

A SCRUTINY OF THE RELATION BETWEEN FAMILY VIOLENCE AND CRIME RATE AMONG THE TEENAGERS

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ABSTRACT

There has been observed an exponential increase in the teenage crime rate simultaneously with family violence in India. Juvenile delinquency has several associations with the environment in which they are cultured, of which their home and its occupants are vital components. It not only determines their mental and physical development, but also influences their amalgamation with the society. Objective: The objective of the present study is to analyse the status of domestic violence and teenage crime rate in India and thereby identify their association. Methodology: For the current study, secondary data from different published sources, related to crime statistics and family violence and its several aspects are analyzed using relevant statistical tools. Findings: Crime statistics reveal that 98% of the juvenile crime is committed by the teenagers aged 12 to 18 years. The cautioning fact observed is that 86% of these convicted/under trial juvenile lived with their parents or guardians while only 4% were homeless. This indicates that there must be some strong determinants in the house environment itself, which creates such divergent youth. Gender wise analysis reveals that the ratio of boys related to crime is more compared to girls. The study explores these areas of visible and invisible, direct and indirect, revealed and concealed aspects of family violence which is associated with the juvenile crime rate. It finds a strong association between increasing crime rate among the teenagers and domestic violence.

Keywords: Adolescent, Awareness, Crime, Family violence, Teenager.

INTRODUCTION

Family Violence or domestic violence (used synonymously) in any form radically affects the growth of the society at large. The issue is global observed in all societies irrespective of class, culture, economy, geography, religion, ethnic, or social background, etc. It is not only making headlines, but is deeply ingrained in the psyche of both the victims as well as the perpetrator and has a serious impact on health and mental condition of the battered person and other persons in the family. The issue is less understood and often misinterpreted. Domestic violence is the power misused to create fear and acquire control of an individual physically and mentally using several means. Domestic violence is one of the prickliest topics to be discussed about. The older people victimized by domestic violence are either reluctant or are made inaccessible so as not to reveal their plight. Many women are reluctant to be labelled as victims of domestic violence as they take it for granted and an accepted way of life, while the children are victims without even understanding for most of the time the reason for it. This makes the assessment of the real dimension of the phenomena more difficult other than only the reported cases which become visible. Among all these groups the most vulnerable age group is the

adolescents who, unlike the children are able to understand the violence against them, tolerate it if introvert or erupt if reactive, many a times with irreparable and long term consequences for the self, family, society and being the most productive age group, for the nation as a whole. Crime statistics reveal increasing crime record of the teenagers over the years. The cautioning fact observed is that the majority of these juvenile recorded for crime lived with their parents or guardian challenging the prevalent thought that the crime rate is more among the homeless children and youth. This signals the association between the adverse effect of domestic violence on the youth and their drive to crimeless.

In most cases of domestic violence, the victim remains tolerant and do not speak out anticipating social seclusion, for fear of being ridiculed and face humiliation, fear of becoming homeless or financially deprived if the victim is economically dependent on the perpetrators etc.

Domestic violence on teenagers has irreparable physical, mental and social consequences. The teenage group subject to this evil can again be grouped under two heads- those who have been subject to such violence from their childhood and the other who were exposed to it in their teenage hood. The consequences include physical impact like injury or diseases, low physical development among others. The mental consequences are like depression, introvert or extremely extrovert behavioral development, dependency and helplessness attitude, suicide, homicide, hateful attitude towards the violence perpetrators or the overall family, anxiety etc. The physical and mental consequences do have their overflow into the societal interaction of the adolescent in the form of lack of understanding towards others, adjustment problem towards siblings, peers and relatives, non-performers in the social platform where the domestic violence affects their health, education and healthy upbringing among others. In extreme form they take more horrific turns like addiction to intoxicants, physical and mental adultery, and no respect to the physical self or of that of others, developing anti-social attitudes or falling prey to such elements in the form of theft, rape, murder, dacoit, terrorism by many trackless youth in the long run.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Domestic violence refers to the direct and indirect violence in the life of adolescent and children in the family. There is a dearth of research on domestic violence on teenagers, more so because of the absence of any standardized concept of defining what the issue is as it ranges from physical torture to mental agony inflicted on the teenagers within the home premises. But the question arises about the extent and type of violence so as to enumerate it to a quantifiable level. Adolescent satisfaction was found to be highly associated in a positive direction with the parents' physical and verbal non-violence while consistently decreased with their violent attitude in any form and severely with the physical violence Alejo (2014). Exposure to maltreatment and physical abuse are higher for children living in families with occurrence of domestic violence (Appel & Holden, 1998). Teenagers develop difficulties in adjustment if they are exposed to frequent domestic violence which takes forms like aggression and oppositional behaviour, anxiety, symptoms of depressions, social and cognitive problems (Jouriles et al., 2001). Preisler & Stewart (2018) in their research titled 'Running the Numbers: Domestic Violence in Child Welfare' finds that those children who are exposed to domestic violence are often vulnerable to additional types of traumatic events. Teenager suffers a lot in a domestic violent family. McCloskey (2001) is of the opinion that those who stay for a long time with individuals with

aggressive behaviour are more at risk of becoming victim of domestic violence. Teenager led to aggressive temperament are often found to react to situations without any rhyme and reason. They often react to inter-parental conflict. Further, it is also observed that in the process, there is a detrimental effect and the teenager often goes through a psychological distress. It is often hard for the teenagers to cope up with the violence, for they are sometimes not aware of the happenings around them (Masten & Garmezy, 1985). They are often found hiding themselves in a helpless condition when violence occurs. Most often, children use emotional distancing or distraction techniques, such as going to their rooms to hide or playing loud music to drown out the noise of the conflict (Lee, 2001; Luthar et al., 2000). Children are found to develop negative behaviours in their effort to cope up with the dysfunctional interactions between their parents and thus to alleviate the current family distress, (McCubbin et al., 2012) but they are often proven to be maladaptive in the long run exposing him/her to more riskier problems (Cummings, 1997).

It was also found from the research that few adolescent even learn to cope up with the domestic violence as they often get used to it. Children in India opine that stronger anti-violence laws will contribute towards curbing violence against them, according to a recent survey focusing on children's views from across the world (Economic Times). Martin et al. (1987) An understanding of the effects of intimate partner violence and domestic violence on adolescents is necessary. Studies reflect that roughly 15.5 million children in the United States witness at least one incident of parental violence per year and approximately seven million adolescents reside in residences that are identified as violent, which are typically domestic environments (DeBoard-Lucas & Grych, 2011). Remarried families are no exception to Domestic violence. The teenager associate with any of the married couple has a risk of adapting and adjusting. Many adolescent, though adapt themselves in a new family set up other refuse to do so. A resiliency model of family stress, Adjustment and adaptation was used to conceptualise the adaptation and its post crisis. The model further explains that some families recover from the crisis and other do not. What make the scenario more complex is the remarriage and the responsibility attached to the individual where stepchildren are involved. Remarriage involves a complex set of changes from pre-divorce tensions, separation, reorganisation of households and parent-child relationships, to remarriage and stepfamily integration (Walsh, 2012). The survey also went through Resilience factor, that is an exposure of an individual to a severe diversity that emphasizes on careful appraisal of violence concerns. Though there is a lot of ambiguity in its representations and definitions, remarks that many children flourished despite their high risk status in rejoinder to adversity and the very concept of resilience has changed over the years (Biswas, 2016). A further peep into the literature on resilience shows that in a changing scenario new susceptibility and strength emerged (Warner & Smith, 1982).

Objectives

The objective of the present study is to analyse the status of domestic violence and teenage crime rate in India and thereby identify their association.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The present study is based on the analysis of the secondary data collected from different official publications like National Crime Records Bureau, Ministry of Home Affairs, GoI, New

Delhi, published journals etc. The secondary data would be analysed to find the extent of domestic violence over the years as well as the crime records of the teenagers to scrutinise the underlying linkage between these two social evils with immense adverse repercussions on the individuals and families at the micro level and the society at large at macro level. The data was analysed using various descriptive and statistical tools as per relevance.

FINDINGS

Teenagers are a vulnerable group who are half way between the children and the rational adulthood. Unlike the children, they understand the evil of domestic violence inflicted against them and unlike the adult, they mostly do not have the tolerant attitude. The present study seeks to explore this association between domestic violence and the youth's crime rate in the society. The findings of the present study are given in this section.

Insight on Domestic Violence from Several Perspectives

Domestic violence is a complicated process by its very nature of being widespread across geographical regions, ages, gender, races, cultures, castes or class distinctions yet reflecting wide variation in terms of their tolerable level of existence and acceptance and the dynamic development of it between the cohabiting partners from its inception to its cessation. Its culmination with a meaningful solution again varies across spatial and cultural boundaries depending on the involvement of the third party to resolve the issue like the other family members, law/police involvement, court or out-of-court resolution, legal provisions and their awareness and acceptance etc.

Several features of 'Domestic violence', makes its study intriguing. Referring to its gender perspective, domestic violence of males against females is given more significance almost across all cultures and classes in terms of its severity of short and long term impact on the overall physical and mental well-being of the abused and the abuser, relative to such cases of violence of females on males or the same sex violence. It takes several forms ranging from physical and mental intimidation, social and economic abuse, threats, harm and injury, sexual assault, human trafficking to rape etc. This may again vary in terms of their frequency of occurrence which may be from rare or occasional episodes to being extremely chronic incidences, as medium used.

In terms of age perspectives, domestic violence shows variation in its form such as the adult dominance on the minors like abusing the children irrespective of their gender through forced labour for socio-economic gains, abusing the domestic helpers/maids by physical, mental or financial intimidation and others, spouse violence etc. However the violence on juvenile is very detrimental because of its consequences which affects the stability of the entire family. And consequentially, the disturbances in the family spheres overflows its impact to the society and nation as a whole.

In terms of the impact of domestic violence, though the severity varies according to its short and long term intensity, it is more pertinent for the violence on the juvenile. It takes the shapes of their psychological and social deprivation, emotional stress physical torture or mental instability or in extreme cases suicide of the abused to cite a few instances. The youth who are considered the foundation of a household when undergoes such violence and its disruptive consequences shakes the stability of the family itself leading to such social negative externalities

like unstable family, divorce, uncared children deprived of either of the parents or both, improper education or discontinuity, lack of moral and emotional attachments, addiction of the direct or indirect participants to the domestic violence (i.e., parents, the children or their family members) to liquor, drugs or other intoxicants etc.

The effect of the domestic violence on juveniles are not confined to the family and that is what makes it a troublesome issue. The youth lost physically, mentally or emotionally to domestic violence has in its opportunity cost a productive hand which goes waste. Over that in case they give up to anti-social activities, they are an added burden on the entire society not to speak of the social and economic losses they cause.

It is also pertinent to introspect how far the existing laws are able to prevent the diverging youth from the path of crime. The concern is more for those juveniles subject to years of domestic violence exhausting their drive to lead a normal and productive life. And given the sensitiveness of the issue, the complexity is heightened when legal rods are used to straighten the domestic curves.

Juvenile/Teenager Crime Statistics in India:

In India, Juvenile crime is related to criminals/under trials below 18 years of age. According to Crime in India, GoI, 2016, report the juvenile crime (which consists of crime under the IPC (Indian Penal code) as well as the SLL (Special and Local Laws) committed by children below 12 years is 1.4% of the total juvenile crime, by children from 12 to 16 years at 24.8% while that committed by children from 12 years to 18 years is 73.8%. Thus, over 99% of the juvenile crime in India are committed by teenagers from 12 years to 18 years.

TABLE 1 CRIME COMMITTED BY TEENAGERS UNDER IPC CASES (TOP 10 CRIMES IN DESCENDING ORDER)						
SN	IPC cases	Both boys+ girls	IPC cases	Boys	IPC cases	Girls
1	Other IPC cases	12137	Counterfeiting	11488	Forgery	649
2	Theft	10139	Unlawful assembly	10022	Grievous hurt	117
3	Criminal trespasses/ burglary	3812	Extortion	3790	Insult to modesty of women	59
4	Rape	2054	Causing death by negligence	2043	Murder	56
5	Rioting	2026	Kidnapping and abduction	1970	counterfeiting	39
6	robbery	1798	Insult to modesty of women	1795	Attempt to commit culpable homicide	22
7	Assault on women with intent to outrage their modesty	1627	Attempt to commit murder	1613	Causing death by negligence	21

8	Grievous hurt	1418	robbery	1359	Attempt to commit murder	20
9	Kidnapping and abduction	1364	Murder	1354	Rape	14
10	Attempt to commit murder	1278	Rape	1257	criminal trespasses/burglary	11

Source: Compiled from the Crime in India Report, Government of India, 2016

Table 1 and Table 2 provide details about the type of crimes in which these teenagers are involved. Table 1 gives the top 10 major crimes committed by these teenagers under the IPC cases in descending order in terms of persons involved. Table 2 gives a similar value of the SLL cases of the 5 top most committed crimes.

TABLE 2 SLL CASES OF TEENAGE CRIMES (TOP 5 CRIMES IN DESCENDING ORDER)						
S.no	SLL Cases	Boys	SLL Cases	Girls	SLL Cases	Boys & Girls
1	Other SLL crimes	921	other SLL crimes	16	other SLL crimes	937
2	Gambling Act, 1867	258	Prohibition act(state)	7	Gambling Act, 1867	258
3	Arms act,1959	241	Narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances act,1985	4	Excise Act,1944	243
4	Excise Act,1944	241	Excise Act,1944	2	Arms act,1959	241
5	Juvenile justice (care and protection of children) Act,2000	225	SC/ST (prevention of atrocities) act, 1989	2	Juvenile justice (care and protection of children) Act,2000	225

Source: Compiled from the Crime in India Report, Government of India, 2016

The top 10 IPC cases committed by the teenagers are found to be the IPC cases like theft, criminal trespasses/burglary, rape, rioting, assault on women to outrage their modesty, grievous hurt, kidnapping and abduction and attempt to commit murder for both the gender combined. However a gender wise analysis of the type of crimes shows that boys related major IPC cases are counterfeited, unlawful assembly, extortion causing death by negligence, kidnapping and abduction while it is forgery, grievous hurt, and insult to modesty of women, murder and counterfeiting for girls taking the first 5 major IPC cases in descending order.

Teenage crime is more among the boys at 98% while the rest 2% is for girls. This is true for crimes committed both under the IPC cases and SLL cases. The teenage crimes under the IPC cases are more than the crimes specified under the SLL cases. For SLL cases, it can be noted that the overall type of crimes for both the gender taken together varies with the type of SLL cases committed by the teenage boys because in terms of the overall percentage of SLL cases for girls is almost negligible at 1% while it is 99% for boys (Table 3 and 4).

TABLE 3			
GENDER WISE TEENAGE CRIME STATISTICS (IN %)			
	Boys	Girls	Boys and Girls
Total cognizable IPC crimes	0.92	0.02	0.95
Total cognisable SLL crimes	0.05	0	0.05
Grand Total (IPC +SLL)	0.98	0.02	1

Source: Calculated from the Crime in India Report, Government of India, 2016

TABLE 4			
EDUCATION AND FAMILY BACKGROUND OF JUVENILES ARRESTED 2016 (INDIA)			
Education	Juvenile arrested	Family background	Juvenile arrested
	(in %)		(in %)
Illiteracy	12	Living with parents	86
Primary	33	Living with guardians	10
Above primary but below matric/H.sec	45	Homeless	4
Matric/ Higher secondary and above	10		
Total	100		100

Source: Calculated from the Crime in India Report, Government of India, 2016

It is seen from the juvenile statistics that 99% of the juvenile crimes are committed by the teenagers, from 12 years to 18 years. Again between male to female ratio of the teenagers' crime, 98% are committed by the male gender. The cautioning fact observed is that 86 % of the juvenile found guilty of the crime committed or under trial were found to be living with their parents at the time of committing the crime and 10% with their guardian and only 4% were homeless. This challenges the prevalent thought that the crime rate is more among the homeless children and youth. This also signals the link between the home environment and their effect on the youth and their drive to crime. So the next section discusses about the cases of domestic violence, their statistics and types in India over the years.

Scrutiny of the Relations between Domestic Violence and Teenage Crime Rate in India from the Secondary Data

The percentage variation in the IPC crime incidence cases had increased by 3.4% from 2014-15 while it has shown an increase of 0.9% over 2015-16. This, however, gives no point to cheer as it shows stability in the already high crime cases which may again further increase in future. During the same period the variation in SLL cases has shown an increase of 2.4% in 2014-15 and by 5.4% in 2015-16. Overall, there has been a 2.6% increase in both the IPC and SLL cases together over 2015-16. The top five states in decreasing order of IPC cases based on incidence are Madhya Pradesh (MP), Maharashtra, Kerala, Rajasthan and Tamil Nadu. In case of

SLL, Kerala has the highest occurrence of 24.1% followed by Gujarat and Tamil Nadu at 15.5% each. In the country as a whole, Delhi has the highest reported number of IPC crime rate cases of 974.9 followed by Kerala of 727.6 which are much higher than the national average of 233.6.

Table 5 show the major offences under IPC/SLL cases which have domestic violence linkages as given below.

TABLE 5		
IPC/SLL CASES		
Category of Crime offences	Crimes linked with domestic violence	States having the highest occurrences in India
Offences affecting the human body (30% of the total IPC crime)	Causing death by negligence (15.6%)	Uttar Pradesh (UP): 11.2%
	And Grievous hurt (9.9%)	Madhya Pradesh (MP): 9.2%
		Maharashtra: 8.9%
Crime against women	Cruelty by husband or his relatives (32.6%)	UP: 14.5%
	Assault on women intending to outrage her modesty (25%)	West Bengal(WB): 9.6%
	Kidnapping & Abduction of women (19%)	
	Rape (11.5%)	
	Dowry Deaths (Sec.304B, IPC)	UP, Haryana, Odisha, MP, Jharkhand
	Abetment of suicide of women (Sec.306IPC)	Telengana, Himachal Pradesh (HP), MP, Andhra Pradesh, Chhattisgarh
	Causing miscarriage without women's consent (Sec.313 IPC)	UP, WB
	Under Protection of Women from domestic violence Act, 2005	Bihar, Kerala, MP, UP, HP
	Women and Girls victim of rape under 6 years of age	Maharashtra, UP, Kerala, MP, Karnataka
	Cases of rape victims where the offenders were known to the victim	UP, MP, Maharashtra, Rajasthan and Assam
Crime against children	Under the Protection of children from sexual offence Act, 2012	UP, Maharashtra, MP

Source: Compiled from the Crime in India Report, Government of India, 2016

Domestic violence has several components as it is an umbrella term. The major among them being the violence on women, children and aged population. However it is the violence on women and children (and adolescents) specifically which is the focus of this paper. The simple incidence of visible domestic violence points to a plethora of several underlying complexities ranging from physically and mentally ill/injured women, children, family members, family disruptions, losing faith in family's protective environment and all these usually deviates the victim(here adolescents, who may be the direct prey or may have been a spectator of the brutalities being conducted on other family members like his/her mother/sister etc) away from home in many cases into the crime world as the above statistics clearly reflects, which are an outburst of their physical and mental exposure to domestic violence.

The Juvenile in conflict with law has increased by 7.2% over 2015-16 varying from theft (7717 cases), rape (1903 cases), under Arms act (1959 cases) and under juvenile justice (care and protection of Children Act, 2000). 94% of these juveniles are apprehended for IPC cases and 6%

for SLL related cases. 74% of these juvenile belongs to the age group of 16-18 years. Again the states which have the largest number of IPC and SLL related cases are also those which have the highest number of juvenile reported cases. In this category majorly comes UP, MP, Maharashtra, WB, Kerala, Bihar etc. as reported above. These are again the very states in which family related atrocities are more as observed above.

In almost all these states more than 90% of the juvenile arrested lived with their parents (average 80%) or guardians (10%) and only 10% were found to be homeless. Of these again 80% were either illiterate/primary/above matric or 20% belonged to the category of having an educational status of above matric/H.Sc category (Table 6 shows some major occurrences states Viv-a-vis the national average). Thus an underlying link is observed between the family disruptions and upbringing of children in homes and the increasing crime rate among the teenagers.

Table 6 STATEWISE SEGREGATION OF THE EDUCATIONAL AND FAMILY STATUS OF THE JUVENILE BOOKED UNDER IPC/SLL CASES IN INDIA (IN %)									
States	Illiterate	Primary	Above matric but below matric/H.Sc*	Matric /H.Sc & above	Total	Living with parents	Living with guardians	Homeless	Total
UP	18	32	39	11	100	75	18	7	100
MP	12	32	41	15	100	86	11	3	100
Maha	5	36	53	6	100	88	10	2	100
WB	6	28	64	2	100	80	17	3	100
India	12	33	45	10	100	87	10	3	100

There is paucity of data on domestic violence to link it with individual cases of juvenile violence. To scrutinize the association between juvenile crime and domestic violence the data available for 2016 for the 29 states of the country, in the National Crime Records of the Government of India have been used. Here the variables assault on women and dowry cases have been used as proxies to represent 'domestic violence under the pretext that the families with such issues are disbalanced leading to uncared children, physical and mental disruptions of the victim, her children, family members etc. The juvenile crime IPC cases has been taken to analyse the association between the increasing crime rate among teenagers and domestic violence. The result of this analysis using an F-test is shown below in Table 7.

TABLE 7 F-TEST RESULTS BETWEEN DOMESTIC VIOLENCE AND TEENAGE CRIME RATE			
IPC crime cases of Juvenile	Assault on Women	IPC crime cases of Juvenile	Dowry cases
F calculated : 1153.9 > F critical value for 29 d.f : 1.86		F calculated : 73000.01 > F critical value for 29 d.f : 1.86	

Source: Calculated from data of the Crime in India Report, Government of India, 2016

Thus it is observed that in both cases the calculated value of F-test is greater than the critical value of F at 29 degrees of freedom. Thus we reject the null hypothesis and accept that

there exist a strong association between the increasing crime rate among the teenagers and the family violence.

CONCLUSION

To conclude, domestic violence surfaces only in cases of visible physical injuries to the victim while a major part remains invisible due to its varied perspective like gender issues, medium used, severity of impact, societal norms, age of the victim as well as legal perceptions. However the increasing cases of crime rate among the teenagers are a manifestation of these visible and invisible angles of domestic violence and not to exclude the sort of family environment provided in upbringing the children and nurturing the adolescents. In India particularly this is taking a lethal materialization with the gradual disintegration of the joint family system and rampant adoption of nuclear system either voluntarily or involuntarily due to the changing socioeconomic scenario requiring job/education or other issues related migration. The cases which have shivered the nation like that of “*Nirbha*” and “*Priyanka*” all committed by teenagers are only a sight of the tip of the iceberg which has surfaced indicating the huge hidden dimension of the issue. Under such situation these vices cannot only be tackled with legal cuffs as is evident from its expanding reach in spite of several acts. This requires a wholesome approach to tackle and uproot the spreading tantrums of these problems. The foremost among these measures is to stop domestic/family violence. Though the existing acts may halt the aftermath of family violence resulting in physical injury and death to some extent, it fails to curd its indirect venom in disrupting the physical and mental growth and development of the children and/or teenagers in such families. Some measures can be inculcating values and ethics education right in the curriculum at all levels compulsorily and imparted both in theory and practice through several incentives and demonstrations, counselling by creating a platform to generate awareness among all the stakeholders like the adolescent, parents and the society at large about the short and long term consequences of domestic violence.

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