table 2.04 : Age-wise distribution of population (Percentage).**

Age-group	Bangalore	Delhi
0-19	50	49
20-29	18	19
30-39	12	14
40-49	9	9
50-60	11	9
Total	100	100

Source : Census 1971.

Of late, focused attention has been paid on the weaker sections of society. With this in view, the proportion of scheduled castes and scheduled tribes may be examined (Table 2.05). It is found that Delhi has a larger proportion of the population belong to scheduled castes and no scheduled tribes. In Bangalore, there are over 10,000 persons belong to scheduled tribes.

**Table 2.05 : Population of scheduled castes and scheduled tribes.**

	Scheduled Caste		Scheduled Tribe	
	Number	%*	Number	%*
Bangalore	505,644	15	10,287	0.3
Delhi	635,698	16	—	—

**Source :** Census 1971.

\*As percentage of the total population.

An interesting feature comes up when the literacy distribution in the two cities is examined (Table 2.06). In Bangalore, the ratio of literate and educated to the illiterate is 43 : 57. In Delhi it is just the reverse. Apparently, the literacy rate in Delhi is much higher. Having a large number of persons doing salaried jobs in government or in private sector, the literacy-rate in Delhi has to be what it is. For the purposes of the present study, the census categories of 'workers' have been merged into four categories, viz. business, service, agriculture and others.

**Table 2.06 : Literacy distribution (percentages).**

	Literate & Educated	Illiterate	Total
Bangalore	43	57	100
Delhi	57	43	100

**Source :** Census 1971.

Table 2.07 reflects the relevant data. It is found that in both the cities more than two-thirds of the population is 'non-worker'. In Bangalore the proportion of those engaged in agriculture is substantial (14%); whereas in Delhi, it is negligible. At the same time, the proportion of those doing service or business is much higher in Delhi than in Bangalore.

**Table 2.07 : Occupational distribution (percentages).**

Occupation	Bangalore	Delhi
Business	3	6
Service	14	21
Agriculture	14	1
Others	1	2
Non-workers	68	70
<b>Total</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>

**Source :** Census 1971.

As far as the occupation determines the form and nature of social living, it is also likely to affect the nature and extent of crime in the two cities.

The foregoing discussion brings out the basic information relating to the cities of Bangalore and Delhi. Both are urban areas. One is a State capital and the other is the national capital. However, beyond this there is no similarity. In respect of sex-composition, literacy-rate and occupational pattern, the two cities differ in varying degrees. Indeed, it is because of the dissimilarities that they were selected for the present purposes so as to achieve a comparative insight into the phenomenon of homicide and the problems of the victims in the Country.

### CRIME SITUATION

Before proceeding further, it may be mentioned that the responsibility to prevent and control crime is mainly that of the police. Towards this they undertake patrolling, supervise processions and register, investigate and prosecute criminal cases. It would be, therefore, typical to note the police disposition in the two cities. There are 34 police-stations in Bangalore and 60 in Delhi. In Delhi, the police-stations are grouped into six police-districts excluding 'Railways'. The details of police-strength in the two cities as in 1979 are shown in Table 2.08 and 2.09. It would be seen that on the whole Delhi is better policed. Not only is the total number of policemen more but also they average more. For example, in 1977 in Delhi there were about 1,438 policemen per 100 square kilometres in Delhi as against 75 Policemen, in Bangalore. Similarly, there were 40 policemen to every 1,000 Persons in Delhi and less than half as many in Bangalore. Perhaps being the national capital, Delhi has its own set of problems or, else, special attention is paid to the maintenance of law and order.

**Table 2.08 : Strength of Executive and Armed Police  
as on 31.12.1977.**

Police	Bangalore	Delhi
<i>Executive Police</i>		
IG, DIG and SP	5	25
ASP, DSP	10	74
Inspector and SI	213	1806
Below SI	3805	1411
Total	4033	16015
<i>Armed Police</i>		
IG, DIG and SP	1	7
ASP, DSP	2	15
Inspector and SI	46	206
Below SI	1882	5116
Total	1931	5344

**Source :** Crime in India, 1979.

**Table 2.09 : Police strength during 1977 in  
Bangalore and Delhi.**

Police	Bangalore	Delhi
Executive Police	4033	16016
Armed Police	1931	5344
Total	5964	21360
Policemen per 100 Sq. Km. area	74.52	1438.4
Policemen per 10,000 of population	31.72	40.1
IPC cases per policemen	5.15	2.2

**Source :** Crime in India, 1979.

Attention may now be turned to the incidence of crime in the two cities. For the present only cognizable offences attracting the provision of the Indian Penal Code may be brought under discussion. As would be expected, property offences including burglary and theft, account for more than half of the offences in both the cities (see Table 2.10 and 2.11). Over the years (1971-79) different types of offences have been on the increase. What is more, the incidence of murder has been increasing. In Bangalore only 22 murders occurred in 1971 : this increased to 60 in 1979. Likewise, in 1971, Delhi had only 113 murders which increased to 189 in 1979. The overall incidence of crime in Bangalore shows a mild decline in 1979 over the preceding year, while in Delhi it appears to have maintained an upward trend.

**Table 2.10 :** Incidence of crime under IPC during 1971-1979 in Bangalore.

Crime	1971	1972	1973	1974	1975	1976	1977	1978	1979
Murder	22	26	25	26	34	20	37	49	60
Kidnapping/Abduction	12	18	11	35	27	38	73	95	74
Dacoity	—	—	—	2	2	7	15	47	45
Robbery	20	11	17	19	37	35	277	496	33
Burglary	1,774	1,285	1,612	1,529	1,448	1,704	2,607	3,260	2,826
Thefts	4,307	4,041	4,792	5,845	5,845	4,152	9,639	11,251	10,573
Riots	59	70	126	61	33	82	451	626	496
Criminal breach of trust	196	148	128	183	156	182	345	470	349
Cheating	292	297	333	448	379	501	891	960	702
Counter-feiting	49	6	10	49	19	45	35	52	42
<b>Total</b>	<b>8,961</b>	<b>7,555</b>	<b>9,356</b>	<b>10,688</b>	<b>10,182</b>	<b>11,002</b>	<b>20,751</b>	<b>26,490</b>	<b>24,693</b>

Source : Crime in India, 1979.

**Table 2.11 : Incidence of crime under IPC during 1971-1979 in Delhi.**

Crime	1971	1972	1973	1974	1975	1976	1977	1978	1979
Murder	113	132	152	174	165	120	185	178	189
Kidnapping/Abduction	453	523	570	555	481	386	610	858	797
Dacoity	14	27	27	32	18	6	20	73	58
Robbery	329	378	417	343	256	142	357	565	606
Burglary	2,833	3,329	3,319	2,998	2,388	1,702	2,894	3,757	3,259
Thefts	16,735	18,720	19,748	20,398	16,980	13,280	21,699	25,273	25,673
Riots	240	447	453	280	147	38	148	299	388
Criminal breach of trust	587	658	555	522	435	336	548	708	776
Cheating	595	737	673	697	656	626	867	1,066	970
Counter-feiting	30	70	81	56	47	63	38	21	35
<b>Total</b>	<b>29,236</b>	<b>32,589</b>	<b>34,174</b>	<b>33,824</b>	<b>28,571</b>	<b>23,105</b>	<b>35,056</b>	<b>43,383</b>	<b>44,091</b>

**Source : Crime in India, 1979**

A little more focused attention may be paid to the offence of homicide in the cities under study. This may be helpful in evolving a proper understanding of the background to the present study. The crime statistics (see Table 2.12) brings out that the offence of homicide, frequency-wise, is three times larger in Delhi than in Bangalore. However, should we examine the incidence of the offence over the years 1970-79 Bangalore has had rapid increases as compared with Delhi. Apparently, law enforcement officers particularly in Bangalore need to take notice of this increase.

**Table 2.12 :** Incidence of murder in Bangalore and Delhi during 1970-79.

Year	Bangalore				Delhi			
	IPC Sec 302	IPC Sec 304	Others	Total	IPC Sec 302	IPC Sec 304	Others	Total
1970	9	—	—	9	119	8	1	128
1971	21	—	—	21	113	15	—	128
1972	27	—	—	27	129	7	—	136
1973	33	—	—	33	119	15	4	138
1974	27	—	—	27	199	16	3	218
1975	32	1	—	33	166	10	3	179
1976	28	—	—	28	119	13	5	137
1977	42	—	—	42	183	14	6	203
1978	45	—	—	45	174	23	1	198
1979	58	1	—	59	188	20	—	208

**Source :** Police Headquarters (Bangalore and Delhi).

Do persons singly or in group fall victim to murder? On going through Table 2.13 it would be found that murder is generally a 'one person' phenomenon. In 1979, only in 12 per cent of the cases in Bangalore and 8 per cent in Delhi, had multiple murders taken place. Again in 1970-71, 1978 and 1979 Bangalore has a sizeable proportion of multiple murder cases. However the data are too meagre for generalisation. Perhaps, a murder is not a steady phenomenon and is mostly a matter of random occurrence.

**Table 2.13 : Incidence of murder (single murder and multiple murder) in Bangalore and Delhi during 1970-79**

Year	Bangalore			Delhi		
	One person per case	Two or more persons per case	Total	One person per case	Two or more persons per case	Total
1970	8	1	9	116	5	121
1971	18	3	21	117	5	122
1972	26	1	27	124	8	132
1973	31	2	33	153	6	159
1974	26	1	27	166	10	176
1975	32	1	33	157	8	165
1976	28	—	28	121	5	126
1977	42	—	42	178	9	187
1978	40	5	45	179	16	195
1979	52	7	59	189	17	206

Source : Police Headquarters (Bangalore and Delhi).

For quite sometime cartographical factors have been associated with crime. Generally, the argument has been that many geographical factors in-

**Table 2.14 : Monthwise (decennial average, 1970-79) incidence of murder in Bangalore and Delhi**

Month	Bangalore	Delhi
January	2.0	12.3
February	2.9	10.3
March	3.1	15.3
April	3.6	13.8
May	2.6	14.7
June	2.4	13.5
July	2.4	16.0
August	3.1	11.8
September	2.2	12.3
October	3.1	14.1
November	2.7	12.8
December	2.3	13.1
Total	32.4	159.4

Source : Police Headquarters (Bangalore and Delhi).

fluence the volume and form of crime. This also includes seasons. Motivated by these considerations, distribution of murders over calendar months in the two cities has been ascertained (see Table 2.14). Although a ten-year period (1970-79) has been examined and the decennial average is reflected in the table, no specific trend is discernible. It may be mentioned in passing that the months of April for Bangalore and July for Delhi have been in a way fatal. However, this trend is far from being clear or dependable.

There has often been reported a correlation between the dark hours and the dark deed of murder. This is what is partially supported by the data presented in Table 2.15. In both the cities, the maximum number of cases have occurred between sun-down and sun-rise, the bulk of it taking place in the early hours of the evening. In this, Bangalore scores over Delhi. While 58 per cent of murders have taken place in Delhi between sun-down and sun-rise, more than 63 per cent of the cases have taken place in Bangalore. Apparently, this aspect should attract special attention from law enforcement agencies.

**Table 2.15 : Time of murder in Bangalore and Delhi during 1970-79**

Year	Bangalore					Delhi					
	0-6	6-12	12-18	18-24	Total	0-6	6-12	12-18	18-24	Not known	Total
1970	4	3	2	—	9	35	24	26	33	5	123
1971	4	7	3	7	21	30	20	16	43	11	120
1972	4	6	5	12	27	28	15	23	49	15	130
1973	13	7	6	7	33	41	26	29	46	14	156
1974	8	6	6	7	27	47	16	32	66	10	171
1975	8	8	7	10	33	41	23	38	54	12	168
1976	5	7	2	14	28	28	21	21	41	13	124
1977	8	2	11	21	42	47	32	36	54	21	190
1978	11	5	14	15	45	39	28	27	92	21	197
1979	22	6	7	24	59	44	21	44	72	15	196

Source : Police Headquarters (Bangalore and Delhi).

Many means can be adopted to kill a person, ranging from burning to burying, from the use of sharp-edged weapons to firearms, from poisoning to strangulation and the like. In the two cities, it is found (Table 2.16) that in about half the cases the means adopted to kill have been mixed. The main *modus operandi* of murder is the use of a sharp-edged weapon. In this Delhi marginally outstrips Bangalore.

**Table 2.16 :** Incidence of murder (weapon-wise) in Bangalore and Delhi during 1970-79.

Year	Bangalore					Delhi				
	Sharp edged arms	Fire-arms	Poisoning	Others	Total	Sharp edged arms	Fire-arms	Poisoning	Others	Total
1970	2	—	1	6	9	64	2	10	45	121
1971	5	—	—	16	21	53	2	4	59	118
1972	17	1	2	7	27	61	7	4	59	131
1973	14	—	—	19	33	78	8	6	64	156
1974	13	—	—	14	27	90	9	1	74	174
1975	14	—	2	17	33	80	6	5	78	169
1976	10	1	—	17	28	58	6	2	60	126
1977	19	—	1	22	42	89	8	6	91	201
1979	24	—	—	35	59	86	12	5	96	199

Source : Police Headquarters, (Bangalore and Delhi).

### HOMICIDE

Having outlined the setting and the crime-situation obtaining in the cities of Bangalore and Delhi, attention may now be turned to a few details secured through the primary data collection. It may be reiterated that in respect of Bangalore two financial years (1978-80) and in respect of Delhi, one financial year (1979-80) have been taken into consideration. Some of the findings which aid our understanding of the phenomenon of homicide are discussed below.

In exploring the possible association between seasons and murder, the month of murder has been looked into (see Table 2.17). There are variations in both the cities. The highest number of cases of murder in Bangalore have occurred in the months of March and November, and, in Delhi, in July and February. However, no dependable trend is discernible (see also Table 2.14).

**Table 2.17 :** Month of murder (percentages)

	Month												
	Jan	Feb	March	April	May	June	July	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec	Total
Bangalore (N=57)	9	9	12	7	11	5	7	9	9	12	11	11	100
Delhi (N=86)	9	13	9	5	4	7	16	6	9	12	5	6	100

Nevertheless, a question arises : Is month of murder related to personal characteristics of the victim (e.g., sex, age, occupation, habits and habitat), to the personal characteristics of the offender (e.g., sex, age, relation with the victims, pre-incident interaction with the victims, number of offenders and motive behind murder), or to the nature of offence (e.g. day, time, place, and weapon used) ? As far as the victim is concerned only his occupation is found to be significant ( $X^2=37.474$ ;  $C=0.485$ ;  $df=22$ ,  $P<.021$ ). The data show that businessmen are vulnerable during the months of July and October. The Month of murder has little or no correspondence with offence-related variable and so is the case with the area in which the victim has been living. Among offender-related variables, only victim-offender dimension is underlined by the data. The distribution is significant ( $X^2=47.120$ ;  $df=66$ ;  $P<.04$ ). The contingency coefficient also underscores this trend ( $C=0.534$ ). The data reveal that chance victimisation by strangers is more probable during the months of March and April, and, on the other hand, during the months of July and October close-relatives as well as friends pick up quarrels and indulge in violence which, in turn, may lead to murder.

Day of Murder : Table 2.18 Presents the distribution of murder cases

**Table 2.18 :** Day of murder (Percentages).

	Day							Total
	Sun	Mon	Tues	Wed	Thurs	Fri	Sat	
Bangalore (N=55)	24	20	2	9	11	15	20	100
Delhi (N=86)	14	15	13	20	12	11	16	100

over the days in the week. It can be seen that in Bangalore, a maximum number of cases occurred on Sundays while in Delhi on Wednesday. Now an attempt may be made to examine the relationship between the day of murder and other variables. The data show that the victim's personal characteristics do not matter as far as the day of murder is concerned. Similarly, the area in which the victim was living has nothing to do with day of the murder. Among the offence-related variables, only weapon of murder seems to correspond with the day of murder ( $X^2=36.525$ ;  $C=.552$ ;  $df=36$ ;  $P<.016$ ). In a limited way, the trend is that stabbing is the most common mode of killing others on all the days, while beating, on Fridays, Saturdays and Sundays. Among the offender-related variables, the relationship between the offender and victim ( $X^2=54.549$ ;  $C=.562$ ;  $df=36$ ;  $P<.024$ ) and motive behind murder ( $X^2=43.866$ ;  $C=.527$ ;  $df=30$ ;  $P<.049$ ) are significant. The data bring out that most

of the murders by close-relatives were committed on Saturdays and Sundays. Possibly on weekends close-relatives have leisure, they interact, pick up quarrels and indulge in violence which at times results in homicide.

As regards the relationship between motive behind murder and the day of murder, the data reveal that the murders on Saturdays and Sundays arise from domestic quarrel. This also supports the above finding that mostly murders by close relatives occur on Saturdays and Sundays. The reason behind most of the murders on Thursday, Fridays and Saturdays is money, while on Sundays and Wednesdays, it is general enmity.

*Time of Murder* : Table 2.19 brings out the time of murder in the cities under study. The findings generally support the secondary data (Table

**Table 2.19 :** Time of murder (percentages)

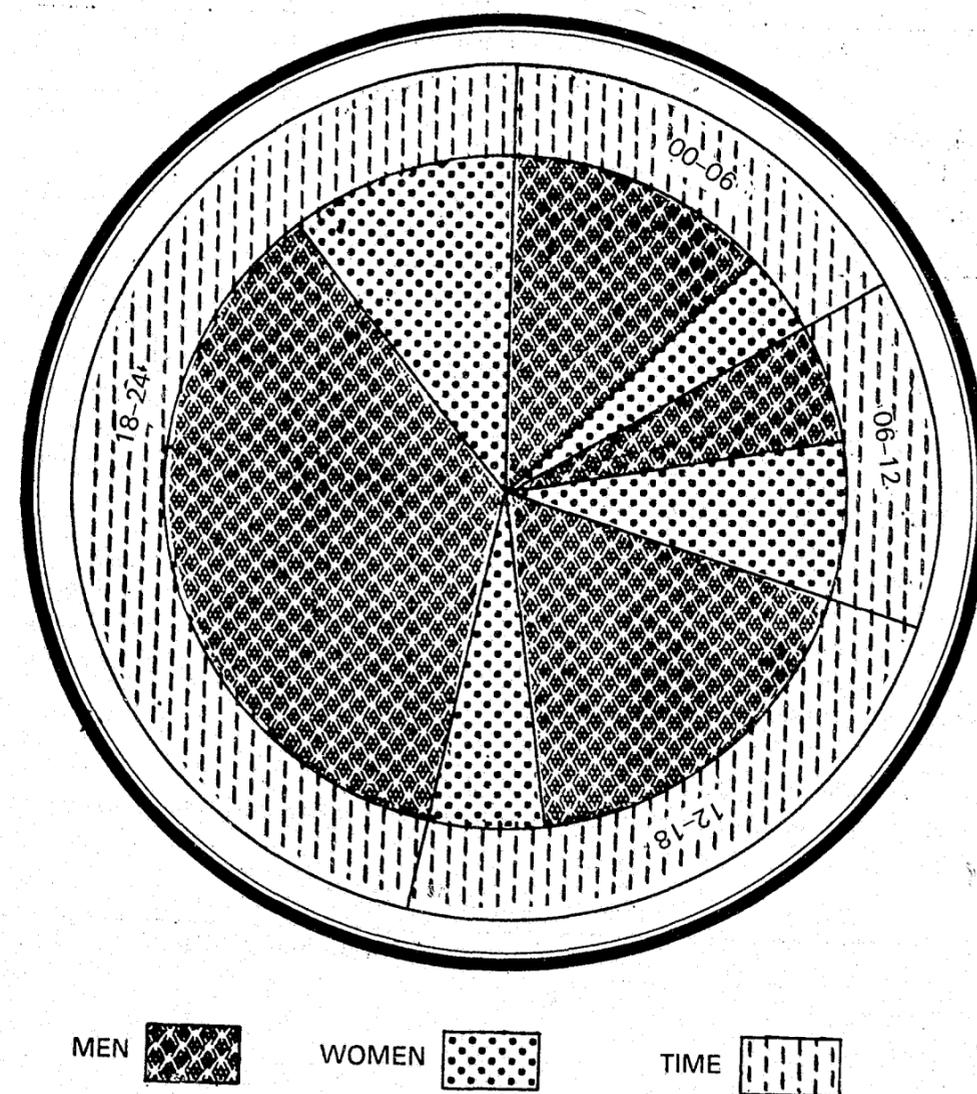
	Midnight to 6 AM	6 AM to 12 Noon	12 Noon to 6 PM	5 PM to 12 Midnight	Total
Bangalore (N=49)	27	6	16	51	100
Delhi (N=77)	10	18	29	43	100

2.15) that the maximum number of cases in both the cities occur during the early hours of the night. As relationship between time of murder and other factors, the findings reveal that among victim-related variables, only sex of the victim (see Figure 2.01) shows some variation with the time of murder ( $X^2=8.819$ ;  $P<.063$ );  $C=.256$ ;  $df=3$ ;  $P<.032$ ;  $\tau=.097$ ; The data suggest that during 6 PM to 6 AM men are mainly victimized while a maximum number of women were murdered during 6 PM to 12 midnight and 6 AM to 12 noon.

Among the offence-related variables only the number of murders ( $X^2=16.246$ ;  $C=.340$ ;  $df=3$ ;  $P<.001$ ) and the weapon of murder ( $X^2=28.157$ ;  $C=.436$ ;  $df=18$ ;  $P<.059$ ), to some extent, appear to correspond with the time of murder. The findings show that the maximum number of multiple murders took place during 6 PM to 6 AM.

As far as the relationship between the time of murder and weapon of murder is concerned, it is found that stabbing and beating irrespective of the time of incidence are the most commonly used means. Murders by burning, however, occurred only during day-time, viz. 6 AM to 12 noon. None of the offender-related factors appears to vary with the time of murder.

**FIG. 2.01**  
**SEX OF THE VICTIM**  
**AND**  
**TIME OF MURDER**



**Place of Murder :** As a social phenomenon, albeit heinous, murder may have something to do with the victim's habitat. Often times, congested and overcrowded areas spawn more crime than properly planned areas. What has been the position in the present context? Relevant data are reflected in Table 2.20. As can be seen, maximum number of murders have occurred in the residential areas, followed by market places. This holds good for both the cities. An attempt has also been made to find out the relationship between place of murder and other variables. The findings show that victim-related

**Table 2.20. : Place of murder (Percentages).**

	Market area	Recreational area	Residential area	Office area	Others	Total
Bangalore (N=57)	26	—	42	2	30	100
Delhi (N=83)	8	6	52	—	34	100

factors like sex, age, occupation, habits are not linked with the place of murder; and, so is the case with the area in which the victim was living. Among the offence-related variables, only weapon of murder shows some correspondence with the place of murder ( $X^2=29.176$ ;  $C=.427$ ;  $df=18$ ;  $p<.046$ ). The findings show that stabbing is common to all the places while poisoning is somewhat particular to market place. In residential areas, burning and strangulation have also been used.

Among the offender-related variables only the number of offenders has been found to be associated with the place of murder ( $X^2=19.388$ ;  $C=.393$ ;  $df=12$ ;  $p<.080$ ). The results show that in market and residential areas single assailants have indulged in mayhem, while in recreational and residential areas, two to five assailants have been active.

**Number of Murders :** In order to ascertain the gravity of the problem, the incidence of single and multiple murders has been looked into (Table 2.21).

**Table 2.21 : Single and multiple murders (percentages).**

	Single murder	Multiple murder	Total
Bangalore (N=57)	88	12	100
Delhi (N=82)	99	1	100

The findings broadly support the secondary data (Table 2.13) : murder is mostly one-person phenomenon. Even in this, as compared to Bangalore, Delhi has a smaller proportion of multiple murders. An attempt may also be made to examine the relationship between single/multiple murders and other variables. The findings suggest that among various characteristics of the victims, only age somewhat corresponds with the number of murders ( $X^2=9.937$ ;  $C=258$ ;  $df=5$ ;  $p<.077$ ;  $\tau=-.116$ ;  $p<.020$ ). The data reveal that the victims in the multiple murder cases were in the age-group of below 20 years' and 20 to 29 years. As discussed earlier among offence-related variables, time of murder is related to number of murders ( $X^2=16.249$ ;  $C=.340$ ;  $df=3$ ;  $p<.001$ ,  $\tau=-.099$ ;  $p<.050$ ). Mostly multiple murders have taken place during 6 P.M. to 6 A.M. Another variable related to this is the weapon of murders ( $X^2=47.148$ ;  $df=6$ ;  $p<.001$ ). The contingency coefficient ( $C=.519$ ) also supports this; a maximum number of the multiple murders were committed by the method of strangulation, while in single murders mainly stabbing, beating and burning have been resorted to.

Among other offender-related variables, only the victim's relationship with the offender ( $X^2=22.326$ ;  $C=.402$ ;  $df=6$ ;  $p<.001$ ) and the sex of the offender ( $X^2=26.697$ ;  $C=.431$ ;  $df=1$ ;  $p<.001$ ;  $\tau=.095$ ;  $p<.062$ ) appear to correspond with the number of murders. The data reveal that in the cases of single murder, the offenders have been mainly strangers, neighbours, friends and close-relatives. On the other hand, in the multiple murder cases, the offenders have been mainly close-relatives. Similarly, with regard to the relationship between sex of the offender and number of murders, the data show that in multiple-murders, the offenders were generally women while single murders were committed generally by men.

**Mode of Murder :** Table 2.22 brings out the means adopted to commit homicide. The trend indicated by the secondary data (Table 2.16) is supported by the field-data as well (Table 2.22). A large number of murders

**Table 2.22. Weapon of murder (percentages).**

	Stabb- ing	Shoot- ing	Burn- ing	Beat- ing	Poison- ing	Stran- gulation	Others	Total
Bangalore (N=53)	45	2	6	26	—	9	11	100
Delhi (N=78)	50	6	15	19	4	3	3	100

were perpetrated by stabbing followed by beating. Compared to Bangalore, a large proportion of murders in Delhi were done by shooting, burning and poisoning. On the other hand, a large number of homicides have been committed through strangulation in Bangalore. To some extent, the weapon of murder is found associated with the victim's sex ( $X^2=31.786$ ;  $C=.442$ ;  $df=6$ ;  $p<.001$ ), age ( $X^2=58.520$ ;  $C=.556$ ;  $df=30$ ;  $p<.001$ ) and Occupation ( $X^2=39.682$ ;  $C=.511$ ;  $df=12$ ;  $p<.001$ ). As regards the sex of the victims the analysis shows that while stabbing is common for both the sexes, men have proportionately fallen more to beating, and women, to burning. Also, while stabbing and beating have been the main method adopted for murder, the victims who have been burnt to death have been mostly under 20 years of age. Almost similar findings are arrived at with regard to the victim's occupation. Stabbing and beating being the common weapon of murder for all occupational groups, some cases of murder by burning have been reported involving victims belonging to the category of non-workers, possibly house-wives. This finding, in part, highlights the phenomenon of wife-burning which, of late, has attracted much media-attention.

As regards the relationship between weapon of murder and other factors related to the offence, the findings have been discussed earlier. Apparently, the month of murder is not related to the weapon of murder, and so is the case with the day, time and number of murders.

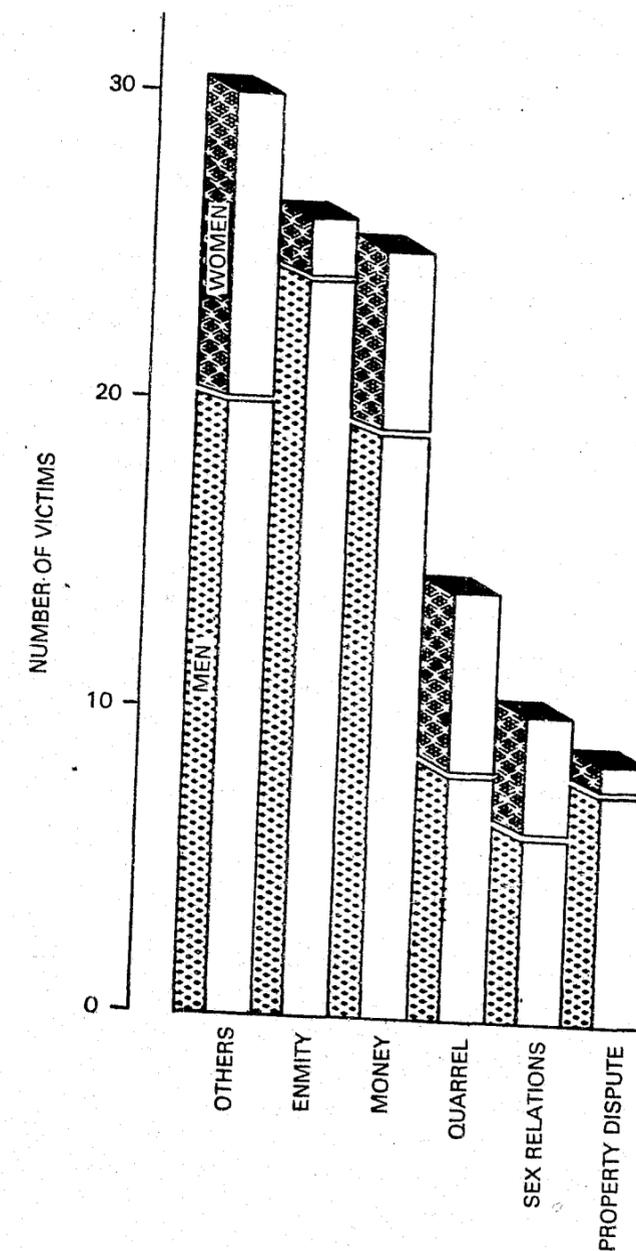
*Motive behind murder* : The motive behind murder as ascertained in the sample has been shown in Table 2.23. In Bangalore, the bulk of the murders

**Table 2.23** : Motive behind murder (percentages).

	Property dispute	Pre-marital/ Extra-marital sex-relations	General enmity	Domestic quarrel	Money	Others	Total
Bangalore (N=46)	13	11	—	20	22	35	100
Delhi (N=68)	4	7	38	7	22	11	100

have taken place for a variety of unclassified reasons, while in Delhi, a maximum number of murders have occurred due to enmity. The next important motive behind murder seems to be monetary considerations—in both the cities. In Bangalore, the third main reason behind murder is domestic quarrel. Compared to Delhi, a large proportion of murders have occurred in Bangalore due to property disputes and pre-marital and extra-marital sex-relations (see also Figure 2.02).

**FIG. 2.02**  
**SEX OF THE VICTIM AND MOTIVE BEHIND MURDER.**



Opinionnaires were mailed to a cross-section of intelligentsia including judicial officers, lawyers, police officers, teachers and voluntary workers to obtain their views on the crime-situation in general and homicide in particular. They generally, feel that the rate of crime including homicide is increasing. Only one person, interestingly enough, has observed that crime rate is declining and the rate of homicide is increasing. In their opinion usually knives, daggers, firearms, sharp and blunt weapons are commonly used ; only one of them has mentioned that poisoning, strangulation and bombs are also used to perpetrate the crime.

About the motive behind murder, the opinion of the intelligentsia generally supports the findings. The main motive behind murder is to become rich quickly, and, hence, the adoption of antisocial means. Enmity over land property is considered to be the second main motive behind murder. Some persons have opined that murders take place due to sex-relations, out of wedlock. Similarly, a few have also mentioned communal riots, inter-union rivalries, jealousies, frustration, aggression, hatred, alcohol consumption, delinquency, vendatta and any real or imaginary provocations leading to quarrels and ultimately to homicide. Many of the crimes, they observe, are perpetrated or encouraged by influential persons in politics and business.

*Habitat* : One of the objectives of the study is to find out whether certain kinds of areas spawn more violence than others. The results are summarised in Table 2.24. It is seen that in Bangalore a large number of the victims

**Table 2.24 : Victims' place of residence (percentages)**

	Congested	Mixed	Spacious	Total
Bangalore (N=57)	30	61	9	100
Delhi (N=86)	33	30	36	100

were staying in mixed (neither congested nor spacious) areas. In Delhi, no specific pattern is noticed : Victims were almost equally distributed in the congested, mixed and spacious areas.

As regards the relationship between the area in which the victim was living and other variables, only the pre-incidence interaction between victim and offenders appears to be significant ( $X^2=8.563$  ;  $C=.272$  ;  $df=4$  ;  $p<.073$ ).

The data show that maximum interaction between the offender and victim was found in mixed and congested areas. Other variables do not correspond with the type of area in which the victim was living.

*Police Behaviour* : A scene of crime cannot be thought of without the presence of the police. Also, the police behaviour on the crime-scene has received both approbation and disapprobation of the public including of the aggrieved. An attempt therefore has been made to assess the conduct of the policemen vis-a-vis the incidence of murder from the next-of-kin. The findings are shown in Table 4.14. It is found that a large proportion (60%) of the next-of-kin report satisfaction with the policeman's behaviour in Bangalore, while in Delhi, nearly half of them (49%) show dissatisfaction.

The foregoing account delineates the crime-situation particularly that of homicide in Bangalore and Delhi. Although both are metropolitan centres, they are different in many respects. Delhi is more thickly populated, has a young population, more men than women, more educated persons, and the better part of the population is engaged either in business or service. Likewise, Delhi is also better policed; but public appears to be more satisfied with the police in Bangalore.

The dissimilarity, however, loses its sharpness when the offence of homicide in the two cities is looked into. In both the centres most murders are committed between sun-down and sun-up, in residential and congested areas, and with sharp-edged weapons, the chief motive being enmity. It would be, therefore, justifiable to infer that human tendencies, problems, interaction, violence and the like tend to cut across regional boundaries.

## Chapter 3

### Victims of Homicide

If crime and victimization refer to one and the same social reality, a delineation of the role of a crime-doer would remain well nigh incomplete without paying attention to the victim. Till recently, society as well as criminal justice system have been overly concerned with the crime and the criminal. If any attention has been paid to the process of victimization or to the victim, it has been mostly supplementary and aimed at highlighting the motive behind and the reality of the offence. In the process the human situation developed due to the occurrence of a crime has remained largely ignored. More often than not, the victim, the trauma which he has undergone and the problems he might be facing in the aftermath have, by and large, escaped the attention of all concerned. The situation has been more so disquieting in those countries where social security system is non-existent or rudimentary. Victims or their dependents have been left to their own devices.

Occurrence of a crime including that of homicide is a psychosocial event in which both the crime-doer and the victim are intensely and antagonistically involved. From this stems the contention that both the crime-doer and the victim may have a role in this. In most cases the victim may have a passive role in the whole affair. In others, his role may be more than that of a passive participant. In still others, the difference between the crime-doer and the victim may be only a matter of chance. All these nuances, however, get garbled with the over-concern with the crime and crime-doer. "For decades", observes Antilla, "the offenders had been in the focus of interest, and much work has been done on efforts to find out what kind of peculiarities, anomalies, mental illness, intelligence or character—defects could serve as an explanation of criminality" (1974). This kind of approach has led to only to a one-sided understanding of the crime-phenomenon.

While crime is a part of social living, it is not a random phenomenon. There are many individuals who, because of their peculiar background and psyche have anti-social tendencies or are crime-prone. Also there are individuals who likewise may be victimization-prone. Stated differently, particular types of individuals may be victimized more than others. This may be attributed to their peculiar social background (Khan and Singh, 1980) or to their personality make-up (Drapkin and Viano, 1974). Besides, many victims may have a role in the occurrence of an offence, in varying degrees. For example, Wolfgang (1967) has reported that in 26 per cent of homicide cases victims participation in the offence was substantial. This view is further supported by the study conducted by Hepburn and Voss (1968) who have found that 38 per cent of the homicides in Chicago were prodded by the victims themselves (see also Mulvihill, et al., 1969). Keeping the above and similar issues in view, a discussion of the victims of homicide in the two cities under study appears to be more than a formal necessity. The present section therefore aims to bring the victims under focus. Here the purpose is three-fold. A systematic insight into the role of the victim in the occurrence of the offence may be developed. Secondly, a reliable assessment of the socioeconomic background of the victims may be secured. Lastly, the proportion of those cases may be ascertained which may be needing immediate relief or compensation. Towards this, personal characteristics, socioeconomic background and psychological traits of the victims as also the nature of victim-offender relationship are analysed.

#### PERSONAL CHARACTERISTICS

There is no denying the fact that both victims and crime-doers differ. They may be grouped into their respective categories; but one crime would differ from the other on a number of counts. So would be the case with the victims. As a matter of fact, the rise of Typological School in criminology in the later half of the 19th century was based on this assumption. In any case, towards a proper appreciation of the role of the victim in the occurrence of an offence including that of homicide a discussion of personal characteristics is of utmost importance. As such a few prominent ones may be analysed.

**Sex:** Women-folk are less involved in crime. In most societies they are culturally assigned a secondary role. Their participation in social, economic and political activities of the community tends to be relatively smaller than that of men. So is their proportion in the number of arrests in different categories of offences. Is it also the case in the process of victimization?

There are indeed certain offences in which only women-folk are more likely to be victimized than men. Rape is one such offence. Likewise, their

share in offences such as kidnapping and abduction is sizeable. The position, however, needs to be ascertained with regard to other offences. Deiker (1974), Cordrey (1975) and many others contend that the sex of the victim plays an important role in the process of victimization. Feyerherm and Hindelang (1964) report that the likelihood of women being victimized is lesser than men (29 : 43). What is the position in the present context ?

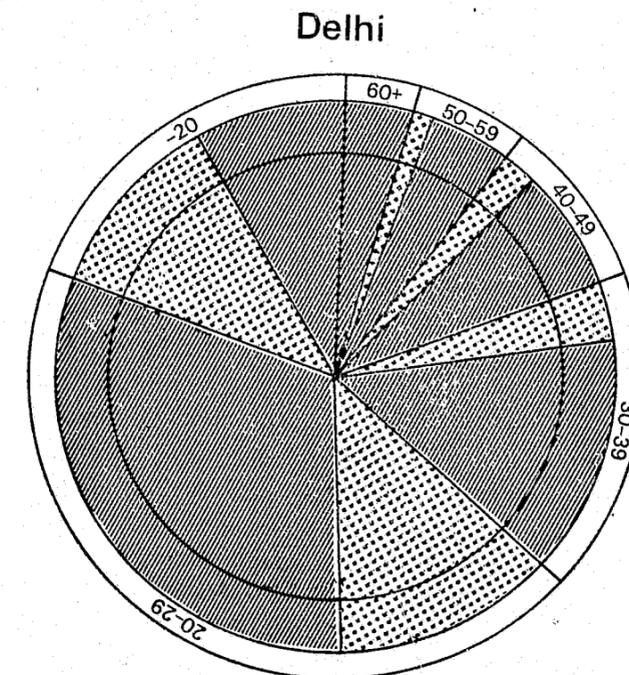
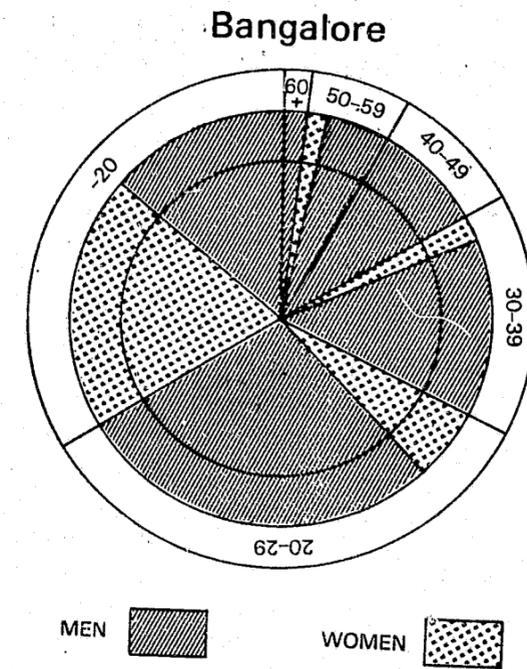
**Table 3.01 :** Victims of homicide Bangalore and Delhi according to their sex.

Year	Bangalore			Delhi		
	Men	Women	Total	Men	Women	Total
1970	6	5	11	93	36	129
1971	11	13	24	92	30	122
1972	18	16	34	122	33	155
1973	23	13	36	123	35	158
1974	22	6	18	134	46	180
1975	25	9	34	137	42	179
1976	21	7	28	97	31	128
1977	29	13	42	132	68	200
1978	35	15	50	159	50	209
1979	53	19	72	128	75	203

**Source :** Police Headquarters (Bangalore and Delhi)

Table 3.01 presents the official data. All along (period examined, 1970-79) the proportion of women killed is markedly low, compared with men. In 1979 only 26 per cent of the victims in Bangalore and 37 per cent in Delhi were women. This position may be further examined in the light of the first-hand data (Table 3.02). Again, the proportion of men-victims far exceed that of the women-victims. In the two cities, the proportion of women-victims differs; their proportion is only 28 per cent in Bangalore as against 30 per cent in Delhi. However, the difference is only marginal.

Further analysis shows that women victims are younger in age than men ( $X^2=17.512$ ;  $C=.330$ ;  $df=5$ ;  $P<.004$ ). 48 per cent of the women-folk who lost their lives were below 20 years in age, while most of the men-folk (23%) were between 21 and 30 years (see Figure 3.01). It may be added that while the participation of women in community activities is relatively small, early in their age it may not be so. Girls have to attend school or



**FIG. 3.01**  
**SEX AND AGE OF VICTIMS**

college. They may be a little more outgoing. Hence, they may be correspondingly more vulnerable to homicide as is brought out by the data. A few occupational differences ( $X^2=44.00$ ;  $C=.515$ ;  $df=2$ ;  $P<.001$ ) are also noticed.

**Table 3.02 : Sex of the victims of homicide (Percentages).**

	Men	Women	Total
Bangalore (N=57)	72	28	100
Delhi (N=86)	70	30	100

For example, 19 per cent of the men-victims were engaged either in service or in business, and, in contrast, 69 per cent of the women-victims were non-workers, possibly housewives. The fact needs pointed attention that even housewives are not immune to the offence. A little more insight in this dimension can be had, should we look into the nature of the victim-offender relationship. It is seen ( $X^2=20.868$ ;  $C=.388$ ;  $df=6$ ;  $P<.001$ ) that a sizeable number of men were killed by strangers (24%) and neighbours (20%), while a large number of women (40%), by close relatives. However, in 73 per cent of the cases involving women-victims the offence was committed by one assailant ( $X^2=7.35$ ;  $C=.250$ ;  $df=3$ ;  $P<.061$ ). Has the sex of the victim a bearing on the motive behind murder? About one-fourth of the women-victims were killed due to domestic quarrels, whereas most of men-victims because of general enmity and money-matters ( $X^2=9.661$ ;  $C=.279$ ;  $df=5$ ;  $P<.085$ ). It may be pointed out that the present data are not very clear with regard to disputes and hence homicides emanating from illicit sex-relations. This may be attributed mainly to the respondent's bias.

**Age :** It has been generally observed that in the process of victimization that the proportion of mature people (20-50 years in age) is distinctly higher (Gubrim, 1974) and that the incidence of victimization is about the lowest in the old age group. Similar observations were made by Block and Rechar (1977) : during 1965-74 about one-third of the victims belonged to the age-group of 15-24 years (see also Herjanic and Meyer, 1976). An examination of the age of victims of homicide would, therefore, be of more than passing interest.

A perusal of Tables 3.03 and 3.04 would show that mostly young people have been victimized in the two cities under study and the proportion of the aged victims is markedly low. In 1979, five out of every twelve in Bangalore

**Table 3.03 : Victims of homicide in Bangalore according to their age (in years)**

Year	Below 20	20-29	30-39	40-49	50-59	Above 60	Total
1970	3	1	5	1	1	—	11
1971	11	8	5	—	—	—	24
1972	9	11	6	7	—	1	34
1973	15	5	10	3	2	1	36
1974	5	8	10	3	1	1	28
1975	5	16	8	3	—	2	34
1976	3	10	9	3	2	1	28
1977	14	14	8	5	1	—	42
1978	15	11	6	2	2	1	50
1979	29	14	18	7	3	1	72

Source : Police Headquarters (Bangalore and Delhi).

**Table 3.04 : Victims of homicide in the Union territory of Delhi according to their age (in years).**

Year	Below 20	20-29	30-39	40-49	50-59	Above 60	Total
1970	37	37	29	12	1	3	119
1971	18	50	37	17	2	1	125
1972	16	48	37	23	6	3	135
1973	23	59	43	20	9	4	158
1974	24	60	55	26	8	4	177
1975	32	62	51	15	9	2	171
1976	14	50	35	13	8	6	126
1977	28	83	49	24	9	1	194
1978	22	75	62	27	21	3	210
1979	34	93	46	14	6	5	198

Source : Police Headquarters (Bangalore and Delhi).

were below 20 years in age ; and their proportion in Delhi was even higher (6 out of every 12). Thus, the official data show that the young as compared with the old are more likely to fall victims to the offence.

The foregoing line of analysis has been pursued further. The age of the victims in the two cities has been examined (Table 3.05). There are seen many inter-city differences, if we consider two victims below 30 years of age. These differences further show up, should we focus our attention on the victims below 20 years in age. While 33 per cent of the victims were below 20 years in Bangalore, in Delhi there proportion was only 20 per cent. Besides, in both the cities the proportion of the aged (about 50 years) is markedly low. These trends are further supported by the mean age of the victims. In Bangalore, it is 27.81 years, in Delhi, 29.77 years. The trend appears to be fairly consistent as the standard deviation is also small (12.94 and 12.64, respectively). Energetic, inexperienced, emotional and passionate, young people apparently get easily involved in brawls and quarrels many of which may culminate in violence.

**Table 3.05 :** Age of the victims of homicide (percentages).

	Age (in years)						Total
	Below 20	20-29	30-39	40-49	50-59	60 and above	
Bangalore (N=57)	33	33	16	9	7	2	100
Delhi (N=86)	20	44	17	9	6	3	100

As would be expected, the bulk of the victims below 20 years of age (78%) were unmarried ( $X^2=38.957$ ;  $C=0.463$ ;  $df=10$ ;  $p<.001$ ); and their predators were also not having any clearly defined purpose or motive except general enmity ( $X^2=35.162$ ;  $C=.485$ ;  $df=25$ ;  $p<.085$ ). The fact that young persons have mostly fallen to homicide often because of nothing more specific than general enmity should attract attention. The contention resists elimination that they and many others might have had more than a passive role. In containing them and shielding them from violence or homicide, criminal justice system may, however, have limited contribution to make in this. Family, neighbourhood, school and the general social environment may have a more positive role to play.

**Marital Status :** Mckinley (1964) has found marital status to be a significant determinant in child-bashing. Similarly, Somasundaram (1970) reports that murder is often a domestic affair and that more married women are killed in their bed-rooms (see also Wolfgang, 1967 ; Martin, 1978). As against this,

Hindelang et. al. (1978) observe that there is less likelihood of married and widowed women getting victimized as compared with unmarried and separated women. What is the position in the Indian social context ?

**Table 3.06 :** Marital status of the victims of homicide (percentages).

	Married	Unmarried	Widow/Widower	Total
Bangalore (N=57)	49	51	0	100
Delhi (N=86)	62	37	1	100

A reference to Table 3.06 would show that most of the victims in Delhi and Bangalore were married. To be specific, about half of the victims in Bangalore and about two-thirds in Delhi were married. The inter-city differences are worth noticing. This apart, a few other observations are also possible to make. While married life tends to make the spouses more responsible, it may also entail an element of inevitability of disputes. Matters relating to property, money and sex may involve them with an intensity often leading to violence. This may in part explain why the proportion of married victims is markedly high in the sample.

Most of the married victims (31%) have been killed because of the disputes arising over money-matters; as against this a sizeable proportion of the unmarried victims (23%), because of personal enmity (or inter-personal as also sex-disputes ?). These variations are also statistically significant ( $X^2=19.678$ ;  $C=.384$ ;  $df=10$ ;  $P<.032$ ). The involvement of the men-victims in disputes over money-matters is however supported by the fact that most of them (57%) were killed by men-offenders ( $X^2=24.237$ ;  $C=.411$ ;  $df=2$ ;  $P<.001$ ).

To get married when of age and live a settled life is a social norm. Not the married but the persons living single, attract attention. It is therefore hardly surprising that the proportion of married victims in the sample is high.

**Stay Period :** It may be remarked that the stay-period of a given individual would directly correspond with the sociocultural roots he might be having in the locality. In other words, a person who has lived in an area over a length of time has the likelihood of being better adjusted in the community. Conversely, the community is likely to have a positive impact on the psycho-

social stability of the individual as well as the family. The community is also likely to rally around the individual and the family, should crisis arise. Taken together, the stay-period may have a relevance to the process of homicidal victimization.

**Table 3.07 :** Duration of stay of the victims in the area (percentages).

	Stay Period (in years)					Total
	Less than one	1-5	6-10	11-15	Since birth	
Bangalore (N=56)	4	14	16	7	59	100
Delhi (N=86)	3	9	8	20	59	100

On going through Table 3.07, it would be noticed that there are only 16 per cent of the victims in Bangalore who had been there in the locality for five years or less. In Delhi the proportion is even a smaller (12%). On the other hand, in both the cities an overwhelming majority of the victims (59%) had been living in the locality since their birth. That most of the victims had been the resident of the locality for considerable length of time is also supported by the mean value: in Bangalore it is 13.25 years (standard deviation =6.25) and in Delhi, 14.45 years (standard deviation=4.76). The data thus do not support that the victims belonged to floating population having no roots in the soil. It would be, therefore, justifiable to infer that elements of violence and mayhem may be there in the sociocultural environment itself. This contention is further reinforced by the fact that most victims who had been living in the locality for longer periods of time or since their birth had been killed because of general enmity, whereas those who had been for smaller periods, mostly because of disputes involving money ( $X^2=34.784$ ;  $C=.483$ ;  $df=20$ ;  $P<.021$ ). This, again, calls for a reappraisal of civil laws and social mores among various communities in the country.

### SOCIOECONOMIC BACKGROUND

To the extent that man is a social animal, the importance of socio-economic background of an individual or group can hardly be discounted. It is generally accepted that at the time of birth man is an unfinished product. Inter-personal relations, group-experiences and the sociocultural environment, education, training, vocation and cultural influences render the man into an

individual or person. Besides, socioeconomic factors like religion and income determine the extent to which he would be endowed with anti-social or law-abiding tendencies. These may also determine his susceptibility to fall victim to various crimes. Generally speaking, most of the offenders belong to lower socioeconomic strata (see, for example, Deiker, 1975, Horoszowski, 1975). What has been the position with regard to victims of homicide? To answer this question satisfactorily, a few salient socioeconomic characteristics of the victims may be discussed.

*Religion and Caste :* Religion does not merely represent the faith in the unknown, it also denotes the cultural mode of life. Individuals and groups belonging to a particular religious group have much in common which differentiates them from others. Suicide, addiction to intoxicants and the proclivity to violate law differ from religious group to religious group. Has it anything to do with the process of victimization?

**Table 3.08 :** Persons killed in murder cases religion-wise in Bangalore city during 1970-1979.

Year	Christian	Hindu	Muslim	Sikh	Others	Total
1970	—	10	—	—	—	10
1971	1	17	2	—	1	11
1972	2	24	7	—	4	24
1973	4	30	1	—	1	34
1974	—	22	4	—	1	36
1975	—	29	1	—	2	28
1976	1	22	3	—	4	34
1977	3	33	3	1	1	28
1978	2	35	10	—	3	42
1979	2	53	10	—	3	50
					7	72

**Source :** Police Headquarters (Bangalore and Delhi).

India is a multi-religion country. Although the predominant religion happens to be Hinduism (82%), several other religions and sects are very much there. As a matter of fact, there would be few organised religions adherents of which would not be found on the subcontinent. Germane, however, to the issue whether members belong to a particular religious group are victimised more than others. This assumes a pointed relevance in view of the fact that denominational riots in the country have been more or less a recurrent feature.

**Table 3.09 : Persons killed in murder cases religion-wise in the Union Territory of Delhi during 1970-1979.**

Year	Christian	Hindu	Muslim	Sikh	Others	Total
1970	—	100	8	10	10	128
1971	1	99	9	7	7	123
1972	1	118	5	7	4	145
1973	—	127	12	10	9	158
1974	2	151	14	6	4	177
1975	—	154	8	10	5	177
1976	3	101	9	10	2	125
1977	4	168	13	6	7	198
1978	1	142	10	10	6	169
1979	3	163	17	16	5	204

Source : Police Headquarters (Bangalore and Delhi).

On going through Tables 3.08 and 3.09 it would be seen that apart from Hindus, Christians, Muslims, Sikhs and others have also been victimised in the two cities. Should we focus our attention on the year 1979, 74 per cent of the victims in Bangalore were Hindus. The proportion is slightly higher in the case of Delhi (80%). Generally speaking, the proportion of Hindu-victims in both the cities is marginally lower as compared with the general population-ratio. Do the official figures correspond with the first-hand data collected in the study ?

**Table 3.10 : Religion of the victims (percentages).**

	Christian	Hindu	Muslim	Sikh	Others	Total
Bangalore (N=57)	7	79	12	0	2	100
Delhi (N=86)	1	87	4	8	0	100

A reference to Table 3.10 would show that the proportion of the Hindu-victims is substantially higher, in both the cities. This is so particularly in Delhi (87%). It may be generally remarked that in Bangalore the victims belonging to Hindu religion are somewhat over-represented. However, no dependable trend is in evidence to show that members of a particular religious group are victimized more than others.

The caste system is a distinctive feature of the Indian society. Determined by birth, the system has elaborate rules and practices governing inter-marriage, inter-dining and so on. So pervasive has been the influence of the system that it has survived several exogenous cultural influences and has even permeated other religious groups like Christians, Muslims and Sikhs. Untouchability has been abolished under the Civil Rights Act and the principle of universal franchise has been in operation for the last 30 years or more. Further, the so-called lower caste-groups have been provided selective opportunities for upliftment. There are reservations in schools and colleges, in economic assistance and job opportunities, and in Assemblies and Parliament. Many sociologists, however, doubt if these measures have narrowed caste cleavages. Has the factor of caste an influence on the process of victimization ?

**Table 3.11 : Caste of the victims (percentages).**

	Brahmin	Kshatriya	Vaishya	Kayastha	Backward class	Scheduled caste	Scheduled tribes	Total
Bangalore (N=57)	17	12	4	0	17	29	21	100
Delhi (N=86)	19	40	13	1	9	15	1	100

Somehow census data do not provide estimates of caste-groups in the country. Official statistics supplied by the police headquarters are also silent in this regard. Nonetheless, census report do classify scheduled castes and scheduled tribes. Table 3.11 presents the caste-classification of the victims obtained in the present study. Inter-city differences clearly show up. In Bangalore, most of the victims belong to scheduled castes (29%) followed by scheduled tribes (21%) and Brahmins (17%) : and on the other hand, in Delhi most of the victims belong to Kshatriya castes (40%) followed by Brahmins (19%). Attention may be turned to the victims belonging to scheduled castes and scheduled tribes. In this connection Table 2.05 may also be referred to. In Bangalore, the proportion of scheduled castes in the general population is only 15 per cent whereas their proportion among the victims killed during years 1978-1980 is 29 per cent. This is more so noticeable with respect to scheduled tribes : In Bangalore the proportion of scheduled tribes in the general population is only a fraction of a per cent ; and as against this, 21 per cent of the victims belonged to scheduled tribes. The proportion of victims

belonging to scheduled castes and scheduled tribes in Delhi more or less conforms to the general population-ratio. The data thus show that Delhi as compared with Bangalore is relatively free from caste-tensions. Besides, members belonging to scheduled castes and scheduled tribes in Bangalore are much vulnerable to violence including homicide.

*Education* : It is axiomatic to state that education equips the individual to face the realities of life. Both formal or informal modes of education enable the individual to adjust himself in the community in a meaningful way. This may, to a great extent, keep the educated away from the anti-social path. Likewise, the educated are also likely to be more aware of the circumstances and situations which would imperil their survival. The expectation, therefore, would be that the educated would be less likely to fall victim of crime including homicide. What has been the position in the present context ?

**Table 3.12** : Educational status of the victims (percentages).

	Illit	Lit	MS/HSS	HS/HSS	Grad	Total
Bangalore (N=57)	11	7	63	17	2	100
Delhi (N=86)	30	5	31	22	12	100

It is observed (Table 3.12) that the nature and extent of formal education differs in the two cities, Bangalore and Delhi. In terms of literacy, primary and junior high school education, Bangalore has an edge over Delhi ; in contrast in terms of higher education ((high school, graduate degrees, etc.) the position is almost reversed. In any case, a majority of the victims were literate or educated. The data thus do not show that most victims are illiterate.

It may not be without interest to note that the victims who were better educated belonged to higher income group ( $X^2=18.609$  ;  $C=.430$  ;  $df=12$  ;  $p<.001$ ). To some extent, victims' educational status and motives behind murder are also interlinked ( $X^2=29.810$  ;  $C=.454$  ;  $df=20$  ;  $p<.091$ ). The educated are somewhat over-represented in the categories of domestic quarrels and personal enmity.

*Family background* : There is no denying the fact that family is a basic social unit. It transmits social norms and values from one generation to

another. Often times, an individual is what his family has enabled him to be. Likewise, his likes and dislikes, his preferences and prejudices and his motivations and life goals—all carry the impress of his family. It is hardly necessary to mention that the basis of family is sex. Generally speaking, husband, wife and the off-spring comprise the family-group. However, a family group may accommodate three or more generations also. This has given rise to the institution of the joint family system which is yet another notable feature of Indian society. Three or more generations live together, share assets and liabilities

**Table 3.13** : Nature of family of the victims (percentages).

	Joint Family	Nuclear Family	Total
Bangalore (N=57)	7	93	100
Delhi (N=83)	63	37	100

and share a common style of life. For understandable reasons, joint families are large groups. Among other things, joint family groups have one notable advantage : they have an in-built social security mechanism. To illustrate, if a grown-up earning member passes away, the widow and the orphans would be looked after and provided for almost in the usual manner. Under the impact of urbanisation, industrialisation and modernisation, the joint family system, however, is fast disintegrating.

**Table 3.14** : Number of members in the victim's household (percentages).

	None	3 and below	4—6	7—9	10 and above	Total
Bangalore (N=46)	—	29	21	30	20	100
Delhi (N=83)	7	18	48	18	8	100

The position relating to the type of the family to which the victims belonged was ascertained (Table 3.13). It would be readily seen that most of victims in Bangalore were from nuclear family groups. As compared with this a large number of victims in Delhi were from joint family groups. It may, however, be mentioned that owing to the housing problem, as is the case with Delhi, two or more families live together. They may often share food prepared

on one hearth ; but income and expenditure and assets and liabilities are not necessarily shared. In view of this, they may not be regarded joint family groups. They may well be termed as extended family groups. Notwithstanding this, the size of the households of the victims appears to be large. This is what is observed on going through Table 3.14. The distribution of the data clearly brings out inter-city differences. The size of the household in Bangalore appears to be larger than in Delhi. On the average, there are 7.59 members in the household of the victim (standard deviation=1.70) in Bangalore ; as against this there are 5.14 members to a household in Delhi (standard deviation=2.85). It may be pointed out that the loss of a member in a large household would become moreso traumatic if he were the bread-winner.

*Occupation* : What one does for his living has much to do with inter-personal and inter-group relation. With this in view, the occupational status of the victims has been ascertained (Table 3.15). For the present purposes, three major categories have been formed : Business (small and large), service (including both government and private) and non-workers (infants, children, students, housewives, etc.). It would be noticed that the two cities, Bangalore and Delhi considerably differ in occupational pattern (see, also, Table 2.07). Business was the principal occupation of the victims in Bangalore ; and service, in Delhi. The proportion of non-workers among the victims does not conform to general population ratio : they are under-represented in the sample. Apparently, non-workers have to carry on a lesser amount of social or economic activity and hence they are less involved in disputes and violence.

**Table 3.15 : Occupational status of the victims (percentages).**

	Business	Service	Nonworkers	Total
Bangalore (N=57)	38	32	30	100
Delhi (N=86)	23	51	27	100

The above line of contention is also supported if we examine the victim-offender relationship in relation to victim's occupation ( $X^2=26.883$  ;  $C=.462$  ;  $df=12$  ;  $p<.008$ ). For example, 38 per cent of the victims engaged in business were killed by strangers, 24 per cent of them engaged in service, by neighbours, and 38 per cent of them in the category of non-workers, by close

relatives. It may be noted that non-workers also include housewives. It may be thus remarked that non-workers particularly housewives are likely to suffer violence at the hands of close relatives more than others.

*Income* : Means of livelihood, economic resources or income have always been important to the individual and group and in inter-personal and inter-group relations. They have become moreso important in contemporary times characterised by what is termed as 'consumerism'. Is it poverty or affluence which makes one vulnerable to violence or homicide ?

**Table 3.16 : Income of the victims (percentages).**

	Income (in rupees per month)				Total
	Below 250	250-499	500-999	1000-1499	
Bangalore (N=32)	41	37	19	3	100
Delhi (N=50)	14	48	38	4	100

The data presented in Table 3.16 may be looked into. The income-pattern in the two cities is found to be markedly different. Victims in Bangalore were having a lower monthly income than those in Delhi. In Bangalore, for example, 41 per cent of them were having an income of less than Rs. 250. As against this, 48 per cent of them in Delhi were having an income between Rs. 250-500. The trend that the victims in Delhi were relatively better off than those in Bangalore, is also supported by the average monthly income : in Delhi, the average is Rs. 478.40 (standard deviation=278.70) ; whereas in Bangalore the average is Rs. 352.35 (standard deviation=Rs. 275.87). It is difficult to generalise that either poverty or affluence has anything substantial to contribute to the process of victimization.

For obvious reasons income and age of the victims are found related with each other. To some extent, income is seen to increase with age ( $X^2=4.696$  ;  $C=.576$  ;  $df=15$  ;  $p<.001$ ). So is the case with education ( $X^2=18.609$  ;  $C=.430$  ;  $df=12$  ;  $p<.098$ ). Victims belonging to middle age-group and having a better educational status, were having a higher income. However, it is difficult to generalise whether it is poverty or affluence which makes one vulnerable to violence or homicide.

## PSYCHOLOGICAL TRAITS

A consideration of psychological factors in crime or victimisation is doubtless important. More than a century ago Sigmund Freud highlighted different types of instincts. He postulated that *eros* (or life instinct) and *thanatos* (or death instinct) are an inseparable part of human psyche. Pre-dominance of the latter results in suicide or even in homicidal behaviour. May be, it is also linked with proneness to fall victim of crimes. A few psychologists have also attempted to link intelligence with criminal behaviour. Still others have examined criminal behaviour in relation to mental systems and diseases. Notwithstanding these psychological approaches, it may be asserted that motivational structures, pattern of attitudes, behavioural tendencies, life-goals and other personality factors have a direct bearing on an individual's thinking and behaviour. To a large extent, they determine whether a given individual could be a law-abiding citizen or otherwise. Likewise, they may also determine the extent to which he would be able to avoid involvement in conflicts and violence. A large number of studies are available to show that different categories of offenders have specific psychological traits, as also a few studies delineating psychological characteristics of the victims of different types of crime.

To investigate psychological characteristics of the victims of homicide is, however, an uphill task. Ascertaining psychological characteristic requires study, evaluation and testing for which subjects are simply unavailable. This is the case in the present context. Consequently, a second best procedure has been followed in the study. A few details have been picked up during the interviews with the next-of-kin.

It has already been reported that most of the victims were men, they were around 29 years of age, and nearly half of them were married. These aspects may have a bearing on the psychological make-up of the victim.

Besides, an attempt has been made to ascertain such dimensions like sociability, anxiety, introversion-extroversion and the like. The next-of-kin have been less than informed and unbiased in this regard. Resulting, the data

**Table 3.17 : Use of intoxicants by the victim (percentages)**

	Alcohol	Other drugs	Total
Bangalore (N=18)	98	6	100
Delhi (N=11)	100	—	100

are far from being dependable and their presentation is being deferred. To the extent of their reliability, the data suggest that the victims were having few psychological characteristics which would differentiate them from the general population.

The linkage between habit-forming drugs and criminal tendency has been a subject of much debate and research. Needless to add, the hypothesis is far from being settled. Nonetheless, it is worth exploring to find out whether victims of homicide were given to any intoxicant. Again the responses of the next-of-kin have been relied upon. However, only 13 per cent of them have supplied information with regard to the use of alcohol or other addictive drugs by the victims (see Table 3.17). In a limited way a few inter-city differences are visible. A few victims in Bangalore were habitually using intoxicants like cannabis and synthetic drugs. On the other hand, 94 per cent of the victims in Bangalore and all of them in Delhi were given to alcohol. However, due to the insufficiency of data and valid generalisation relating to the use of intoxicants and the process of victimization is difficult to make.

## VICTIM-OFFENDER RELATIONSHIP

It may be restated that in the occurrence of an offence both the crime-doer and the victim are involved in several ways and that in quite a few cases the victim wittingly or unwittingly would have himself contributed to the occurrence. Towards a systematic understanding of this phenomenon, a few offender characteristics as also the victim-offender interaction need to be analysed.

*The Offender :* It may be restated that homicide is not always a chance occurrence. More often than not, the crime-doer and the victim may have prior interaction or even may have known each other. This is what is brought out by the data presented in Table 3.18. The proportion of homicides perpetrated by strangers in Bangalore is quite large (35%). But such is not

**Table 3.18 : Victims relationship with the offenders (percentages).**

	Distant relatives	Near relative	Close relative	Friend	Neigh- bour	Stran- ger	Others	Total
Bangalore (N=51)	10	6	23	14	4	35	8	100
Delhi (N=67)	1	6	15	18	27	15	18	100

the case in Delhi (15%). On the other hand, in about 39 per cent of the cases in Bangalore, and in 22 per cent, in Delhi, relatives of the victims were the offenders. Likewise, in 35 per cent of the cases in Delhi, and in 18 per cent, in Bangalore, friends and neighbours were responsible for the dark deed. A few inter-city differences are discernible. In Bangalore, murders appear to be mostly the handiwork either of relatives (family feuds?) or of strangers, while, in Delhi, it is mostly that of friends and neighbours. This may be in part attributed to the level of urbanisation which spawns secondary relations.

It is not without interest to mention that most women-victims (40%) have died at the hands of close-relatives ( $X^2=20.868$ ;  $C=.388$ ;  $df=6$ ;  $p<.002$ ); that they (close relatives) have indulged in violence mostly (35%) singly ( $X^2=28.058$ ;  $C=.459$ ;  $df=10$ ;  $p<.061$ ); and that often times the close relatives have committed multiple murders ( $X^2=22.326$ ;  $C=.402$ ;  $df=6$ ;  $p<.001$ ). Should we focus our attention either on the categories of 'relatives' 'friends' and 'neighbours', the possibility resists elimination that the victims had only a passive role in the occurrence of the offence.

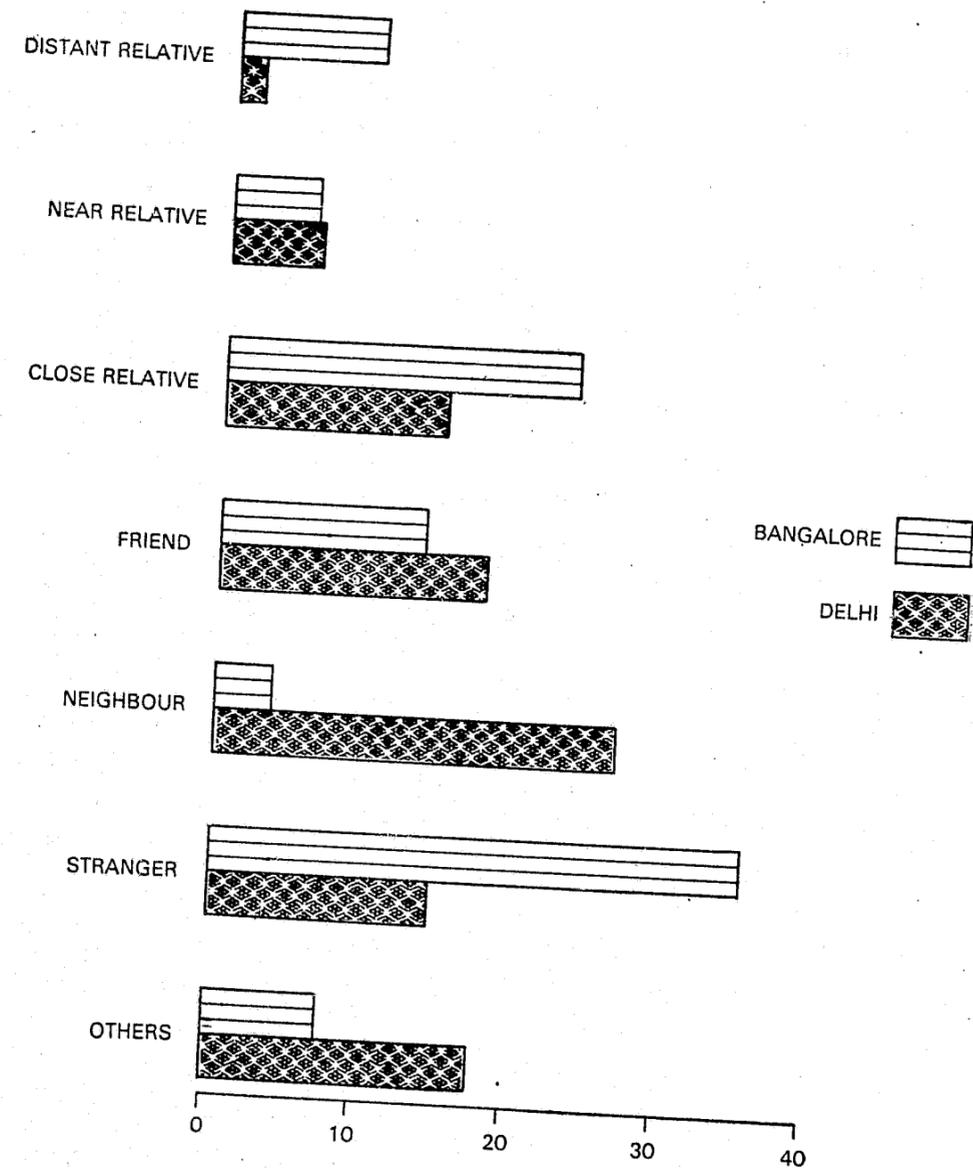
*Sex of the Offender*: Although the involvement of the women-folk in crime is small, it is not non-existent. The involvement of women in a heinous offence like homicide, though small, is very much there. In the cases of infanticide and in poisoning the food of husbands, the role of women-folk is often noted. What is the position in the present sample?

Table 3.19 : Sex of the offenders (percentages).

	Men	Women	Total
Bangalore (N=51)	94	6	100
Delhi (N=68)	96	4	100

Table 3.18 classifies offenders according to their sex, as reported by the next-of-kin. It is observed that most of the offenders were men and only in a limited number of cases women have committed the offence. The latter mostly include those who were involved in the murder of infants and children. This is further supported by the fact that 83 per cent of the women-offenders were responsible for the murder of close relatives ( $X^2=19.226$ ;  $C=.376$ ;  $P<.001$ ). The evidence is in the expected direction. The number of women-folk among the offenders is small and is mostly confined to killing youngsters and close relatives.

FIG. 3.02  
VICTIM-OFFENDER RELATIONSHIP.  
(Percentages)



**Age of the offender :** In the consideration of victim-offender relationship, the age of the latter is important. To assume an aggressive role, the offender has to have some edge over the victim at least in physical terms. This is

**Table 3.20 :** Age of the offenders (percentages).

	Below 20	20-29	30-39	40-49	50-59	60 and above	Total
Bangalore (N=44)	—	43	25	14	14	4	100
Delhi (N=58)	10	50	22	14	3	—	100

what is brought out by the data presented in Table 3.19. There are a few marked differences between two cities in terms of the age of the offender. The distribution of the data suggests that offenders in Bangalore were older in age than those in Delhi. This is also supported by the averages: It is 36.14 years (standard deviation=12.28) in Bangalore and 30.00 years (standard deviation =9.69) in Delhi. The age of the offender may gainfully be compared with the age of the victims (see Table 3.05). The victims have been noticeably younger in age (average, 27.81 years) than the offender.

**Number of offenders :** In passing attention may be turned to the number of assailants in homicides. To a limited extent, this may show whether a given homicide case was spontaneous or pre-meditated. A perusal of Table 3.20 would show that two-thirds of the homicide cases in Bangalore and two-fifths in Delhi were the handiwork of single assailants. In 55 per cent of the cases in Delhi 2 to 5 assailants were involved. On the other hand, in quite a few cases

**Table 3.21 :** Number of offenders in the homicide case (percentages).

	Single	2-5	6-8	9 and above	Total
Bangalore (N=49)	65	20	6	8	100
Delhi (N=58)	40	55	5	0	100

(8%) in Bangalore 9 or more persons were involved in the killing; perhaps these represent group feuds over property disputes. On the whole, the data suggest that in Delhi more offenders than one were involved in homicide cases (pre-meditated ?).

Further, the analysis of the data bring out that the homicide cases taking place in residential areas have been committed mostly by more than one offender ( $X^2=19.38$ ;  $C=.393$ ;  $df=12$ ;  $P<.079$ ). Likewise, murder over money and general enmity had been mostly committed by 2 to 5 assailants, and because of domestic quarrel, by single assailant ( $X^2=25.032$ ;  $C=.451$ ;  $df=50$ ;  $P<.049$ ). Few dependable trends are however discerned except the fact the homicide appears to be mostly a one-offender phenomenon.

**Motive behind murder :** A reference to this aspect has already been made in Chapter Two (Table 2.23). It has been found that general enmity and disputes involving money, property and illicit sex-relations have been the main reasons of homicide. The analysis of the data shows that the motive behind murder has some correspondence with the fear which the bereaved family has faced in the aftermath. It has been found that the 73 per cent of the families whose one member was or more were killed over money matters were having much fear and apprehension ( $X^2=13.809$ ;  $C=.351$ ;  $df=5$ ;  $P<.017$ ).

**Victim-Offender Interaction :** As has been argued earlier, few murders are the consequence of chance occurrence. In most cases victim and offender know each other and might have had a prior interaction. An understanding of these antecedents is important to a systematic analysis of victim-offender relationship (see Figure 3.02). The data presented in Table 3.22 are as interesting as they are revealing. In 85 per cent of the cases in Bangalore and in 58 per cent in Delhi the victim and the offender had an interaction with each other prior to the occurrence of the offence. It follows that they would have known each other for quite some time. Besides, the proportion of the victims having prior interaction with the offender is far greater in Bangalore

**Table 3.22 :** Prior interaction between the victim and offender (percentages)

	Yes	No	Total
Bangalore (N=48)	85	15	48
Delhi (N=60)	58	42	60

than in Delhi. To some extent, the data show that the possibility of chance-victimization is larger in Delhi than in Bangalore. It is further noticed that in the situation where victim and offender had prior interaction the offence has been mostly (56%) committed by a single assailant ( $X^2=47.819$ ;  $C=.576$ ;  $df=6$ ;  $P<.001$ ). On the whole, in quite a large number of cases the victims might themselves have a role in varying degrees.

The foregoing section outlines personal, social and psychological characteristics of the victims of homicide in Bangalore and Delhi. Pertinent aspects of victims-offender relationship have also been highlighted. These data and analyses may be helpful in understanding the crime-situation, the role of the victim in the crime and the problems which the bereaved families might be facing.

## Chapter 4

### The Next-of-Kin

To take away another person's life is the most violent act. The victim suffers and succumbs and furthermore, he leaves behind a relatively enduring trail of shock, misery and a plethora of problems for the next-of-kin. The family thus losing one of its members finds itself surrounded with social and psychological trauma. Moreso pathetic is often the condition of the family whose bread-winner is abruptly and violently removed from the scene. It faces unprecedented economic difficulties and undeserved want.

Pragmatic in approach, the present study is focused on the bereaved families involved in homicide cases. However, for operational reasons attention has been focused on a grown-up and responsible member of the bereaved family, termed the next-of-kin. Mostly a next-of-kin has been a close relative (wife, husband, father, mother, son, daughter, etc.). When close relatives have not been available near relatives (niece, nephew, cousin, uncle, etc.) were contacted. There were a few instances when only distant relatives by blood or marriage could be contacted. In one case, none of the relatives of the victim was available and, hence, a close friend of the victim was con-

**Table 4.01** : Relationship of the next-of-kin (interviewee) with the victim (percentages).

	Distant relative	Near relative	Close relative	Friend	Total
Bangalore (N=57)	2	9	90	—	100
Delhi (N=86)	1	1	97	1	100

tacted. Nevertheless, all these categories of relatives have been termed as the next-of-kin (see Table 4.01). They were interviewed so as to ascertain social and economic problems as also the psychological trauma which the bereaved family may have undergone following the death of the victim.

### SOCIAL BACKGROUND

There is no denying the fact that social background of the next-of-kin would be almost similar to that of the victim, discussed in the preceding section. Nonetheless, it may differ on several counts. Moreover, since most of the next-of-kin are grown-up and responsible members of the bereaved families, an examination of their social background may help in developing an understanding of the social problems the bereaved families may be facing.

**Sex :** During the course of data-collection, the dependents in the bereaved families were often insistent that they would talk in the presence

**Table 4.02 :** Sex of the next-of-kin (percentages).

	Men	Women	Total
Bangalore (N=57)	46	54	100
Delhi (N=86)	56	44	100

of a grown-up male member of the family ; or any information relating to the occurrence of the crime, would be supplied only by him. In quite a few cases timings of the interview had to be shifted because of such insistence. It is in this light that the data presented in Table 4.02 may be seen. It would be readily noticed that among the next-of-kin interviewed in Bangalore, there are more women than men. The reverse is true of Delhi. Apparently, women-folk in Bangalore are more forthcoming than those in Delhi.

**Age :** Since the research-design requires that adult and responsible next-of-kin should be interviewed as also the dependents in the bereaved

**Table 4.03 :** Age of the next-of-kin (percentages).

	Age (in years)						Total
	Below 20	20-29	30-39	40-49	50-59	60 and above	
Bangalore (N=57)	4	18	37	19	5	18	100
Delhi (N=86)	5	26	23	19	15	13	100

family were insistent on it, most of the next-of-kin have been persons of mature age (Table 4.03). In both the cities, only 5 per cent or less of them are below 20 years in age and the rest are older. As a matter of fact, most of them are around 40 years (average=40.07 years ; standard deviation=13.64). To some extent, the age-dimension of the informants ensures that they would have offered their considered opinion on the issues under investigation.

**Religion and Caste :** The religious affiliation of the next-of-kin was also examined (Table 4.04). Few of the next-of-kin are likely to differ in their

**Table 4.04 :** Religion of the next-of-kin (percentages)

	Christian	Hindu	Muslim	Sikh	Other	Total
Bangalore (N=57)	7	79	12	—	2	100
Delhi (N=86)	1	87	4	8	—	100

religious affiliation from that of the victim. Nonetheless, a few may. This is what is seen when the distribution presented in Table 4.04 as compared with those presented in Table 3.10. The distribution is similar. Perhaps, inter-religious marriages in the family groups of the victims were non-existent ; and perhaps sympathetic neighbours and friends of the victims are also from the same religious group. Is it also the case that the victim and the informants belong to the same caste-groups ? Relevant data are presented in Table 4.05. Again it is observed that only one-third of the next-of-kin in Bangalore belong to upper caste (Brahmin, Kshatriya, and Vaishya) ; as against this, their

**Table 4.05 :** Caste of the next-of-kin (percentages).

	Brahmin	Kshatriya	Vaishya	Kayastha	Backward class	Scheduled caste	Scheduled tribe	Total
Bangalore (N=24)	17	13	4	—	17	29	21	100
Delhi (N=75)	19	39	13	3	11	16	—	100

proportion in Delhi is nearly three-fourths. These data may be gainfully compared with those presented in Table 3.11. There is much in common in the distribution presented in the two tables. At the same time, there are also seen differences in the caste of the victim and that of the next-of-kin. Owing

to these differences in the caste-distribution, it may be inferred that, to some extent, inter-caste marriages in the victim family-group have been there and that friends and neighbours may at times include members of other caste groups as well.

**Education :** Similarities between the victim and the next-of-kin observed in the case of religious affiliation and caste are unlikely to persist in respect of the educational status of the two. Table 4.06 brings out the educational status of the next-of-kin. It would be seen that two out of every five

Table 4.06 : Educational status of the next-of-kin (percentages).

	Illit	Lit	MS/JHS	HSS/HS	Graduate	Post-Graduate	Total
Bangalore (N=57)	39	9	33	16	2	2	100
Delhi (N=86)	38	9	30	15	5	2	100

next-of-kin are illiterate and very few are matriculate or graduate. Likewise, inter-city differences are also negligible. These data may be compared with those presented in Table 3.12. It would not take long to observe that the literacy level among the next-of-kin is lower than what it was in the case of the victims. It can be partly explained by the fact that most of next-of-kin are women-folk among whom literacy is yet to catch up.

**Stay period :** The relationship between the period of stay in a locality and social stability of the individual and the family-group has been referred to earlier. The duration of stay of the next-of-kin in the area may also be examined (Table 4.07). It would be seen that both in Bangalore and Delhi a vast majority of the next-of-kin have been living in the same locality since their birth. Nonetheless, the duration of stay, on the whole, appears to be

Table 4.07 : Duration of stay of the next-of-kin (percentages).

	Less than One	1-5	6-10	11-15	Since birth	Total
Bangalore (N=57)	2	14	16	19	49	100
Delhi (N=86)	1	6	11	47	36	100

larger in Bangalore than in Delhi. Perhaps spatial mobility in Delhi is a shade higher than in Bangalore. This apart, a reference may be made to the duration of stay of the victims in the locality (see Table 3.07). A comparison of the two data-sets reveals that the duration of stay of the next-of-kin in the locality is markedly smaller than that of the victims. This is understandable. A large number of the victims were grown-ups and many of them were earning members who might have moved to the locality earlier than their dependents.

### ECONOMIC CONDITION

Whatever similarities between the victim and the next-of-kin, these end up with personal and social background. In terms of economic conditions, they are likely to differ markedly. Moreover, an examination of the economic condition of the bereaved family including that of the next-of-kin is likely to bring out the nature and extent of relief or compensation needed by them. Towards this, such aspects like occupation, income and liabilities may be explored.

**Occupation :** It would be recalled that most of the victims in Bangalore were engaged in the business and most of them in Delhi, in service (Table 3.15).

Table 4.08 : Occupational status of the next-of-kin (percentages).

	Student	Wage-earner	Business	Service (P)	Service (D)	Ser-vice (G)	House-wife	Total
Bangalore (N=53)	2	23	23	6	6	9	32	100
Delhi (N=79)	3	20	15	28	1	22	11	100

A similar occupational pattern is seen in respect of the next-of-kin (Table 4.08). For example, most of the next-of-kin in Bangalore are engaged in business (that is, excluding housewives) and, in contrast, in Delhi most of them are engaged in private, domestic or government service. Nevertheless, the proportion of non-workers (students, housewives) and that of the daily wage-earners among the next-of-kin should attract attention. The possibility cannot be ruled out that many in the latter group may be under-employed and may have been compelled to take up the work owing to the stringency of the circumstances.

**Income :** It can be hardly gainsaid that the income-level of the bereaved family including that of the next-of-kin is of utmost importance as

**Table 4.09 : Income of the next-of-kin (percentages).**

	Income (in rupees, per month)						Total
	Below 250	250-499	500-999	1000-1499	1500-1999	2000-above	
Bangalore (N=35)	51	23	14	3	6	3	100
Delhi (N=71)	16	38	30	10	4	3	100

far as the consideration of compensatory measure is concerned. The monthly income of the next-of-kin has been presented in Table 4.09. It may be noted that non-workers like students, housewives, numbering 37 have been precluded from the analysis. As nearly three-fourths of the next-of-kin in Bangalore and a little more than half of them in Delhi are having an income of less than Rs. 800, they do not appear to be economically worse off. The average income is also found to be Rs. 585.55. However, the distribution of the data is not much consistent (standard deviation=507.35). At the same time thoughts should go to the non-workers who have no income worth mentioning.

*Marital Status* . A discussion of economic resources including occupation and income would remain incomplete without paying attention to the liabilities; therefore, in a generalised way, the marital status and the number of dependents of the next-of-kin may be looked into. Table 4.10 presents their

**Table 4.10 : Marital status of the next-of-kin (Percentages).**

	Unmarried	Married	Widow/widower	Total
Bangalore (N=57)	7	68	25	100
Delhi (N=86)	4	67	29	100

marital status. A sizeable proportion of the next-of-kin has been classified as widow or widower. This stands in sharp contrast with the marital status of the victims reflected in Table 3.06. It is easy to conclude that many of the next-of-kin have lost their spouses as a consequence of the homicide. Many widows may be facing a variety of economic difficulties and many of the widowers would be finding their household thrown out of gear.

*Number of Dependents* : While on this theme a number of dependents of the next-of-kin may be ascertained (Table 4.11). In five cases, information

**Table 4.11 : Number of dependents of the next-of kin (percentages).**

	None	2-3	4-6	7-9	10 and above	Total
Bangalore (N=53)	24	41	15	15	4	100
Delhi (N=85)	6	20	55	16	2	100

could not be ascertained, and in quite a few cases the next-of-kin are having no dependents. On the other hand, a large proportion of them in Delhi are having many more dependents than those in Bangalore. Taken together, the next-of-kin are having 4 to 5 dependents (average=4.57; standard deviation =2.49). These data may be profitably compared with those presented in Table 3.14. For obvious reasons, the victims were having larger households than the next-of-kin. Nevertheless, the households losing their bread-winner would be facing many social and economic difficulties, in spite of smaller number of dependents.

### PSYCHOLOGICAL MILIEU

The occurrence of a crime including the offence of homicide is not an isolated phenomenon. If it has antecedents, it also has repercussions. Leaving aside the economic and social difficulties which the family losing one of its members faces, it may have its sense of security severely jolted. As a matter of fact, the repercussions of a homicide do not remain confined to the affected family, they may extend to the neighbourhood and at times to the entire village or city.

The concept of fear of crime has of late been taken to be a viable alternative of crime statistics. As a barometer of community-health, crime statistics have been often criticised. They suffer, it is argued, from several structural and operational limitations (Herbert, 1959; Cavan, 1960; Rao, 1981). Further, it is not the quantum of crimes but the impact they have on the general populace which matters (Cressey and Ward, 1969; Ford and Dejong, 1970; Khan and Krishna, 1982). In case the nature and extent of fear of crime in a geo-political unit is properly ascertained, it is likely to provide a better measure of its health.

In view of the above considerations an attempt has been made to ascertain the viewpoint and the feelings of the next-of kin.

*General fear :* It may be clarified that in the cases where offenders are strangers to their victims and the homicide is mostly a chance-occurrence, a bereaved family may not be much terrorised. Similar would not be the situation in those cases where offenders and victims had known each other or had interacted. During the course of data-collection, it was observed that many members in the bereaved family were afraid that the offender would return and harm others. Some of them reported that the relatives and friends of the offender have threatened them with further dire consequences. In one case, the offender himself, reportedly, threatened the members of the bereaved family that he would take to further vengeance as soon as he would come out from the jail. Quite a few offenders have been professionals. In one case in Bangalore, the offender threatened to set the house of the victim to fire, should the members testify against him in the court. Likewise in one case in Delhi, the collaborators of the offender demanded Rs. 10,000 failing which the life of other family members would be in jeopardy.

**Table 4.12 :** Fear among the family members after the incidence (percentages).

	Yes	No	Total
Bangalore (N=56)	54	46	100
Delhi (N=63)	52	48	100

In any case, the element of foreboding to the bereaved family would seldom be wholly absent. That many a bereaved family may put a bold face is another story. This is likely to happen when a homicide takes place following prolonged enmity or family feud. It may be added that the proportion of such cases in the present sample has not been small.

Are the bereaved families living under the shadow of fear in the aftermath? Table 4.12 presents the relevant data. In both the cities more than half of the next-of-kin have responded in the affirmative (see Table 4.12). Attention may be diverted to the other half. Reportedly, the family members have few apprehensions. A reference to Table 2.23 would readily show that in many cases property disputes, illicit sex-relations and domestic quarrels

were the main cause of murder. These are the cases which are less likely to leave behind a trail of fear. Keeping this in view, these data have been cross-tabulated with the motive behind murder. The distribution is significant ( $X^2=13.809$ ;  $df=5$ ;  $p<.017$ ); and the two variables show a good deal of association ( $C=.351$ ). It is found that in the cases of homicide committed because of money and property disputes, a larger proportion of the bereaved families were having fear.

To lose a family member is tragic and to continue to live in fear is traumatic. The families living in fear need the support which would alleviate their fears. In this direction neighbourhood, community as well as the criminal justice system can do much.

*Feelings towards the Offender :* Few crimes give rise to violence, vendatta, vengeance or reprisal more than homicide. In ancient and medieval times, a murder used to touch off family-fueds often transcending generations. So is the case even today in many traditional and tribal societies. To some extent, feelings of vengeance of the bereaved family, next-of-kin, relatives and friends are assuaged through the action taken by the state against the offender. They greatly reconcile if the offender is promptly arrested, expeditiously tried and suitably punished.

**Table 4.13 :** Feelings of the next-of-kin towards the offender and his family (percentages).

	Be imprisoned	Be hanged/ killed	Family be punished	Offender may not be punished	Total
Bangalore (N=35)	31	43	3	23	100
Delhi (N=12)	25	75	—	—	100

In view of the above it would be interesting to inquire into the feelings which the next-of-kin have towards the offender and his family. Their responses are shown in Table 4.13. In Bangalore, most of the next-of-kin (43%) feel that the offender should be hanged or killed. A few go to the extent to suggest that even the offender's family should also be punished. At the same time, there are about 23 per cent of them who appear to be much

element and suggest that the offender may not be punished. The position in Delhi, in contrast, is much straightforward. Three-fourths of the next-of-kin recommend that the offender should be hanged or killed and the remainder prescribed imprisonment. The data suggest that the next-of-kin in Bangalore are less vindictive in respect of the offender than those in Delhi.

Interestingly, few personal and family-related variables have shown correspondence with the feelings of the next-of-kin towards the offender. Nonetheless, the victim-offender relationship is found to be significant in this regard ( $X^2=19.143$  ;  $C=.551$  ;  $df=12$  ;  $p<.085$ ). It is observed that in those cases where the offender was a close relative of the victim or neighbour, the next-of-kin feel that the offender should be hanged or killed. On the other hand, in the case where the offender was the friend of the victim they have mostly suggested imprisonment.

From the standpoint of the next-of-kin and their feelings towards the offender, the issue of capital punishment is highlighted. No doubt, a majority of them recommends capital punishment, but some do not. As a matter of fact a few of them tend to exonerate the offender altogether. Perhaps in homicide cases it is not the severity but the certainty of the punishment which counts as far as the feelings of the bereaved are concerned.

*Role of the Police* : While discussing fear in the bereaved family, their feelings towards the offender and their opinion about the treatment to be meted out to him, a consideration of the role of the police in the mishap, is a logical corollary. The promptness with which the police reach the scene of crime, the way they approach the members of the bereaved family and the efficiency with which they investigate the case, would in no small way contribute in restoring the confidence of the bereaved in the criminal justice system and in the social organization.

**Table 4.14** : Satisfaction of the victims' next-of-kin with the police behaviour at the time of reporting murder (percentages).

	Very satisfied	Satisfied	No opinion	Dis-satisfied	Very dissatisfied	Total
Bangalore (N=55)	20	40	—	16	24	100
Delhi (N=71)	7	35	9	18	31	100

The view of the next-of-kin of the police behaviour at the time of the occurrence has been ascertained (Table 4.14). It is observed that 60 per cent of the next-of-kin in Bangalore were satisfied with the way the police handled the case. The proportion of the next-of-kin who are so satisfied is distinctly lower in Delhi (42%). These inter-city differences become more pronounced when dissatisfaction among the next-of-kin is examined. The proportion of dissatisfied next-of-kin in Delhi is 49 per cent as compared with 40 per cent in Bangalore. Apparently, the police in Bangalore are more understanding and efficient ; or, alternatively, the public in Delhi is more exacting in their demands on the police.

The analysis suggests that the view of the police behaviour tends to vary with a few personal factors of the next-of-kin. For example, sex shows a mild correspondence ( $X^2=9.360$  ;  $C=.249$  ;  $df=4$  ;  $p<.078$ ). About 58 per cent of the women next-of-kin have showed satisfaction with the police behaviour. In this respect age is also important ( $X^2=28.576$  ;  $C=.430$  ;  $df=20$  ;  $p<.096$ ). The analysis shows that the young (age group : below 20 and 30-39 years) are mostly satisfied ; and most of those next-of-kin belonging to the age group of 20-29 years (56%) are dissatisfied. It would be justifiable to infer that the next-of-kin who are men and mature in age (20-29 years) are more critical of the police than others.

To sum up, social background, economic condition and the opinion of the next-of-kin have been analysed. This combined with the discussion on the victim in Chapter Three should provide a helpful background to the understanding of the need and availability of relief and compensation to the bereaved families in homicide cases.

## Chapter 5

# Compensation

The idea of compensation to victims of crime springs from the very contractual nature of relationship between the individual and society. As part of the social organization, the individual has submitted himself to social norms and practices. It implies, in turn, that social organization has an obligation to free him from the fear of crime, protect his interests and enable him to exploit his talents to the maximum. Indeed, these goals are very much pursued and they form the bedrock of a welfare society. Nonetheless, owing to a host of intertwined reasons, crimes do occur signifying in varying degrees a failure of measures of social control, in particular, and social organization, in general. Inasmuch as society reacts to crime, it has a concurrent responsibility to the victims.

Towards explaining crime, conventionally, numerous political, economic and social factors are brought up. The point which is often missed is that the victim of a crime has no control over these factors; yet it is he who bears the brunt of the criminal occurrence. At the same time, crime-victimization in temporary times has become a common risk of life. It follows that society needs to assume the responsibility not only of bringing the crime-doer to book but also of providing relief to the crime-victim. In other words, the State should underwrite risks posed by the crime-problem so as to protect and promote the interests of the individual.

Compensation to crime-victims is important from yet another angle. By skipping this measure, society or state is unlikely to effect a financial saving. In the long run, however, many victims or their dependents owing to adverse circumstances may take to anti-social or anti-legal path which indeed would attract the attention of the criminal justice system. This would inevitably involve may indirect and direct costs which presumably would far exceed the amount of compensation that could have been provided initially.

Some note-worthy progress has been made in this area in several Western countries. New Zealand initiated a scheme in 1963, followed by UK, in 1964, and Australia, in 1967. In this the United States of America has not lagged behind. 29 of its federating States have introduced such schemes.

This is not to say that the countries which have schemes for providing compensation to victims of crime, do so in respect of all and sundry crimes. They are and have to be necessarily selective. In this connection, the guidelines generally followed are :

- (a) Compensation is payable to the persons with personal injury resulting from crime, but crime against property is not compensable (except few States in the USA).
- (b) Generally no compensation can be claimed unless the injury results from an act specifically violative of the penal law.
- (c) Victims of inter-familial crimes are not compensable. (A notable exception is the UK where legislation took effect from October 1, 1979 to make such offences also compensable under certain conditions).
- (d) Victims who initiate or provoke the criminal assault resulting in their victimization are precluded.
- (e) Offences arising from gang warfare not compensable.
- (f) Trivial injuries are usually ignored. For example, the United Kingdom requires a loss of three week's earnings and the states of New York, two weeks earnings for the admissibility of an injury or assault case for compensation purposes.
- (g) The criteria for determining the amount of compensation, of course, varies from country to country so is the case with the amount of compensation.

The idea of compensation to victims of crime is not all that alien to the Indian social context. The Constitution provides : "The state shall, within the limits of its economic capacity and development, make effective provision for securing the right to work, to education and to public assistance in case of unemployment, old age, sickness and disablement, and in other cases of undeserved want" (Article 41). Needless to add, victims of crime in a

number of cases are exposed to undeserved want and even privation. Are they compensated? Apparently, modern criminal law is designed to punish as well as reform the criminal whereas the victim of crime and the problems surrounding him are almost totally overlooked.

There are, however, a few legal provisions which may be brought under discussion. Under Section 357 of the Criminal procedure Code, courts are empowered to pay compensation to the victims of the crime out of the fine imposed by the court on the offender. The court-discretion is that a part or the whole of the amount of the fine may be passed on to the victim. Likewise, under Section 359 of the CrPC, when any complaint of a non-cognizable offence is made, the court may on conviction of the accused order him to pay to the complainant, in whole or in part, the cost incurred by him in prosecution in addition to the penalty imposed upon him. In passing, a mention may be made of Section 110-E of the Motor Vehicle Act, 1939. It provides for the award of compensation to the injured or to the next-of-kin of the deceased. On the whole, it is doubtless that these legislative measures add too much as far as the compensation to victims of crime, in general, and to the next-of-kin in homicide cases, in particular, are concerned.

Keeping the above issues in view, the present section of the report attempts to look into the relief, assistance or compensation made available to the next-of-kin in homicide cases in the two cities. Indeed, many bereaved families would be least interested in financial assistance by the community, voluntary agencies or government since the traumatic effect of the offence overshadows every aspect of it. Yet, many of them would be in economic straight-jacket. For them, community help, payment by insurance companies, indirect assistance and, of course, compensation from government, would be more than welcome. These are some of the aspects which are proposed to be dealt with here.

#### HARDSHIP OF THE FAMILY

Doubtless, the abrupt removal of the family member from the scene leaves a void and a trail of misery. While social and psychological trauma in the bereaved family would be there in all the cases of homicide, economic difficulties may vary, depending upon the sex, age, education and occupation of the deceased. To illustrate the point, economic loss to the bereaved family would be negligible if the victim happened to be an infant or aged. On the other hand, these difficulties would be pervasive if the victims were the bread-winner. Needless to add, such families rate a priority consideration by way of relief, assistance or compensation. With this in view, the position of the bereaved families in the present sample may be examined.

**Table 5.01** : Response of the next-of-kin to the question "Did the victim's family face hardship?" (percentages).

	Yes	No	Total
Bangalore (N=58)	97	2	100
Delhi (N=58)	74	26	100

Table 5.01 brings out the responses of the next-of-kin to the question, "Did the victim's family face hardship"? Many of the next-of-kin have not expressed their opinion on the subject. Besides, inter-city differences are clear. In Bangalore 97 per cent of the respondents as against 74 per cent in Delhi report that bereaved family is facing economic hardship. Apparently, every loss of human life is an economic loss, as well. This is what is also supported by the opinion of the intelligentsia contacted in the present study. A vast majority feels in like terms. However quite a few add that economic hardship would be imminent only in those cases where the victim was a bread-winner in the family. At the same time, many informants have also emphasised on psychological trauma, emotional setback, sense of insecurity and the like. A few mentioned that if the victim was following dubious pursuits (as often in the casé) then, for the family, it may be a matter of regret and loss of face, as well.

To some extent, hardship faced by the bereaved family is found related to the victim's income ( $X^2=7.133$ ;  $C=.302$ ;  $df=3$ ;  $p<.068$ ). In any case, the trend is that the families of those victims who had lower income (Rs. 250-499 per month) are facing more acute hardship than others. These are the families, who to a limited extent, have been helped by the community

**Table 5.02** : Response of the next-of-kin to the question "Who is looking after the victim's family?" (percentages).

	Distant relatives	Near relatives	Close relatives	No body particular	Total
Bangalore (N=49)	2	2	82	14	100
Delhi (N=49)	—	2	88	10	100

( $\chi^2=10.376$  ;  $C=.303$  ;  $df=2$  ;  $p<.006$ ). Nevertheless, in most of the cases, the mode of help has been that friends and relatives have stayed with the bereaved family ( $\chi^2=8.000$  ;  $C=.707$  ;  $df=4$  ;  $p<.092$ ). Ignoring inter-city differences, the data suggest that most of the bereaved families, as a consequence of homicide have faced economic difficulties. This angle deserves closer scrutiny.

Table 5.02 brings out the information as to who is looking after the victim's family after his death. In a sizeable number of cases the issue of substitute head of the household did not arise : the victim was neither an adult nor head of the household. Of the remainder, in an overwhelming majority of cases the bereaved family is being looked after by near and close relatives. Only in one case in Bangalore, it is being looked after by distant relatives. It must be, however, noted that in a sizeable proportion of cases (14% in Bangalore and 10% in Delhi), there is nobody in particular looking after the bereaved family. It could readily be observed that these are the family-groups which might be in the throes of a variety of social and economic difficulties and that these are the family groups which deserve priority attention in any scheme designed to provide relief or assistance. As this dimension does not correspond with any personal, economic or crime-related variable, perhaps they need to be studied case by case for the purposes of providing relief.

#### COMMUNITY HELP

In the Indian sociocultural context, the extensity and intensity of interpersonal relationship has been often emphasised (Prabhu; 1954). Religious and myriad faiths are millenia-old. More often than not, these underline mutual help and charity. Above all, the caste-system has been a hallmark of the Indian society and much affinity, understanding and mutual give-and-take within caste-groups have been reported (Ghurye, 1968). In this regard a mention may also be made to the institution of joint-family system (Karve, 1953). Although the system particularly in urban areas is on the wane, its

**Table 5.03 :** Help received by the victim's family from his relatives/ friends (percentages).

	Yes	No	Total
Bangalore (N=57)	12	88	100
Delhi (N=48)	6	94	100

tradition of mutual help may not be wholly extinct. Likewise, several denominational as also secular voluntary organizations have been functioning for decades. They may be having the resources to provide relief to the needy. What has been the position in the present context ?

On going through Table 5.03, it would be seen that only in a limited number of cases, help from friends and relatives has been available to the victim's family. Bangalore in this respect appears to be somewhat better off than Delhi. May be life in Delhi is a little more impersonal. Although the data are too small to be cross-tabulated, there is a mild trend that most of the families who have been assisted by relatives and friends belong to the lower income groups.

**Table 5.04 :** Mode of help received by the victim's family (percentages).

	Food/ grains	Clothes	Loan	Stayed at home to help	Other forms of help	Total
Bangalore (N=7)	14	14	14	14	43	100
Delhi (N=1)	—	—	—	—	100	100

It would not be without interest to examine the mode of help received by the victim's family from relatives and friends. In a few cases where such help has been available, it has been mainly in the form of food grains, clothes, loan, etc. (see Table 5.04). Mode of help in the form of foodgrain or clothes in relation to better-off family groups appears to be ridiculous ; but it may not be so ridiculous in the context of the families belonging to low socioeconomic strata.

That community participation in the distress-situation faced by the bereaved families has been negligible, is decisively brought out by the foregoing data. It appears that social bonds forged by religious affiliation, caste or joint-family system are getting outweighed by economic stringency or by the process of modernization. What is more, voluntary organisations, find little concern in the sufferings of the bereaved families.

## INSURANCE

The modern economic system has brought into being an important innovation : insurance. Based on the principle of mathematical justice, it cushions the shock by distributing the economic loss over a multitude of points. As is well known, insurance corporations now-a-days offer general insurance, group insurance, endowment and life insurance policies. Whatever the form, insurance policies have a pivotal role in enabling the individual or the group to tide over crises including the murder of a family-member. A moot question however is how the insurance habit has percolated to the lower income groups.

**Table 5.05 : Life Insurance Policy held by the victim (percentages).**

	Yes	No	Total
Bangalore (N=57)	7	93	100
Delhi (N=50)	12	88	100

**Table 5.06 : The amount of LIC-policy held by the victim (percentages).**

	Amount (in rupees)				Total
	Less than 1000	1001- 5000	5001- 10000	10001- 15000	
Bangalore (N=4)	—	75	—	25	100
Delhi (N=6)	17	67	17	—	100

A reference to table 5.05 would show that only a very small number of victims had taken out insurance covers. Both in Bangalore and in Delhi more than 90 per cent of the victims were uninsured. It is easy to suggest that the bereaved families of these uninsured victims do not have even insurance to turn to.

The information relating to insurance may be further probed. The amount for which the victims were insured may be examined (see Table 5.06). Only in respect of 4 cases in Bangalore and 6 cases in Delhi, the necessary

information has been available. While the average insurance-amount for Bangalore is found to be Rs. 5,375, it is only Rs. 2,833 in Delhi. The overall average is Rs. 4,150. It would not take long to see that, in relation to current price level, the insurance-amount does not add up too much. Nevertheless, the bereaved families in these cases have at least something to fall back upon. Perhaps there is an urgent need to popularise the idea of insurance among the masses.

## INDIRECT MEANS

In many instances, the situation of a bereaved family would be little better than that of a drowning man, and they would be more than willing to catch on straws. Similarly, small measures like the exemption from the payment of tuition-fee of the school-going children, to many of them mean much. Looking to the labour-situation in the country, a provision of employment to a grown-up member in the bereaved family, is regarded as an important means of providing relief. Notwithstanding the inadequacy or the superficiality of these measures, their durability may not be overlooked. Small as they are, they may instill a sense of self-reliance in the needy families. The availability of these means has been examined in the present context.

**Table 5.07 : Freeship/Scholarship allowed to the children (percentages).**

	Yes	No	Total
Bangalore (N=31)	—	100	100
Delhi (N=32)	6	94	100

In quite a few cases the bereaved families were not having school-going children, they were not sending them to school, or the next-of-kin was unaware. Only in about half the cases in Bangalore and in less than one-third of the cases in Delhi, information in this regard is available (see Table 5.07). In respect of Bangalore, the data are categorical : none of the children from bereaved families have been granted freeship or scholarship. The position in Delhi is not much different : only in two cases such a concession has been made available. It may well be kept in mind that tuition-fee is only a part of the expenditure involved in schooling ; nevertheless, even this small measure has been unavailable to the majority of the bereaved families.

**Table 5.08 : Employment provided to the bereaved dependent (percentages).**

	Yes	No	Total
Bangalore (N=48)	—	100	100
Delhi (N=27)	15	85	100

Next, attention may be turned to the provision of employment to a grown-up member in the bereaved family on compassionate grounds. Table 5.08 brings out a less than encouraging position. Most of the next-of-kin have not provided information, mostly because they had rarely thought along this line. According to the information supplied by them none of the dependents in the bereaved families in Bangalore has been provided this kind of support. In only six cases it has been possible in Delhi; and this has been possible only in those cases where the victim was a government employee. Why is it that this practice has not been vigorously activated by the government, that private employers have not come forward, and that employment-exchanges do not have an appropriate policy, in this regard?

As would be expected the jobs provided to the dependents in the bereaved families have been small. The break down of the data indicates that in two cases in Delhi the jobs have been on the basis of daily wages, in one case a temporary job, and only in two cases the dependents could lend small but permanent jobs. This could not be otherwise, as the employment is provided on compassionate grounds. This apart, the data indicate that at times, considerable lapse of time has been there between the occurrence and provision of alternative employment. Furthermore, the coverage of this relief is desparingly small.

#### GOVERNMENT ASSISTANCE

At the outset, a few terms like damages, restitution and Compensation may be clarified. Damages are claimed mostly in civil disputes. They are adjudicated in civil courts, although related criminal proceedings may provide direct or indirect support to the claim. Restitution is commonly understood as the payment in cash or kind exacted from the offender(s). Common in ancient and medieval times, it continues in one form or another, even to this day. It is mostly sanctioned by a criminal court. Payment made to the

victim under Section 357 and 359 of the CrPC may be regarded as restitution. On the other hand, compensation is social assistance. It is a state responsibility and, often times, is independent of the conviction of the offender in a court or his capacity of pay. In this section, the focus is on the last mentioned.

**Table 5.09 : Assistance from the government to the victim's family (percentages).**

	Yes	No	Total
Bangalore (N=56)	13	87	100
Delhi (N=43)	12	88	100

On going through Table 5.09 it would be readily seen that in very few cases bereaved families have received assistance from the government. This has been possible only in seven cases in Bangalore and in five cases in Delhi. In this, Bangalore outstrips Delhi: not only have a larger number of families in Bangalore received government assistance than those in Delhi, but also the proportion would be much larger since the sample-size in Bangalore is small. Perhaps the Government of Karnataka is much alive to the problem of undeserved want faced by the bereaved families.

Has the government assistance been in kind or cash? Although the presentation is deferred, the data show that it was mostly in cash. Only in one case in Delhi, the bereaved family has been offered foodgrains and clothing. Perhaps there is a large scope for devising programmes like "Food for Work".

**Table 5.10 : The amount of cash-assistance from the government (percentages).**

	Amount (in rupees)					Total
	Less than 500	501-1000	1001-4000	4001-5000	5001 and above	
Bangalore (N=6)	33	17	—	33	17	100
Delhi (N=2)	—	—	—	50	50	100

An attempt has also been made to ascertain the extent of cash assistance received by the few victims' families (see Table 5.10). It would be observed that the quantum of cash assistance has been larger in Delhi (average, Rs. 5,000) than in Bangalore (average, Rs. 2,625). On the whole the bereaved families in the two cities have received cash assistance from the government around Rs. 4,468, each. Again, the amount of assistance is small and more so, the coverage is still smaller. This is how the beneficiaries also feel.

A pointed reference may be made to the official procedure involved in securing government assistance. Notwithstanding the trauma which the dependents in the bereaved family may be facing, they are required, if found eligible for relief, to fill up numerous proformae. Instances have been reported by the next-of-kin when they were required to call on concerned departments more than once. Taken together, there appears to be much scope for simplifying these procedures.

#### VIEWPOINTS

It would not be out of place to ascertain the point of view of the next-of-kin in relation to compensation and other issues. Most certainly this kind of exercise would not be of any avail to them or to the bereaved families which have been studied. Nevertheless, an elucidation of these issues may help in working out of a policy.

**Table 5.11 :** Response of the next-of-kin to the question "Who should take up the responsibility to compensate the loss caused by the victim's death ? (percentages).

	Murderer	Government	Others	Total
Bangalore (N=25)	6	92	2	100
Delhi (N=25)	12	84	4	100

The opinion of the next-of-kin has been ascertained as to whom should be responsible for providing relief to the victim's family (Table 5.11). The bulk of the next-of-kin have shown their inability to express their opinion, in this regard. Of the remaining, most of them, both in Bangalore and Delhi, favour the idea that government should assume this responsibility. Nonethe-

less, there are quite a few who feel that murderer should be responsible. The proportion of the next-of-kin holding the offender responsible for compensation (restitution ?) is larger in Delhi than in Bangalore.

The compensation-restitution dichotomy is not fully elucidated by the data presented above. Further, there are a number of criminologists who feel that the issue of compensation should not be wholly delinked from the responsibility of the offender (Schafer, 1975). An attempt therefore has been made to ascertain the point of view of the next-of-kin (see Table 5.12). Among those who have expressed their opinion, 36 per cent of them in Bangalore and 13 per cent of them in Delhi feel that the offenders should be compelled to pay restitution. A majority of them, however, feel otherwise. Perhaps their opinion is influenced by the financial background of the offender. Nevertheless, a fairly sizeable section of the next-of-kin do underline restitution. Possibly in appropriate cases the offender should not be only convicted, and penalised but he should also be made to pay restitution to the dependents. This contention is further reinforced from the opinion expressed by the intelligentsia approached in the present work. This calls for a review of the legal system so as to build an appropriate mechanism into the substantive and procedural law.

**Table 5.12 :** Response of the next-of-kin to the question "Should the offender be compelled to pay restitution to the victim's family ?" (percentages).

	Yes	No	Total
Bangalore (N=47)	36	64	100
Delhi (N=37)	13	86	100

**Table 5.13 :** Opinion of the next-of-kin about the mode of restitution to the victim's family (percentages).

	By sharing his income	By doing physical work for the family	Others	Total
Bangalore (N=16)	56	37	6	100
Delhi (N=5)	40	60	—	100

**CONTINUED**

**1 OF 2**

It may not be a diversion to ascertain the opinion of the next-of-kin about the mode of restitution. A perusal of Table 5.13 would show that the majority of the next-of-kin in Bangalore favour lump sum or periodical cash payment and, in contrast the majority in Delhi recommend physical work. Apparently, the labour problem in Delhi is more acute than in Bangalore.

It may be restated that the need for compensation as differentiated from restitution is not all grasping. In many cases involving the death of an infant, child or aged, the issue of compensation may not be important. It may be so where the victim happens to be a grown-up adult and, more so, when he/she was a bread-winner. Then, what should be the criteria for the grant of compensation and its quantum? In the opinion of the intelligentsia, the criteria adopted by the Claims Tribunals (Section 110 of the Motor Vehicles Act) may be applied. A few have also suggested the adoption of guidelines adhered to by the insurance-agencies. It may be added that most of these criteria include such considerations like the age, sex, education, occupation and income of the victim.

**Table 5.14 :** Opinion of the next-of-kin about the criteria for deciding the quantum of compensation (percentages).

	Economic status of the family	Size of the family	Others	Total
Bangalore (N=46)	86	12	2	100
Delhi (N=27)	70	30	—	100

In relation of the above, the opinion of the next-of-kin has also been ascertained. An examination of Table 5.14 would show that a sizeable section of the next-of-kin has not expressed its opinion. This aside, an overwhelming majority of the next-of-kin, in both the cities, emphasizes on the economic status of the bereaved family as the main criterion in deciding the quantum of compensation. Nonetheless, about 20 per cent of the victims underline the size of the bereaved family (or the needs of the family). It may be pointed out that the two criteria, economic status of family and the size of the family, are not necessarily exclusive. Apparently, the economic needs of the bereaved family should be the criterion in matters relating to compensation.

As at present compensation, if any, has been made available to the bereaved families by the government. Few voluntary organizations have come forward. This is what is also brought out by the opinion offered by the intelligentsia. The majority of them is not even aware of any organization which is concerned with such work. Next, compensation, if any, is granted by and is secured through the court. In view of the workload and preoccupations of the court it is relevant to ask whether the work and the responsibility should continue to rest with the court, or else, it should be passed on to others.

**Table 5.15 :** Response of the next-of-kin to the question "Who should decide about the compensation?" (percentages).

	Revenue Officers	Police Officers	Judicial Officers	Bereaved dependents	Special Compensation Board	Total
Bangalore (N=55)	2	47	47	4	—	100
Delhi (N=9)	—	22	11	11	56	100

In the opinion of the intelligentsia, an appraisal committee comprising professionals like doctors, lawyers, psychologists and social workers need to be set up to shoulder the responsibility of deciding and administering compensation to the bereaved families of the victims of homicide. Others suggest voluntary organizations, in this regard. A few also suggest that organizations like the Institute of Criminology and Forensic Science should be entrusted with the task, because it would combine a relief-scheme with a research programme.

In this respect, the opinion of the next-of-kin has also been looked into (see Table 5.15). In Bangalore most of them suggest that judicial officers and police officers should decide the issue of compensation. In sharp contrast, most of them in Delhi (56%) favour the organization of a Special Compensation Board. The next preference is for the police (22%). It is worth noting that only one respondent suggests judicial officers (or courts). Perhaps court working in the capital city is not held in high esteem. Be that as it may, the issue of having special compensation boards at least in Delhi deserves a priority consideration.

The foregoing account deals with the pertinent aspects of relief, assistance and compensation which have been made available to the dependents of the victim of homicide. It is apparent that society has acquitted

itself of its duty less than satisfactorily. In an overwhelming majority of the cases the dependents have been left to fend for themselves. Among other things this position is incongruent without democratic ideas. "Democracy", observes Radhakrishnan, "has two essential pillars on which it stands— political liberty and economic security. If there is no economic security political liberty becomes a meaningless obstruction. If men are in the stress they do not bother about civil liberty and civil rights. What they want are food, cloth and shelter. These are the needs which a Welfare State has to provide for all those who belong to this country."

## Chapter 6

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### Conclusions

#### I

While homicide represents the oldest and most serious offence, the attention paid to its victims has been far from being adequate. Crime and victimisation are the obverse and reverse of an occurrence like homicide. Without having a systematic assessment of the role played both by the crime-doer and the victim, its reality could seldom be properly understood. Humanitarian, democratic and welfare considerations in a Welfare State call for sympathetic attention to the plight of the victims and of their dependents in the aftermath of serious offences. For several reasons, it is imprudent to leave them to their own devices. Nonetheless, in many developing and even in some developed countries, scant attention has been paid to this aspect.

Motivated by these considerations the present study is focused on two urban centres—Bangalore and Delhi. It has delved into the crime situation obtaining in the two cities. First-hand information has been collected from 143 next-of-kin of the homicide victims. This has helped in piecing together a sociopsychological profile of the victims of homicide and in securing an assessment of the trauma and economic loss faced by the bereaved families in the aftermath of the offence. The information gathered from the next-of-kin has also been supplemented with the opinion gathered from a cross-section of the intelligentsia so as to highlight the nature and extent of assistance, relief and compensation available to the bereaved families.

#### II

It is found that the two urban centres stand apart in several demographic aspects. For example, Delhi is more urban than Bangalore. It has a denser population and more men than women. Besides, the population is younger, better educated and predominantly engaged in salaried jobs. Delhi is also much better policed than Bangalore.

In both the cities, the volume of crime is showing an upward trend. So is the case with the offence of homicide. However, the rate of homicide appears to be faster in Bangalore than in Delhi. Besides, homicide appears to be one-man phenomenon : mostly single assailants and single victims are involved. The offence occurs mostly during sun-down and sun-up. There appears to be a diabolical nexus between the dark deed and dark hours. Sharp-edged instruments are mostly the weapons used for perpetrating the offence. The information gathered does not suggest that homicides are prompted by specific reasons. In most cases the offence is committed for no better reason than general enmity. These aspects are further supported by the first-hand information collected during the course of the present study.

Involvement of women-folk in the offence of homicide as victims is distinctly small. In less than one-third of the cases the victim was a women. In these cases they were mostly young in age, perhaps students and working girls. It may be noted that in a sizeable number of cases housewives were also done to death. Most of the victims were young, below 30 years in age and married. They were not strangers to their residential area. Since most of them had been in the locality for 13-14 years, they could hardly be regarded as belonging to a floating population.

In spite of marginal differences, the religion of the victim does not appear to be important. Falling victim to homicide is not peculiar to any religious group. On the other hand the caste factor is significant particularly in relation to Bangalore. To some extent, the victims are over-represented in the categories of scheduled castes and scheduled tribes. Such is not the case with Delhi. Perhaps the capital city is more cosmopolitan in character. There are seen quite a few notable differences in terms of literacy. General literacy is a shade higher in Bangalore but, in terms of higher education, Delhi appears to be better off. Most of the victims were from large family-groups with 5-7 members in the household. It follows that these family-groups in the aftermath are likely to face the difficulty to support themselves particularly when the victim happened to be the bread-winner. This is further supported by the fact that most of the victims belonged to lower and middle income-groups, their average monthly income ranging between Rs. 300-500. The significance of the psychological characteristics of the victims can hardly be overemphasised. However, it is difficult to operationalise for the simple reason that the subjects themselves are unavailable. The attempt to assess this dimension from the next-of-kin proved less than rewarding. In a limited way, the data suggest that quite a few victims in both the cities were given to alcoholic beverages. Nonetheless, it is difficult to generalise that in their psychological make-up the victims were having any distinctive characteristics.

The information relating to victim-offender relationship is as interesting as it is revealing. A sizeable proportion of the victims in both the cities died at the hands of distant, near or close relatives. Similarly, friends and neighbours were also there as offenders. To some extent, the phenomena of wife-burning and child-bashing are also highlighted. This aside, most of the offenders were around 28 years in age and married. In a few cases, in which women were the offender, the victims were invariably close relatives. As regards the motives behind the offence, the data are not specific. More often than not, general enmity was the main reason. In a situation where offenders and victims are mostly relatives, neighbours or friends, there is even otherwise little chance that motives could be specific or better than general enmity. That in many cases the victims might have a role in the offence, is indicated by the foregoing. This is further reinforced by the fact that 88 per cent of the victims in Bangalore and 58 per cent in Delhi had prior interaction with the offender. It may be added that in many cases the victims themselves might have contributed or even provoked the offence.

With a view to ascertaining the condition obtaining in the family in the post-offence period, attention has been paid on the next-of-kin. Most of them are men, around 40 years in age. Although the religious affiliation is similar to that of the victims, many of the next-of-kin belong to different caste. Notably, their general educational level is lower than that of the victim. They also differ in their occupational pattern and many of them are housewives. Understandably, many among them are widows or widowers. Although the size of the household is smaller than that of the victims (one member removed from the scene), quite a few of them, particularly those who have lost the bread-winner, face economic hardship.

Reportedly, many bereaved families have been living in fear. In a few cases they have been even threatened by the offenders or their coterie. In any case, in a large number of cases, apprehension and fear have constantly loomed large on the bereaved families. Interestingly enough, all the next-of-kin are not of the view that the offender should be awarded capital punishment. In this, Bangalore scores over Delhi. Even, 23 per cent of the next-of-kin in Bangalore feel that the offender should not be punished.

In neutralising the fear syndrome the police doubtless have a keyrole. The promptness with which they arrive on the scene of crime, and the efficiency with which they conduct the inquiry in the locality, arrest the offender and prosecute him—all are important in this regard. The next-of-kin however are not wholly satisfied with the police-conduct. About 40 per cent of them in Bangalore and about 49 per cent in Delhi are dissatisfied. Perhaps the police-working in both the cities, particularly in Delhi, calls for a review.

It is hardly surprising to find that an overwhelming majority of the bereaved families in the two cities face hardship. The loss of a member in the family is bound to give rise to numerous problems, including economic difficulties. However, what should attract a pointed attention is the fact that in the case of 14 per cent of the bereaved families in Bangalore and about 10 per cent in Delhi, there is nobody in particular to look after them. The victim was the bread-winner and relatives and friends have cut corners and the families are left to fend for themselves. Notwithstanding the tradition of mutual help, few individuals or voluntary organisations have come forward to the rescue of the needy families. In a few cases, relatives or friends have stayed with the bereaved families perhaps to console. In fewer still cases, they have offered small amounts of money and material to assist them. It is easy to infer that the community-help to the needy families has been but nominal.

Insurance is another avenue from which the bereaved families could have drawn some relief. However, insurance does not appear to have caught popular imagination: only 10 per cent of the victims were carrying insurance cover of varying amounts (average, Rs 4,150). So has been the case with indirect means like exemption from the payment of tuition-fees of the school-going children in the family or the provision of employment to a grown-up member in the family. These have been extremely limited. Only in two cases the bereaved families have availed the concession of free tuition; and only in six cases they have been provided employment on compassionate grounds. In respect of employment, this has been possible only in six cases where the victim was a government-employee. Further, these measures have been totally unavailable in Bangalore.

In both the cities, government-assistance to the bereaved families has been available but in a very limited number of cases. It is found that such assistance has been received by the bereaved families in seven cases in Bangalore and in five cases in Delhi. Mostly in the form of lump sum. The amount has been indeed small (average Rs. 4,468 each). This appears to be particularly inadequate in respect of Delhi.

A vast majority of the next-of-kin favour the idea that government should shoulder the responsibility to compensate the loss caused by the victim's death. Nevertheless, quite a few of them also concur with the idea of restitution to be exacted from the offender. They feel that the economic needs of the bereaved families should be the main criterion in deciding the quantum of compensation to the bereaved. Quite a few of them particularly those in Delhi think that the responsibility for deciding compensation should be passed on to agencies other than judicial officers. The style of working of courts and the inordinate delays may have something to do with this opinion-pattern.

## III

The present study highlights the linkage between urbanization and crime. Crime, including homicide, is increasing. However it would be hasty to generalise that urbanization and development necessarily accelerate crime. Perhaps it is not development but unplanned development which stimulates anti-social or anti-legal behaviour. Thus the need for planned development including planned urbanization is underscored.

The two cities, namely Bangalore and Delhi, differ in terms of geographical and demographic factors. However the differences between the two tend to fade when the nature and extent of the offence of homicide are examined. Possibly they share human virtues and vices equally.

In a generalised way, homicide appears to be mostly a spontaneous offence.

- (i) Most of the homicides have been committed during the evening hours, using sharp-edged weapons because of general enmity.
- (ii) In a large number of cases the victim and the offender were relatives, neighbours or friends. Quite a few of them had prior interaction.
- (iii) Characteristics like young, male, married, Hindu, possessing average education and belonging to a large household and a low or middle income group—typifies a victim. Generally speaking, the offender is also a man, slightly older than the victim. The two may be adversaries and may get involved into a brawl which, in turn, may precipitate violence leading to death, per chance, of the victim. It would not take long to see that violence or homicide is somehow anchored into the social environment. A viable preventive strategy, therefore, has necessarily to reckon with social institutions and organizations.

Whatever the role of the victim in homicide, it would be myopic to ignore the problems of the next-of-kin of the victim. They undergo untold social and psychological trauma. Quite a few of them live in fear. What is more, between 10 to 15 per cent of them may be facing severe economic hardship. This becomes particularly disquieting in view of the fact that community help, indirect means of assistance and government relief measures have been tardy or non-existent. They are most certainly in need of immediate relief or assistance. This is not to say that every family which undergoes such traumatic experience should be offered public assistance. Nor is it possible within the existing availability of resources. In keeping with the practice being followed elsewhere, public assistance programmes for the victims of homicide

have necessarily to be selective. It may be designed to ameliorate the condition of those bereaved families who have no where to turn to. In this regard legislation and the formation of Special Compensation Boards may be given due thought.

To recapitulate, in our fight against crime including that of the homicide, due attention has to be paid to the victims. This would place the crime-phenomenon in proper perspective, facilitate our understanding of the problems which victims face as a consequence of the offence, and evolve a viable assistance programme to the needy so that they and others feel that they have a criminal justice system which cares.

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