

CRIME AGAINST WOMEN IN KOLKATA: A SPATIAL DIFFERENCE AND TEMPORAL CHANGE ANALYSIS

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Abstract: Twenty years ago, violence against women was not considered an issue worthy of international attention or concern. Victims of violence suffered in silence, with little public recognition of their plight. This began to change in the 1980s as women's groups organised locally and internationally to demand attention to the physical, psychological and economic abuse of women. Gradually, violence against women has come to be recognised as a legitimate human rights issue and as a significant threat to women health and well-being. Amongst the various ways to victimise a woman, rape, molestation, torture, eve teasing, are the most evident and reported crime against women in the police stations under Kolkata jurisdiction. Although women may be victims of any of the general crimes such as murder or robbery but the crimes which are directed specially against women are characterised as crime against women under Indian Penal Code. This paper attempts an insight into the spatial difference and temporal change of crime scenario against women in Kolkata during 2008 – 2012. Location Quotient mapping through GIS techniques and other simple statistical methods are used to find the answer of the stated objectives. The result shows a trend of ever increasing tendency of crime against women. An administrative change of divisions of police jurisdiction boundary in the year 2011 failed to combat with the prevailing situation.

Keywords: Crime, Abuse of women, Human right, Social evils, Well being.

INTRODUCTION

In the ancient India women held a high place of respect in the society as mentioned in the Rigveda and other scriptures. Volumes can be written about the status of our women and their heroic deeds from the Vedic period to the modern times. But later on, because of social, political and economical changes, women lost their status and were relegated to the background. Many evil customs and traditions stepped in which enslaved the women and tied them to the boundaries of the house (Arun Goyal, 2004).

Twenty years ago, violence against women was not considered an issue worthy of international attention or concern. Victims of violence suffered in silence, with little public recognition of their plight. This began to change in the 1980s as women's groups organised locally and internationally to demand attention to the physical, psychological and economic

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abuse of women. Gradually, violence against women has come to be recognised as a legitimate human rights issue and as a significant threat to women health and well-being.

The official statistics showed a declining sex ratio, health status, literacy rate, work participation rate and political participation among women. While on the other hand the spread of social evils like dowry deaths, child marriage, domestic violence, rape, sexual harassment, exploitation of women workers are rampant in different parts of India (A. K. Singh and J. Choudhury, 2012).

Table 1: CRIME HEAD-WISE INCIDENCES OF CRIME AGAINST WOMEN IN INDIA DURING 2007 – 2011

SL. NO.	CRIME HEAD	YEAR				
		2007	2008	2009	2010	2011
1	Rape	20,737	21,467	21,397	22,172	24,206
2	Kidnapping and abduction	20,416	22,939	25,741	29,795	35,565
3	Dowry death	8,093	8,172	8,383	8,391	8,618
4	Torture	75,930	81,344	89,546	94,041	99,135
5	Molestation	38,734	40,413	38,711	40,613	42,986
6	Sexual harassment	10,950	12,214	11,009	9,961	8,570
7	Importation of girls	61	67	48	36	80
8	Sati prevention act	0	1	0	0	1
9	Immoral traffic	3,568	2,659	2,474	2,499	2,435
10	Indecent representation of women (prohibition) act,1986	1,200	1,025	845	895	453
11	Dowry prohibition act, 1961	5,623	5,555	5,650	5,182	6,619
	Total	1,85,312	1,95,856	2,03,804	2,13,585	2,28,650

SOURCE: *National Crime Records Bureau Crime in India, 2011*

India is one of the fastest growing countries in the world. With a history of democratic secularism and rich cultural heritage India draws a special attention from the rest of the world. In spite of being a country of 'Unity in Diversity', India fails to provide due respect to its women. All over India it has been a recent trend to victimise women in some of the selected states like West Bengal, Andhra Pradesh, Uttar Pradesh, etc. Apart from rural areas, mega cities are also serving more as a catalyst and triggering off the flame. West Bengal with 7.5% share of country's population has accounted for nearly 12.7% of the total crime against women by reporting 29,133 cases (NCRB, 2011). With this status of cases West Bengal leads the table as compared with other Indian states (Table – 2).

Table 2: INCIDENCES AND RATE OF CRIME COMMITTED AGAINST WOMEN IN MAJOR INDIAN STATES DURING 2011

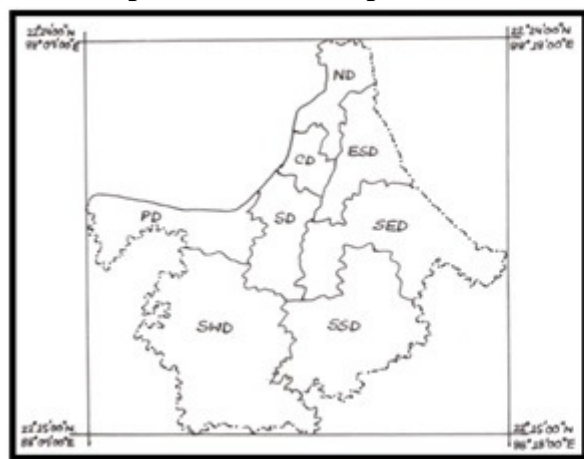
STATES	INCIDENCE	PERCENTAGE CONTRIBUTION TO ALL-INDIA TOTAL	POPULATION IN LAKHS	RATE OF TOTAL COGNIZABLE CRIMES	RANK AS PER RATE OF TOTAL COGNIZABLE CRIMES	RANK AS PER PERCENTAGE SHARE
WEST BENGAL	29133	12.7	913.5	31.9	5	1
ANDHRA PRADESH	28246	12.4	846.7	33.4	4	2
UTTAR PRADESH	22639	9.9	1995.8	11.3	21	3
RAJASTHAN	19888	8.7	686.2	29	7	4
MADHYA PRADESH	16599	7.3	726	22.9	9	5
MAHARASTRA	15728	6.9	1123.7	14	18	6

SOURCE: National Crime Records Bureau Crime in India, 2011

STUDY AREA

Kolkata is located in the eastern part of India at 22°82'N latitude and 88°20'E longitude. It has spread linearly along the bank of the River Hugli with slope towards east. The city stands at an average elevation of 6.5m above MSL with a total area of 187.33 sq.km. and is divided into a number of boroughs and wards. As per 2011 census total population of Kolkata is 4.5 million whereas greater Kolkata has 14.1 million population. The urban agglomeration of Kolkata covers several municipal corporations, municipalities, city boards and villages and is the third largest urban agglomeration in India after Mumbai and Delhi. The Kolkata Municipal Corporation or KMC (Formerly the Calcutta Municipal Corporation), established in 1876, is responsible for the civic maintenance and infrastructure of Kolkata. Kolkata police had five divisions, which was rearranged into eight divisions since 2010 (Table – 3).

Map – 1: Location Map



SOURCE: Kolkata Police, 2013

Image – 1: Google Image of Study Area



SOURCE: Google Earth, 2013

Table 3: DIVISION WISE LIST OF THE POLICE STATIONS UNDER KOLKATA POLICE JURISDICTION

SL. NO.	DIVISIONS	NO. OF POLICE STATIONS	NAME OF THE POLICE STATIONS
1.	NORTH DIVISION (ND)	8	Shyampukur, Jorabagan, Burtolla, Amherst Street, Cossipore, Chitpur, Tala, Sinthi
2.	CENTRAL DIVISION (CD)	9	Burrabazar, Posta, Jorasanko, Girish Park, Hare Street, Bowbazar, Muchipara, Taltala, New Market
3.	EAST SUBURBAN DIVISION (ESD)	7	Maniktala, Ultadanga, Beliaghata, Phoolbagan, Narkeldanga, Entally, Beniapukur
4.	SOUTH DIVISION (SD)	11	Park Street, Shakespear Sarani, Hastings, Maidan, Bhowanipur, Kalighat, Tollygunj, Charu Market, Alipore, New Alipore, Chetla
5.	PORT DIVISION (PD)	9	North Port, South Port, Watgunj, West Port, Garden Reach, Ekbalpur, Naadial, Rajabagan
6.	SOUTH EAST DIVISION (SED)	8	Tangra, Topsia, Ballygunge, Gariahat, Lake, Karaya, Pragati Maidan, Tiljala
7.	SOUTH SUBURBAN DIVISION (SSD)	8	Jadavpur, Kasba, Purba Jadavpur, Regent Park, Survey Park, Bansdroni, Garfa, Patuli
8.	SOUTH WEST DIVISION (SWD)	5	Taratala, Behala, Parnashree, Thakurpukur, Haridevpur

SOURCE: *Lalbazar, the Head quarter of Kolkata Police, 2013*

DEFINITION OF CRIME

Crime is the breaking of rules or laws for which some governing authority can ultimately prescribe a conviction. Crimes may also result in cautions, rehabilitation or be unenforced. Individual human societies may each define crime and crimes differently, in different localities (state, local, international), at different time stages of the so-called "crime", from planning, disclosure, supposedly intended, supposedly prepared, incomplete, complete or future proclaimed after the "crime" (Wikipedia, 2014). Crime is an action or omission which constitutes an offence and is punishable by law (Oxford Dictionary). A crime is an act committed or omitted in violation of a public law, either forbidding or commanding it; a breach or violation of some public right or duty due to a whole community, considered as a community in its social aggregate capacity, as distinguished from a civil injury (Black's Law Dictionary).

TYPES OF CRIME AGAINST WOMEN

Although Women may be victims of any of the general crimes such as 'Murder', 'Robbery', 'Cheating' etc. only the crimes which are directed specifically against Women are characterised as 'Crimes against Women'. Various new legislations have been brought and amendments have been made in existing laws with view to handle these crimes effectively. These are broadly classified under following two categories:

Table 4: CRIMES AS IDENTIFIED UNDER IPC AND SPECIAL AND LOCAL LAWS

The Crimes identified under the Indian Penal Code(IPC)	The Crimes identified under the Special laws and Local law
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Rape (Sec.376 IPC) 2. Kidnapping & Abduction for specified purpose (Sec.363-373 IPC) 3. Homicide for dowry, dowry deaths or their attempts (Sec. 302-304-BIPC) 4. Torture, both mental and physical (Sec. 498-A IPC) 5. Molestation (Sec. 354 IPC) 6. Sexual Harassment (Sec. 509 IPC) 7. Importation of girls (Sec. 366-B IPC) 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Immoral Traffic (Prevention) Act,1956 2. Dowry (Prohibition) Act,1961 3. Indecent Representation of women (Prohibition) Act,1986 4. Commission of <i>Sati</i> (Prevention) act,1987

SOURCE: *National Crime Records Bureau Crime in India, 2011*

OBJECTIVES

Following objectives are taken into consideration to justify the research questions raised in this paper.

1. To analyze the temporal change of selected types of crimes against women in Kolkata.
2. To compare the spatial difference of selected types of crimes against women in Kolkata.
3. To examine the overall scenario of crime against women in Kolkata and suggest remedies to combat with the situation.

DATABASE AND METHODOLOGY

The present research work is a systematic analysis of emerging social pathological issues to achieve the stated objectives. The data for this research work is collected mainly from secondary sources like National Crime Record Bureau, Govt. of India and from Kolkata Police headquarter at Lalbazar. Secondary data mainly during 2008 to 2012 is taken into consideration keeping in mind the political change in West Bengal and divisional rearrangement of Kolkata police jurisdiction. Out of all the crimes identified under Indian Penal Code (IPC) and under special and local laws, only six types of crimes are taken into consideration which includes Rape, Molestation, Dowry Death, Torture on Housewives, Eve-teasing and Abetment to commit suicide. Both qualitative and quantitative methods are applied for the overall evaluation of crime against women in Kolkata. Location Quotient, Composite Index and other simple statistical techniques are used to analyze the present situation. GIS techniques are used for mapping the spatial difference across Kolkata.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Kolkata is the largest Megacity in eastern India. Kolkata has undergone certain clear phases of growth into a metropolitan complex. The most significant phases that have impacted upon its socio-economic, cultural and political profile are: the partition of Bengal (1905); the independence of the country (1947); Bangladesh war of independence (1971); and finally the onset of liberalization and the entry of world market (B. Aleaz, 2009).

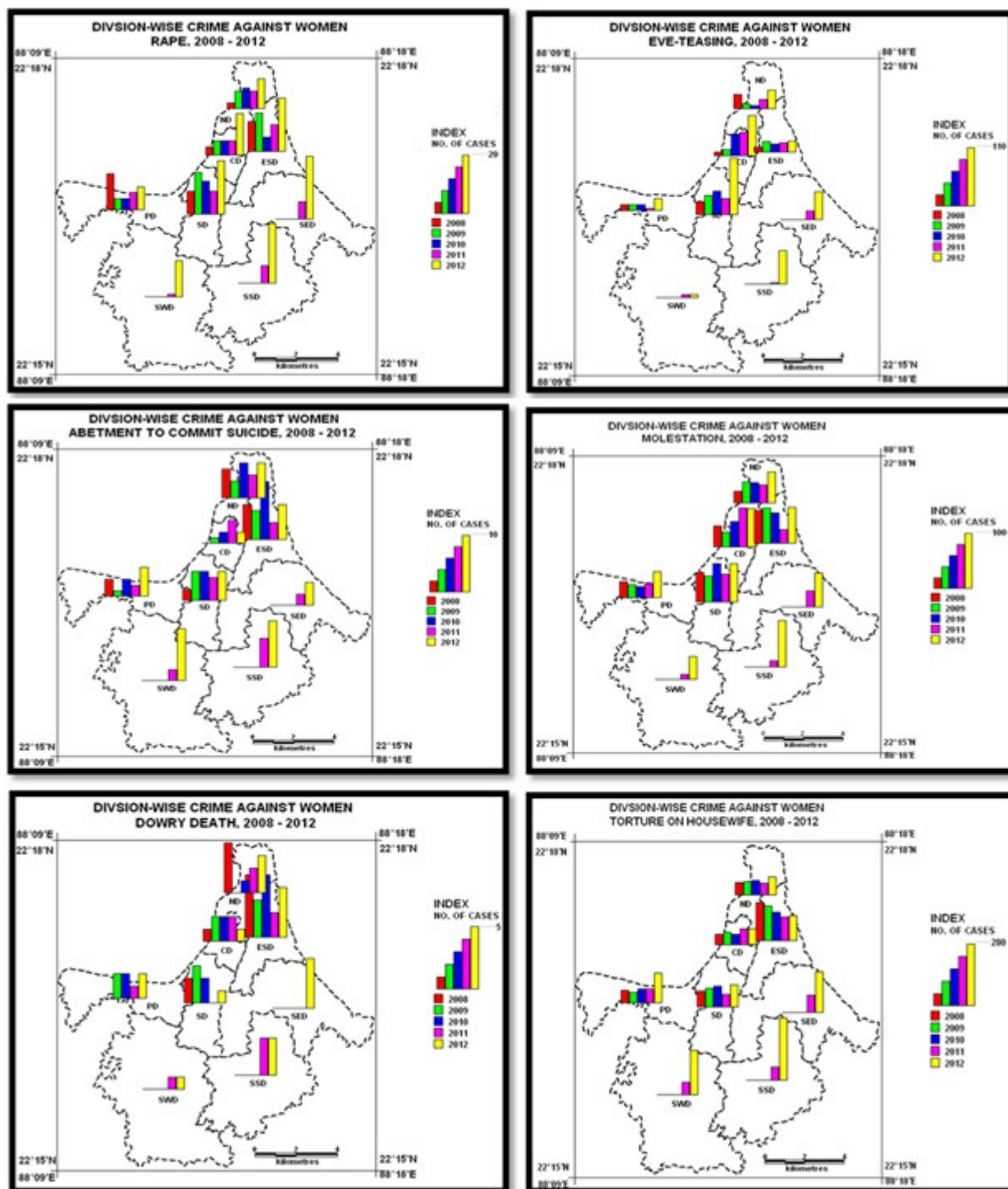
Table 5: DIVISION WISE TREND OF TOTAL CRIME AGAINST WOMEN IN KOLKATA BETWEEN 2008 -2012

NAME OF THE DIVISIONS	YEAR				
	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012
CENTRAL DIVISION	100	107	146	198	234
SOUTH DIVISION	163	189	225	152	296
EAST SUBURBAN DIVISION	258	261	215	163	225
NORTH DIVISION	117	120	126	116	191
PORT DIVISION	113	92	105	105	220
SOUTH EAST DIVISION	-	-	-	134	322
SOUTH WEST DIVISION	-	-	-	78	266
SOUTH SUBURBAN DIVISION	-	-	-	93	449

SOURCE: *Lalbazar, the Head quarter of Kolkata Police, 2013*

a) Temporal change analysis:

There was a mixed trend of Rape cases during 2008-10. But an increasing trend in Rape cases has been observed in all the divisions during 2011-12. From existing divisions to newly added suburban divisions, the scenario is almost same. As compared to Rape cases Eve-teasing are more reported during 2008-12 (from 81 cases in 2008 to 377 cases in 2012). In case of Eve-teasing, women in most of the cases try to avoid and pass by, not considering it reportable, unless something serious. It has also been noticed that a physical assault had to suffer in case protested. Abetment to commit suicide is another serious issue of crime against women. A mixed trend has been observed during 2008-12 across Kolkata¹² (from 16 cases in 2008 to 45 cases in 2012). Molestation is another serious crime against women which had increased tremendously in recent years. Reports show that it has increased from 211 in 2008 to 491 in 2012. Dowry demand for marriage has been another malpractice, which has resulted total 12 death cases in 2008 to 19 death cases in 2012 in Kolkata. In male dominated society, both physical and mental torture on housewives by her husband and other relatives has been an issue of concern. The issue is suppressed in most of the times within the family; even then it has been reported 405 cases in 2008 to 1150 cases in 2012.

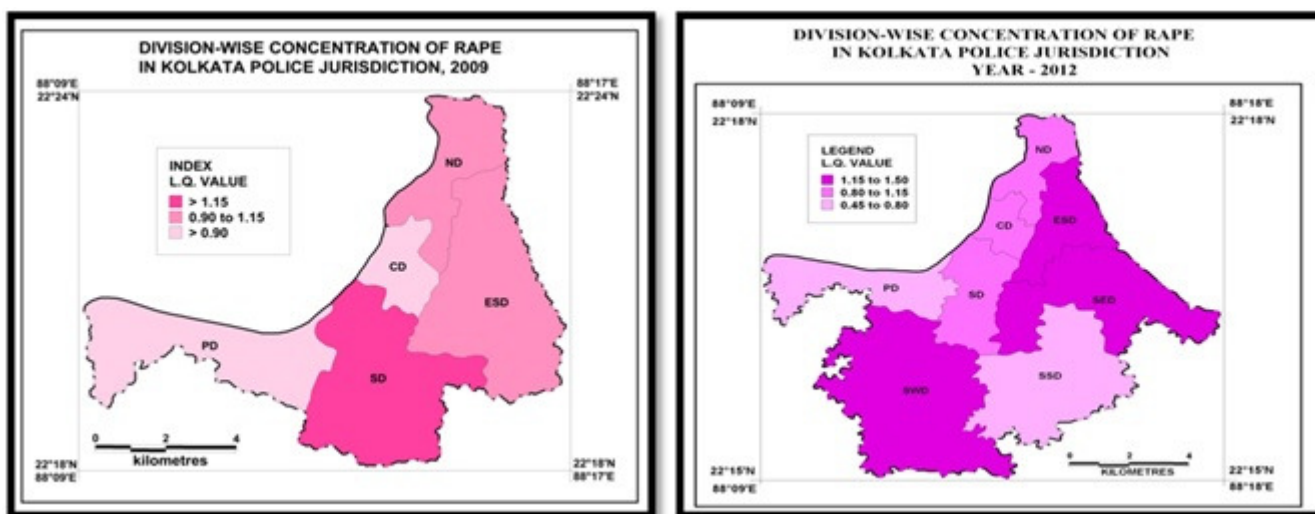


SOURCE: Lalbazar, the Head quarter of Kolkata Police, 2013

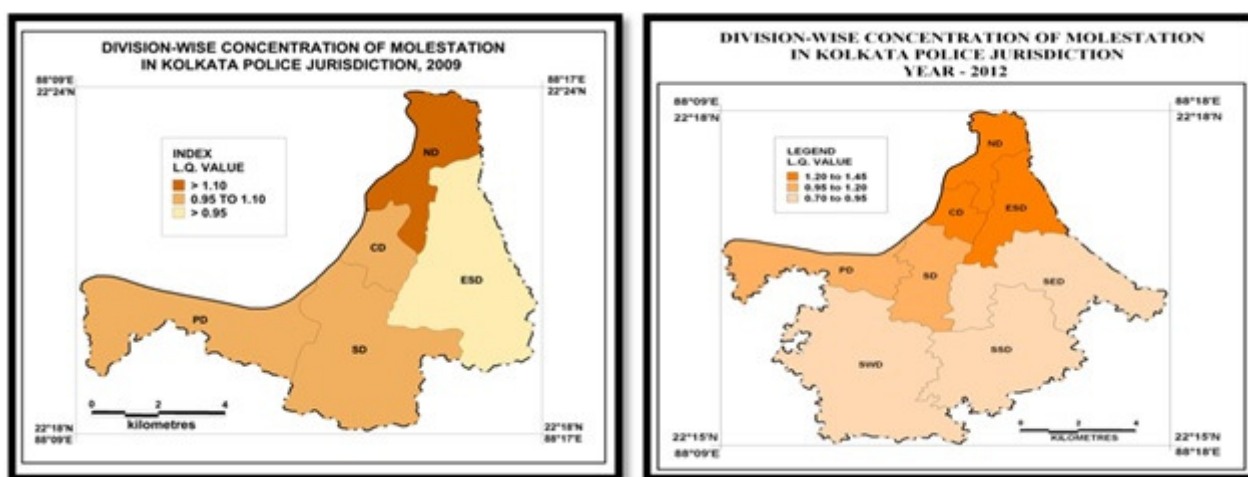
a) Spatial difference analysis:

RAPE: An inter-divisional difference in rape cases has been observed in Kolkata. In 2009 Port and Central division reports low; North and East Suburban division reports moderate; whereas South division reports high intensity of rape cases. On the other hand in 2012 Port and South Suburban division reports low; North, Central and South division reports

moderate; and South East, South West and East Suburban division reports high intensity of rape cases. Location quotient index shows that suburban divisions are more susceptible to this case.

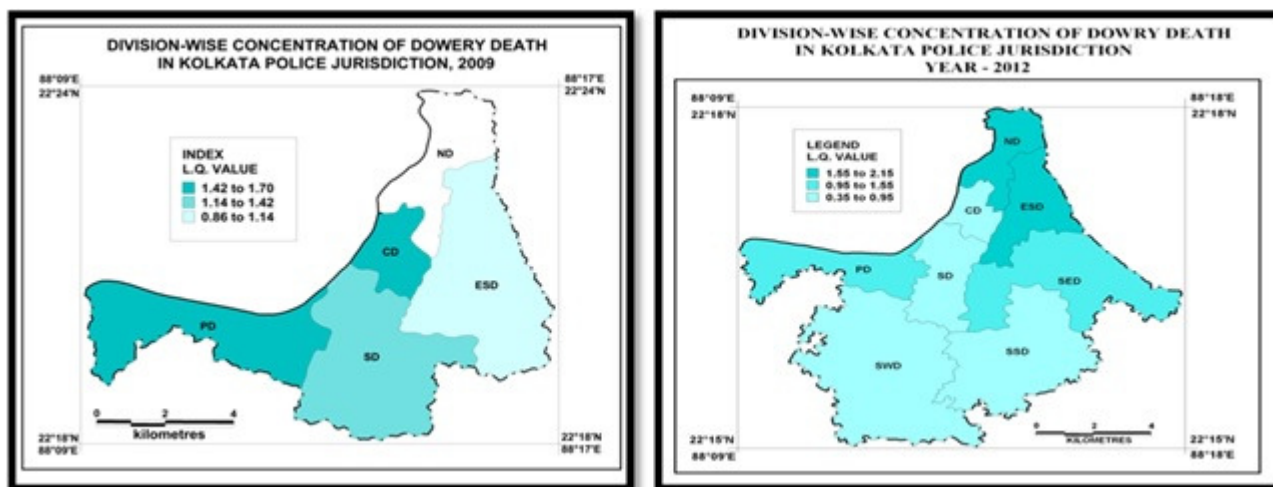


MOLESTATION: Another significant crime against women is molestation. In 2009 East suburban division reports low; Port, Central and South division reports moderate; whereas North division reports high intensity of molestation cases. On the other hand in 2012 South West, South East and South suburban division reports low; Port and South division reports moderate; whereas Central, North and East suburban division reports high rate of molestation cases. Results show that suburban Kolkata records better than Central and North Kolkata in case of molestation.

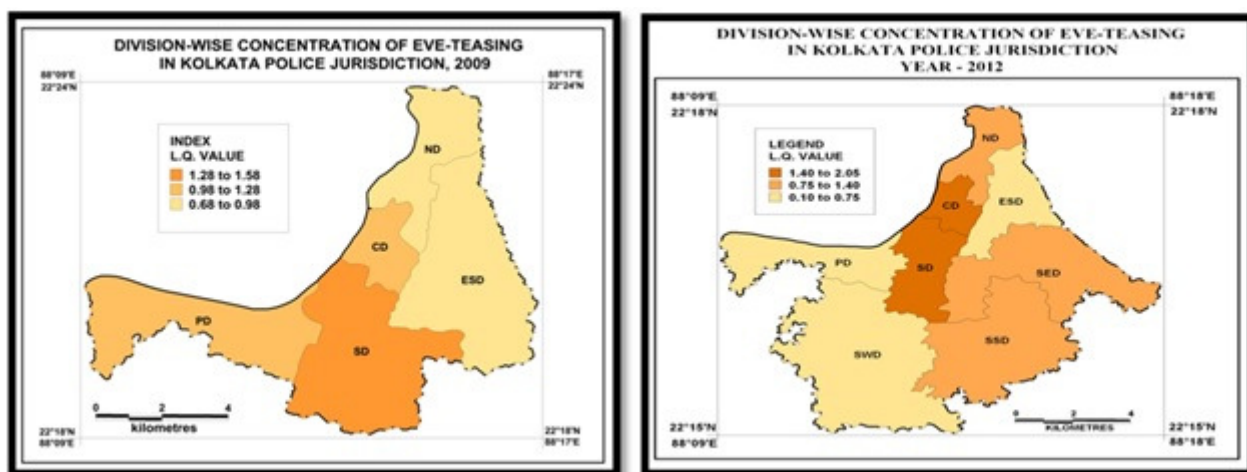


DOWRY DEATH: Dowry demand and eventual death report of housewives across Kolkata is another major concern. In 2009 North and East suburban division reports low; South division reports moderate; whereas Port and Central division reports high rate of dowry death incidences. On the other hand in 2012 Central, South, South West and South suburban

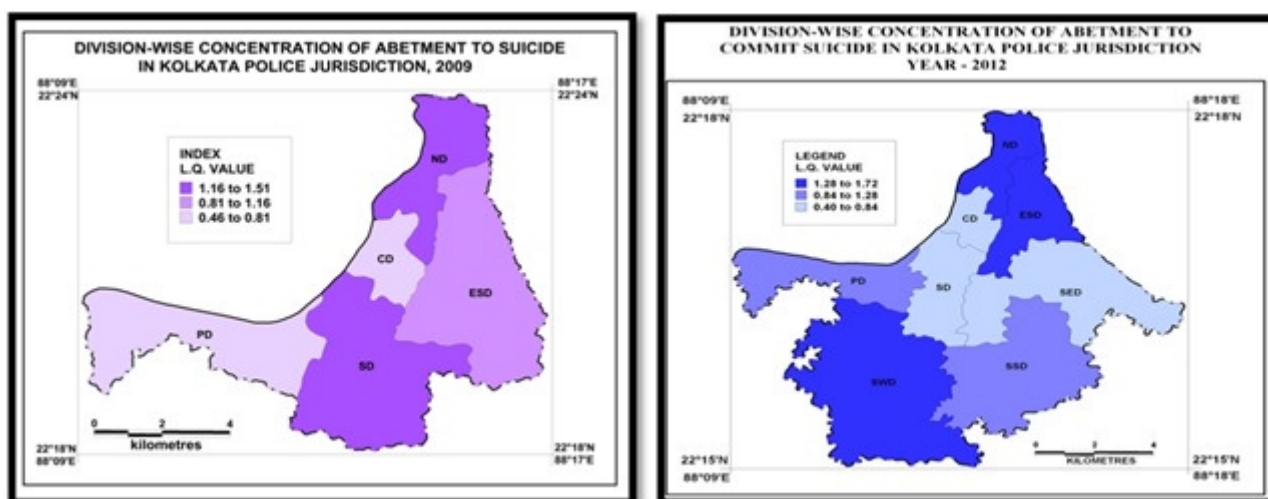
division reports low; Port and South East division reports moderate; whereas North and East suburban division reports high rate of dowry death incidences.



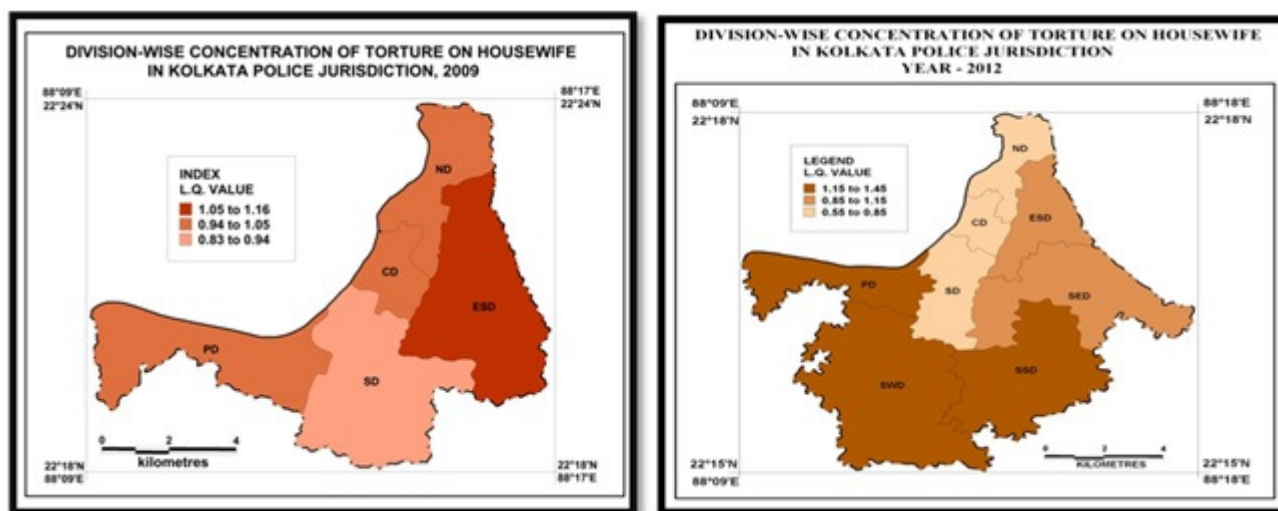
EVE TEASING: It is one of the most tempting incidences for a victimised woman. So far Kolkata is concerned; it is observed that in 2009 North and East suburban division reports low; Port and Central division reports moderate; whereas South division reports high intensity of eve-teasing reports. On the other hand, in 2012, Port, South West and East suburban division reports low; North, South East and South suburban division reports moderate; whereas Central and South division reports high intensity of eve-teasing reports.



SUICIDE: Abetment to commit suicide is a blend of prolonged mental and physical torture on women. In Kolkata, in 2009, Central and Port division reports low; East suburban division reports moderate; whereas North and South division reports high rate of suicide incidences. On the other hand, in 2012, Central, South and South East division reports low; Port and South suburban reports moderate; whereas North, South West and East suburban division reports high rate of suicide incidences.



TORTURE: Both mental and physical assault on housewives by husband and other relatives comes under torture cases. In 2009, it is observed that South division reports low; North, Central and Port division reports moderate; whereas East suburban division reports high rate of torture cases. On the other hand, in 2012, North, Central and South division reports low; South East and East suburban division reports moderate; whereas Port, South West and South suburban division reports high rate of torture cases.



In between 2008 and 2012, for long 5 years, West Bengal has undergone a rapid political and administrative change. Kolkata police reoriented the divisions for better administration. On average 8 to 10 police stations per division are given responsibilities for better functioning in terms of law and order. But in last five years crime against women has increased many fold and police on the other hand come up with failures in anchoring the increasing trend. More over police is beaten up by the criminals in some of the cases. Composite Index therefore significantly portrays the differences between 2008 (Table – 6) and 2012 (Table - 7). In

2008 Central division (10) scores low index value; North (17) and Port (17) division scores moderate index value; whereas South (20) and East suburban (26) division reports high index value. This proves that, North, Central and Port division of Kolkata provides better environment for women to live safely. On the other hand South and East suburban division of Kolkata fails to provide such safety to women. In 2012, the situation turns more a rampant. Law and order in the city becomes completely wrecked. In this case North (18) and Port (16) division continues performing low index value; Central (20) and South West (22) division scores moderate index value; South (26) and East suburban (24) division scores high index value; whereas South East (28) and South suburban (32) division scores alarmingly very high index value.

Table 6: COMPOSITE INDEX SHOWING THE INTENSITY OF CRIME AGAINST WOMEN IN KOLKATA IN 2008

DIVISIONS	TORTURE	Z SCORE	RANK	RAPE	Z SCORE	RANK	DOWRY	Z SCORE	RANK	MOLESTATION	Z SCORE	RANK	EVE TEASING	Z SCORE	RANK	SUICIDE	Z SCORE	RANK	TOTAL SCORE
CD	49	-0.65	1	3	-0.92	2	1	-0.68	2	39	-0.09	3	8	-0.907	1	0	-1.34	1	10
SD	73	-0.16	4	8	0.229	3	2	-0.19	3	53	0.81	4	25	0.9736	4	2	-0.5	2	20
ESD	168	1.761	5	10	0.688	4	5	1.254	5	59	1.19	5	10	-0.686	2	6	1.173	5	26
ND	57	-0.49	2	2	-1.15	1	4	0.772	4	22	-1.18	1	27	1.1948	5	5	0.754	4	17
PD	58	-0.47	3	12	1.147	5	0	-1.16	1	29	-0.73	2	11	-0.575	3	3	-0.08	3	17

SOURCE: *Computed by the Author*

Table 7: COMPOSITE INDEX SHOWING THE INTENSITY OF CRIME AGAINST WOMEN IN KOLKATA IN 2012

DIVISIONS	TORTURE	Z SCORE	RANK	RAPE	Z SCORE	RANK	DOWRY	Z SCORE	RANK	MOLESTATION	Z SCORE	RANK	EVE TEASING	Z SCORE	RANK	SUICIDE	Z SCORE	RANK	TOTAL SCORE
CD	73	-1.04	1	14	-0.23	4	1	-1.06	1	69	0.58	6	75	0.8734	7	2	-1.65	1	20
SD	100	-0.64	3	18	0.596	5	1	-1.06	1	69	0.58	6	103	1.7506	8	5	-0.28	3	26
ESD	110	-0.49	4	18	0.596	5	4	1.248	4	65	0.27	5	22	-0.787	2	6	0.17	4	24
ND	83	-0.89	2	10	-1.06	2	3	0.48	3	55	-0.48	3	34	-0.411	4	6	0.17	4	18
PD	135	-0.13	5	8	-1.48	1	2	-0.29	2	47	-1.09	2	23	-0.756	3	5	-0.28	3	16
SED	181	0.546	6	21	1.218	7	4	1.248	4	61	-0.03	4	51	0.1214	5	4	-0.74	2	28
SWD	195	0.752	7	20	1.011	6	1	-1.06	1	42	-1.47	1	7	-1.257	1	9	1.534	6	22
SSD	273	1.896	8	12	-0.65	3	3	0.48	3	83	1.64	7	62	0.4661	6	8	1.08	5	32

SOURCE: *Computed by the Author*

FINDINGS

1. Over the years, crime rate against women has increased alarmingly in Kolkata.
2. West Bengal so far being placed 1st rank in crime against women in the country, Kolkata is also following the same trend.
3. While comparing the crime reports of 2008 and 2012, in both the cases it is observed that outskirts of the city or suburban divisions of Kolkata police jurisdiction shows higher tendency of crime against women.
4. North, central, port, south divisions are comparatively safer places for women to live in because these areas are lesser crime prone.
5. Torture on housewife and molestation cases are recorded highest in Kolkata. It is narrowly followed by eve-teasing and rape cases.
6. Wrecked law and order, poor governance, lack of atrocious punishment, safe political custody and helplessness of police have made criminals more aggressive.

7. Divisional rearrangement for better administration from five divisions to eight divisions in 2011 and so called *poriborton* (change) in West Bengal political scenario did not work positively rather crime rate against women increased manifold.
8. Kolkata being the capital city of West Bengal is passing through the ever increasing rate of crime against women to other cities and peripheral rural places.

SUGGESTION

1. Only atrocious punishment like life sentence to jail if found guilty might help in reducing the crime rate in recent years.
2. Police, court and government should work hand in hand. The trio should not allow any lackadaisical attitude towards reported crimes.
3. Political interference and biasness should be kept away from the process of justice. Only law should take its own course without delaying justice.
4. Literacy rate and awareness among women should be increased. Demand of dowry or any such malpractice should be opposed at its budding stage.
5. Media should play a honest role without overexposure and hurting the sentiment of the victim and its family.
6. Media should not only focus in urban hotspots. They should look into rural areas also where major issues are most of the times suppressed down, avoided or hidden up.
7. It is high time that women should start learning self defence.

CONCLUSION

With increasing pace of urbanization and eventual social change, crime against women is turning into a matter of serious concern. From office canteen to legislature assembly, the crime issue has been among the most debated topic in recent times. Kolkata, the city of joy, is therefore not safe for women anymore. Apart from increasing level of women literacy, mass campaign of awareness through public display will effectively work. Police should be given more independent responsibility to take a prompt action against reported cases. In this era of globalization there is an urgent need to motion our criminal justice system of India in maintaining law and order situation of the country that one should feel safe and secure.

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