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A Study On Crimes Against Women In Tiruchirappalli City

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“Violence against women is perhaps the most shameful human rights violation and it is perhaps the most pervasive. It knows no boundaries of geography, culture or wealth. As long as it continues, we cannot claim to be making real progress towards equality, development and peace.” -

Kofi Annan

ABSTRACT

Here, we are attempting to gauge the types of crimes and extent of crimes against women in particular in Tiruchirappalli City from 2012 to 2017. The year 2012 recorded the highest crimes against women i.e. about 24.6% whereas the lowest were recorded in 2017 i.e about 12.8%. Therefore, it is clear that the rate of crimes against women in Tiruchirappalli City had been declining from 2012 to 2017. On perusal of the statistics collected, it was seen that cruelty by husbands, which were a whopping 32.4%, perpetrated the highest crimes against women whereas the lowest crimes against women about 1.9% thankfully were dowry deaths. Thus, we can safely conclude that the Tiruchirappalli City police administration have been doing a commendable job in fighting crimes against women however more efforts must be made to ensure that crimes against women in the city are zero.

KEYWORDS: Women Crimes, Rape, Dowry death, Cruelty by husband and Sexual harassment.

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INTRODUCTION

Crimes against women have been rampant in our society since time immemorial. A global issue transcends the boundaries of countries, cultures, regions and communities. Violence against women exists at various levels be it physical violence, mental torture, emotional abuse, domestic abuse and public humiliation. Crimes against women have their roots in the poor status of women in most countries of the world. Women are the most oppressed and tormented section of society. However, over the past few decades through various revolutions and rebellions by both men and women alike, the status of women has been improving. Education, stricter laws as well as economic independence have gone a long way in the emancipation of women all over the world. Yet, women are still targeted by criminals especially in the sexual context.

Women have to suffer the most heinous of crimes even today. Rape and sexual abuse are always the highest rate in most cities of India. Together with this domestic violence, dowry deaths, kidnapping (women & girls), molestation, cruelty by husband, child marriages, sex trafficking, feticides and infanticide are also on the rise. The advancement of science and technology has made women more vulnerable to certain crimes like online stalking and pornography.

The reasons for increasing crimes against women are numerous, the primary one being that they have always been considered as the weaker sex because of whom, they are targeted. In India, women are still considered as a burden on the family and in the lower strata are denied even basic education as it is regarded as unnecessary. The media has objectified women since time immemorial deeming it acceptable to treat them as sex objects. No matter how economically independent or educated women become, social ideologies and male egoism keep them marginalized. Thus, crimes against women are always on the rise and in some cases even accepted by warped social customs.

K.D. Gaur 2013¹ has made an in depth study on various sections related to crime against women with latest case laws and the need of amendment in Indian Penal Code, 1860 with the Criminal Amendment Act, 2013 in his book *A Textbook on the Indian Penal Code*.

B.K. Pal 1987² in his book *Problems and concerns of Indian Woman* has highlighted the issues and challenges faced by the Indian Woman while achieving equality for them.

S. C. Tirpathi 2014³ in his book “Woman and Criminal Law” has extensively highlighted the crimes committed against women in India. The author has thoroughly discussed the Nirbhaya gang rape case, which necessitated the rapid passing of the Criminal Amendment Act, 2013 by the government on account of the massive public outrage.

Shobha Saxena 1995⁴ in her Book *Crimes against Women and Protective laws* has given an explicit and frightening account of trials and tribulations of women who yearn for sensitive attention.

Through this book, the author wants to highlight the heinous crimes that are committed against women as well as bring to the foreground the ineffectiveness of the existing laws dealing with crimes against women.

Justice Verma Committee Report 2013⁵ on The Criminal Amendment Act has also highlighted the issue of providing safety and security to women both within the home and outside.

It is the need of the hour that social attitudes undergo a sea change so that women are given the respect and recognition that they deserve. Gender equality and gender sensitization are two powerful tools that will go a long way in reducing the crimes against women. Together with this, there should be strong law enforcement agencies and rigorous punishment for offenders to stop perpetration of crimes against women. Women should be well aware of their rights as well as of the laws that protect them so that they can be the defenders of their own dignity and security. The government should fast track all cases of crimes against women to ensure that the criminal justice is delivered rapidly to victims and their families. With the combined efforts of the Central and State Governments as well as NGO's and women themselves, the crimes against women can finally cease.

STUDY AREA

The Tiruchirappalli city base map had been drawn from Survey of India Toposheets Nos. 58 J/9, 10, 13 and 14 lies between the latitudes 10° 43' 40" – 10° 53' 00" North and the longitudes 78° 38' 14" - 78° 48' 50" East. The city is situated in central southeastern India, almost at the geographic centre of the state of Tamil Nadu. The topology of Tiruchirappalli is almost flat, with an average elevation of 88 meters (289 ft). A few isolated hillocks rise above the surface, the highest of which is the Rock fort. It is one of the oldest rocks in the world and its estimated age of 3,800 million years. Other hillocks include the Golden Rock, Khajamalai and one each at Uyyakondan, Thirumalai and Thiruverumbur are prominent. It Covers 167.23 square kilometers. The municipal corporation comprises sixty-five wards and four administrative zones; they are Srirangam, Ariyamangalam, Golden Rock and Abhishekapuram.

As per the Census of 2011, the total population of the Tiruchirappalli city corporation is 9,16,857. The number of male population accounts 4,52,835 and female is 4,63,998. The Sex Ratio of Tiruchirappalli is 1,025. Thus per every 1,000 men there were 1,025 females in Tiruchirappalli city, also as per census, the Child Sex Ratio was 960, which is less than Average Sex Ratio (1,025) of Tiruchirappalli city.

In Tamil Nadu Tiruchirappalli is the fourth largest city. It is urbanized with high density of population resulting in more number of crimes. Due to high mobility of people and development of new residential area with well developed thorough – fares, the city experiences an increasing trend in

the number of crimes in the recent years. Hence, Tiruchirappalli city has been selected for the present study to describe the various offences against women.

DATABASE AND METHODOLOGY

The crimes against women incidents data is collected from the Tiruchirappalli city Commissioner’s Office from 2012 to 2017. Crime type data about Rape, Kidnapping and Abduction (Women and Girls and others), Dowry Death, Molestation, Sexual Harassment, Cruelty by husband and relatives, Dowry prohibition act and cases under the POCSO Act are given in table 1.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Rape

Rape is a forced sexual intercourse against the will of the victim Parrot, 1988⁶. Sexual assault on women is a common phenomenon in our country. Sexual assault includes; molestation, eve-teasing, child sex abuse, rape, marital rape, domestic violence.

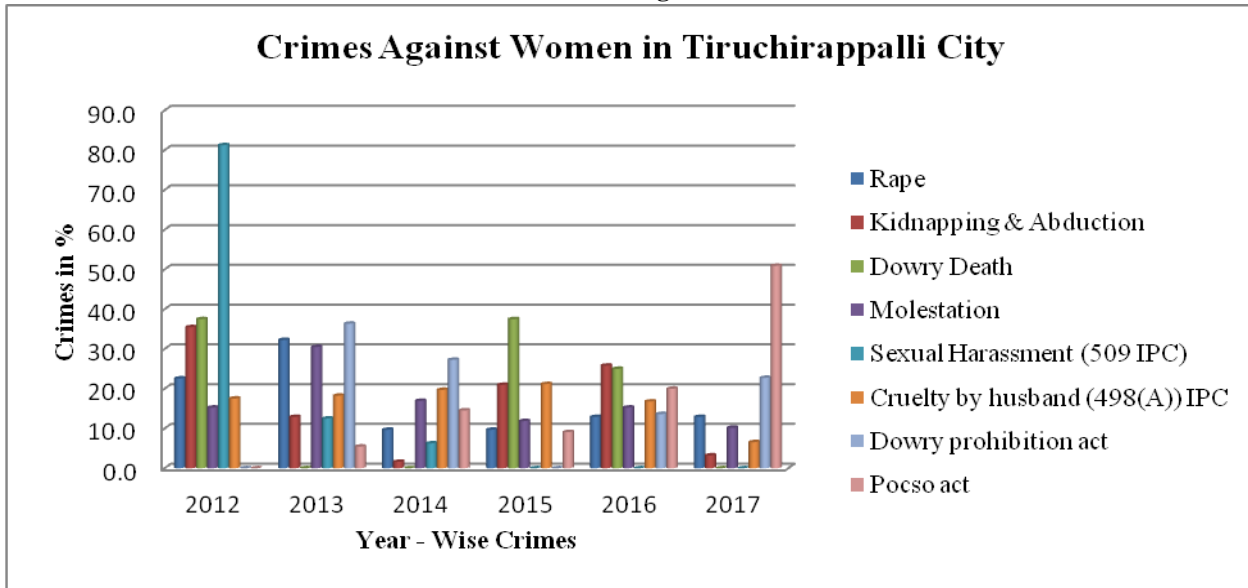
Of all these crimes, Rape is the most violent crime, which is committed against women. According to Section 375 of the Indian Penal Code, Rape means an unlawful intercourse done by a man with a woman without her valid consent. Rape outrages a woman's modesty. After a rape incident, a woman is scarred for life, forced to live with fear, depression, with a guilt complex, suicidal tendency and social stigma.

Table 1: Statistics of Crimes Against Women in Tiruchirappalli city

| Crime Types | YEAR | | | | | | Total |
|------------------------|----------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|----------------|
| | 2012 | 2013 | 2014 | 2015 | 2016 | 2017 | |
| Rape | 7 (22.6%) | 10 (32.3%) | 3 (9.7%) | 3 (9.7%) | 4 (12.9%) | 4 (12.9%) | 31 (7.3%) |
| Kidnapping & Abduction | 22 (35.5%) | 8 (12.9%) | 1 (1.6%) | 13 (21.0%) | 16 (25.8%) | 2 (3.2%) | 62 (14.6%) |
| Dowry Death | 3 (37.5%) | 0 | 0 | 3 (37.5%) | 2 (25.0%) | 0 | 8 (1.9%) |
| Molestation | 9 (15.3%) | 18 (30.5%) | 10 (16.9%) | 7 (11.9%) | 9 (15.3%) | 6 (10.2%) | 59 (13.9%) |
| Sexual Harassment | 39 (81.3%) | 6 (12.5%) | 3 (6.3%) | 0 | 0 | 0 | 48 (11.3%) |
| Cruelty by husband | 24 (17.3) | 25 (18.2%) | 27 (19.7%) | 29 (21.0%) | 23 (16.0%) | 9 (6.6%) | 137 (32.4%) |
| Dowry prohibition act | 0 | 8 (36.4%) | 6 (27.3%) | 0 | 3 (13.6%) | 5 (22.0%) | 22 (5.2%) |
| Pocso act | 0 | 3 (5.5%) | 8 (14.5%) | 5 (9.1%) | 11 (20.0%) | 28 (50.9%) | 55 (13.0%) |
| Total | 104 (24.6%) | 78 (18.5%) | 58 (13.7%) | 60 (14.2) | 68 (16.1%) | 54 (12.8%) | 422 (100%) |

Sources: Tiruchirappalli City Commissioner of Police

Fig. 1



In recent times, the rape incidents in our country have increased manifold. According to statistics, two women are raped in the country every hour. If further statistics are to be believed, every 10 hours a girl of age 1-10 is raped in India. These figures are truly shocking.

After analyzing the rape crime against women in Tiruchirappalli city for the period of 2012 to 2017, it showed that 7.3% of all crimes against women were rapes (Table1 & Fig.1). Maximum rapes were recorded in 2013, which is 32.3% and 9.7% in 2014 and 2015 respectively, which had been recorded as minimum. AWPS of Cantonment and Fort recorded the maximum and AWPS of Golden rock recorded the minimum rape cases.

Kidnapping

Kidnapping is taking away of a person by force, threat, or deceit, with intent to cause him or her to detain against his or her will. Kidnapping is done for ransom or for political power or for other purposes. Abduction is the taking away of a person by persuasion, by fraud, or by open force or violence by criminals⁷.

After studying the crime, kidnapping and abduction against women in Tiruchirappalli city from 2012 to 2017, it was found that the total kidnapping and abduction cases were 14.6% out of all other crimes against women in the study area. The highest number of kidnapping and abduction were recorded in 2012, which is 35.5%. It seems that the city was almost free from kidnapping and abduction in 2014 with minimum 1.6%. The maximum kidnappings were recorded in K.K. Nagar Police Station followed by Woraiyur, Government Police Station, Golden rock AWPS. The minimum was recorded in Cantonment AWPS.

Dowry Death

Almost all dowry deaths occur when the young woman, unable to bear the harassment and torture, commits suicide by hanging herself or consuming poison etc. Dowry deaths also include bride burning where brides are doused in kerosene and set ablaze by the husband or his family Teays, Wanda (Fall 1991)⁸.

While comparing the crime dowry death with other crimes against women of the study area from 2012 to 2017, that the maximum dowry death had been recorded in 2012 and 2015 with the same percentage 37.5 respectively. Total dowry deaths were 1.9% of all other crimes against women. The minimum was in 2016 with 25.5%. The city experienced no dowry death crime at all in the year 2013, 2014 and 2017. The maximum dowry death was recorded in AWPS Srirangam and minimum in Golden rock AWPS and K.K. Nagar Police Station.

Molestation

Molestation, the crime of sexual acts touching of private parts, exposure of genitalia, taking of pornographic pictures, rape, inducement of sexual acts with the molester⁹.

From the year 2012 to 2017, the crimes against women of the study area was found that the highest number of molestation had been recorded in 2013, which is 30.5 % and lowest in 2017 with 10.2 %. Total molestation was 13.9% recorded of all other crimes against women. The maximum molestation was recorded in Gandhi market Police station and AWPS of Cantonment and minimum was recorded in AWPS Fort and Edamalaipattipudur Police Station.

Sexual Harassment

Sexual harassment is bullying or coercion of a sexual nature and the unwelcome or inappropriate promise of rewards in exchange for sexual favors. Sexual harassment includes a range of actions from mild transgressions to sexual abuse or assault¹⁰.

The harasser can be the victim's administrator, a controller in another area, a co-worker, or a client or customer. Harassers or victims can be of any gender. Dziech, Billie Wright 2002¹¹.

While analyzing the crimes against women of the study area from 2012 to 2017, it was found that 81.3 % of sexual harassment was recorded in 2012, which is maximum, and 6.3% recorded as minimum in the year 2014. Total sexual harassment cases were 11.3% of all other crimes against women. From 2015 to 2017, the city was totally free from sexual harassment.

Cruelty by Husband

This crime involves the husband or relative of husband of a woman subjecting her to cruelty¹².

After analysing the crime against women in Tiruchirappalli city from 2012 to 2017, the total cruelty cases by the husband were 32.4% out of all other crimes against women in the study area. The highest number of cruelty by husband was recorded in 2015, which is 21.2%. It seems that the city was almost free from cruelty by husband in 2017 with minimum 6.6%. The maximum Cruelty by husband was recorded in AWPS of Cantonment, Golden rock, Fort and Srirangam. The minimum was recorded in Palakkarai Police Station.

Dowry Prohibition Act Cases

In some cases, the dowry system leads to crime against women, ranging from emotional abuse and injury to even deaths. The payment of dowry has long been prohibited under specific Indian laws including the Dowry Prohibition Act, 1961 and subsequently by Sections 304B and 498A of the Indian Penal Code¹³.

While comparing the crime of dowry prohibition act cases with other crimes against women of the study area from 2012 to 2017, it was found that the maximum dowry prohibition act cases had been recorded in 2013, which is 36.4%. Total dowry prohibition act cases were 5.2% of all other crimes against women. The minimum was in 2016 with 13.6%. The city experienced no dowry prohibition act cases crime at all in the year 2012 and 2015. The maximum Dowry prohibition act cases were recorded in AWPS of Cantonment, Fort and Srirangam. The minimum was recorded in AWPS of Golden rock.

POCSO Act Cases

In order to effectively address the sexual abuse and sexual exploitation of children, The Protection of Children from Sexual Offences Act (POCSO Act) 2012 was formulated. The Act also casts the police in the role of child protectors during the investigative process¹⁴.

From the year 2012 to 2017, the crimes against women of the study area was found that the highest number of POCSO Act cases had been recorded in 2017, which is 50.9 % and lowest in 2013 with 5.5 %. Total POCSO Act was 13.0% recorded of all other crimes against women. The maximum POCSO Act cases were recorded in AWPS of Cantonment, Fort, Golden rock and Srirangam. The minimum was recorded in Palakkarai, Airport and Golden rock Police Station.

CONCLUSION

Crimes against women in Tiruchirappalli city for the year 2012 to 2017, The highest crime was recorded in the year 2012 which is about 24.6 % followed by 18.5% in 2013, 16.1% in 2016, 14.2% in 2015, 13.7% in 2014 and 12.8% in 2017 respectively. The crimes against women had been decreasing from 2012 to 2014. There was slight increase in the crimes against women in the year 2015 and 2016, again the crimes decreased in the year 2017. From the above data, it was evident that

the city had the highest crime in cruelty by husband, which is about 32.4%. The lowest crime was dowry death, which is about 1.9%. From the above findings, we can conclude that the Tiruchirappalli city police administration had done a great job in reducing the crimes against women. However, they must continue to reduce the crimes and crimes against women perhaps by the use of the latest technology such as GPS and CCTV's at vulnerable spots thereby helping to reduce all crimes especially those against women.

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