

IMPACT OF EDUCATIONAL QUALIFICATIONS AND NEW SAFEGUARDING LAWS ON CRIME AGAINST WOMEN: A CRITICAL STUDY IN LUCKNOW

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ABSTRACT

Violence against women remains a pervasive global issue, with substantial repercussions on their physical, mental, and societal well-being. This study investigates the prevalence and trends of gender-based violence in Lucknow, India, a city renowned for its cultural heritage but currently grappling with a rising incidence of crimes against women. The study employs a blend of qualitative and quantitative techniques, including semi-structured interviews, focus group discussions, and participant observation, to examine the impact of legal changes and educational qualifications on the occurrence of crimes targeting women. The results indicate a significant correlation between legal reforms and the prevalence of gender-based violence, emphasising the crucial role of legislative frameworks in addressing this societal problem. Moreover, the study highlights the influence of educational attainment on awareness of laws safeguarding women, underscoring the importance of education in fostering societal change and efforts to mitigate harm. Despite certain advancements, the occurrence of violence against women is still impacted by societal attitudes and perspectives. This underscores the significance of enacting all-encompassing policies that integrate legal, educational, and sociological activities. This study deepens our understanding of the many factors that influence gender-based violence and offers valuable insights for devising strategies to create safer environments for women in Lucknow and other regions.

Keywords: Crime against women, Lucknow, Educational Qualification, Safeguarding laws.

INTRODUCTION

Women are highly susceptible to violence, making them one of the most vulnerable demographics. The United Nations General Assembly has provided a definition for violence against women, stating that it encompasses any form of gender-based violence that causes physical, sexual, or psychological harm to women. In 1993, the World Conference on Human Rights in Vienna acknowledged 'gender violence' as a violation of human rights for the first time. (Vicente et al., 2019)

Gender inequality is the foundation of cultural traditions in numerous countries, leading to a rise in violence against women when efforts to achieve equality after colonisation were unsuccessful. India, with a population of over 1210 million people according to the 2011 census, is experiencing an alarming increase in crimes against women, which has become a significant concern. (Bradley et al., 2022). Gender-based violence is firmly ingrained in the institutions of India and it arises within the framework of religious, cultural, or social practices. The enforcement of patriarchal principles sustains gender disparity by subjecting men and women to distinct regulations, thereby validating acts of violence against women. In India, the sex-gender system subjects girls and young women to various sorts of violence, such as selective abortion and infanticide, harassment, rape, kidnapping, dowry-related homicide, and murder. These acts prevent them from living a life with dignity. (Patel, 2015).

Although Lucknow holds significant historical and cultural significance, it has recently faced scrutiny due to an alarming increase in recorded crimes targeting women. With the steady increase in the incidence of sexual harassment, assault, and other crimes against women, there is a growing concern for their safety and security. (Tripathi et al., 2017). It is imperative to put an end to violence against women. Diverse initiatives have been orchestrated to combat violence against women in multiple regions of the country, including Lucknow. This pressing issue not only jeopardises the physical and emotional health of women but also highlights deficiencies in the social structure that allow such

violence to endure. Lucknow is not the only city facing issues with crimes against women, but its reputation as a model of refinement and cultural unity makes the situation much more noticeable. The prevalence of gender-based violence in this city of Nawabs, known for its long-standing tradition of civility, raises significant questions about the cultural underpinnings. It highlights the presence of inherent vulnerabilities that allow these crimes to continue. (Rizvi & Meena, 2024)

Violence refers to the utilisation of physical force with the intention of causing harm to individuals or damaging property. Violence can inflict physical suffering on individuals who directly experience it, as well as emotional distress on those who witness it. Vandalism is the illegal use of physical force to intentionally cause damage or injury to property. In certain legal countries, explicit threats are also regarded as acts of violence. Violence can be defined as a severe manifestation of aggressiveness, encompassing acts such as assault, rape, or murder. Violence can be attributed to various factors, such as feelings of frustration, exposure to violent media, violence within the household or community, and a tendency to perceive others' actions as hostile even in ambiguous situations. Additionally, certain risk factors like alcohol consumption, insults, and other forms of provocation, as well as environmental conditions like high temperatures and overcrowding, can also contribute to an increased likelihood of aggression. (Sharma & Novelty Journals, 2015)

Education is a pivotal moment in the women's suffrage movement since it enables them to challenge their traditional positions and revolutionise their lives. Only until the young ladies of our country achieve empowerment, which is just one year away, can this become a reality. (Bhaskar, 2021) Agrawal and Salve (1992) contend that education enables women to develop mental resilience by equipping them with knowledge about optimal physical well-being, hence enhancing their mental health. Women have demonstrated superiority over men in various sectors, including classroom practice, healthcare, youth service, and medical fields. Women's empowerment is crucial for the advancement of economic, educational, familial, intellectual, psychological, and creative growth. Education and literacy empower women. Formal schooling, especially education among youngsters, is the sole means for a society or an individual to attain economic growth and development. (Department of Human Resource Management, 2022)

LITERATURE REVIEW

Several research have been undertaken to forecast the aggression exhibited by males across various age groups and circumstances. A study was conducted to assess and distinguish the effects of general risk variables for delinquency by examining distinct acts of recidivism. Additionally, to assess the differences in the occurrence of general delinquent risk characteristics among different offender categories. Longitudinal study has examined multiple predictors associated with significant criminality in early adulthood. Multiple pieces of evidence have been examined on sexual crimes perpetrated against women and girls worldwide. Furthermore, some factors have been identified that can prevent the occurrence of crime. (Put et al., 2020)

Several public health initiatives aim to mitigate various forms of criminal activity, including IPV, rape, assault, and murder. However, there is a lack of significant efforts to address the underlying factors that contribute to crime. A study has been undertaken that examines the hypotheses that explain the causes of violence. The study investigated the underlying factors contributing to the physical abuse of women. The study contended that developing distinct remedies for each kind of crime or violence is a less successful method. Therefore, rather than assessing crimes on an individual basis, it is necessary to use a comprehensive strategy that will aid in identifying the shared underlying factors contributing to violence. According to research, it is crucial to focus on preventing crimes against women. (Fleming, 2015)

A study conducted in India utilised data from the National Crime Records Bureau (NCRB) (2005) and the National Family Health Survey (NFS) (2005) to assess the extent of underreporting of sexual and physical violence in cases classified as 'crimes against women'. In 2005, the survey examined instances

of violence against women perpetrated by husbands, with a notable prevalence of violence committed by males who were not the victims' husbands. Out of every 100 cases, 6 were perpetrated by individuals other than the victim's spouse, whereas the majority of sexual violence was carried out by the spouses of the survivors. The number of women who encountered domestic violence perpetrated by their husbands is 40 times more than the number of women who experienced violence from men who were not their husbands (or from non-intimate perpetrators). According to the survey, only 1% of incidents of sexual violence or criminality committed by husbands were reported to the police, while 2% of cases of physical abuse were recorded. In the case of non-partner physical violence, only 1% of events are reported to the police. (Simister, 2018)

The study examines the violation of women's rights in India, the concept of womanhood in India, different viewpoints on women's rights, the influence of patriarchal norms on the pursuit of equality, and the legal status of women. Additionally, addressing the constitutional provisions on women's rights and gender discrimination within a culture that is predominantly male-dominated. The paper is constructed using secondary data and employs a descriptive research style. (Salagare, 2018)

This comprehensive manual on women's legal rights has been compiled to provide a fundamental understanding to students and staff of IIT Kanpur. This text serves as the primary material for organising a 3-day course on legal rights and covers a broad range of issues. (Majlis, 2018)

Throughout history, women in India have been regarded with deep respect and admiration. As a result of societal developments, their status, role, and level of respect have been shaped. Women were once revered as divine beings, serving as a source of power and support for their fathers, husbands, and sons in society. (Gorain & Sonowal, 2023) They were content - possessing nothing, they had everything. However, there has been a significant and sudden shift in the societal position of women under the guise of advocating for their rights and seeking justice. The emerging concept of social globalisation aims to provide diverse perspectives on women's identities. This article aims to provide an overview of the impact of globalisation on women in India and assess the extent to which it has been successful in redefining their status. (Mishra, 2018)

The Constitution guarantees gender equality and authorises the state to implement affirmative action policies in favour of women. Nevertheless, when it comes to women's human rights in India, there exists a significant disparity between theoretical principles and actual implementation. Indian society is characterised by male dominance, with men consistently holding a superior position. Women in India frequently encounter discrimination, unfairness, and humiliation. Despite women having greater rights than men in India, the condition of women in the country is extremely distressing. This article aims to provide a comprehensive overview of the constitutional and legal rights afforded to women in India. (Journal, 2020)

Objectives

1. To study the impact of amendments in the laws on crime against women in Lucknow.
2. To study the impact of educational qualification on crime against women in Lucknow.

Hypothesis

H0: There is no significant influence of amendments in the laws over crime against woman

H1: There is a significant influence of amendments in the laws over crime against woman

H0: Educational qualifications do not significantly impact awareness of laws protecting women.

H2: Educational qualifications do significantly impact awareness of laws protecting women.

METHODOLOGY

The study utilises purposeful sampling to choose participants from a wide range of backgrounds, such as legal experts, law enforcement officials, educators, women's rights activists, survivors of gender-based violence, and individuals with diverse educational backgrounds. This ensures that the study

includes representation from different demographic characteristics. Data collection for this study involves using a mixed-method approach, which includes conducting semi-structured interviews, focus group discussions (FGDs), and participant observation. These methods are used to investigate perspectives, experiences, and attitudes related to crime against women, legislation amendments, and the impact of education. Thematic analysis is utilised to detect repetitive patterns, themes, and narratives within qualitative data obtained from interviews, FGDs, and participant observation. The analysis specifically examines the effects of legal changes, educational qualifications, and their intersections on crimes committed against women. An analysis is conducted to explore the connections and tensions between objectives in order to cultivate a comprehensive comprehension of the topic.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Information was gathered from many sources. The analysis revealed that among the 60 participants, 28.3% were under the age of 25, 35.0% were between the ages of 26 and 36, 18.3% were between the ages of 37 and 47, and the remaining respondents were 48 years old or above.

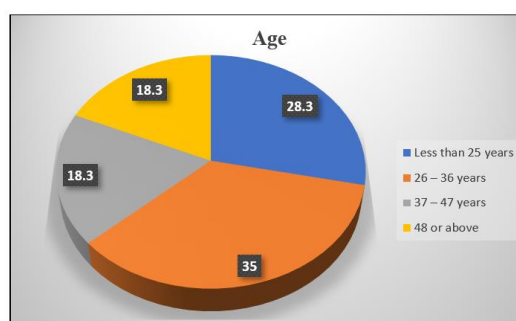


Figure 1. Age of respondents

It was concluded that out of 60 respondents, 21.7% of respondents were male and 78.3% of respondents were female.

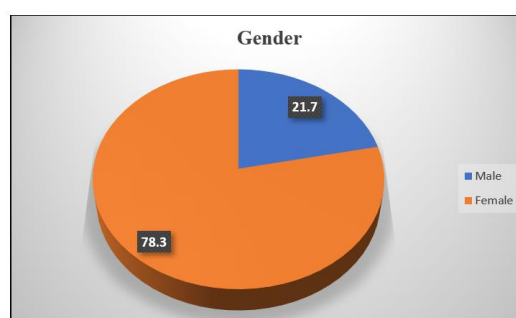


Figure 2. Gender of respondents

The findings revealed that among the 60 participants, 33.3% possessed a 10th grade education, 26.7% had completed 12th grade, 23.3% held a bachelor's degree, and 16.7% had qualifications other than those mentioned.

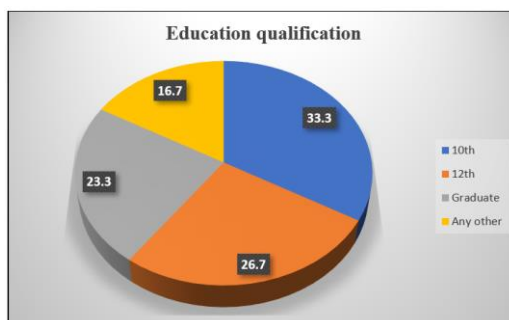


Figure 3. Education Qualification of respondents

The findings revealed that among the 60 respondents, 76.7% expressed agreement with the safeguards established by international human rights law and the Indian constitution for the protection of women's dignity. Conversely, 23.3% of respondents disagreed with these safeguards.



Figure 4. The safeguards provided internationally by human rights law and nationally by constitution of India for protection of dignity of women.

The findings indicate that 58.3% of respondents agreed that Indian laws have effectively eradicated crimes such as domestic violence, child marriage, child sexual abuse, rape, sexual harassment, dowry, dowry deaths, acid attacks, and human trafficking against women. Conversely, 41.7% of respondents disagreed with this assessment.

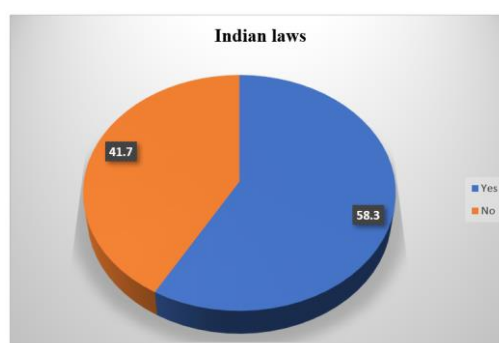


Figure 5. Indian laws

The study found that 58.3% of the 60 respondents agreed that the backward mindset of society is one of the main reasons why women still face unfavourable conditions in certain cities/states. On the other hand, 41.7% of the respondents disagreed with this notion.

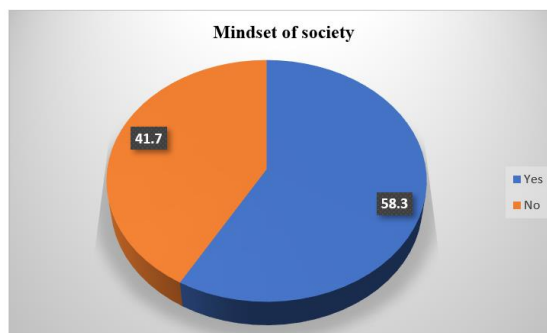


Table 6. Mindset of society

The findings revealed that among the 60 respondents, 40.0% expressed agreement about the need for stricter measures to protect women in such places, while 60.0% expressed disagreement with the notion that more rigorous provisions are necessary for safeguarding women in such areas.

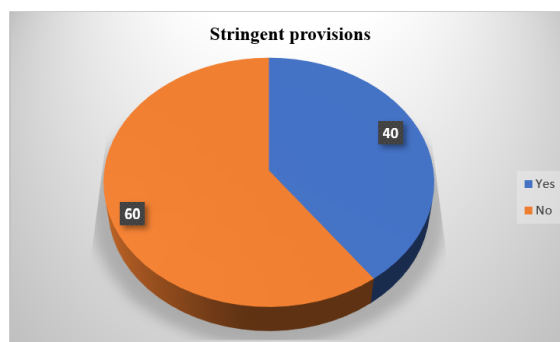


Figure 7. Stringent provisions

Hypothesis Testing

H0: There is no significant influence of amendments in the laws over crime against woman.

H1: There is a significant influence of amendments in the laws over crime against woman.

Based on the table, we determined that the chi-square values for the influence of amendments in the laws on crime against women were 1.454, 3.42, and 4.211, with a p-value of 0.04. These values were lower than the significance level of 0.05, indicating that we accepted the alternate hypothesis, which states that there is a significant influence of amendments in the laws on crime against women.

Crosstab				
Count				
		human rights law and national		Total
		Yes	No	
witnessed an incident of crime against women in Lucknow city	Yes	28	11	39
	No	18	3	21
Total		46	14	60
Chi-square		1.454	p-value	0.22
witnessed an incident of crime against women in State	Yes	35	7	42
	No	11	7	18
Total		46	14	60
Chi-square		3.42	p-value	0.03*
any horrific news of crime against women in Lucknow	Yes	35	6	41
	No	11	7	19
Total		46	14	60
Chi-square		4.211	p-value	0.0401**

Table 1. Hypothesis 1

H0: There is no significant influence of educational qualification on awareness of woman protection laws.

H2: There is a significant influence of educational qualification on awareness of woman protection laws.

Based on the data presented in the table, we determined that the chi-square value for educational qualification's impact on awareness of woman protection laws was 3.93, with a p-value of 0.04. Since both values were below the threshold of 0.05, we accepted the alternate hypothesis, which states that there is a significant influence of educational qualification on awareness of woman protection laws.

Table 2. Hypothesis 1

Crosstabulation				
Count				
		Sexual Assault and violence against women		Total
		Yes	No	
Education Qualification	10 th	12	8	20
	12 th	11	5	16
	Graduate	11	3	14
	Any other	8	2	10
Total		42	18	60
Chi-square		3.93	p-value	0.045*

CONCLUSION

The study highlights a significant influence of legislative amendments on the incidence of crimes directed towards women in Lucknow. The application of chi-square testing has verified that modifications in legislation have a measurable impact on the reduction or escalation of crimes specifically aimed at women inside the city. There is a strong association between an individual's educational attainment and their knowledge of laws related to the safeguarding of women. The study suggests that those with greater levels of education have a more thorough understanding of laws designed to protect women, underscoring the importance of education in raising awareness and reducing gender-based violence. A significant number of participants acknowledge that a backward mindset in society contributes to the persistent prevalence of violence against women. However, there are differing viewpoints on the need for imposing more stringent restrictions to guarantee the safety of women in areas like Lucknow. The majority of participants recognise the importance of legal safeguards provided by international human rights legislation and the Indian constitution in protecting the dignity of women. This underscores the necessity of implementing legal frameworks to address gender-based violence. While a significant number of respondents recognise the efficacy of Indian laws in eliminating various crimes against women, there is still a considerable difference of opinion on this matter. This highlights the need for continuous efforts to strengthen legislative frameworks and ensure their effective implementation.

In summary, the study emphasises the complex connection between changes in laws, academic success, public opinions, and the effectiveness of existing legal frameworks in addressing violence directed towards women. The essay highlights the importance of implementing comprehensive approaches that include legal, educational, and societal interventions to effectively combat gender-based violence and create safer environments for women in Lucknow and other areas.

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