UNIVERSITY OF CANBERRA

RESEARCH METHODS PG (9505)

U3188623- Khushprit Kaur

**Research Question - Does Literacy Rate Helps in Decreasing Rape Culture And Eve Teasing In India & What Are The Socio-Cultural Reasons For The Increase In Rape Rate In India?**

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Research problem

 Rape is one of the most highlighted issues that have been prevailing for quite a long time in India. The problem was firstly suppressed due to the conservative and patriarchal system of India, but after the fatal gang-rape of a medical student in Delhi in a bus, the view of society in this particular perspective has been changed. People are raising voice against this issue and spreading awareness. Awareness is much important, as quality education can bring immense change in an individual's mentality and personality. The increasing literacy rate has influenced quite a lot upon people's minds, as people are much more aware today than they were before. Women have started asking for their rights and doing stringent measures for their safety. The attempt has helped a lot in promoting women empowerment in a country like India, where women were afraid to walk on the roads alone. This paper aims to discuss some specific aspects of Indian society that examines the following question. - Will increase in the literacy rate help people be more aware and will it decrease rape culture and eve teasing in India? What are the socio-cultural reasons for the increase in rapes in India?

These questions have been answered in this paper concerning the general behavior of people. Moreover, the aspects of male dominance and women empowerment are also elaborated.

More exploratory questions in this paper are -

* Why is Rape culture and Eve teasing still prevalent in India and how women empowerment can increase women social security?
* How do you think those who have been sexually violent towards women should be punished and why?
* What is a woman's place in India compared to a man's today?

This study states the present situation of a country that how has this particular aspect of the society changed the perspective of the world and how people have come forth to fight for this evil.

Literature review

 The percentage of rape in India has increased largely after the fatal gang-rape of a student in Delhi, in 2012 (Kohli, 2012; Underwood, 2014). Flaeiro (2013) mentioned in the study that 600 rape cases were recorded in Delhi, India in 2012, but only one led to a conviction. According to Pandey (1986), a rape-prone environment has evolved in India as the status of women is rendered inferior to that of men. Cultural and environmental ties prove a role quite authentic in framing this mentality. All of this may be a cause due to the objectification of women as portrayed in mainstream media due to the effects of Globalization (Datta, 2000).

 The domestic trends in India have been dominant in the mindsets of Indian people, and maybe this is why the gender-biased attitude is a reaction towards the transition of Indian society to modern day society (Simister & Mehta, 2010; Kohli, 2012). As per the views of Kolsky (2010), the increasing rape rate is maybe due to the colonial mindsets of people as established by the British. Rape is a matter usually not much addressed but it does not affect only one perspective of a person but being raped becomes the identity of the victim. Sharma, Nandram & Pardasani (2014) has disclosed in their research that the current problem in India is multi-dimensional and there is a severe need to eradicate it.

According to Madan & Sinha (2013), rape concerns have flourished immensely and have now become a national problem rather than a social problem. The problem is faced by all and sundry and everyone gets affected by it equally. Effective measures should be taken to prevent the cause. India's cultural hierarchy and cultural perpetuation have laid great influence upon the present condition (Livne n.d.). Even the print media has been affected by this situation of the country, and mainstream journalists have participated in reporting sex crimes (Drache & Velagic, 2014; Kohli, 2012).

Most of the research studies that were carried out in the past and recently, were to highlight the factors accountable for the increase in rape rates and awareness of youth have been recorded (Singh & Parveen, 2018). Rape awareness has extensively been increased after the Delhi rape incident, and people have started spreading their views towards this specific issue which states that people have been well aware of its intensity. Eve teasing or harassment in public is quite a common practice which a female undergoes through (Natarajan, 2016).

Ghosh (2011) has stated in a research study that sexual harassment of women in public places is an insult and shaming of female gender. It is a result of a patriarchal society, which is now intolerant in innovating India and people are getting knowledge on this particular aspect to fight it and eradicate it (Underwood, 2014). Eve-teasing has not just confined itself to public humiliation but has proved fatal for many, as it does stress a female not merely physically but mentally as well (Devi & Jasrotia, 2013).

One of the ridiculous kinds of leisure for the dominant male society like India is "Eve Teasing," and this has harmed both mental and physical states of women badly. Indian girls are becoming the victim of this plague regularly. Eve teasing is the most omnipresent and sinister act as it is considered as something very normal among the men. According to a study conducted by Akhtar (2013), several socio-psychological and socio-economic factors have evolved eve-teasing in Indian society. He further stated that the responses of the women population have never been brought into the public notice by the victims of eve teasing, as they feel their personality would get smashed and the society would never accept them.

The colonialism in India has given masculinity enough strength to molest feminism. The myths regarding the supremacy of men have been a part of all customs and norms, but now these same myths are proving them harmful for the betterment of a flourishing society (Lakshmi, 2002; Livne, 2015; Mangoli & Tarase, 2009). The degradation of femininity is the disgrace of society and should not be ignored. Even the fears of being rejected while getting married by sexual harassment is quite an essential factor to be discussed (Hoque, 2013). The lives and reputations of some girls have been put at stake due to this common practice of assaulting, and harassment and this practice should be ended.

Significance & innovation, practical values

 The study of Rape is itself a painful task to do. This paper helped a lot while understanding what rape is and what external pressure a rape victim undergoes. Abuse is the assault of a female or even a male without his/her consent. Rape considered as one of the greatest crimes amongst all, for it does not affect a person physically but leaves a person handicapped for her entire life, as rape victims always have a tag, or might say label attached on them, i.e., "Raped." It is condemned not physically but morally as well. Eve teasing or public harassment is quite common practice nowadays. Every woman experiences this once in her lifetime and that might be in the form of stalking, and other forms of harassment (Rogers, 2008; Pandey, 2012; Pandey, 1987). Women are most vulnerable in public places, as they are being targeted by men ever. The public places may either include parks or offices or any public domain places. It is quite embarrassing for women to be objectified and be an apple of the eye to many. Furthermore, as we know for every action there is an equal and opposite reaction, so women have to understand their issues and should stand for themselves rather than avoiding them.

India, the world's most diverse country not only in terms of religion but crimes also has been facing this rape issue not now but since couples of years when such events started happening a lot (Rogers, 2008; Pandey, 1987). India is a significant trade market and has a considerable number of sects. At present, the women population of India is facing many threats to the due grown level of rape cases and women security. Women feel afraid of walking alone in nights because they are afraid of getting harassed or molested. Daughters of the nation have been raped to death, and not effective actions are taken against the culprits. Rape is no more of a personal issue, but now it has become a national issue for India due to an increase in rape cases (Sinha, 1999; Sinha, 2013; Sur, 2012).

 Increased rate of rape cases in India elevated the necessity to take measures for eradicating the causes. People are getting more and more aware of this issue. The only way to eliminate this evil from society is to spread consciousness of subject issue. Not only perception but strict rules should be framed to make people realize what degree sin it is. Increase in literacy rate has caused an immediate decrease in rape cases as people get to know how worse it is. Education helps a person understand the case matter of anything. Any well-educated person would never commit this sin of teasing. Females are raped not only in offices in fact at workplaces, schools, colleges, etc. This study tends to fill in the gap of how awareness of rape cases has affected its percentage.

 Rapists should be hanged to death in front of everyone so people need to know how actually a rapist should be treated (Rogers, 2008; Pandey, 1987). It would make people aware of the degree of this brutality of ruining someone's life. Rape victims usually have to sacrifice their identity after being molested brutally. Every 1 out of 5 girls in India have a probability of being raped, and this ratio is going higher constantly (Mitra-Sarkar & Partheeban, 2011). The root cause for this may be the portrayal of women in mainstream media and their objectification. Women are treated as sex toys in films and media, which are causing frustration in people, and they release this frustration through rape.

Moreover, in a patriarchal society like India, mere to prove dominance over females, they are raped, and men show their power and dominance. It is to a male that a woman is realized that they are inferior and naive. Measures are needed to be taken for the betterment of the country and help maintaining security for women in the state.

**Measures to eradicate rape culture**

**To eliminate or should say mitigate the impact of rape culture the following actions are believed to be effective:**

**Pinpoint the Real Issue**

**The rape culture enwraps the two basic concepts of male violence and victim blaming. Whenever a case of sexual assault takes place, the people raise the question regarding the physical and mental state of the victim instead of the culprit. News and media underline the dressing and sobriety status of victim and in due course, forget to ask the real question, that in any case is it acceptable to assault sexually? Therefore, to eliminate the rape culture from society people have to learn blame and inquiring the perpetrator, it will discourage others and will prevent them from committing the same crime.**

**Exert Pressure on Government and Law Enforcement Agencies**

**Many countries have laws and punishment policies regarding sexual offenses, yet in several cases, the perpetrator escapes unpunished and unscathed. Therefore, people should take a strong initiative in this regard; they should arrange social campaigns through different media channels, to record their protest to government and other law enforcement agencies to deliver the fair punishment to rapists as so they can set an example for others.**

**Educational Intercession**

**Without awareness programs and increased education intervention, it is almost impossible to control the rape incidence. It is imperative to include specific awareness courses for college and university students' regarding the causes and effects of rape. Moreover, for convenient access to the entire community online courses regarding the information, precautions, and other measures should be arranged.**

**Self Defense Measures**

**According to the common perception, girls and women are considered as a delicate and vulnerable gender, and their defenselessness evokes perpetrators to take extreme steps. Therefore, it is suggested to arrange training programs to teach the women self-defense techniques in case of any physical assault. Bollywood action movie star Akshay Kumar has established Martial Arts Training Institute for women in Mumbai, so they could learn to defend themselves in case of any sexual assault. Moreover, girls should understand the power of speaking up. Generally, society does not approve that female's talk about sexual issues, and as a result, whenever they get sexual threats or harassments they feel unable to discuss it with someone. Consequently, the men feel powerful and knowing that no one is going to complain about them, they keep advancing, and eventually rape cases occur.**

Articulate data

Quantitative research methodology relies on statistical and numeric method for data analysis. The primary survey is conducted for the collection of data that leads to the formulation of results. I will quantify the data and generalized results will be obtained from the sample that represents the interest of the population. Incidence of various views and opinions are used in the chosen sample. Quantitative research stresses on understanding the opinions, reasons, and motivations by providing insights into the problems and develop ideas for the research (South, Trent, & Bose, 2014). The approach relies on observing the facts thus leading to an in-depth understanding of the social phenomena. Direct human experiences are used to making judgments and analysis. This process does not rely on the statistical procedures but uses case studies, biography, historical analysis, discourse analysis, and grounded theory. The areas of focus include language, culture, and society. The common observations used for analysis are subjective as it allows understanding the meaning of the lives. Quantitative research is more appropriate for studying the reasons behind the existence of natural phenomena. It is more convenient to understand the factors of culture and social connections. In qualitative research events are reported with the context of certain people, period and situations also it identifies the purpose of the data (Meikle, 2013). To study the impacts of **literacy rate helps in decreasing rape culture and eve teasing in India & the socio-cultural reasons for the increase in rape rate in India.** The questionnaire include closed-ended questions that targeted the female students. The purpose of the quantitative research was to explore what young woman understand about rape and how vulnerable they are rape culture.

Relevant studies

Test el al., (2010) used mixed methods including qualitative and quantitative data for assessing the perceptions of the participants on female abuse and violence. Both methods are incorporated for identifying why females are victims of sexual abuse. Integration of two different methods are used for gaining better insights about the female perceptions. This simultaneous integration is also important for establishing convergent validity between the qualitative and quantitative methods. Abeid et al., (2014) used quantitative study for examining the views of females regarding rape. This methods are effective for studying the opinions of women about the factors and causes of rape. The interviews with the focus groups uncover that culture and tradition plays significant role in rape. Juvera (2014) used quantitative methods for assessing the link between literacy and rape culture. Questionnaires with the participants of the study confirms that females having better knowledge about rape and its precautions were literate. Illiterate of less educated participants face difficulty in understanding the terms.

Staros (2012) relied on quantitative methods for investigating the factors behind rape culture. The views of the respondents were collected through a well-designed questionnaire. Closed-ended questions focused on determining how education impacts the perceptions of the people about rape. The questions investigated participants for studying their attitudes and knowledge towards rape. Maity et al., (2019) relied on qualitative methods for assessing the attitudes of women towards rape in India. The reasons of increased rape statistics computed on the basis of questionnaire survey confirms that lack of state’s efficiency, poor management and inadequate system of security are major causes of high rape rates. Madan and Sinha (2013) through quantitative study explored the facts causing high rates of rape in India. The responses of the participants were quantified that reveals that the perceptions vary among the population. The study used eleven socio-economic and demographic categories for assessing their impact on rape. These are known as the predictor variables and literacy was also examined in relationship to the rape attitudes. The results are computed on the basis of male and female literacy. Himabindu et al., (2015) examined the factors for crimes against Indian women including rape. The factors were identified through quantitative study suggests that lack of literacy is the prominent factor of high rates of rapes in india.

Targeted population

The will conduct survey in the urban city of India where researcher will randomly target women of the area. In total 50 females will be targeted. Random sampling will be used for investigating a small group of larger population. The opinions and viewpoints of the respondents will help in understanding the perceptions of the larger population. The qualitative study suggests focusing on a small group and using their perceptions for understanding the responses of a larger population.

Reasons for rejecting qualitative survey

The qualitative methods involve primary survey including semi-structured interviews. The survey technique allows integration of the qualitative methods. The interview includes open-ended questions that targeted the female students. It require more efforts to identify the ways for managing information obtained from open-ended questions. It makes qualitative methods inadequate for the current research. The purpose of the qualitative research is to explore the impact of literacy rates in decreasing culture of rape and eve testing in India (South, Trent, & Bose, 2014). The quantitative research helps in understanding how people perceive certain events in their lives. It is the primary instrument that helps in recognizing the distinguishing characteristics.

It is also argued that the qualitative methods rely on content analysis, textual and case study analysis that leads to ambiguous and unclear results. Research quality depends on the individual skills of the researcher and significant evidence suggests high likelihood of researchers bias. Most of the researchers reject qualitative study because it is less reliable. Keeping in view the current topic the research is focused on determining the socio-cultural factors of rape culture that is based on participants responses. It is not reliable to conclude the results on the basis of small focus group’s perceptions based on qualitative methods. It is difficult for the researcher to maintain access and demonstrate the results. The interpretation of interview results in more time consuming compared to the questionnaire surveys. There are many limitations of the qualitative study such as; it is not well understood among the scientific community. Researcher’s presence during data gathering is unavoidable that might impact the neutrality of data. Findings consume more time and it is difficult to present them in a visual manner (Anderson, 2010).

Qualitative research is rejected for the current study because it is a flexible technique that leaves it on the participant to express their views in appropriate manner. Reported patterns of participants are assessed in this process that are unreliable. The interviewer avoids using fixed questions that leads to rage of possibilities of options. An interview is thus not appropriate for investigating the women of India, selected for the study. A semi-structured interview constructed for inquiring the knowledge of females about rape is insufficient because it include larger volume of data. Interview also includes questions about role of consent and involvement of partners that illiterate women will be unable to explain. In qualitative methods the participants will reveal their experiences about the related event but they may find difficulty in expressing them. It is always difficult to determine how responses of participants will be computed because interviews cannot be quantified or presented in numerical form.

The qualitative research requires that the researcher conducts it in natural settings which is difficult to identify in the present study (Cresswell, 2012). The research methodology also allows the researcher to postulate interpretation and observe understanding. The reason for rejecting the qualitative research is the fact that it does not fulfills the purpose of present research. Compared to quantitative data, qualitative surveys cannot be presented in a clear way such as in graphs or charts.

Instrument of quantitative research

A questionnaire is designed for investigating the perceptions of the girls about rapes in India. The quantitative approach involves a pre-determines questionnaire that uncovers the views of the participants selected for the study. Closed-ended questionnaires are used for assessing the perceptions and knowledge of Indian women about rape. questionnaire designed by Kamdar et al., (2017) in their research will be used for the current study. A 22-item IRMA scale is used for examining how Indiana women respond to rapes. A five-point Likert scale is used (always, usually, sometimes, seldom, never) for rating the responses of the participants (Kamdar, kumar, Kosambiya, Chawada, Verma, & Kadia, 2017). They will be provided different definitions and their responses will reveal what they understand about rape. It is assumed that females with low literacy will lack proper knowledge about rape (Meikle, 2013). The purpose is to determine if they are aware of rape and the conditions related to the term.

Demographic information

In the demographic section will be obtainbed about age because findings of the literature depicts that young and teenage girls are more likely to become victims of rape in India (Pathak, Jena, & Kalra, 2013). I will also identify religion of the respondents for determining how it impacts their perceptions about rape. In the survey I will also inquire level of education because low literacy rate is linked to high likelihood of rapes. This is based on the empirical evidence that indicates that lack of awareness regarding rape is due to low education or illiteracy (Babu & Kar, 2009). In the survey I will also collect information about the marital status for finding how it influence the perceptions of the females. I will also collect information about the household income for determining the relationship of poverty and rapes. Question about age will be included for determining how perception of females change with age. The age group of (8 to more than 26 years) is selected because evidence suggests that this is the most vulnerable group. The questionnaire will also include a question on religion for identifying how attitude of respondents change according to their religious beliefs. Level of education is also investigated

Perceptions

Literature was reviewed for identifying the variables that influence the culture of rape. The factors that the study considered for the survey include age, education, household income, marital status and knowledge of rape. To assess perceptions the selected variables include like awareness of reporting to police, likelihood of rape, women’s responsibility and punishments for rapists.

The about perceptions of females regarding rape. A five-point Likert scale will be used for evaluating their responses. The perceptions and beliefs of the women about rape have significant impact on the adoption of preventive strategy. The study will use different questions that will uncover female’s role in preventing rapes and reporting to the concerned bodies. The responses will be used for formulating better strategy for providing in-depth knowledge of how rapes can be prevented. The options given to the respondents include; always, usually, sometimes, seldom, never. The questionnaire will ask question about the likelihood of experiencing rape by each participant. It also include question about participants awareness’s about the services provided by the police. They knowledge is also examined bout where to get help when participant witness someone being raped and knowledge about the right place for reporting the incident (Maity, 2019). Respondents views are also collected on their perceptions about treatment towards rapist, women’s responsibility in preventing rape and perceptions about proving rape victimization. The factors or common causes about rape are also identifies such as the male’s role in rape due to excessive power and the likelihood of getting raped from strangers (Sharma, 2015).

Data collection

As the survey is quantitative so the researcher will visit the New Delhi for collecting data. The study will target the females having ages between 8-more than 26 years. The reason for choosing this age group is the fact that they are more vulnerable to rapes. This will require one month period. The survey will inquire 50 Indian females. New Delhi will be selected as the target location because a larger number of rape cases are reported there (Raj & McDougal, 2014). The researcher choose cost-effective method for conducting survey. The costs will be required for taking printouts of the questionnaires. Costs will also required for reaching the targeted locations for investigating the participants.

Conducting survey

One of the popular cities of India is selected for the collection of data. Personal consent will be taken from the participants after explaining them the purpose of research. The qualitative methods will use interviews for inquiring participants of the research study. The participants will be given adequate time to share their experiences or knowledge on rape culture in India.

In the survey the researched will approach the participants of the survey. They will be explained the purpose of the survey and assure participants that their information will be kept confidential. Face-to-face interaction will be required for explaining the purpose of research. Questionnaires will be handed to the participants and they will be asked to fill them. The participants will fill the questionnaire and return to the researcher. Only completed questionnaires will be considered for the purpose of the research.

Managing survey

The duration for completing the survey will be of 25 minutes. The research project involves different phases such as the approval of the research instrument, permission for conducting research and survey conduction. It requires to take into consideration different issues and cover all aspects of research (Eston & Rowlands, 2000).

Cost of survey

The cost of research is dependent on the allocation of resources and time. The main cost will be incurred in the process of creating a questionnaire survey as it requires materials. Visiting the targeted area for the survey will involve travelling cost. The total cost estimated for the survey is $500.

Data evaluation and analysis

A statistical software SPSS will be used for computing results of the survey. Different statistical tests like independent T-Test and ANOVA will be performed. Independent t-test will allow comparing means between unrelated groups and identifying the statistically significant difference between them. ANOVA will be computed for analyzing the difference of means in the group of the sample. Descriptive statistics will provide measures of central tendency by giving values of mean, median, standard deviation and variance.

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