

## REPORTING RAPE CASES IN INDIA

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### ABSTRACT

Rape is considered to be, one of the most heinous crimes towards the individual and its individuality. It has been observed in the studies that, there is a huge gap between the actual rape cases occurring, and the rape cases that are being reported to the authorities. It is assumed that, the increased number of such crimes will lead to an appropriate trial and justice, for the victim. Further, it will facilitate in decreasing such crimes in India. The present study, aims at understanding the major reasons, behind the reporting of rape cases. The data for the study was collected, from the NCRB (National Crime Record Bureau) and GOI (Government of India), websites. The results indicate that, if the literacy rate of woman will increase, the reporting of such crime will also increase. An educated woman will be a better custodian, of her rights and responsibilities.

**KEYWORDS:** Rape, Literacy Rate, Sex Ratio, Population Density & Regions

### INTRODUCTION

India is considered the most promising nation, among other developing nations. The diversified and young population dividend, gives a boost to the greater possibility, of a better future for the nation. India is progressing in leaps and bound, in all the related aspects of development, but among all these things there is something which keeps troubling the intellectuals, and make them rethink about the social and demographic structure of our country. The increasing rate of crime against woman in India, has been a big problem, faced by the government and its officials. It is very important to control the sexual violence, against the woman.

Sexual violence against woman poses an anxious situation, for Indian authorities. In recent times, all the governments have focused on, the increasing number of crimes against woman and seem worried, by the volcanic growth in the numbers. According to reports published in Times of India (2008), rape is the fastest growing crime in India. In the past few years, the report from ministry suggests that, India stands at the third rank, on the crimes against woman. Here, the study focuses on the rape cases that are reported, the research does not include the number of cases which are not reported. According to sources only 10% of the rape cases, are reported and rest 90% of the cases go unreported, due to several personal and social reasons. The current research concentrates on the different demographic variables that are pivotal in reporting the rape cases. The research includes three major factors in the study, respectively literacy rate, population density and sex ratio.

#### **Sexual Violence: the Global Scenario**

A study by the World Health Organization (2005) suggests that, one out of every five women have faced either rape or an attempted rape, once in her lifetime. The study also describes that in Canada, United Kingdom and United States, 15% of the woman has faced the sexual violence, whereas South Africa was reported as the most

vulnerable country, with 40% of the woman reported Violence.

### **Sexual Violence in India**

The status of woman in Indian society, has witnessed a consistent decline. The women of pre-vedic era were given equal rights, and were treated equally as man, thereafter; the decline in the status of woman in Indian society continues (Halli and Mullal, 2016). The social and cultural structure of India, has always subordinated woman, and the legal system has always considered them as weak and passive, which actually functions as a tool for subordination of woman (Cossman and Kapur, 2002). The patriarchal mindset forces woman to a gullible situation, where they feel unsafe and vulnerable to their male counterparts (Kapur, 1996).

Violence against woman includes all kinds of gendered crimes such as verbal abuse, sexual abuse, sexual assault and physical violence (Merry, 2009). Here in the current research paper the focal point is to understand the factors of demographic factors and its influence on sexual violence against woman. Amongst all forms of sexual violence, rape is considered the most gendered aggressive act, towards the woman (Ignatuis, 2013).

The word rape is originated from a Latin word '*rapere*', which refers to 'unlawful sexual activity'. There are several incidents reported in our mythologies, from time to time and rape is considered as a heinous crime from the ancient times. One such example is from the epic *Ramayana*, where Ravana committed this crime to a celestial nymph Rambha, then her husband Nalkubar cursed him that, the moment he touches a woman against her will, his head will split into seven pieces. The aforementioned example shows that, even the most powerful people cannot avoid the punishment, of this heinous crime.

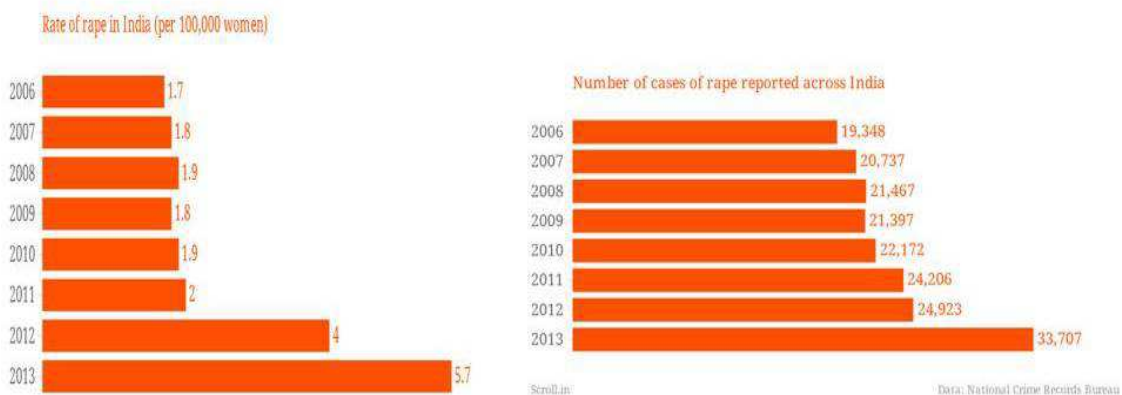
The perception of rape varies from culture to culture; especially in Indian scenario, rape is considered as stigmatic and traumatic, for the victims (Madan and Sinha, 2013). In Indian scenario rape victims feel traumatized as well as, it is one of the few crimes, where the sufferer is being stigmatized by the society. This perception towards the victims is also indicative of the patriarchal nature of the Indian society. Though India has achieved freedom in 1947, the woman in India still needed the liberation and empowerment. In the past few years our country has witnessed a volcanic growth in rape cases being reported, there may be several reasons that may explain the reason of the rape cases reported.

### **Definition of Rape**

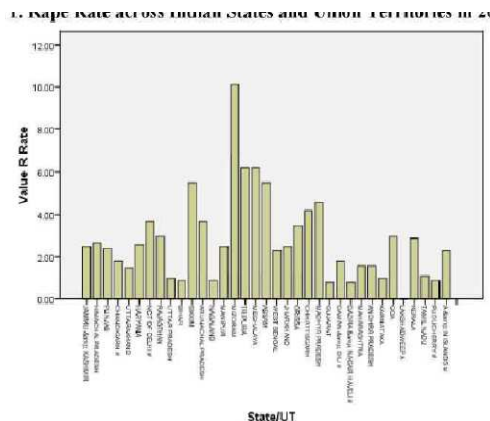
United Nations included rape, under the sexual violence against woman. It defines gender based violence as an act of causing physical, social or psychological harm, to a woman. The other definition of rape includes, any sexual act against the will of the victim (Smith, 1998). Rape is not merely an obsessive desire of sexual gratification, but mostly in society, it is being practiced by the man, to establish the superiority over the woman (Goonsekere, 2004). In India, rape has devastating consequences on the victim's life, there are many negative reactions, and social stigma is attached to it (Karmen, 2010). Apart from social and cultural isolation, victims of rape become vulnerable to several physical and psychological problems. The victims may fall prey to several diseases, like STIs and HIV/AIDS after the assault. The victims may also experience psychological problems like anxiety, fear and posttraumatic disorder (Mcanulty and Burnette, 2006).

**Demographic Factors and Rape Cases Reported**

Apart from social and cultural factors, there are many other factors that are also associated with reporting the rape cases. It is already mentioned that, approximately 90% of the rape cases goes unreported. The demographic factors play, a very important role in reporting the rape cases. It is already explored by the researchers that, demographic play is an important role, in reporting marital rape cases (Shakya and Dangal, 2014). In last one decade, the number of rape case reported in India has sharply increased. According to the data provided by National Crime Record Bureau (NCRB), the rape cases increased from 1.7 per laks to 5.7 per lakh, in the last seven years.



**Figure 1**



**Figure 2: Rape Rate Across Indian States and Union Territories in 2012**

Madan and Sinha (2013) reported that, in 2012 across 28 states and seven union territories, where Mizoram had the highest rape rate (10.1), and Lakshdweep had the lowest rape rate. Here, it is notable that, Lakshdweep is a union territory, where 40% households were run by female family heads.

According to crime in Indian compendium (2014), the numbers of rape cases reported in our country were, 36,735 to 95.6% of the charge-sheet rate. Madhya Pradesh alone contributed around 13% of the total rape cases, reported in the country. The rape cases reported have witnessed, a hundred percent growth during last ten years. These statistics show, a horrifying picture of sexual violence against woman.

## METHOD

The current study, focused on the three major demographic factors and their association with the rape cases, reported in the different regions of India. The three demographic variables taken into consideration, in the study are literacy rate, population density and sex ratio. These are the different demographic variables and their association with reporting rape cases in the country. The whole country is divided into six regions the six regions are respectively north, east, west, south, central and north -east. All twenty nine states and seven union territories, have been categorized in six above mentioned regions. The data for the rape cases reports sex ratio, literacy rate and population density, which were collected from the Government of India's official websites and National Crime Record Bureau's (NCRB) website.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

The present study explores the relationship between the rape case reported and other demographic variables such as sex ratio, literacy rate and population density. The results of the analysis are as follows-

### Descriptive Statistics

**Table 1.1: Descriptive Statistics of the Variables**

Variable	Mean	SD
Rape Case Reported	965.86	121.60
Literacy Rate	78.83	8.26
Population Density	1033.08	214.06
Sex Ratio	898.94	173.35

**Table 1.2: Rape Case Reported Across Regions**

Variable	Mean
North India	1305
East India	1117
West India	798
South India	735
North East India	283
Central India	2980

**Table 1.3: Rape Case Reported Across different Age Groups**

Variable	Mean
Below 12 Years	45
13-20 Years	272
21-30 Years	272
31-45 Years	158
46 and above	21

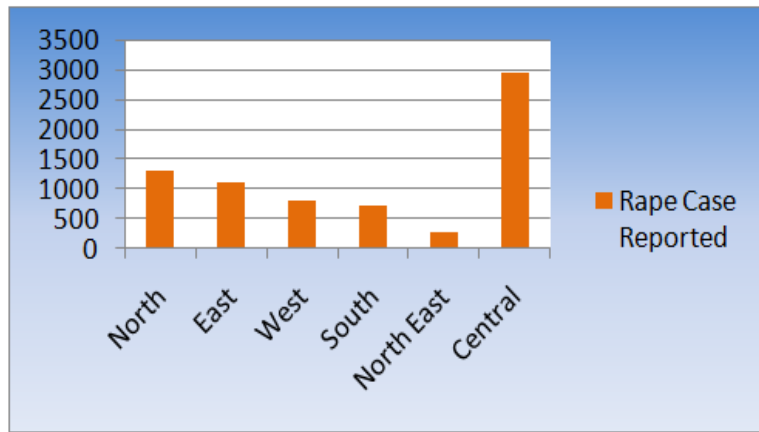


Figure 3: Rape Case Reported across different Regions

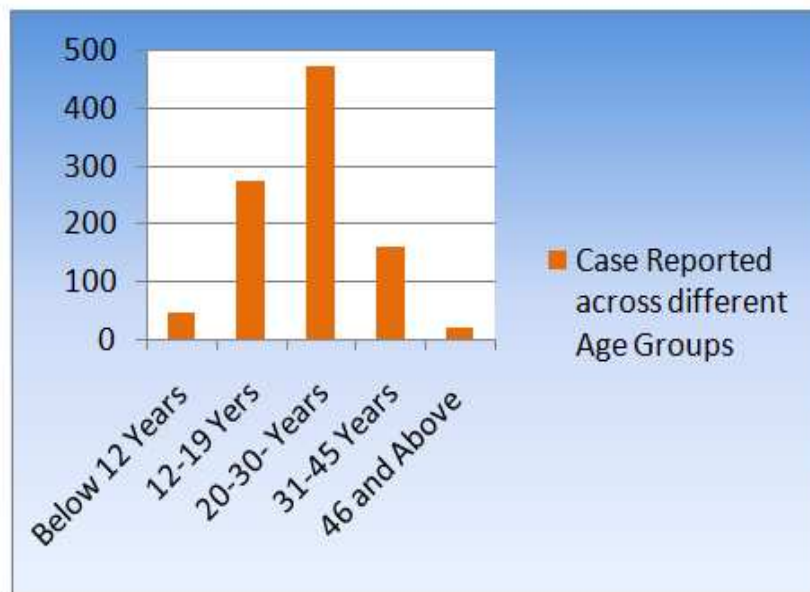


Figure 4: Case Reported across different Age Groups

The above shown tables and figure, present a clear idea about the rape case, reported literacy rate, sex ratio and population density in India. These data indicate that, the central part of India that is, Madhya Pradesh, Chattisgarh etc., are in a dire need of some effective reform initiative, as far as woman safety is concerned. Here it is also important that, the lowest number of rape case reported was observed, in the north east regions of India, as in most of the northeast states, women are considered equal and in some communities, they are preferred over their counterparts in important decision making processes, which makes them more empowered and their vulnerability eventually vanishes, in these societies (Roselima, 2014). It is evident from the table 1.3 that, the girls from the age group of 20-30 years are most vulnerable and most number of crimes happen against them. The organizations, institutions and society needs to become more aware, for the woman of this age group and should provide proactively, more security to them.

Further, multiple regression was applied to the data to find out the predictors of the rape case reported.

**Table 1.4: Multiple Regressions Analyses Predicting Rape Case Reported from Literacy Rate, Sex Ratio and Population Density (Total)**

Predictors	B	R	Adjusted R <sup>2</sup>	P
Literacy Rate	-.370	.370	.370	.039
** < 0.01		* < 0.05		

**Table 1.5: Multiple Regressions Analyses Predicting Rape Case Reported from Literacy Rate, Sex Ratio and Population Density (20-30 Years)**

Predictors	B	R	Adjusted R <sup>2</sup>	P
Literacy Rate	-.492	.492	.219	.003
** < 0.01		* < 0.05		

**Table 1.6: Multiple Regressions Analyses Predicting Rape Case Reported from Literacy Rate, Sex Ratio and Population Density (30-45 Years)**

Predictors	B	R	Adjusted R <sup>2</sup>	P
Literacy Rate	-.337	.337	.087	.049
** < 0.01		* < 0.05		

**Table 1.7: Multiple Regressions Analyses Predicting Rape Case Reported from Literacy Rate, Sex Ratio and Population Density (North-East Region)**

Predictors	B	R	Adjusted R <sup>2</sup>	P
Population Density	.752	.752	.453	.031
** < 0.01		* < 0.05		

### Literacy Rate and Rape Case Reported

The multiple regression performed on the data yielded some important results. One of these important findings was that the literacy rate emerges as major predictor of rape case reported in case of total rape case reported, for young adults (20-30 Years) and middle aged (30-45 Year). The literacy rate has emerged as the major predictor in almost all the cases. It shows that providing education to woman will increase the number of rape case reported as the education will empower the woman and the empowered woman will also be wary of their rights and these heightened awareness will affect the reporting of rape cases positively. The increased number of reported rape cases will insure the justice, which will facilitate in abating these kinds of crimes.

### Population Density

It is strange but interesting that, for north east region, the population density has emerged as the major predictor of rape cases reported. 45.3% of the total variance is being explained by the population density. This denotes that, with increased density of population, the chances of rape cases reported will also increase which is natural. Several studies have proved that, the increased number of people residing in the area, is responsible for the increasing number of crimes, occurring in that area.

### CONCLUSIONS

Finally, on the basis of analysis, it can be said that, sexual violence against woman in India is rising and portrays, the worrisome picture towards the society, and different institutions. And everyone needs to take some specific and effective action, against the people who are committing these kinds of crime. The quick and efficient prosecution, which ensures the delivery of justice in time, will be very effective in decreasing these kinds of crime,

against the woman. The society should also work on reshaping its perspective, towards the young woman, and they should be provided more security and proper attention towards them.

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