

# **Whose generalized trust is shattered by criminal victimization? Using various methods to study heterogenous causal effects**

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A growing body of research shows that life experiences can change adults' generalized trust, that is, their beliefs that people are generally trustworthy. Yet, the impact of criminal victimization – an experience with particular potential to shatter trustworthy beliefs – has rarely been adequately studied. Most extant research relied on cross-sectional data and findings thus suffer from low internal validity. Moreover, studies have typically failed to consider that victims might respond differently to victimization and that only some people may lose trust in others. The current work addresses this research gap by studying the question: Whose generalized trust is shattered by criminal victimization? Using data from two-wave panel studies conducted in Cologne and Essen (Germany), various analytical procedures were applied (matching, change score models, machine learning procedures) to estimate causal effects and how these differ across victims. The findings obtained from the various procedures are discussed in terms of their internal validity.