

‘It’s not like you’re delivering Amazon packages’: A qualitative study and thematic analysis exploring older victims’ perspectives on how the police responded to their crime report

Georgia West¹, Jessica Satchell¹, , Paul Ford² and Marc Serfaty^{3,4}

¹University College London, London, UK. E-mail: j.satchell@ucl.ac.uk

²Institute of Criminology, University of Cambridge, Sidgwick Ave, Cambridge

³Professor of Psychotherapy Research, University College London, London

⁴Consultant Psychiatrist, Priory Hospital North London, London

ABSTRACT

Crime can be psychologically distressing for older victims, but their needs are poorly understood by the police. Using data from 27 in-depth semi-structured interviews with older victims who reported their crime to the Metropolitan Police Service in London (UK), we inductively explored their perceptions of how officers responded. We found that, whilst experiences and opinions varied, the actions of the police appeared to shape older victims’ psychological outcomes. Showing concern for older victims’ welfare, apologizing for oversights, and communicating case progress were helpful actions from officers. Lengthy responses, failure to acknowledge emotional harm and reduced presence of officers on the street, were considered not helpful. Our recommendations include flagging older victims to be contacted on more than one occasion post-crime, expanding routine training to encourage sensitive communication with this population, and online implementation of procedural justice training.

INTRODUCTION

Victims’ satisfaction with the police is declining in England and Wales ([The Police Foundation, 2022](#)). This may be influenced by how the police service is managed, including the ability to obtain investigative outcomes for victims, and treat them with respect ([The Police Foundation, 2022](#)). Negative reports of police conduct have been highly publicized in the media in recent years, highlighting particularly serious institutional failures within the Metropolitan Police Service (MPS) ([Casey, 2023](#)). Having trust in the police predicts victims’ willingness to co-operate with them ([Murphy et al., 2013](#)), so improving victims’ perceptions of the police is crucial. The Mayor of London’s Office recently demonstrated a commitment to improving victim support, through greater collaboration between the MPS, criminal justice system, and other support services ([Mayor’s Office for Policing and Crime, 2022a](#)). To further inform how the police can improve upon their service, a deeper understanding of victims’ perceptions and experiences of the police is warranted.

Research suggests that crime has negative psychological effects on victims, such as emotional distress, depression, anxiety, and post-traumatic stress disorder ([Shapland and Hall,](#)

[2007](#)). Psychological harm among older victims is particularly concerning ([Satchell et al., 2022](#)), as risk factors for depression, such as social isolation, bereavement, and physical health problems, are more likely to affect older than younger people ([Maier et al., 2021](#)). Indeed, 27% of older victims are likely to feel distressed 3 months after experiencing a crime ([Serfaty et al., 2015](#)). Additionally, violent crime may have greater impact than less violent crimes, as older victims of violent crime are 1.84 times more likely to develop depression than their counterparts who have not been a victim ([Muhammad et al., 2021](#)). As older people are less likely to seek help for their mental health than younger adults ([Bogner et al., 2009](#); [Crabb and Hunsley, 2006](#)), due to factors including stigma and ageism ([Polacsek et al., 2019](#)), the police may be the only professional support services they encounter post-crime. As some victims recover quickly from crime, whilst others’ experiences are chronic ([Shapland and Hall, 2007](#)), it is necessary to understand the potential influence of the police on psychological well-being.

The UK population is ageing: the number of older people aged 65 and over is expected to reach 15 million (21.5% of the population) by the mid-2030s, ([Office for National Statistics](#)

[ONS, 2022]. This warrants consideration of the implications for victimization in this age group. Indeed, an estimated 12.1% of people aged 65–74 experienced crime in 2022–23 (ONS, 2023a). Although researchers are showing greater interest in the experiences of older victims (Bows *et al.*, 2023; Ludvigsson *et al.*, 2022), crime in this group has been historically overlooked (Bows, 2019). For example, the Crime Survey for England and Wales did not collect data on sexual violence or harassment in adults aged 60+ until 2017 (ONS, 2017). The lack of accurate, long-term data appears to have perpetuated a myth that crime does not affect older people (Bows, 2020).

A recent inspection of police forces in England and Wales (HMICFRS, 2019) found that officers lack understanding of the complex needs of older victims, and consistently fail to refer them onto victim support services. Moreover, older victims are reportedly less likely to obtain legitimacy than other age groups, which occurs when they perceive the police to be effective and fair (Terrill *et al.*, 2016), and is a key performance indicator of the police effectiveness, efficiency, and legitimacy (PEEL) inspection program conducted by HMICFRS (HMICFRS, 2022). They have also been found to have unequal access to procedural justice (e.g. Brown and Gordon, 2019), which is obtained when a perpetrator is identified and convicted by authorities for the harm inflicted. Given their heightened fear of crime, lower resilience, and additional vulnerabilities such as impaired memory recall, older victims require specialized support in order to obtain justice, which is not being offered by the agencies of the criminal justice system (Brown and Gordon 2020, 2022). These findings underscore the need to increase understanding of older victims' perceptions of the police, to inform improvements to the support offered.

Previous literature into perceptions of the police has been among victims of sexual offences (e.g. Greeson *et al.*, 2014; Sleath and Bull, 2017), and from ethnic minority groups (e.g. Novich and Hunt, 2016; Saarikkomäki *et al.*, 2020), but there is limited research focussing on older victims. To our knowledge, only two peer-reviewed studies have explored police perceptions in this age group. Schack and Frank (1978) interviewed older people from two cities and found that, while attitudes were generally positive, those who had recent contact with the police or a greater willingness to do so, exhibited greater police dissatisfaction than older people who did not. Zevitz and Gurnack (1991) found that older victims who received support from elderly victimization specialists—who underwent training in interviewing older people—were more satisfied with their performance than those who encountered non-specialist officers. However, these studies may also be outdated because public perceptions of the police have since shifted (The Police Foundation, 2022). Both studies also took place in the USA, and due to international differences in police management and victim satisfaction, the views of older victims in the UK may be different (van Dijk *et al.*, 2007).

The Mayor of London's Office for Policing and Crime (MOPAC) uses the User Satisfaction Survey to measure victim satisfaction throughout London annually. Data collected from this survey showed a significant decline in overall satisfaction from 71% to 66% between 2020–21 and 2021–22 (Mayor's Office for Policing and Crime, 2022b). Public confidence in policing has also fallen over time. From 2015/16 to 2022/23, the percentage of adults aged 65–74 who perceived the police as doing a 'good'

or 'excellent' job fell from 62% to 47%, and overall confidence in local policing fell from 79% to 67% (ONS, 2016, 2023b). However, quantitative surveys do not provide in-depth or nuanced insight into victims' views and experiences (Choy, 2014). The current study, therefore, aims to contribute to knowledge in this area by collaborating with the MPS in London (UK) to qualitatively explore older victims' perceptions of how the police handled their crime to provide greater insight into how to improve services.

Research question:

How do older victims who reported their crime to the MPS perceive how officers responded to their crime report? How might this inform recommendations to improve support offered by the police to older victims?

METHOD

This is a qualitative study nested within a randomized controlled trial investigating efficacy and cost-effectiveness of adapted cognitive behavioural therapy for older crime victims aged 65 and over (Serfaty *et al.*, 2020). In this study, across nine North and East London boroughs, victims were identified through national crime recording indices by the MPS and visited by community support officers within a month of the crime. Officers collected demographic information, crime details, screened for psychological distress using the two-item Patient Health Questionnaire (PHQ-2) and the Generalised Anxiety Disorder scale (GAD-2) (Kroenke *et al.*, 2003; 2007), and obtained consent to data share with the team. Older victims who consented to follow-up were re-screened 3 months post-crime on the GAD-2 and PHQ-2 and invited to participate in qualitative interviews.

Sample

Between June 2018 and August 2019, 27 older adults who reported a crime 3 months prior took part in in-depth semi-structured one-to-one interviews. A total of 146 older victims involved in the wider trial were asked if participating in qualitative interviews was of interest, of which 86% were agreeable. Of those that declined, the reasons included business, going away, poor health, discomfort with being recorded, or lack of confidence with speaking in English. We arranged interviews with a subset ($N = 27$) who had expressed interest in participating, purposively sampled to achieve diversity. The final sample was selected to ensure variation across ethnicity, age, gender, crime type, and screening outcomes on the GAD-2 and PHQ-2 at 1 month and 3 months post-crime, so that participants both with and without significant distress were included. Informed consent was obtained for all participants. Although this was not a formal exclusion criterion, it was necessary for participants to have sufficient hearing and command of English to participate in interviews. As the wider trial excluded victims of elder abuse and domestic violence, by default such individuals were not interviewed in the present study.

Interview schedule

The semi-structured interview schedule was designed to investigate how earlier experiences shape how victims cope with

crime later in life, as part of a PhD thesis. Perceptions of the police were, therefore, not the intended focus of the interviews, but many older victims spontaneously shared their experiences, inspiring an in-depth exploration of the data.

Interviews were conducted in-person by [author initials] during home visits or at [author institution], based on participant preference. Active listening was adopted, and questions were asked with a non-judgemental but inquisitive manner. Most interviews were completed one-to-one, except for three participants who requested a family member's presence. Interviews lasted 73 min on average (range 34–132 min). Identifying information was removed from transcripts, and audio files were deleted post-transcription.

Analysis

Qualitative data was analysed by [author initials] using thematic analysis (Braun and Clarke, 2006). Codes were created from interview transcripts, which were organized into themes by writing them onto post-it notes and arranging them on a white board. As there is a lack of pre-existing evidence regarding older victims' perceptions of the police, we used an inductive approach to analysis, in which we built themes from the data.

Ethics

The Victim Improvement Package Trial was approved by the National Institute for Health Research: Public Health Research (grant number 13/164/32). Although crime may be sensitive to discuss, it is important to conduct research in this area, as not doing so risks silencing victims and limits knowledge on how to help (Becker-Blease and Freyd, 2006; Perôt et al., 2018). Participants were advised of their right to confidentiality, and to pause or withdraw from interviews. Researchers monitored older victims' well-being and any concerns were discussed with [author initials], a qualified psychiatrist. For one participant, it was agreed to write to their GP with their consent.

RESULTS

Sample characteristics

The sample ($N = 27$) ranged from 65 to 94 years (mean age = 74; $SD = 8.05$), and the majority were female ($N = 16$, 59%). Most were White British ($N = 17$, 63%), whilst three (11%) were Asian Indian, two (7%) were Black African, one (4%) was Black Caribbean, one of mixed ethnicity and one identified as 'other' ethnicity. Participants were mostly Christian ($N = 14$) followed by Jewish ($N = 4$), Atheist ($N = 3$), and secular ($N = 2$). The most common crime types were personal threat (e.g. verbal abuse) ($N = 10$, 37%) and house burglary (e.g. breaking into a property to steal items) ($N = 5$, 19%), with assault (e.g. being pushed), fraud (e.g. check tampering), distraction burglary (e.g. impersonating a police officer to enter a property to steal items), harassment (e.g. offensive messages), robbery (e.g. street mugging), and criminal damage (e.g. arson) also reported. Twelve participants (44%) scored positive for psychological distress measured using either the PHQ-2 or the GAD-2 scale at both 1 and 3 months post-crime, whilst six (22%) scored negative at both time points, and nine (33%) scored positive at 1 month but negative at 3 months ('recovered'). Sample characteristics are summarized in Table 1.

Qualitative findings

Older crime victims' perceptions of the police were categorized into five major themes, which are detailed in Table 2. Themes include: (1) how the police initially responded to the crime; (2) how the police's evaluation of the harm caused by crime influenced their response and investigation; (3) the police's longer-term responses to crime; (4) victims' general opinions of the police and (5) victims' historic experiences of the police and how these related to their current perceptions.

Theme 1: Initial response

Older victims often discussed details of their initial contact with police following the crime. Some victims noted the communication styles adopted by officers. For example, a female victim of assault gained reassurance from being informed she lives in a safe neighbourhood: '*he felt it was . . . the area was a safe area and that . . . it probably would never happen again. So that sort of put my mind at rest*' (P11). Meanwhile, a male victim of theft valued the directness of being told he lives in a '*terrible neighbourhood*', describing the officer he spoke to as '*very frank, which I really appreciated*' (P3).

Many older victims experienced a long response time after reporting crime, with one victim having to wait '*the best part of 3 hours, 2.5 hours*' (P1). Consequently, some victims sought alternative routes to access support. For example, one victim phoned 999 because they noticed a long queue at their local station and were '*dealt with quicker on the phone*' (P10), whilst a female victim of burglary had to contact a police service in a different borough because the '*Barnet police didn't come*' after calling them for help (P25). These examples have important implications for emergency services.

The importance of faster police attendance to initial calls was highlighted in relation to the needs of older victims. A female victim of burglary with memory deterioration remarked that '*if they'd have come two or three hours later, that would have been it*'. Furthermore, a single female victim who failed to receive a visit from the police after calling them (P25) discussed the need to prioritize victims without a spouse, due to the heightened risk involved with being alone post-crime: '*I think they should come, because being a single person . . . Ok, when you are family it's a different thing, but they have to improve that I think*' (P25). In sum, victims experienced a variety of initial responses, with a prompt response marked as particularly important, because of the additional vulnerabilities outlined.

Theme 2: Acknowledgement of harm

Some participants discussed whether the police acknowledged the harm caused by their experience. One participant (P11) who was initially distressed, received an apology from the police for failing to recognize the severity of the physical damage inflicted by the perpetrator: '[the officer said] "*we should have come to you a lot sooner, we didn't really realise how much criminal damage he had done*". Thereupon, she viewed the police as '*very thoughtful*' and '*caring*' and more focussed on '*how were we rather than about what happened*'; simply showing an understanding of the harm incurred appeared to be more important to the victim than solving the crime.

A positive example of where the police went above and beyond in their consideration of a victim's well-being involved

Table 1: Sample characteristics

P No.	Age	Gender	Ethnicity	Religion	Living alone	Self-reported health	Crime type	Arrest	Previous anxiety or depression	Positive GAD/PHQ 1 month post-crime	Positive GAD/PHQ 3 months post-crime
1	70	F	White British	Christian—Catholic	NO	None reported	Burglary	NO	YES	NO	NO
2	71	M	White British	Christian—C of E	NO	Diabetes	Harassment	NO	NO	YES	YES
3	74	M	White British	Atheist	NO	None reported	Attempted burglary	NO	NO	YES	YES
4	70	M	White British	Christian	NO	None reported	Burglary	NO	NO	NO	YES
5	71	M	Asian Indian	Muslim	YES	Poor mobility	Theft from car	NO	YES	YES	YES
6	82	F	White British	Christian	NO	None reported	Distraction burglary	NO	YES	YES	YES
7	76	F	White British	Christian	YES	Diabetes, wheelchair	Distraction burglary	NO	YES	YES	YES
8	65	F	White British	Christian—Catholic	NO	Poor mobility, COPD	Theft from person	NO	YES	YES	YES
9	71	M	White British	Atheist	NO	Parkinson's disease	Theft from car	NO	NO	YES	NO
10	78	F	Black African	Christian	YES	None reported	Theft from person	NO	NO	YES	NO
11	67	F	White British	Christian—Catholic	NO	None reported	Criminal damage	YES	YES	YES	NO
12	68	F	Black African	Christian	YES	Poor mobility	Theft from car	NO	NO	NO	NO
13	65	M	Asian Indian	Christian	YES	Poor mobility	Harassment	NO	YES	YES	YES
14	83	F	White British	Christian—Anglican	YES	Poor mobility	Theft and fraud	NO	NO	YES	NO
15	87	M	White British	Stoicism	YES	Poor mobility	Fraud	NO	NO	YES	NO
16	76	M	White other	Atheist	NO	None reported	Theft from car	NO	NO	YES	NO
17	66	M	White British	Buddhism	YES	None reported	Racially/religious aggravated assault	NO	NO	YES	NO
18	70	F	White other	Jewish	NO	None reported	Actual bodily harm	NO	NO	YES	YES
19	72	M	Other	Jewish	NO	None reported	Robbery	NO	NO	NO	NO
20	83	F	White British	Christian	YES	None reported	Theft	NO	NO	NO	NO
21	73	F	White British	Jewish	YES	Poor mobility	Theft	NO	YES	YES	YES
22	94	F	White British	No religion	YES	Poor mobility	Burglary	NO	NO	NO	NO
23	65	F	Black Carib-bean	Christian	YES	None reported	Actual bodily harm	NO	YES	YES	YES
24	68	M	Mixed other	Jewish	NO	None reported	Racially/religious common assault	NO	NO	YES	NO
25	71	F	Asian Indian	Hindu	YES	History of breast cancer	Burglary	NO	NO	YES	YES
26	91	F	White British	No religion	NO	Registered blind	Fraud	YES	YES	YES	YES
27	66	F	White British	Christian	YES	Poor mobility, angioplasty	Theft from car	NO	NO	YES	YES

Table 2: Thematic map of police perceptions themes among older crime victims

Theme	Sub-themes	Codes
Initial Response	Communication style	Reassuring tone Straightforward tone
	Response time	Long wait time Took alternative route to access support Faster response needed for older victims who live alone and have memory problems
Acknowledgement of Harm	Acknowledged harm	Police apologized for not realizing the severity of damage Police were more concerned for victim well-being than solving the crime Greater concern shown to knife crime Greater concern shown to hate crime
		Did not acknowledge harm (related to anti-Semitic hate crime)
	Longer-term response	Effective follow-up correspondence
	Ineffective follow-up correspondence	Insensitive comment made by a scenes of crime officer Informed their case was closed due to a lack of evidence
	Lack of follow-up correspondence	Failure to update the victim when they said they would
General perceptions of the police	Police funding	Sympathy towards police underfunding
	Police efficacy	The police use underfunding as an excuse for inadequate service The police are doing their best
		The police are more concerned about their social media image than solving crime The police are more concerned about catching tax evasion than supporting victims
	Racism	The police have no sympathy for Black people Lack of trust in police Avoid reporting crimes to police
Historical experiences in relation to current perceptions	Negative perceptions, despite positive experiences	Mistrust in the police as a whole, despite contact with a sympathetic officer
	Historic experiences inconsistent with current perceptions	Police were approachable in the past, but they feel let down by them now Previously witnessed police brutality when living abroad, but greatly appreciate recent support from Metropolitan Police officers
	Historic experiences congruent with current perceptions	Police failed to adequately deal with anti-Semitism both in the past and now Previously helped the police to form relationships with the south Asian community, and now views them as trustworthy

a 94-year-old repeat victim (P22). Officers went to the effort of installing equipment to ensure her home was 'burglar proof', asked her neighbours to 'keep an eye on her', and even sent her a 'big bunch of flowers'. Consequently, these actions had a positive

influence on how she perceived the police, describing them as 'marvellous', 'helpful', and having done 'everything they could'.

Some victims thought the concern demonstrated by police depended on the nature of the crime. Although a male Jewish

victim (P19) said he ‘*recovered very quickly*’ post-crime, and ‘*wasn’t particularly fearful*’ about it, he believed the police demonstrated greater care for his well-being because a knife was involved: ‘*I think they would have given me a psychologist had I said “I’m not doing very well” . . . It may be the magic word “knife”, of course, because that’s the rage at the moment*’. A female Jewish victim (P21), thought the police showed especial concern for the hate crime she experienced, informing her that ‘*it’s definitely a hate crime and we’ve got to try and keep that call*’.

In contrast, other hate crime victims believed the police failed to acknowledge their harm, leading to negative perceptions of the police. For example, a Jewish participant (P24) felt let down because he thought the police failed to acknowledge his experience of violent anti-Semitic assault as a serious crime: ‘*The police woman and other witnesses did see how he was kicking me and beating me on the floor and tramping on me . . . they were not terribly bothered*’. This participant also struggled to understand why the officer thought there was insufficient evidence to arrest the perpetrator: ‘*[he said] “I don’t see any blood” “yeah you don’t see blood but I’m utterly shaken . . . why do you have to have blood necessarily?”*’.

Another Jewish participant (P18), similarly, felt ‘*very let down*’ by the police, for lacking concern for the injury incurred, as ‘*nobody seemed interested in the fact I’d been beaten to bits*’, and for failing to investigate the crime properly, purely because it was motivated by anti-Semitism: ‘*it was only my persistence that got me to find all this out and make sure that they interviewed people, because they didn’t want to*’. These actions had a substantial influence on how the victim viewed the crime, because in her words: ‘*the biggest effect on me is the way the police behaved*’. To conclude, whether the police acknowledge the emotional and physical harm inflicted upon victims appears to greatly impact how they feel about the crime and the police. In our sample, victims of anti-Semitic hate crime appeared particularly affected.

Theme 3: Longer-term response

Many participants commented on how the police managed their case in the longer term. Some received effective follow-up correspondence from officers who were concerned for their wellbeing (P2, P4, P5, P12, P17, P19, P21, and P25). Specifically, one victim described them as ‘*really caring and very gentle*’ during their numerous visits (P4). Meanwhile, a male victim of theft was pleasantly surprised to hear from them, because he doubted the police’s empathy towards victims:

He said he wanted to follow-up, which I guess is pretty good. Why would they bother? You know . . . I wouldn’t have been surprised or miffed if . . . that had been the end, the end to the matter. (P3)

For another participant (P21) the attentive, empathetic support they received from one officer was far more meaningful than whether ‘*they found the person or they didn’t find the person responsible*’. Keeping in touch with victims may therefore be beneficial, even if the police cannot resolve the case.

Other victims received follow-up contact from less helpful police officers. During a follow-up visit to collect evidence, an

older victim encountered a scenes of crime officer they viewed as insensitive, which left them feeling disregarded:

[the officer said:] “When I looked at this one, this list of possible jobs, I knew it’d be a really quick one so that’s why I wanted to do it” . . . “It’s not like you’re delivering Amazon packages”. (P3)

For some victims, a lack of evidence meant the police had to close the case without further investigation: ‘*what had they to go on? There was just no way they could do it*’ (P16), which often led to despondence: ‘*There you are, what the use report it*’ (P5).

In contrast, others felt let down by the police for failing to update them on case progress, particularly whether resolution was obtained. For example, one participant received no outcome after waiting far longer than originally estimated:

He said it could take about a year to get a result . . . it’s coming up to three years this, there’s no result . . . I’m let down by the, by that certain group yes I am—because I’ve got no outcome. (P8)

Overall, the police’s longer-term responses to the crimes reported by older victims were varied, but it is clear that police contact in the aftermath of crime is helpful to victims, even if there is nothing to report.

Theme 4: General perceptions of the police

Many participants drew on their wider perceptions of the police when considering how their case had been handled. A few discussed police funding; one participant (P1) was sympathetic towards the perceived lack of resources ‘*I don’t think they get paid enough . . . I felt sorry for them when they finally came*’, whilst another (P3) believed the police use underfunding as an excuse for inadequate service: ‘*You don’t need an extra hundred pounds a week for that . . . guy to care, or the man on the telephone to do the right thing, do you?*’.

Police priorities were also discussed. Although some participants (P12, P17) perceived them as doing the best they could, others were critical. One participant viewed the police as being ‘*muddled up*’ about their purpose, and more concerned with their social media image than solving crime: ‘*Somewhere along the line they’ve gone off course. And it’s about them, not solving the crime . . . It’s about managing the PR image on Twitter*’ (P3). This sentiment was shared by another victim (P5), who discussed that the police’s priorities are in the wrong place: ‘*If you don’t pay tax, they run after you, but if you need help, it takes long*’.

Perceptions of racism among the police were discussed by a Black female participant (P23), who expressed that ‘*they don’t care about Black people . . . they don’t have no sympathy for Black people*’. As a result of these beliefs, she lacked trust in their abilities: ‘*I don’t believe in what the police do*’, and thus dislikes turning to them for support: ‘*I don’t like to get police involved*’.

A few participants held negative perceptions of the police force overall, despite recalling positive experiences with individual officers (P3, P23). For example, a Black Caribbean participant (P23) viewed the police as racist and untrustworthy, despite receiving support from a police officer who was empathetic and compassionate towards her: ‘*the younger version was quite nice . . . he kneel down to me and he hold my hands*’. In sum, general perceptions of

the police varied greatly, but they appeared to, in part, be shaped by older victims' personal interactions with them.

Theme 5: Historic experiences related to current perceptions

Many participants voluntarily shared past experiences of the police. These were not always consistent with their current perceptions, which impacted how victims perceived the crime. For example, one victim remembered the police as reliable and approachable during her childhood: *'well there's always the policeman outside, you can always ask the policeman the time'*. Yet, when the police could not resolve her recent crime, she was disappointed by the lack of justice: *'I'm let down by the, by that certain group yes I am—because I've got no outcome'* (P8). For some victims, positive historic experiences aligned with how they now viewed the police. A victim of South Asian heritage (P5) who previously worked with the police to help them build a stronger relationship with the South Asian community in London, viewed them in the present day as trustworthy, as they *'love to see police walking about'*.

Other participants had unpleasant encounters with police in the past. For example, a Black older victim who witnessed genocide and experienced torture by White South African soldiers in Namibia. In contrast, she greatly appreciated the *'very sympathetic'* manner used by MPS police officers in the present day, which helped her cope with the experience: *'It really gave me a lot of reassurance that there are people who care for people'* (P12). Another victim, who identified as a lesbian, described the police as *'evil'* and *'wicked'*, for asking her *'Well what did you do for this to happen?'* after experiencing gang rape in her youth. Meanwhile, in the modern day, her experience was *'absolutely brilliant'* because they *'came straight away'*; feeling *'so grateful'* for the reassurance they offered after being burgled multiple times.

Alternatively, a Jewish victim's encounter with the police in London mirrored the disappointment they experienced from the authorities in their home country (P24). Specifically, he endured anti-Semitic abuse as a child whilst in Poland, describing the police as *'not very helpful'*. This aligned with how police officers treated him following a recent anti-Semitic assault in London, by failing to acknowledge the crime as a hate crime. Overall, previous experiences generally left a long-lasting impression on crime victims and may shape their current opinion of the police.

DISCUSSION

This research provides an updated and in-depth qualitative analysis of older victims' perceptions of the police, following recent calls for the police and the criminal justice system to enhance the service offered to this group (Brown and Gordon, 2019; HMICFRS, 2019). Through 27 interviews with older people, we identified five main themes. Older victims referred to the police in terms of their initial response, acknowledgement of harm, longer-term response, overall perceptions of the police, and historic experiences in relation to current perceptions. Perceptions of the police varied greatly between participants, with both positive and negative attitudes and experiences evident.

Although waiting times were generally prompt, some victims were left waiting for prolonged periods, with a few forces unable to visit in-person entirely. Evidence suggests that slower

response times are associated with a reduced chance of catching the perpetrator (Blanes i Vidal and Kirchmaier, 2017) and lower police satisfaction (Brandl and Hovarth, 1991), which highlights the importance of ensuring that all victims are supported quickly. This is particularly important for older victims, because factors that more commonly impact this age group such as living alone, ill health, and impaired mobility (Schröder-Butterfill and Mariani, 2006) are likely to leave them feeling more vulnerable in the aftermath of crime than younger victims. Ageing commonly involves deterioration in memory functions, which may prevent older victims from recalling important details of the crime, if too much time has passed (Dando, 2013). This is likely to impact the crime investigation, and prevent victims from obtaining procedural justice, which is linked to reduced police legitimacy (e.g. Ferdik et al., 2014; Madon et al., 2017). A lack of resolution is also frustrating and could contribute to continued psychological distress in the aftermath of crime. Although the police should strive to obtain justice for all, it was evident the level of support offered was more meaningful to some victims. Showing empathy and expressing concern for well-being may, therefore, be the key to improving the experiences of older victims in distress, even where justice is unobtainable.

One reason why victims report crime to the police is to receive recognition and validation of the harm they have experienced (Tyler, 2006). However, we observed inconsistencies in whether the police acknowledged harm, which impacted on victims' subsequent perceptions of the police, and the crime itself. This provides insight into the specific type of police behaviour that may be driving victim satisfaction in older people. Failure to acknowledge harm was most commonly reported by victims of hate crime, which has been found to be associated with increased psychological harm compared to non-hate offences (Iganski and Lagou, 2015). In particular, hate crime victims may be twice as likely to experience serious psychological consequences, including panic attacks, anxiety, depression, and sleep disturbance (Paterson et al., 2018). Hate crime is a personal attack against one's identity, which may explain its profound influence (Benier, 2017). Given this, such cases ought to be handled with greater sensitivity by the police, but this was always not the case for the older victims in this study. Following a report highlighting inconsistencies in the police's acknowledgement of crimes as hate crimes, and a lack of practical support offered (HMICFRS, 2018), these findings contribute to a growing picture of inadequate handling of hate crime in England and Wales.

Police response in the long-term after a crime was largely disappointing for participants. With victims left feeling let down, disregarded, and questioning the utility of reporting crime altogether, the impact of poor communication is clear, and may be contributing to victims' distress. Choosing not to report crime prevents victims from obtaining justice and reduces the deterrent effect of the criminal justice system (Mbewu et al., 2021; OECD, 2017). It is, therefore, imperative that police's actions do not discourage reporting. Moreover, crime victims are considered to have a fundamental right to be updated on case progress (Code of Practice for Victims of Crime in England and Wales (Victim's Code), 2021; Healey, 2019), making the police's failure to do so concerning. The surprise some victims expressed to even receive follow-up contact may be influenced by the common public recognition that the police are underfunded (Higgins, 2019). This

illustrates how expectations of police behaviour may be influenced by general perceptions formed through external sources, such as the media. The general implication of these findings is that the police must improve the follow-up support offered to older victims.

We observed marked variation in victims' general opinions of the police, which may be attributable to differences in the demographic characteristics of the sample. In particular, race has been found to influence perceptions (Nadal *et al.*, 2017; Strickler and Lawson, 2020), which we found to be true for Black victims in this study. Deep mistrust and lack of confidence in the police are a common sentiment held by people from ethnic minorities in the UK and worldwide, especially by Black and Hispanic individuals (e.g. Cochran and Warren, 2012; Office for National Statistics, 2020). Those who trust the police are more likely to co-operate, by reporting crime and victimization to them (Bradford and Jackson, 2016), which justifies the need to improve trust between ethnic minority people and police forces.

Although, a Black female victim had a pleasant encounter with one officer, she continued to mistrust the police generally because of prior unpleasant experiences. This may be explained by the 'asymmetry' theory, which posits that positive experiences have a markedly smaller influence on perspectives of the police than negative encounters (Skogan, 2006). The solution to improving trust among older ethnic minority people is, therefore, likely more complex than officers simply acting more helpful, polite, or prompt now, due to the long history of discriminatory action against ethnic minority communities by the Metropolitan Police (HMICFRS, 2021; Yesufu, 2013). Preventing negative encounters may, however, improve trust among future generations. The implementation of unconscious bias training through virtual reality simulation is a promising method for meaningful reform in the police's disproportionate use of violence and stop and search against ethnic minority communities (Alanis and Pyram, 2022).

Many participants were nostalgic towards what they perceived to be as greater presence and approachability of police officers in their youth, which is associated with increased trust in police fairness across London neighbourhoods (Yesberg *et al.*, 2021). This supports the decision to increase funding for 'bobbies on the beat' (GOV.UK, 2020), as greater trust is likely to benefit older people by helping them feel safer, especially those living in high-crime areas like London. The appreciation demonstrated by a Black female victim towards the English police for their kindness towards her in contrast to the horrific experiences she endured in Namibia, is an example of how the police's actions can help a victim cope with their experience. To better support older victims, it is important that officers are aware of victims' possible history with the police. Building trust may be particularly difficult with victims who previously endured unpleasant encounters, as was the case for a Polish victim who felt they had been let down all over again by English police officers.

Practical recommendations

These findings offer insight into how support for older victims could be improved, which may also be helpful for police forces more widely. Firstly, once identified as a distressed older person, the crime record could include a flag to contact the victim on

one or more occasions over a period of time. Secondly, officers could be trained on the needs of older victims and how to communicate sensitively as part of existing safeguarding training. Thirdly, procedural justice training could be provided through an e-learning package, which would ensure that the learning could be achieved nationally and across all police forces.

Strengths and limitations

This study addresses a gap in the literature, which is particularly relevant, following recent publications highlighting the inadequacy of the support offered to older victims (Brown and Gordon, 2019; HMICFRS, 2019). An advantage of qualitative research is that it provides greater insight into personal perspective compared to quantitative research. Another strength of this study lies in the sampling method used; purposely selecting the participants ensured the sample was highly diverse in terms of age, ethnicity, and crime type, with an even balance of genders. This helped to ensure we gathered a range of perspectives, which is crucial in qualitative research. Capturing the voices of ethnic minority victims was also prioritized, because they are disproportionately more likely to be victimized (Cabinet Office, 2017). However, as our sample was based in London, we did not include older victims living in other urban areas or rural communities, who may have different perspectives (Gordon and Brown, 2023). As the interviewer did not seek to investigate older victims' perspectives of the police, another strength of this study is that the perceptions captured were organic. The victims were unaware they would be asked these questions, so the discussions were likely meaningful to them. A final strength of this research lies in its historical importance. The victims' off-topic recollections of prior experiences provide insight into the conduct and behaviour of police officers in the past, which would have gone unreported otherwise.

This study also has limitations that must be considered and accounted for in future research.

A key measure of data adequacy and content validity in qualitative research is 'saturation' (Saunders *et al.*, 2017), defined as the point at which all relevant concepts have been fully captured by the data, and further coding is unable to provide new insights (Guest *et al.*, 2020). With such a heterogeneous study sample, the marked variation in victims' personal characteristics and police encounters raises uncertainty of whether saturation was achieved (Hennink and Kaiser, 2022). However, proponents of thematic analysis argue that the concept is poorly defined and not meaningful (Braun and Clark, 2019). Although our diverse sample included a range of perspectives, there may still be more to explore, especially given that only two crimes in our sample resulted in arrest. Older victims with different justice outcomes may have alternative perspectives on police responding. Furthermore, this paper made reference to key performance indicators, such as legitimacy, however, their use has been critiqued for having a narrow focus of crime and the police response to it (Hodgkinson *et al.*, 2019). A new, broader approach to assess police performance may be more appropriate.

The focus of this research was older victims' recollections of how the police responded to their crime report, so by definition, only older victims of police-reported crime were interviewed. At present, the dark figure of crime—the crimes unknown to

the police—is estimated at 60%, with unreported personal property and damage instances estimated to be as high as 63% and 67%, respectively (Buil-Gil *et al.*, 2020; 2022). The present study, therefore, represents the views of only a specific group of older victims. Albeit difficult to identify and recruit, it would be insightful to explore the perceptions of older people who did not report crime. As victims of elder abuse and domestic violence were excluded from the wider trial, we also failed to capture their perceptions. Additionally, although we did not exclude older victims living in long-term care facilities, we did not identify any during sampling either, who may have different perspectives. We thus recommend the purposeful recruitment of this population in future qualitative research of this nature. A comparative analysis of younger and older victims' perceptions may also be helpful. Lastly, although we sought a range of justice outcomes in our sample, only one victim's case progressed to court. While this is reflective of many older victims' experiences, as only 6% of all cases end in a charge (ONS, 2023c), further research to elucidate the psychological impact of the criminal justice process on older victims would be worthwhile (Brown and Gordon, 2019).

To conclude, this study provided a rare opportunity for older victims to freely discuss their perceptions and experiences of the police, offering a valuable contribution to the policing and older adult mental health literature. These findings highlight the impact of police officers' actions on the well-being of older victims in the aftermath of crime. It is important that the police greatly improve the service offered to this overlooked age group.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Thank you to the participants of the VIP Trial, and the Metropolitan Police Service for their contribution to this research.

DISCLOSURE STATEMENT

No conflict of interest was reported by the authors.

REFERENCES

Alanis, J. M. and Pyram, R. H. (2022). 'From Simulations to Real-world Operations: Virtual Reality Training for Reducing Racialized Police Violence.' *Industrial and Organizational Psychology*, **15**(4): 621–625. doi:10.1017/iop.2022.80

Becker-Blease, K. A. and Freyd, J. J. (2006). 'Research Participants Telling the Truth About Their Lives: The Ethics of Asking and Not Asking About Abuse.' *American Psychologist* **61**(3): 218–226. doi:10.1037/0003-066x.61.3.218

Benier, K. (2017). 'The Harms of Hate: Comparing the Neighbouring Practices and Interactions of Hate Crime Victims, Non-hate Crime Victims and Non-Victims.' *International Review of Victimology* **23**(2): 179–201. doi:10.1177/0269758017693087

Blanes i Vidal, J. and Kirchmaier, T. (2017). 'The Effect of Police Response Time on Crime Clearance Rates.' *The Review of Economic Studies* **85**(2): 855–891. doi:10.1093/restud/rdx044

Bogner, H. R., de Vries, H. F., Maulik, P. K., and Unützer, J. (2009). 'Mental Health Services Use: Baltimore Epidemiologic Catchment Area Follow-up.' *The American Journal of Geriatric Psychiatry* **17**(8): 706–715. doi:10.1097/jgp.0b013e3181aad5c5

Bows, H. (2019). 'Considering Older Victims and Survivors – Hannah Bows.' *White Ribbon UK*. <https://www.whiteribbon.org.uk/news/2019/11/29/violence-against-older-women-by-hannah-bows> (accessed 18 December 2023).

Bows, H. (2020). 'Violence and Abuse of Older People - A Review of Current Proposals for Criminalisation.' *Criminal Law Review* **10**: 877–894. <https://durham-repository.worktribe.com/output/1300752> (accessed 18 December 2023).

Bows, H., Bromley, P., and Walklate, S. (2023). 'Practitioner Understandings of Older Victims of Abuse and Their Perpetrators: Not Ideal Enough?' *The British Journal of Criminology*: 1–18. doi:10.1093/bjc/azad057

Bradford, B. and Jackson, J. (2016). 'Cooperating with the Police as an Act of Social Control - Trust and Neighbourhood Concerns as Predictors of Public Assistance.' *Nordisk politiforskning* **3**(2): 111–131.

Brandl, S. G. and Horvath, F. (1991). 'Crime-Victim Evaluation of Police Investigative Performance.' *Journal of Criminal Justice* **19**(2): 109–121. doi:10.1016/0047-2352(91)90046-x

Braun, V. and Clarke, V. (2006). 'Using Thematic Analysis in Psychology.' *Qualitative Research in Psychology* **3**(2): 77–101. doi:10.1191/1478088706qp063oa

Braun, V. and Clarke, V. (2019). 'To Saturate or Not to Saturate? Questioning Data Saturation as a Useful Concept for Thematic Analysis and Sample-size Rationales.' *Qualitative Research in Sport, Exercise and Health* **13**(2): 201–216. doi:10.1080/2159676X.2019.1704846.

Brown, K. J. and Gordon, F. (2019). 'Older Victims of Crime: Vulnerability, Resilience and Access to Procedural Justice.' *International Review of Victimology* **25**(2): 201–221. doi:10.1177/0269758018791426

Brown, K. J. and Gordon, F. (2020). 'Exploring and Overcoming Barriers to Justice for Older Victims of Crime.' *Criminal Law Review* **12**: 1127–1136. <https://ssrn.com/abstract=3739870>

Brown, K. J. and Gordon, F. (2022). 'Improving Access to Justice for Older Victims of Crime by Reimagining Conceptions of Vulnerability.' *Ageing & Society* **42**(3): 614–631. doi:10.1017/S0144686X20001051

Buil-Gil, D., Medina, J., and Shlomo, N. (2020). 'Measuring the Dark Figure of Crime in Geographic Areas: Small Area Estimation from the Crime Survey for England and Wales.' *The British Journal of Criminology* **61**(2): 364–388.

Buil-Gil, D., Pina-Sánchez, J., Brunton-Smith, I., and Cernat, A. (2022). *Bad Data, Worse Predictions*. Crest Research. <https://crestresearch.ac.uk/comment/bad-data-worse-predictions/> (accessed 5 April 2023).

Cabinet Office. (2017). *Race Disparity Audit*. https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/686071/Revised_RDA_report_March_2018.pdf (accessed 5 April 2023).

Casey, L. (2023). *Final Report: An Independent Review into the Standards of Behaviour and Internal Culture of the Metropolitan Police Service*. <https://www.met.police.uk/SysSiteAssets/media/downloads/met/about-us/baroness-casey-review/update-march-2023/baroness-casey-review-march-2023a.pdf> (accessed 17 December 2023).

Choy, L. T. (2014). 'The Strengths and Weaknesses of Research Methodology: Comparison and Complimentary Between Qualitative and Quantitative Approaches.' *IOSR Journal of Humanities and Social Science* **19**(4): 99–104. doi:10.9790/0837-194399104

Cochran, J. C. and Warren, P. Y. (2012). 'Racial, Ethnic, and Gender Differences in Perceptions of the Police.' *Journal of Contemporary Criminal Justice* **28**(2): 206–227. doi:10.1177/1043986211425726

Code of Practice for Victims of Crime in England and Wales (Victim's Code). (2021). GOV.UK. <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/the-code-of-practice-for-victims-of-crime/code-of-practice-for-victims-of-crime-in-england-and-wales-victims-code> (accessed 5 April 2023).

Crabb, R. and Hunsley, J. (2006). 'Utilization of Mental Health Care Services Among Older Adults with Depression.' *Journal of Clinical Psychology* **62**(3): 299–312. doi:10.1002/jclp.20231

Dando, C. J. (2013). 'Drawing to Remember: External Support of Older Adults' Eyewitness Performance.' *PLoS One* **8**(7): e69937. doi:10.1371/journal.pone.0069937

Ferdik, F. V., Wolfe, S. E., and Blasco, N. (2014). 'Informal Social Controls, Procedural Justice and Perceived Police Legitimacy: Do Social Bonds Influence Evaluations of Police Legitimacy?' *American Journal of Criminal Justice* **39**(3): 471–492.

- Gordon, F. and Brown, K. J. (2023) 'Older Victims, Legal need and Access to Justice in Rural Communities in Northern Ireland.' In Newman, D. and Gordon, F. (eds.), *Access to Justice in Rural Communities: Global Perspectives*. Oxford: Hart Publishing, pp. 101–109.
- GOV.UK. (2020). *Policing gets Biggest Funding Boost in Decade to Put More Bobbies on the Beat*. <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/policing-gets-biggest-funding-boost-in-decade-to-put-more-bobbies-on-the-beat> (accessed 5 April 2023).
- Greeson, M. R., Campbell, R., and Fehler-Cabral, G. (2014). 'Cold or Caring? Adolescent Sexual Assault Victims' Perceptions of Their Interactions with the Police.' *Violence and Victims* **29**(4): 636–651. doi: [10.1891/0886-6708.vv-d-13-00039](https://doi.org/10.1891/0886-6708.vv-d-13-00039)
- Guest, G., Namey, E., and Chen, M. (2020). 'A Simple Method to Assess and Report Thematic Saturation in Qualitative Research.' *PLoS One* **15**(5): e0232076. doi: [10.1371/journal.pone.0232076](https://doi.org/10.1371/journal.pone.0232076)
- Healey, D. (2019). *Exploring Victims' Interactions with the Criminal Justice System: A Literature Review*. Department of Justice and Equality. <https://www.gov.ie/pdf/?file=https://assets.gov.ie/46819/b539aae36f4648a2832c812dbba01821.pdf#page=null> (accessed 5 April 2023).
- Hennink, M. and Kaiser, B. N. (2022). 'Sample Sizes for Saturation in Qualitative Research: A Systematic Review of Empirical Tests.' *Social Science & Medicine* **292**: 114523. doi: [10.1016/j.socscimed.2021.114523](https://doi.org/10.1016/j.socscimed.2021.114523)
- Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire & Rescue Services. (2018). *Understanding the Difference: The Initial Police Response to Hate Crime*. <https://www.justiceinspectors.gov.uk/hmicfrs/wp-content/uploads/understanding-the-difference-the-initial-police-response-to-hate-crime.pdf> (accessed 5 April 2023).
- Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire & Rescue Services. (2019). *The Poor Relation: The Police and Crown Prosecution Service's Response to Crimes against Older People*. <https://www.justiceinspectors.gov.uk/hmicfrs/wp-content/uploads/crimes-against-older-people.pdf> (accessed 5 April 2023).
- Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire & Rescue Services. (2021). *Disproportionate Use of Police Powers: A Spotlight on Stop and Search and the Use of Force*. <https://www.justiceinspectors.gov.uk/hmicfrs/wp-content/uploads/disproportionate-use-of-police-powers-spotlight-on-stop-search-and-use-of-force.pdf> (accessed 5 April 2023).
- Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire & Rescue Services. (2022). *What is PEEL?* <https://www.justiceinspectors.gov.uk/hmicfrs/peel-assessments/what-is-peel/> (accessed 5 April 2023).
- Higgins, A. (2019). *Understanding the Public's Priorities for Policing*. The Police Foundation. <https://www.police-foundation.org.uk/2017/wp-content/uploads/2010/10/understanding-public-priorities-final.pdf> (accessed 5 April 2023).
- Hodgkinson, T., Caputo, T., and McIntyre, M. L. (2019). 'Beyond Crime Rates and Community Surveys: A New Approach to Police Accountability and Performance Measurement.' *Crime Science* **8**(1). doi: [10.1186/s40163-019-0108-x](https://doi.org/10.1186/s40163-019-0108-x)
- Iganski, P. and Lagou, S. (2015). 'Hate Crimes Hurt Some More Than Others.' *Journal of Interpersonal Violence* **30**(10): 1696–1718. doi: [10.1177/0886260514548584](https://doi.org/10.1177/0886260514548584)
- Kroenke, K., Spitzer, R. L., and Williams, J. B. (2003). 'The Patient Health Questionnaire-2.' *Medical Care* **41**(11): 1284–1292. doi: [10.1097/01.mlr.0000093487.78664.3c](https://doi.org/10.1097/01.mlr.0000093487.78664.3c)
- Kroenke, K., Spitzer, R. L., Williams, J. B., Monahan, P. O., and Löwe, B. (2007). 'Anxiety Disorders in Primary Care: Prevalence, Impairment, Comorbidity, and Detection.' *Annals of Internal Medicine* **146**(5): 317. doi: [10.7326/0003-4819-146-5-200703060-00004](https://doi.org/10.7326/0003-4819-146-5-200703060-00004)
- Ludvigsson, M., Wiklund, N., Swahnberg, K., and Simmons, J. (2022). 'Experiences of Elder Abuse: A Qualitative Study Among Victims in Sweden.' *BMC Geriatrics* **22**(1): 256. doi: [10.1186/s12877-022-02933-8](https://doi.org/10.1186/s12877-022-02933-8)
- Madon, N. S., Murphy, K., and Sargeant, E. (2017). 'Promoting Police Legitimacy Among Disengaged Minority Groups: Does Procedural Justice Matter More?' *Criminology & Criminal Justice* **17**(5): 624–642. doi: [10.1177/1748895817692849](https://doi.org/10.1177/1748895817692849)
- Maier, A., Riedel-Heller, S. G., Pabst, A., and Lupp, M. (2021). 'Risk Factors and Protective Factors of Depression in Older People 65+. A Systematic Review.' *PLoS One* **16**(5): e0251326. doi: [10.1371/journal.pone.0251326](https://doi.org/10.1371/journal.pone.0251326)
- Mayor's Office for Policing and Crime. (2022a). *Building a Safer London: Police and Crime Plan for London 2022-25*. <https://www.london.gov.uk/publications/building-safer-london> (accessed 5 April 2023).
- Mayor's Office for Policing and Crime. (2022b). *A Better Police Service for London—MOPAC London Surveys: FY 21-22*. https://www.london.gov.uk/sites/default/files/q4_2122_public_voice_final.pdf (accessed 17 December 2023).
- Mbwu, I., Obioha, E. E., and Mugari, I. (2021). 'Consequences of Citizens' Non-reporting of Crime to the Police: A Survey of Mthatha Policing Precinct, South Africa.' *European Journal of Economics, Law and Social Sciences* **5**(3): 453–463. <https://iupcl.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/10/035.pdf> (accessed 18 December 2023).
- Muhammad, T., Meher, T., and Sekher, T. V. (2021). 'Association of Elder Abuse, Crime Victimhood and Perceived Neighbourhood Safety with Major Depression Among Older Adults in India: A Cross-sectional Study Using Data from the LASI Baseline Survey (2017–2018)'. *BMJ Open* **11**(12): e055625. doi: [10.1136/bmjopen-2021-055625](https://doi.org/10.1136/bmjopen-2021-055625)
- Murphy, K., Mazerolle, L., and Bennett, S. (2013). 'Promoting Trust in Police: Findings from a Randomised Experimental Field Trial of Procedural Justice Policing.' *Policing and Society* **24**(4): 405–424. doi: [10.1080/10439463.2013.862246](https://doi.org/10.1080/10439463.2013.862246)
- Nadal, K. L., Davidoff, K. C., Allicock, N., Serpe, C. R., and Erazo, T. (2017). 'Perceptions of Police, Racial Profiling, and Psychological Outcomes: A Mixed Methodological Study.' *Journal of Social Issues* **73**(4): 808–830.
- Novich, M. and Hunt, G. (2016). "'Get Off Me": Perceptions of Disrespectful Police Behaviour Among Ethnic Minority Youth Gang Members.' *Drugs: Education, Prevention and Policy* **24**(3): 248–255.
- Office for National Statistics. (2016). *Crime in England and Wales: Annual Supplementary Tables*. <https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/crimeandjustice/datasets/crimeinenglandandwales-annualsupplementarytables> (accessed 19 November 2023).
- Office for National Statistics. (2017). *Crime in England and Wales: Year Ending June 2017*. <https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/crimeandjustice/bulletins/crimeinenglandandwales/june2017> (accessed 15 December 2023).
- Office for National Statistics. (2020). *Crime in England and Wales: Annual Supplementary Tables*. <https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/crimeandjustice/datasets/crimeinenglandandwales-annualsupplementarytables> (accessed 5 April 2023).
- Office for National Statistics. (2022). *National Population Projections: 2020-based Interim*. <https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/populationandmigration/populationprojections/bulletins/nationalpopulationprojections/2020basedinterim> (accessed 5 April 2023).
- Office for National Statistics. (2023a). *Crime in England and Wales: Annual Trend and Demographic Tables*. <https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/crimeandjustice/datasets/crimeinenglandandwalesannualtrendanddemographicstables> (accessed 5 November 2023).
- Office for National Statistics. (2023b). *Crime in England and Wales: Annual Supplementary Tables*. <https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/crimeandjustice/datasets/crimeinenglandandwalesannualsupplementarytables> (accessed 11 October 2023).
- Office for National Statistics. (2023c). *Crime Outcomes in England and Wales 2022 to 2023*. <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/crime-outcomes-in-england-and-wales-2022-to-2023#outcomes-assigned-to-offences-recorded-in-the-year-ending-31-march-2023> (accessed 28 December 2023).
- OECD. (2017). *Trust and Public Policy: How Better Governance Can Help Rebuild Public Trust*. OECD Public Governance Reviews, Paris: OECD Publishing, p. 144. <https://doi.org/10.1787/9789264268920-en> (accessed 18 December 2023).

- Paterson, J., Walters, M. A., Brown, R., and Fearn, H. (2018). *The Sussex Hate Crime Project: Final Report*. University of Sussex. http://sro.sussex.ac.uk/id/eprint/73458/1/_smbhome.uscs.susx.ac.uk_lsu53_Documents_My%20Documents_Leverhulme%20Project_Sussex%20Hate%20Crime%20Project%20Report.pdf (accessed 5 April 2023).
- Perôt, C., Chevoux, J., and Group, S. V. R. (2018). *Turning Pain Into Power: A Charter for Organisations Engaging Abuse Survivors in Projects, Research & Service Development*. Pilot version. <https://survivorsvoices.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/10/Survivors-Charter-Final-V1-for-Piloting-Oct-2018.pdf> (accessed 17 December 2023).
- Polacsek, M., Boardman, G. H., and McCann, T. V. (2019). 'Help-seeking Experiences of Older Adults with a Diagnosis of Moderate Depression.' *International Journal of Mental Health Nursing* **28**(1): 278–287. doi: [10.1111/inm.12531](https://doi.org/10.1111/inm.12531)
- Saarikkomäki, E., Birk Haller, M., Solhjell, R. *et al.* (2020). 'Suspected or Protected? Perceptions of Procedural Justice in Ethnic Minority Youth's Descriptions of Police Relations.' *Policing and Society* **31**(4): 386–401. doi: [10.1080/10439463.2020.1747462](https://doi.org/10.1080/10439463.2020.1747462)
- Satchell, J., Craston, T., Drennan, V. M., Billings, J., and Serfaty, M. (2022). 'Psychological Distress and Interventions for Older Victims of Crime: A Systematic Review.' *Trauma, Violence & Abuse* **24**: 3493–3512. doi: [10.1177/15248380221130354](https://doi.org/10.1177/15248380221130354)
- Saunders, B., Sim, J., Kingstone, T. *et al.* (2017). 'Saturation in Qualitative Research: Exploring Its Conceptualization and Operationalization.' *Quality & Quantity* **52**(4): 1893–1907. doi: [10.1007/s11135-017-0574-8](https://doi.org/10.1007/s11135-017-0574-8)
- Schack, S. and Frank, R. S. (1978). 'Police Service Delivery to the Elderly.' *The ANNALS of the American Academy of Political and Social Science* **438**(1): 81–95. doi: [10.1177/000271627843800109](https://doi.org/10.1177/000271627843800109)
- Schröder-Butterfill, E. and Marianti, R. (2006). 'A Framework for Understanding Old-age Vulnerabilities.' *Ageing and Society* **26**(1): 9–35. doi: [10.1017/s0144686x05004423](https://doi.org/10.1017/s0144686x05004423)
- Serfaty, M., Aspden, T., Satchell, J. *et al.* (2020). 'The Clinical and Cost-effectiveness of a Victim Improvement Package (VIP) for the Reduction of Chronic Symptoms of Depression or Anxiety in Older Victims of Common Crime (the VIP trial): Study Protocol for a Randomised Controlled Trial.' *Trials* **21**(1): 333. doi: [10.1186/s13063-020-4211-9](https://doi.org/10.1186/s13063-020-4211-9)
- Serfaty, M., Ridgewell, A., Drennan, V. *et al.* (2015). 'Helping Aged Victims of Crime (The Havoc Study): Common Crime, Older People and Mental Illness.' *Behavioural and Cognitive Psychotherapy* **44**(2): 255–255. doi: [10.1017/s1352465814000514](https://doi.org/10.1017/s1352465814000514)
- Shapland, J. and Hall, M. (2007). 'What Do We Know About the Effects of Crime on Victims?' *International Review of Victimology* **14**(2): 175–217. doi: [10.1177/026975800701400202](https://doi.org/10.1177/026975800701400202)
- Skogan, W. G. (2006). 'Asymmetry in the Impact of Encounters with Police.' *Policing and Society* **16**(2): 99–126. doi: [10.1080/10439460600662098](https://doi.org/10.1080/10439460600662098)
- Sleath, E. and Bull, R. (2017). 'Police Perceptions of Rape Victims and the Impact on Case Decision Making: A Systematic Review.' *Aggression and Violent Behavior* **34**: 102–112. doi: [10.1016/j.avb.2017.02.003](https://doi.org/10.1016/j.avb.2017.02.003)
- Strickler, R. and Lawson, E. (2020). 'Racial Conservatism, Self-monitoring, and Perceptions of Police Violence.' *Politics, Groups, and Identities* **10**(2): 254–275. doi: [10.1080/21565503.2020.1782234](https://doi.org/10.1080/21565503.2020.1782234)
- Terrill, W., Paoline, E. A., and Gau, J. M. (2016). 'Three Pillars of Police Legitimacy: Procedural Justice, Use of Force, and Occupational Culture.' *The Politics of Policing: Between Force and Legitimacy* **21**: 59–76. doi: [10.1108/s1521-613620160000021004](https://doi.org/10.1108/s1521-613620160000021004)
- The Police Foundation. (2022). *A NEW MODE OF PROTECTION: Redesigning Policing and Public Safety for the 21st Century*. https://www.policingreview.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/srpew_final_report.pdf (accessed 5 April 2023).
- Tyler, T. R. (2006). *Why People Obey The Law*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.
- van Dijk, J., van Kesteren, J., and Smit, P. (2007). *Criminal Victimization in International Perspective*. The Hague: Boom Legal Publishers. http://www.unicri.eu/services/library_documentation/publications/icvs/publications/ICVS2004_05report.pdf (accessed 5 April 2023).
- Yesberg, J., Brunton-Smith, I., and Bradford, B. (2021). 'Police Visibility, Trust in Police Fairness, and Collective Efficacy: A Multilevel Structural Equation Model.' *European Journal of Criminology* **20**(2): 712–737. doi: [10.1093/eurpub/cky093](https://doi.org/10.1093/eurpub/cky093)
- Yesufu, S. (2013). 'Discriminatory Use of Police Stop-and-Search Powers in London, UK.' *International Journal of Police Science & Management* **15**(4): 281–293. doi: [10.1350/ijps.2013.15.4.318](https://doi.org/10.1350/ijps.2013.15.4.318)
- Zevitz, R. G. and Gurnack, A. M. (1991). 'Factors Related to Elderly Crime Victims' Satisfaction with Police Service: The Impact of Milwaukee's "Gray Squad".' *The Gerontologist* **31**(1): 92–101. doi: [10.1093/geront/31.1.92](https://doi.org/10.1093/geront/31.1.92)