

CRIME AGAINST WOMEN IN INDIA: AN AWAKENING ALARM

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Abstract: The present paper studies the crime trend in India with specifications to Crime against women in India and Karnataka State. The paper intends to reproduce the crime rate committed against women defined under Indian Penal Code, 1860 and their detail analysis in comparison to the past few years. The trend shows that there is increase in crime rate in India as well as in state of Karnataka. The incidence of crime rate at national level is increased by 6.4% (2, 44,270 cases) in 2012 compared to 2011(2, 28,650 cases), whereas, at the state level in Karnataka the crime against women has increase in 2012 by 6.92% (10,366 cases) over 2011 (9,597 cases). The lack of deterrence among the perpetrators has weakened the faith in justice when it comes to crime against women. Hence, it is a necessity to evaluate the present scenario of safety and security of women in the country and adopt better policies and deploy austere course of action in decreasing crime against women.

Keywords: *Crime, Trend, Incidence, Increase,*

Introduction: Crime against Women in India: An Elevating Alarm:

Society is dynamic in nature; hence all the components related to the society tend to fade away or come untied up as time passes. The only factor that remains constant is the phenomena of 'Dynamic' i.e. the changing process. Crime is one part of the society which existed since past or ancient period of human beings and continues to witness its changing form in present day. The evolution and pattern of crime is associated with development of society. What is a crime? And who is considered to be a criminal has been defined variedly under different societal context. Crime against women prevailed then and even today only the intensity and gravity has increased with changing trend of modernization and globalization. Although women are given the supreme position of Goddess in various doctrines or scriptures but in reality what she faces is the brutality and experiences suppression under the patriarchal system of India.

Indian women are not only exposed to physical ill treatment but also mental or psychological torment along with social humiliation. She faces endanger not only within the four walls of the family but even threatened by the outside world for being bold enough to be independent. The present study reflects crimes against women in the present world and lack of safety and security towards them.

Classification of Crime against Women: Although Women may be victims of any of the general crimes such as „Murder“, „Robbery“, „Cheating“ etc., only the crimes which are directed specifically against women are characterised as „Crimes Against Women“. Various new legislations have been brought and amendments have

been made in existing laws with a view to handle these crimes effectively. These are broadly classified under two categories i.e. (A) The Crimes under the Indian Penal Code (IPC) and (B) The Crimes under the Special & Local Laws (SLL).

The Crimes under the Indian Penal Code (IPC)

Seven Crimes included under this head are as follows:

- 1) Rape (Section 376 IPC)
- 2) Kidnapping & Abduction for specified purposes (Sec. 363-373)
- 3) Homicide for Dowry, Dowry Deaths or their Attempts (Sec. 302/304-B IPC)
- 4) Torture – both mental and physical (Sec. 498 – A IPC)
- 5) Assault on women with intent to outrage her modesty i.e. Molestation (Sec. 354 IPC)
- 6) Insult to the modesty of women i.e. Eve Teasing or Sexual Harassment (Sec. 509 IPC)
- 7) Importation of girl from region country (up to 21 years of age) (Sec. 366 – IPC)

Reported incidents of Crime against Women in India:

A total of 2,44,270 incidents of crime against women were reported in the country during the year 2012 as compared to 2,28,650 in the year 2011 recording as increase of 6.4% during the year 2012. These crimes have continuously increased during 2008-2012 with 1,98,856 cases in the year 2008, 2,03,804 cases in 2009 and 2,13,585 cases in 2010 and 2,28,650 cases in 2011 and 2,44,270 cases in the year 2012. [Table No1]

The crime against women during the year 2012 has increased by 6.8% over the year 2011 and by 24.7% over the year 2008. The IPC component of crimes against women has accounted for 95.2% of total crimes.

Table No.1 Incidence of Crime and against women to Total IPC 2008 - 2012

Sl.No.	Year	Total IPC	Crime Against Women	Percentage to total IPC Crimes
01	2008	20,93,379	1,86,617	8.9
02	2009	21,21,345	2,03,804	9.2
03	2010	22,24,831	2,13,585	9.6
04	2011	23,25,575	2,19,142	9.4
05	2012	23,87,188	2,44,270	10.2

Reported incidents of Crime against Women in Karnataka (2011-2012): A total of 9,695 incidents of crime against were reported in the state of Karnataka during the year 2010, whereas 9,597 incidents of crime in the year 2011 but found to be increased in the year 2012 having incidence 10,366 recording an increase of 6.92 % during the year 2012 over 2011. [Table No.2]

The crime against women during the year 2012 has increased from 6.97% in 2011 to 8.07% in 2012. The available data indicates a increase in IPC crimes against women in the year 2012 (10,822) when compared to 2011 (9,597). Bangalore district accounted for 21.86% of all crimes against women in the state followed by Belgaum (6.29%), Shimoga (4.21%), Hasan (3.14%), Tumkur (4.60%)

Sl.No.	Year	Total IPC	Crime Against Women	Percentage to total IPC Crimes
01	2009	1,34,042	6,616	4.94
02	2010	1,42,322	9,595	6.74
03	2011	1,37,600	9,597	6.97
04	2012	1,34,021	10,822	8.07

Detailed Analysis of Crime Against Women In India & Karnataka:

Rape (Sec. 376, IPC): A decreasing trend in rape cases has been observed during 2008-2009. Thereafter an increasing trend in the incidence of rape has been observed during the periods of 2009-2012. These cases have reported decline of 0.3% in the year 2009 over 200, an increase of 3.6% in 2010 over 2009 and an increase of 9.2% in the year 2011 over the year 2010 and further increase of 0.3% in the year 2012 over 2011. Madhya Pradesh has reported highest number of rape cases (3,425) accounting for 13.7% of total such cases reported in the country. Mizoram has reported the highest crime rate of 20.8 as compared to national average 4.3. A total of 621 rape cases were registered during the year 2012 as against 636 cases during 2011 decreased by 9.04% in the state of Karnataka.

Rape Victims: There were 24,915 victims of rape out of 24,923 reported rape cases in the country during the year 2012. 12.5% (3,125) of the total victims of rape were girls under 14 years of age, while 23.9% (5,957 victims) were teenaged girls (14-18years). 50.2% (12,511 victims) were women in the age-group 18-30 years. Whereas, 12.8% (3,187 victims) were in the age-group of 30-50 years while 0.05% (135 victims) were over 50 years of age. During 2012 of the 621 rape victims, 50.5% (314 victims) were in the age group of 18 years, 36% (224 victims) were between 16-18 years of age. 8.85% (55 victims) were under the age group of 11-15 years whereas, 4.50% (28 victims) were below 10 years of age.

Kidnapping & Abduction for specified purposes (Sec. 363-373): These cases have reported increase of 7.6% during the year 2012 (38,262) as compared to previous year 2011(35,565). Uttar Pradesh with 7910 cases has accounted for 22.2% of the total cases in India. Delhi as union territory has reported the highest crime rate 25.3% as compared to the national average of 6.5. Incidence of kidnapping and abduction cases have increased by 49.5% in 2012 over 2011. In the year 2012, 1,070 cases were reported under this head as against 715 in 2011 and 596 in 2010.

Homicide for Dowry, Dowry Deaths or their Attempts (Sec. 302/304-B IPC): The cases of Dowry deaths have decreased by 4.5% during the year 2012 (8,233) over the year 2011 (8,618). 27.3% of the total such cases were reported from Uttar Pradesh (2,244 cases) alone followed by Bihar (12755 cases) (15.5%). The highest rate of crime (2.7) was reported from Bihar as compared to the national average.

Dowry death cases reported during the 2012 year were 218 whereas the reported incidence were 267 during 2011. There is a decrease of incidence of Dowry death cases by 18.35% in 2012 when compare to 2011.

Torture – both mental and physical (Sec. 498 – A IPC): Torture cases have increased in 2012 by 7.5% (1,06,527) over 2011 (99,135). 18.7% of these were reported from West Bengal (19,865 cases) followed by Andhra Pradesh 12.6% (13,389 cases) and Rajasthan 12.5% (13,312). The highest crime rate of 47.8 was reported from Tripura as compared to national rate at 18.2.

A total of 3,684 cases were reported in the Karnataka state for the year 2012. In the year 2011, the incidences of such cases were 3,712.

Assault on women with intent to outrage her modesty i.e. Molestation (Sec. 354 IPC): Incidents of assault on women with intent to outrage her modesty in the country have increased by 5.5% (45,351 cases) in 2012 over 2011 (42,698 cases). Madhya Pradesh has reported the highest incidence (6,655 cases) amounting to 14.7% total such incidences. Kerala has reported the highest crime rate (20.9) as compared to the National average of 7.7.

The incidence of molestation in the state during the current year increased by 2.5% when compared to the year 2011. 2,978 cases were reported in 2012 compared to 2,604 cases reported in the 2011.

Insult to the modesty of women i.e. Eve Teasing or Sexual Harassment (Sec. 509 IPC): The number of such cases has increased by 7% (9,173 cases) in 2012 than 2011 (8,570 cases). Andhra Pradesh has reported 40.5% (3,714 cases) followed by Maharashtra 14.1% (1,294 cases) of total incidences during the year 2012. Andhra

Pradesh has reported the highest crime rate (8.7) as compared to the national average of 1.6.

Approaches towards protection of women:

- It is necessary to initiate ground work towards women and girls in educating them regarding crime and reporting of crime. Necessary precautionary measures and major steps to be taken in avoiding victimization.
- Role of various governmental and non-governmental organizations to take active participation in extending information regarding legal rights and safety measures by conducting seminars, community services, approaching educational institutions, etc.
- Another factor that can assist in reducing crimes or in preventing crimes is by initiating community policing. Community policing having a member of locality, NGO's clubbed with police can strengthen the safety and security of women within the locality and maintain strict protocol. Taking updates from law enforcement agencies, visiting residential societies within the locality will help in understanding and resolving their issues and also to put forward in front of higher authorities.

➤ Youth groups to be trained under the guidance of community policing or directly under law enforcement in order to serve the society in curbing the crimes.

➤ Stringent laws and speedy disposal of cases under fast track courts related to crime against women will not only retain faith in justice but also reduce the rate of secondary victimization.

Conclusion: Even though India has sturdy judiciary system, somewhere the lack of deterrence in the commission of crime or fear of facing penal sentence is ineffective on the members of the society. Although today we see protest being held for the rights of victim or participation of dignitaries in debate to channelize proper safe and secured environment for women in the country but the verity lies that every individual needs to make an effort to bring these atrocities to a standstill. The purpose of law will be resorted only when women are not only secured or safeguarded but when they are treated with dignity, humanity and compassion giving an equal opportunity or right stand in the society as their male counterparts.

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