

# **A Study on Secondary Victimization and its Impact on the Recovery Process of Sexual Assault Survivors**

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**Abstract:** *Sexual assault is a traumatic experience that can have severe psychological consequences for survivors. In addition to the primary trauma of the assault itself, many survivors also face secondary victimization, which refers to negative treatment or blaming by others in their community or society. This secondary victimization can come from insensitive comments, victim-blaming attitudes, or dismissive responses from friends, family, law enforcement, and others. While the impact of the primary trauma has been well-studied, less research has examined how this secondary victimization affects the recovery process for sexual assault survivors. This secondary victimization can significantly impede the recovery process for survivors, exacerbating their psychological distress and hindering their ability to heal and regain a sense of normalcy in their lives. Violent crimes like sexual assault and rape inflict profound psychological and physical trauma on female victims. Throughout history, various theoretical approaches have attempted to explain the roots of crime and the role of victims. Regrettably, secondary victimization of assaulted women has been prevalent, with victims being blamed and stigmatized by society, scientific theories, and even legal systems. This study aimed to assess public perceptions and attitudes around secondary victimization and its potential impacts on survivors' healing and recovery. The findings revealed significant gaps in public understanding of secondary victimization and its detrimental effects. While most respondents recognized secondary victimization as a real issue, many underestimated its frequency and severity..*

**Keywords:** Secondary victimisation, assault, trauma, emotional and psychological

