

A Study of Crime against Women: Vulnerability to Victimization

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Abstract

Centuries have gone, but the position of women is not likely to change. Time has helplessly watched women suffering in the form of discrimination, oppression, exploitation, degradation, aggression, humiliation. In Indian society, woman occupies an important place. In India Vedas glorified women as the mother, the creator, one who gives life and worshipped her as a 'Devi' or Goddess. But their glorification was rather mythical for at the same time, in India women found herself totally suppressed and subjugated. Violence against women are worldwide phenomenon. There are various forms of crime against women which are discussed in the study. Sometimes the violence is even before birth in the form of foeticide, sometimes in the adulthood in the form of sexual harassment and in the other phrases of life. Violence against women both inside and outside of their home has been a crucial issue in the Indian society. Women in India constitute near about half of its population and most of them are grinding under the socio-cultural and religious structures.

Introduction:

“Violence against women remains one of the invisible and under-recognized pandemics of our time.”

- Nicole Kidman

Crime against women and gender discrimination is not a unique feature of Indian society, but global phenomenon. In all the societies 'East' or 'West', 'Developed' or 'Developing' irrespective of religious faith and economic system, it exist .Women suffer deprivation, humiliation and denial of basic human rights in almost all walks of life, everywhere, at every stage, in varying degrees. Today also traditional societies regarded women as weak, emotional and unable to resist external temptations.

Crime: An act or the commission of an act that is forbidden or the omission of a duty that is commanded by a public law and that makes the offender liable to punishment by that law, especially: a gross violation of law

‘It's a crime to let that beautiful garden go to ruin.’

Police records also show high incidence of crimes against women in India. The National Crime Records Bureau reported in 1998 that the growth rate of crimes against women would be higher than the population growth rate by 2010. Earlier, many cases were not registered with the police due to the social stigma attached to rape and molestation cases. Official statistics show that there has been a dramatic increase in the number of reported crimes against women.

According to the **National Crime Records Bureau of India**, reported incidents of crime against women increased from 6.4% during 2012, and a crime against a woman is committed every three minutes. In 2012, there were a total of 2, 44,270 reported incidents of crime against women, while in 2011, there were 2, 28,650 reported incidents. Andhra is home to 7.3% of India's female population accounts for 11.5% of the total reported crimes against women.

65% of Indian men believe women should tolerate violence in order to keep the family together, and women sometimes deserve to be beaten .In January 2011, the International Men and Gender Equality Survey (IMAGES) Questionnaire reported that 24% of Indian men had committed sexual violence at some point during their lives.

According to National Crime Records Bureau, Madhya Pradesh has reported the highest number of rape cases in the country during 2011. According to the government records, Bhopal tops the chart with 307 cases of sexual harassment while Gwalior remains at second position with 262 cases. However, in the year 2014, 207 cases of sexual harassment have been reported from Indore and 194 from Jabalpur.

Types of Crime against Women:

Violence strikes women from all kinds of backgrounds and of all ages. It can happen at work, on the street, or at home. These are the types of Crime against women.

- Domestic and intimate partner violence
- Emotional abuse
- Human trafficking
- Same-sex relationship violence
- Sexual assault and abuse
- Stalking
- Violence against immigrant and refugee women

- Sexual harassment and other violence against women at work
- Violence against women with disabilities

Sometimes, women are attacked by strangers, also but most often they are hurt by people who are close to them, such as a husband or partner. Whether you are attacked by a stranger or mistreated by a partner, violence and abuse can have terrible effects always.

1. Rape

Rape in India is one of India's most common crimes against women. Official sources show that rape cases in India has doubled between 1990 and 2008. According to National Crime Records Bureau data of 2012, Gujarat has the lowest rape rate (0.8) while Mizoram had the highest rape rate. 'Gang rape is also very common in India, 'Nirbhaya case is the brutal example of it.

2. Female Infanticides and Sex Selective Abortions

India has a highly masculine sex ratio, the chief reason being that many women die before reaching adulthood. Tribal societies in India have a less masculine sex ratio than all other caste groups. This, in spite of the fact that tribal communities have far lower levels of income, literacy and health facilities. All medical tests that can be used to determine the sex of the child have been banned in India, due to incidents of these tests being used to get rid of female children before birth. Female infanticide (killing of girl infants) is still prevalent in some rural areas. The abuse of the dowry tradition has been one of the main reasons for sex-selective abortions and female infanticides in India. Now the govt. is taking step to step this crime.

3. Domestic Violence

According to Union minister for Women and Child Development, domestic violence in India is a serious problem. Around 70% of women in India are victims of domestic violence, former According to Union minister for Women and Child Development. The National Crime Records Bureau reveal that a crime against a woman is committed every three minutes, a woman is raped every 29 minutes, a dowry death occurs every 77 minutes, and one case of cruelty committed by either the husband or relative of the husband occurs every nine minutes This occurs despite the fact that women in India are legally protected from domestic abuse under the Protection of Women from Domestic Violence Act.

Government has made a separate act for this called as Domestic Violence Act 2005.

Various Legislations for Safeguarding the Women in India:

There are various legislation has been incorporated regarding the safeguarding of the women.

Various Legislation for safeguarding crime against women, classified under two categories:

The Crime under Indian Penal Code (IPC):

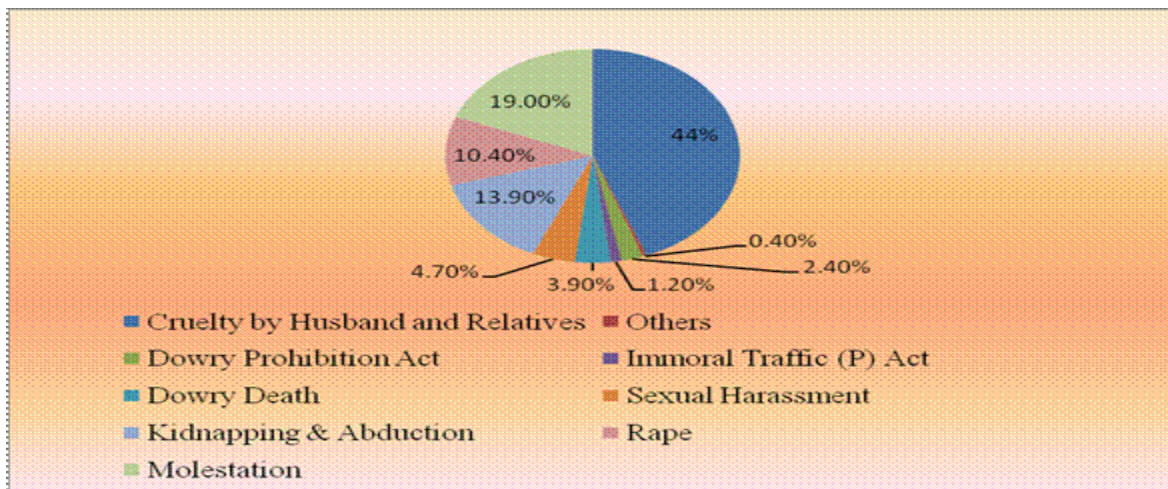
1. Rape (Section 376 IPC)
2. Kidnapping and abduction for specified purpose (Section 363-373 IPC)
3. Homicide for dowry, Dowry death or their attempts. (Sec. 302/304-B IPC)
4. Torture both mental and physical (Sec.498-A –IPC)
5. Sexual Harassment (Sec. 509 IPC)
6. Importation of girls (Up to 21 years of age) (Sec. 366-B IPC)

The Crimes under the Special and local Laws (SLL)- Gender specific laws

1. Immoral Traffic (Prevention) Act, 1956.
2. Dowry Prohibition Act, 1961
3. Indecent Representation of Women (Prohibition) Act, 1986.
4. Commission of Sati (Prevention) Act, 1987.

Crime against Women Percentage Distribution during 2010.

Graph 1.1 showing Crime against Women



Source: Crimes in India, NCRB, 2011

Major causes of crime against women:

- Inequalities in health care services;
- Violence against women;
- Effects of armed conflict on women;
- Inadequate access to direct participation in the economy and policy making processes in a country;
- Inequality in sharing power and decision making;
- In-sufficient mechanism to promote the advancement of women;
- Lack of commitment to women's human rights;
- In-sufficient mobilization of mass-media;
- Lack of support for women's contribution to manage the environment;

Other reasons behind the violence against women in India are as follow:

- Increasing number of broken families, growing uncompromising disputes/differences/ among family members.
- Alcoholism and influence of movies leading weak personalities has led to alarming rise in acts of perverted behavior – like rape of daughter by father, rape of little girls, passing lewd remarks on girls in public places, etc.
- Deteriorating law and order situation,
- Fall of moral values.
- Intolerance amongst youth,
- Ineffective implementation of existing rules and regulations made to protect women from violence,
- Inadequacy of ill-equipped, insensitive, understaffed police and investigative machinery,

Government measures for prevention of crime:

- According to UPA chairperson, Mrs. Sonia Gandhi said a law will be passed soon to prevent crime against women in the country .With a fund of around Rs. 1000 crores, we

are planning to set up a Women Bank, which will be run by women and help women in their business ventures.

- The measures outlined changes in the police system, a review of the Motor Vehicles Act, measures to make responses to crimes against women in efficient and sensitive manner and greater accountability of enforcement agencies. The department of women and child development will implement a scheme to provide compensation to victims of sexual assault and also a scheme for setting up Crisis Response Centres in select hospitals to provide psychological and other assistance to sexual assault victims. The proposed scheme will be implemented 2013-14.
- The National Crime Records Bureau (NCRB) will compile a database of persons convicted of criminal offences. Details of persons convicted of crimes against women will be displayed on their website.
- Girls students will also be trained in self-defense/martial arts.
- Teachers will be given training in value education. Sustained awareness campaigns on gender equality will be undertaken in all schools and colleges and gender modules to be integrated in the curriculum at every level.
- Several acts have been passed by the government like, Domestic Violence Act 2005, Female Foeticide Act etc.

Literature Review:

- Walker, 1979 in the beginning phase of the abusive relationship, some type of abuse occurs towards women. This can be physical, sexual, or emotional, however, most often it is subtle and in the form of verbal insults or accusations.
- Salber and Taliaferro, 1995 discussed though, the initial incident is physical. After the first episode of physical abuse, an abuser may not have to beat his partner to gain or maintain control. The threat of violence is enough, because his partner knows he is capable of following through on his threats.
- Weiss, 2000 describes a woman who should get respect in the society, is getting domination by either the males or the society.
- Department of Justice, National Institute of Justice, 2000, Extent, Nature, and Consequences of Intimate Partner Violence, findings from the National Violence Against

Women Survey, Research Report .It provides detailed information from the survey on women's and men's experiences with intimate partner violence

- Navneet Kumar Misra, explained the various types of crime against the women Physical, sexual and psychological violence strikes women in epidemic proportions worldwide. It crosses every social and economic class, every religion, race and ethnicity. From domestic abuse to rape as a weapon of war, violence against women is a gross violation of their human rights. It not only threatens women's health but also their social and economic well-being.
- Dr. T. K. K. Naidu, Study of Crime Against Women: Role of Forensic Medicine Violence. It is a combination of efforts that address income, education, health, laws and infrastructure which can significantly reduce violence and its consequences. First and foremost, abusive behavior towards women must be viewed as unacceptable. Communities need to have an important role in defining solutions to violence and providing support to victims. And men must be engaged in the process too, as agents of change standing alongside women to end violence.

Conclusion:

In recent times, Indian society is passing through a very difficult phase when human values reached at low level. There is a need to aware people right from their childhood about respect towards women's and not to treat women as mere object or a thing of use. Constantly deteriorating condition of law and order situation has added fuel into the fire making life of women miserable. Common-men demand effective government action and sincere implementation of the laws along with swift justice to curb the increasing violence against women .Currently also many cases are pending related to the women's. India needs to change people's perception of society towards about women's. It should never ever be forgotten that woman is a source of immense power. Without women, men-world stands nowhere. It is the Woman, who is the creator of a new life, sustainer and educator of the new generation. It is also the woman, who comes in man's world with color and pleasure as a loving and caring mother, affectionate sister, cute daughter and compatible companion, without her men's life is nothing.

Many women disclose in the first instance to people they know family, friends, workmates and so more attention should be paid to the development of information and support for the general public. Providing information and support through workplace campaigns, awareness raising programs in schools and general public education campaigns could greatly enhance the level and quality of informal support available to women from those closest to them.

Finally, but most importantly, the views of women themselves should be sought. Women's should be attentive enough towards such above mentioned crimes. If they are aware than nobody can raise voice against them. They have to fight for themselves, as there is law and government but they cannot reach to every corner or street and therefore they have given the right of private defense to everyone and they should use it towards the culprit.

Suggestions:

- “No” means No: Women should be confident enough to say no to the strangers as well as to the close relatives. She should not tolerate wrong things.
- Stop supporting movies and television: that depict women in subordinate roles and as sex objects. Avoid movies and television that glorify rape and other sexual abuses.
- Don't support porn: Not only is the porn industry engaged in violence against women, a research found that people who watch porn are:
 - more likely to be desensitized to violence against women;
 - more likely to blame the victim of rape and violent crimes against women; and
 - more likely to rape a woman.
- Avoid strip clubs and don't accept a partner who supports these places: Recently those indicated many female strippers are threatened with or subjected to violence and are also often the victims of human trafficking.
- Stop demeaning the feminine by saying things like “you run like a girl,” “you throw like a girl,” or “he cried like a little girl.” That includes referring to men or boys as “girls” when you are meaning something derogatory. Don't refer to a woman as a “bitch”.

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- Hidden in Plain Sight: A Statistical Analysis of Violence against Children (UNICEF).

- International Labour Organization, 2012, “ILO Global Estimate of Forced Labour: Results and Methodology.
- JAGORI and UN women (2010). Report on the Baseline Survey..
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- UNICEF, Female Genital Mutilation/Cutting.
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- UNODC global study on homicide, 2013.
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- World Health Organization, Global and Regional estimates of violence against women.