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A Critical Analysis on Crimes against Women and Children in the World

POOJA J.¹ AND NARESH R.²

ABSTRACT

The crimes against women and children have increased dramatically in recent years. Sexual assaults, domestic violence, demanding dowry, eve - teasing, child labour, child marriage, female foeticide are the most common crimes that happen against women and children all over the world. In the current decade with the development of the internet and social media the crime rates have soared high. Women and especially children are not safe online and are prone to sexual harassment. Crimes that happen online makes it difficult to enforce laws and protect the victims. The major objective of the research is to understand the crimes against women and children and prevent the occurrences of such crimes. The study has been conducted using the empirical research method. The samples have been collected using the simple random sampling method. The major findings are the prevalence of such crimes in various parts of the world. In future the government needs to take strict measures to prevent such crimes and create awareness among the people and protect women and children. The younger generation needs to understand the dangers of such crimes and learn to prevent and protect others, especially women and children from becoming victims.

Keywords: *Sexual assaults, Domestic violence, Demanding dowry, Eve- teasing, Child labour, Child marriage, Female foeticide.*

I. INTRODUCTION

The crimes against women and children have increased dramatically in recent years. Sexual assaults, domestic violence, demanding dowry, eve - teasing, child labour, child marriage, female foeticide are the most common crimes that happen against women and children all over the world. In the current decade with the development of the internet and social media the crime rates have soared high. Women and especially children are not safe online and are prone to sexual harassment. Crimes that happen online makes it difficult to enforce laws and protect the victims. Various steps have been taken by many social media companies to create policies to protect women and children against online harassment which has really been helpful in eliminating certain threats that they pose while using social media. All these crimes not only

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affect the victims physically but creates a great threat to their mental, social and emotional well-being.

The government has taken several initiatives in recent years by introducing new schemes and policies to protect women and children. The government of India has established the “Nirbhaya Fund” for women’s safety and security projects. They have also created a “181 Helpline” which is operational from 2018-2019. Various other initiatives include establishing One Stop Centres (OSCs) where psycho-social and mental health support is provided for women in distress, Cyber Crime Prevention against Women and Children (CCPWC) Scheme by the Ministry of Home Affairs and “Meri Saheli” Railway protection force for providing protection to lady passengers who use railways for transportation.

The current trends in crimes against women and children show that the crime rates have been increasing alarmingly especially sexual harassment related crimes. The laws that deal with rape, dowry, child trafficking, sexual harassment and molestation have become practically ineffective as the accused are mostly not convicted. So, the laws need to be modified to suit the present social and political scenario. According to the United Nations Organisation, 35% of women worldwide have experienced physical or sexual violence from their partners. India along with Afghanistan, Syria, Somalia, Saudi Arabia, Pakistan, Democratic Republic of Congo, Yemen, Nigeria and The United States of America were found to be the worst countries for women and children due to their high crime rates based on a 2018 poll conducted by the Thomas Reuters Foundation.

(A) Objectives:

- To study about the crimes against women and children.
- To measure the way the victims feel after experiencing the crime.
- To find the causes of the crime.
- To evaluate the situations in which the crimes are most likely to happen.
- To suggest some protective measures to safeguard women and children.
- To determine the most effective way to prevent the occurrence of such crimes.

(B) Literature Review:

(BL Himabindu, et al., 2014) The author has conducted a study on a brutal gang rape case of a young woman which occurred in New Delhi. The judge sentenced the four men who had committed the crime to death. The main objective of the study was to create public awareness on gender based violence in India. The study also found that the crime rates have increased by

24.7% in India. (**Leela Visalia, 2008**) This study was conducted based on the Third National Family Health survey which revealed that 35 to 75% women face verbal, physical or sexual violence. Many women have experienced forced sexual intercourse without consent. Tamil women have reported a relatively high percentage of violence. This study found that violence is inversely related to wealth index and aims to find the degree of marital control exercised by the husbands.

(**Rekha Mehra, 1997**) This descriptive study conducted by the author focuses on women empowerment and economic development. This study aims to create awareness about the need for development of policies to prevent female foeticide or infanticide and selective abortion assuming women are not responsible for economic support. This study also found out that an estimated 564 million rural women provide economic support to their families and 40% of small farms are owned by women. (**Finkelhor D, et al., 2001**) The authors have conducted a study on the crimes against children by babysitters. The study found that more parents relied on babysitters in the USA to take care of their children. It also found that male babysitters offending are much greater and 48% babysitter sex offenders were themselves juveniles.

(**John W. Fantuzzo, et al., 1999**) This study was conducted to find the prevalence and effect of child exposure to domestic violence. The authors found that when children were exposed to domestic violence their mental health and emotional well-being were threatened. The nature of children who were exposed to domestic violence changes and they are at a greater risk for maladjustment in the society. (**Sonia Dalmia, et al., 2005**) The authors have conducted the study to understand the practice of dowry in India. It found the relation between nature of residence, inheritance system and social stratification in society. The authors found that the people believe that dowry qualifies as a price paid for a good match.

(**Joy D. Osofsky, 1999**) The author has conducted a study on the impacts of domestic violence on children in the United States of America and has found that violence in the US is a public health epidemic based on the national survey of injury mortality data. Any form of violent behaviour including physical, sexual and emotional abuse calls for police assistance. (**Mangai Natarajan, 2016**) This study focuses on eve-teasing of young women during the commute to college in India. Eve-teasing is a situational crime which needs to be prevented. The eve-teasing hotspots are buses and bus stops where the temptation of harassment exists. The author has worked on the criminal victimisation of women and society's crime control objectives.

(**Bibb Latane, et al., 1969**) The authors have studied the inhibiting effects of friends and strangers on bystander intervention during sexual harassment of a woman when they fall and

cry out in pain. It found the two person groups are less likely to offer help in such an ambiguous situation. Due to initial inaction the bystanders decide the situation is not serious. (**Janes Wolak, et al., 2003**) This study has focused on the growing role of the internet and computers in sex crimes that occur around the world. These kinds of crimes that occur through the internet pose major challenges to the legislators to create and enforce laws. They need to create new statutes that encompass criminal offences and impose stiffening penalties.

(**Sarah W. Crain, et al., 2003**) This exploratory study focuses on the impact of internet crimes against children and work on relationships with families and friends. Internet crimes against children cause secondary traumatic stress. The internet crimes against children (ICAC) task force members face the darker sides of human beings and especially the female police officers face more stress due to conflicts between traditional gender roles. (**Jeffrey L. Edleson, 2007**) The author has conducted a study to assess child exposure to adult domestic violence. This study has been conducted to focus on emerging interest in children's exposure to adult domestic violence, concurrent victimisation and perception of domestic violence. The existing measures do not comprehensively identify factors so development of new tools to thoroughly assess child exposure to adult domestic violence is required.

(**Hardianto Djanggih, 2018**) This study has been conducted to focus on the phenomenon of cyber crimes which impact children as victims in Indonesia. The study has found that the development of the internet has both positive and negative impacts and children need to be protected optimally due to the rising number of cyber crimes and increasing number of child victims every year. It is found that online child sexual abuse as an increasingly visible problem in today's society. The authors have conducted the study to find out some strategies to prevent and control cyber crimes against women and children. (**S. Poulpunitha, et al., 2020**) This study found that women fall prey to technological fancies and according to the Indian IT act enacted in 2000 hacking and publishing obscene materials on the net and tampering the data is a punishable offence. The steep increase in crime rates make women feel insecure outside home and awareness needs to be created about cyber crimes and cyber laws.

(**Arvind Verma, et al., 2017**) The authors have conducted the study to explore the trends in violence against women in India. The study has found that India witnessed a growing increase in violence against women. The horrific rapes that India has witnessed causes insecurity and physical threat. (**Raghu N Singh, et al., 2017**) The next study has been conducted to identify and rank various types of violence against women in North India. Violence against women is really high in Haryana and Delhi. The gender specific violence that occurs against women include lower economic values of daughters at birth, illegal prenatal diagnosis, maternal

morbidity, rampant female foeticides and honour killing of women.

(Shekha Kayden, 2017) This study focuses on extreme cases and the criminals justice system and responses to a traumatic sexual assault in India. The criminal justice responses to a traumatic sexual assault “Nirbhaya” in India. The authors believe that such extreme cases help drive changes in large democracies yet economically developing countries like India. **(Patricia L. Kohl, et al., 2005)** This study has been conducted to understand child welfare as a gateway to domestic violence services. The National Survey of Child and Adolescent Well Being and identification of domestic violence and investigation of maltreatments to female caregivers reported only 8 percent cases and 31 percent of caregivers reported victimisation.

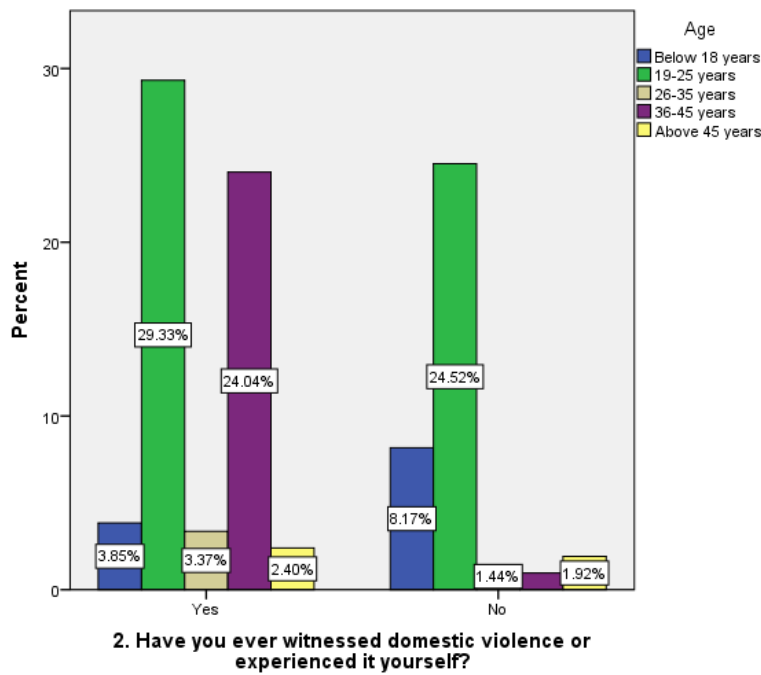
(Kristen A. Berg, et al., 2020)This qualitative study focuses on service needs of children exposed to domestic violence from a statewide survey of domestic violence agencies. The study has found that more than six percent of children in the US were exposed to domestic violence which will cause detrimental bio physiological consequences. They also performed a thematic analysis to investigate professional’s reflection on child maltreatment, family violence and trauma-informed cases. **(Leila Wood, et al., 2022)** The authors have studied the impacts of domestic violence on children in which the major consequences are housing and homelessness for domestic violence survivors. The National network to end domestic violence provides social support to meet families and frequently provide transitional or supportive housing.

(C) Methodology:

The study has been conducted using the empirical research method. The samples have been collected using the simple random sampling method. A total of 208 samples have been collected for the study. The sample frame taken here is of public areas in and around Chennai. The independent variables are gender, age, educational qualification, occupation, annual income and marital status. The dependent variables are experiencing or witnessing domestic violence, dangerous for women to stay out at night, children left alone with babysitters, demanding dowry from women’s family, causes of sexual assault, abolishing child labour, prevention of sexual assault, suggesting safe places for women to live in. Graphical representation is the statistical tool used for the study.

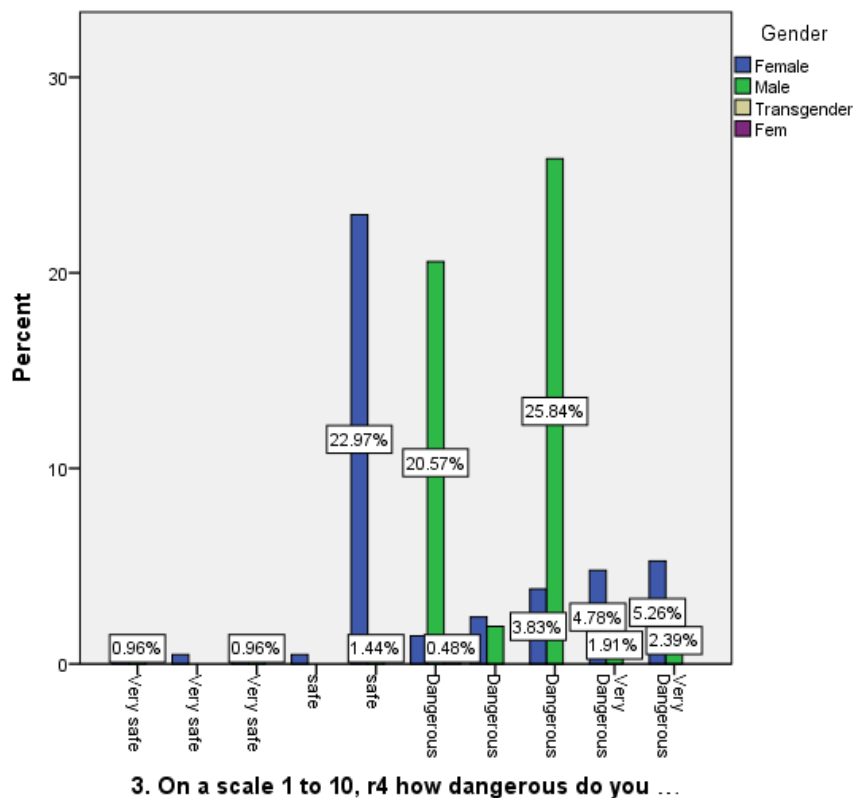
II. ANALYSIS

Figure1



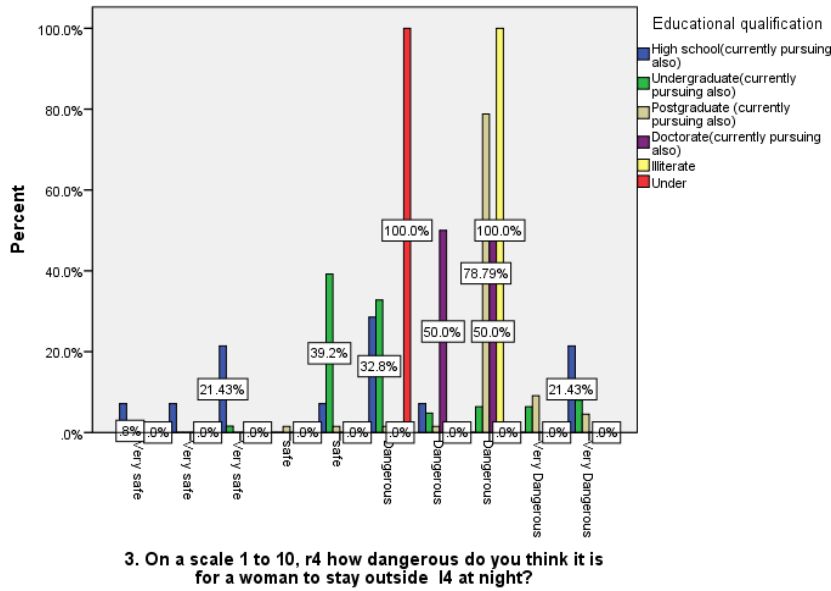
Legend: Figure 1 represents age and their opinion on whether they have witnessed domestic violence or not.

Figure2



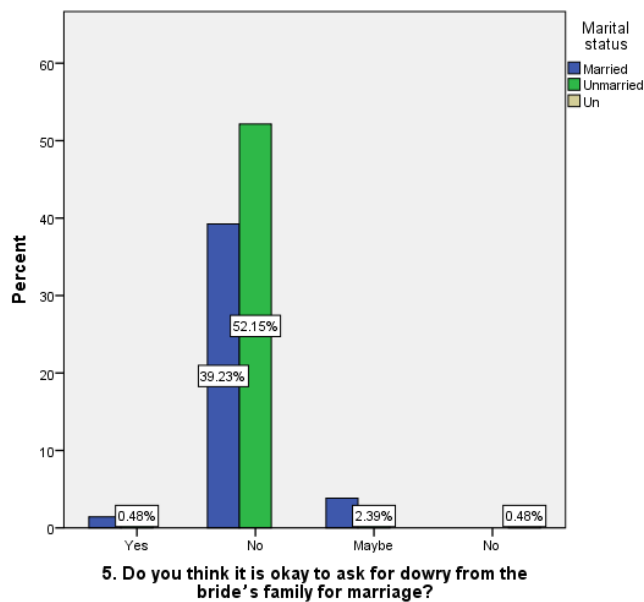
Legend: Figure 2 represents gender and their opinion on how dangerous they think it is for women to stay out late at night.

Figure3



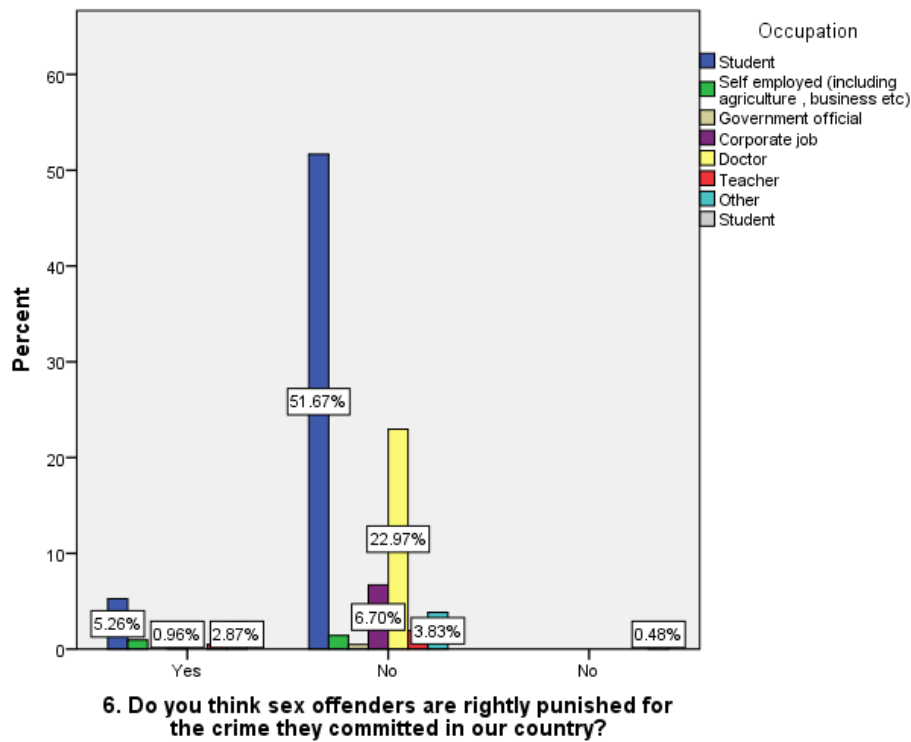
Legend: Figure 3 represents Educational qualification and their opinion on how dangerous they think it is for women to stay out late at night.

Figure 4



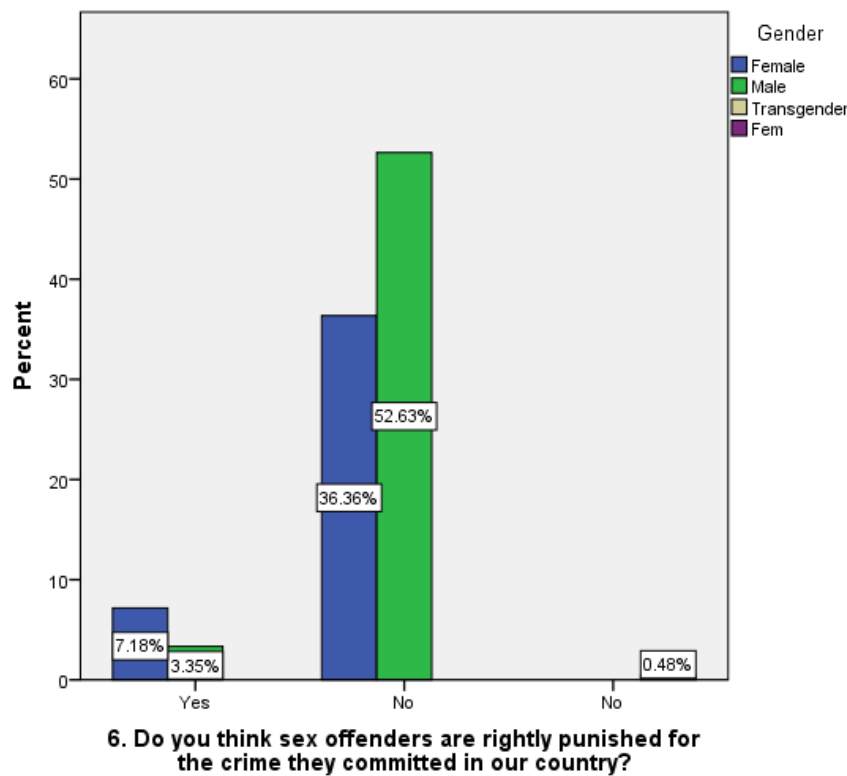
Legend: Figure 4 represents the marital status and their opinion on demanding dowry from the bride's family.

Figure 5



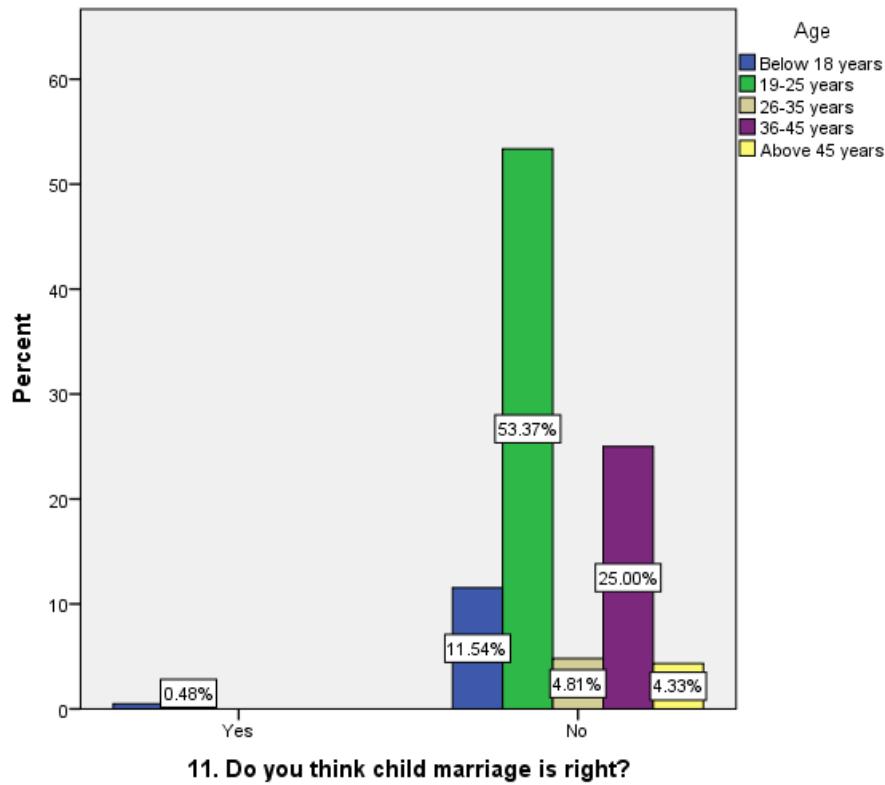
Legend: Figure 5 represents their occupation and their opinion on punishing sex offenders

Figure 6



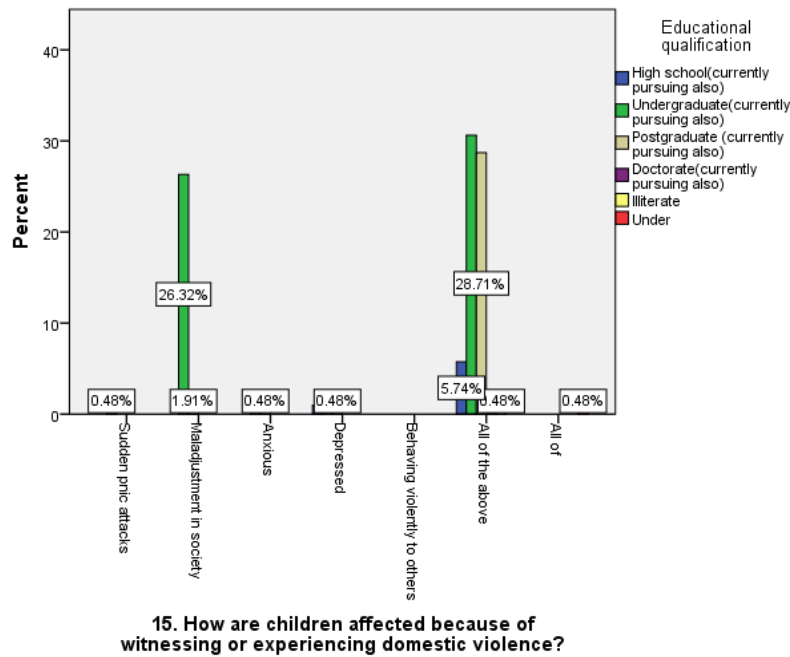
Legend: Figure 6 represents their gender and their opinion on punishing sex offenders

Figure 7



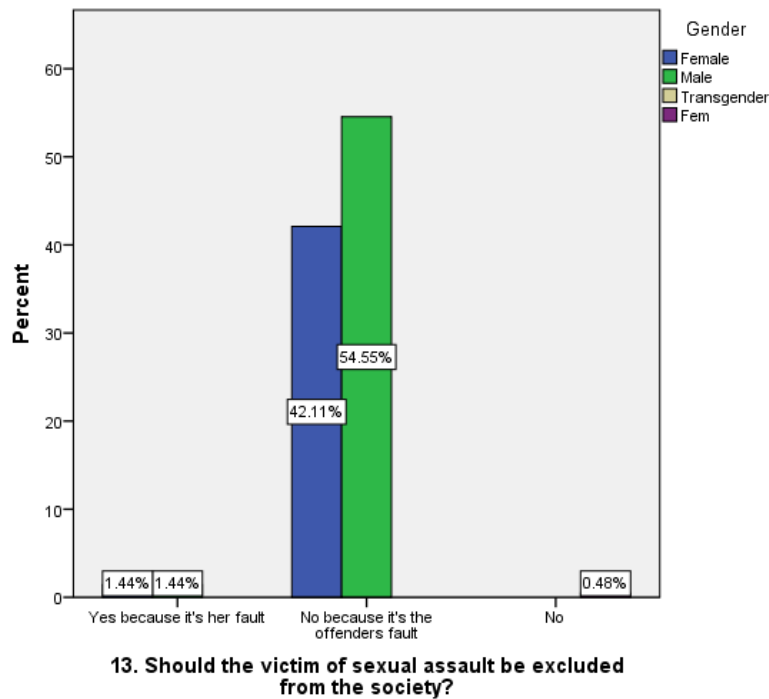
Legend: Figure 7 represents the age and their opinion on whether child marriage is right or not.

Figure 8



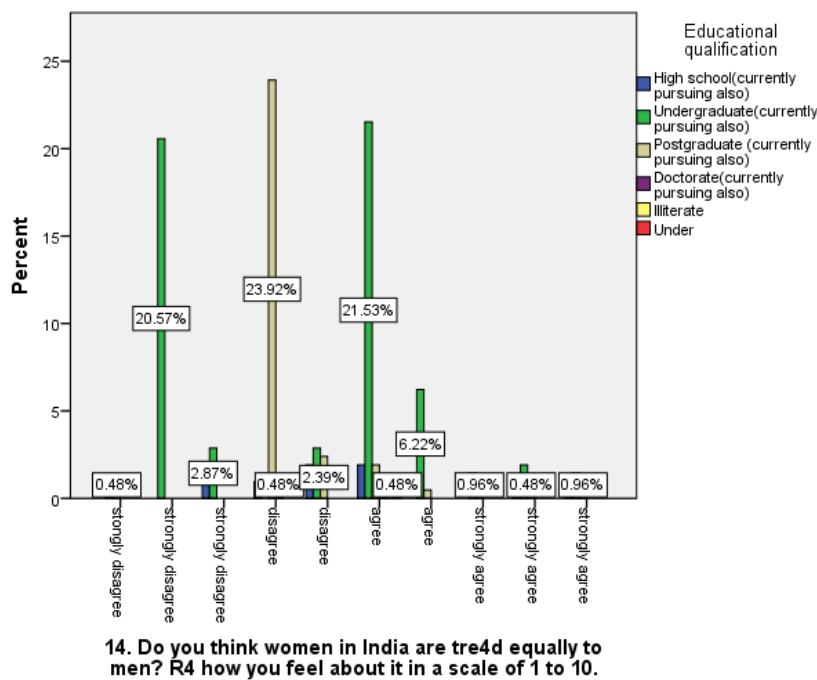
Legend: Figure 8 represents the educational qualification and their opinion on children witnessing or experiencing domestic violence.

Figure 9



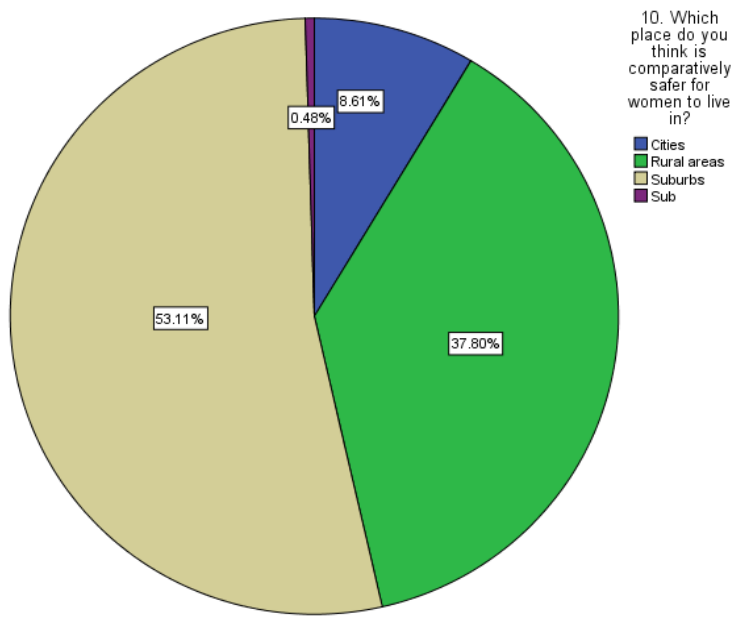
Legend: Figure 9 represents gender and their opinion on social exclusion of the victims of sexual violence.

Figure 10



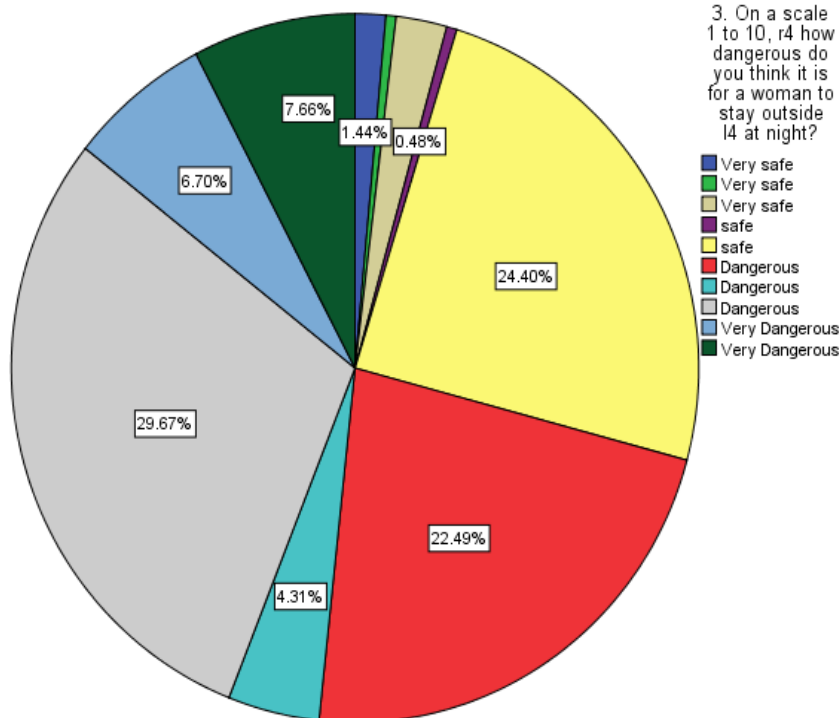
Legend: Figure 10 represents the educational qualification and their opinion on treating women equally to men

Figure 11



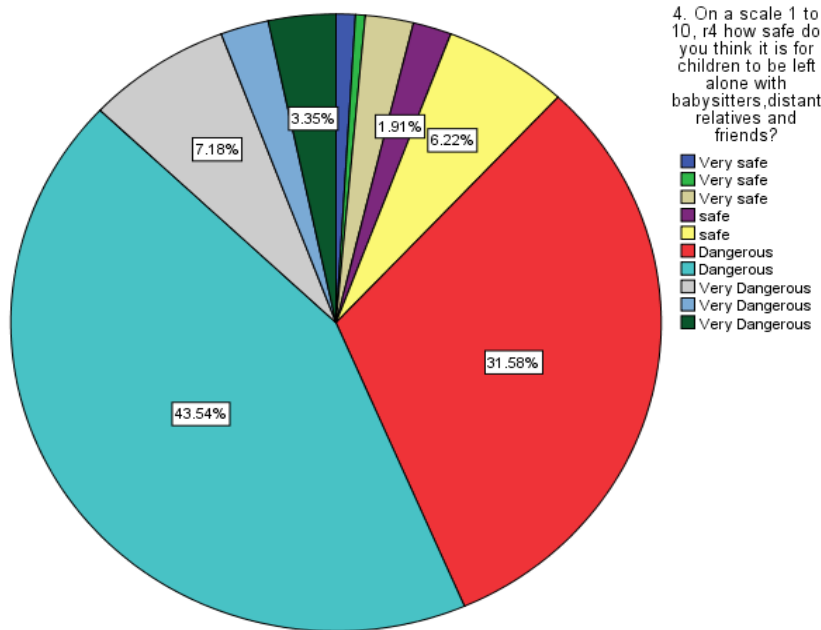
Legend: Figure 11 represents the places where women feel safer to reside in.

Figure 12



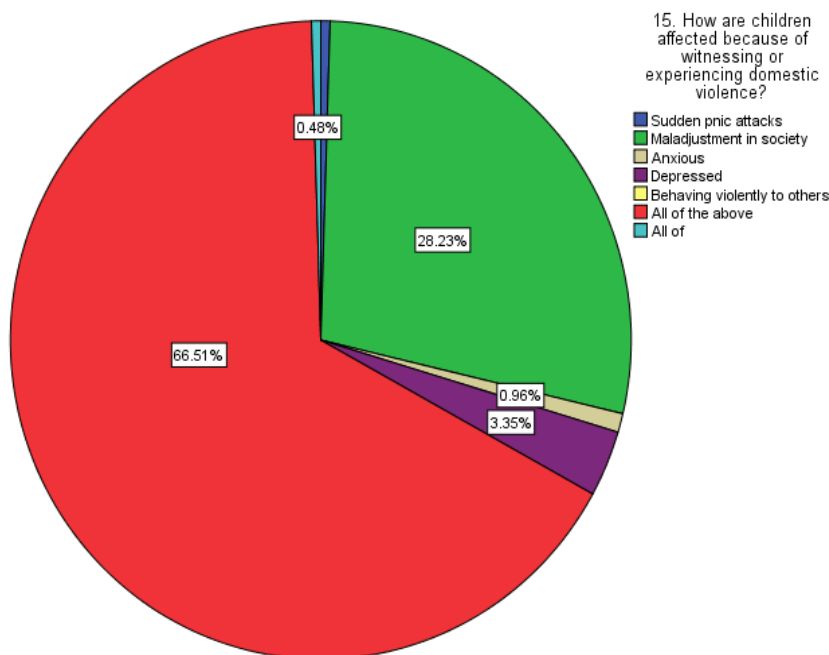
Legend: Figure 12 represents the respondents opinion on how dangerous it is for a woman to stay out late at night.

Figure 13



Legend: Figure 13 represents the respondents opinion on how safe it is for children to be left alone with babysitters, distant relatives and friends.

Figure 14



Legend: Figure 14 represents how children get affected after experiencing domestic violence.

III. RESULT

The majority of the respondents who are 19-25 years old have either experienced or witnessed domestic violence. **(Fig. 1)** The next figure depicts the male and female opinion and majority of them think that it is dangerous for women to stay out late at night. **(Fig. 2)** The next figure depicts educational qualifications and their opinion on how dangerous it is for women to stay out at night. **(Fig. 3)** The next figure represents the marital status and majority of them whether they are married or unmarried think it is unfair to demand dowry from the bride's family. **(Fig. 4)** A majority of students think that sex offenders are not rightly punished in our country. **(Fig. 5)** The next figure represents the male and female respondents and both of them irrespective of their gender think that sex offenders are not rightly punished in our country. **(Fig. 6)** The next figure represents the age of the respondents and the majority of them think that child marriage is not right. **(Fig. 7)** The majority of respondents who are undergraduates think that children who witnessed or experienced domestic violence will face maladjustment in society. **(Fig. 8)** A majority of the male and female respondents irrespective of their gender think that sexual assault is the offender's fault and the victim should not be excluded from our society. **(Fig. 9)** The next figure depicts the educational qualifications of respondents and their opinion on whether women are treated equally to men are not in our society. **(Fig. 10)** The responses collected shows that 53.11% are convinced that suburbs to be the safest place for womens to reside in. **(Fig. 11)** The figure shows that the respondents think it is dangerous for women to stay out late at night. **(Fig. 12)** The next figure represents the respondents opinion that it is dangerous for children to be left alone with babysitters, friends and distant relatives. **(Fig. 13)** The figure shows the various ways in which children get affected because of domestic violence. **(Fig. 14)**

IV. DISCUSSION

The majority of the respondents who are 19-25 years old have either experienced or witnessed domestic violence. Domestic violence is a serious crime that completely affects the mental, social and physical health of a person who has witnessed or experienced it especially children who are very young. When children are exposed to domestic violence they become mentally affected for their whole life and will face serious consequences while facing the society when they grow up **(Fig. 1)** The next figure depicts the male and female opinion and majority of them think that it is dangerous for women to stay out late at night. The female respondents believe that women should have the freedom to stay out late at night and the male respondents think that it is dangerous for women to stay out late at night. **(Fig. 2)** The next figure depicts educational qualifications and their opinion on how dangerous it is for women to stay out at

night. The majority of the respondents are undergraduates and they think that it is dangerous for women to stay out late at night. **(Fig. 3)** The next figure represents the marital status and majority of them whether they are married or unmarried think it is unfair to demand dowry from the bride's family. Demanding dowry from bride's family is legally a serious crime and has resulted in the death of many innocent women due to honour killing which is justified by some heartless illiterates in our society **(Fig. 4)** A majority of students think that sex offenders are not rightly punished in our country. Though the government has made many laws and have created various schemes and services to protect women and children especially girls from sexual assault in most of the cases the offenders are not rightly punished due to lack of evidence and escape through the loopholes in the society by misuse of power. **(Fig. 5)** The next figure represents the male and female respondents and both of them irrespective of their gender think that sex offenders are not rightly punished in our country. Most of the respondents think that India is not a safe country for women especially women and children. **(Fig. 6)** The next figure represents the age of the respondents and the majority of them think that child marriage is not right. Child marriage is considered to be a serious and brutal crime that affects the life of children severely. The people who force children into child marriage must be punished severely by law. **(Fig. 7)** The majority of respondents who are undergraduates think that children who witnessed or experienced domestic violence will face maladjustment in society. Being anxious, depressed, sudden panic attacks and behaving violently are the major causes of witnessing or experiencing domestic violence and among them maladjustment in society as the major side effect. **(Fig. 8)** A majority of the male and female respondents irrespective of their gender think that sexual assault is the offender's fault and the victim should not be excluded from our society. When women or children experience sexual assault they get scared for their life and will face many problems mentally, socially and physically. **(Fig. 9)** The next figure depicts the educational qualifications of respondents and their opinion on whether women are treated equally to men are not in our society. Based on the response it is believed that our society is patriarchal and women in every job sector or at our homes do not have the authority to make decisions and are treated unfairly. This status of women is slowly being improved but we still have a long way to go to attain gender equality which can be achieved through creating awareness and educating the younger generation. **(Fig. 10)** The responses collected shows that 53.11% are convinced that suburbs to be the safest place for women to reside in. Because the suburbs are both developed as well as safer for women. **(Fig. 11)** The figure shows that the respondents think it is dangerous for women to stay out late at night. The respondents believe it is dangerous for women to stay out late at night because most of the sexual assault cases that have occurred so far took place late at

night. **(Fig. 12)** The next figure represents the respondents opinion that it is dangerous for children to be left alone with babysitters, friends and distant relatives. Children are still so young and naive so they should not be left alone with people who are not close and should always be protected by their parents. **(Fig. 13)** The figure shows the various ways in which children get affected because of domestic violence. Domestic violence not only affects the victims physically but also mentally which affects their whole life and ruins it. **(Fig. 14)**namaste

V. LIMITATION

The limitations of this research is lack of respondents. Respondents of different age groups attended the survey but the survey is in the age group between (less than 18 to 31-40), but the main respondents are less than expected. The place where we conducted research had less number of respondents than expected. Another limitation of the study's is the sample size. The sample size is only 208. The sample size is not sufficient to know the opinion of the people. The age group of above 50 opinions which may affect the completeness of the survey. Most of the respondents are undergraduates. So the majority of the opinions of the undergraduates are reflected in this study.

VI. CONCLUSION

The crimes against women and children have increased dramatically in recent years. Sexual assaults, domestic violence, demanding dowry, eve - teasing, child labour, child marriage, female foeticide are the most common crimes that happen against women and children all over the world. In the current decade with the development of the internet and social media the crime rates have soared high. Women and especially children are not safe online and are prone to sexual harassment. The major objective of the research is to understand the crimes against women and children and prevent the occurrences of such crimes. The major findings are the prevalence of such crimes in various parts of the world. In future the government needs to take strict measures to prevent such crimes and create awareness among the people and protect women and children. The younger generation needs to understand the dangers of such crimes and learn to prevent and protect others, especially women and children from becoming victims.

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