



**VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN IN INDIA:  
A CASE STUDY OF DISTRICT GAYA  
SINCE 1969**

**THESIS**

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## **CONCLUSIONS AND SUGGESTIONS**

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### **Conclusions**

In India, women envelop half of the total population. Women are denied access to justice, equality, and liberty. Although women are worshipped as a goddess, on the other hand, they are considered as an object of contempt and sexual enjoyment. Violence against women is well understood and transcends in-country, and across religions. However, women belonging to all communities experience violence, but the nature of violence varies from community to community. Gender violence is a customary and unjust practice. It almost exists throughout the world; however, it has become noticeable the social structure from the last thirty years. Violence against women has gained global concentration, and numerous efforts have been made to bridge the ever-ending gap. The emergence of the feminist movement encourages women to talk about gender issues.

In the Vedic period, the status of women was satisfactory. They enjoyed an equitable position with men. With the passage of time, the condition of women began to deteriorate. The medieval period was called the ‘Dark Age’ which had put the womenfolk in a pathetic and miserable condition. The introduction of several unwanted and customary evil practices occurred in the medieval period. The advent of foreign invaders further degraded the circumstances of women at an extreme level. Social reform movements were enunciated by the great reformers such as Raja Ram Mohan Rao, Ishwar Chandra Vidhya Sagar, Dayanand Saraswati, Keshab Chandra Sen, Gopal Krishna Gokhale, Ram Krishna Paramahansa , Swami Vivekanand, Pandita Rambai who brought awakening among women regarding their exploitation and oppression practicing for centuries. Reformers played a remarkable role in protecting women's issues and introduced various enactments such as the Hindu Marriage Act 1955, Child marriage restraint Act 1929, Dowry Prohibition Act 1961, Sati Act 1987, Immoral Traffic Act, 1956, etc. In the post-Independence era, the constitution of India was designed to secure and provide civil, political, and economic equality between both the sexes. However, the modern-day scenario has violated almost all social institutions. Women are struggling for their own identity and self-esteem. Therefore, ***the research accepts that ‘Women are confined to fewer roles. Some religious, social, cultural beliefs and customs are quite unfavorable to an equitable position of women and are complex to crack from society.’***

The continuing framework of phenomena of violent behavior against women is one of the hurdles in the path of women's development. However, with the continuous hard work to incorporate women into the mainstream development process, the fact remains to possess a multitude of factors that facilitate the constant marginalization of women. Gender violence has various forms ranging from 'feticides,' 'infanticides,' 'sexual abuse,' 'incest, molestation,' 'sexual harassment at work,' 'street rape, marital rape,' 'domestic violence,' 'dowry related violence.' It also includes 'forced sex-selective abortions,' 'intimate partner violence,' 'restrictions in mobility,' 'lack of nutrition,' and aggressive behavior by husband and in-laws for not bringing sufficient dowry and or not giving birth to a male child. **Therefore the hypothesis, 'Women experience several forms of violence within and outside the house. The deeply embedded male chauvinist tendencies and patriarchal structure are intricate to eliminate the evils of Indian society' is accepted.**

There is an underlying truth that both men and women are the victims of violence, but women being the fragile species confront more brutalities in every arena of life. Women are not even safe at home. They are often misbehaved by in-laws and life partners. In the Women's movement, an activist made an argument in concern with violence against women. He/She spoke that patriarchal culture comes with the crime against women. Similarly, early marriages leave an adverse effect on women's health. The burden of a daughter's marriage gives rise to the custom of female feticide and infanticide. The condition of single women like unmarried, widowed, deserted, or divorced is also pathetic. The issue of violence against women has received an international concern. There are several factors which are responsible for the violence against women, such as the dominant nature of men in the family, alcoholic men, poverty, economic inequality, gender socialization, inefficient judiciary and police, religious and orthodox practices and beliefs, stereotype portrayal of men and women in media, etc. **Therefore the hypothesis, 'the atrocities of women exist at the individual, community, and societal levels, which are deeply entrenched and difficult to reduce or combat. The individual-level efforts must of primary importance to attain the desired result' is true.**

Woman, as a mother, sister, and wife, has become the subject of discussion in most of the places. With the growing and changing the emphasis on terms like 'women welfare,' 'women development,' 'women empowerment,' and 'gender equality' in the social,

economic, and political analysis, women have started realizing their importance and self-respect. International organizations and other allied agencies had made strong commitments towards gender parity and addressed women at the UN. Equal rights of women and the related issues have been discussed in the United Nations. The preamble of the United Nations aims to have faith in fundamental rights and declare that men and women share equal respect and value from all walks of life.

In this regard, the United Nations held a series of world conferences on women's issues. The women conference was known as the world conference of the International Women's Year held in Mexico in 1975. This conference was designed for the international forum for women's rights. It also focused on the complete involvement of women in the development process. Moreover, the instruments like the UN Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW), Copenhagen, Nairobi, and Beijing Conference have supported and encouraged women's rights as human rights. At both, International and national dimensions, the nongovernmental and voluntary association plays an important role in supplementing governmental efforts in promoting women empowerment, rural development, socio-economic change, relief, and social welfare. They support and advance decentralized activities by guaranteeing the preparation and investment of the general population at the grass-root level. The deliberate association assumes a vital job in handling different issues related to women. The irony is that In spite of these efforts, women are still abused, ill-treated, humiliated, and exploited in society.

These essential laws could not bring much improvement in the condition of women, although the provisions under criminal laws were included. The provision under Criminal law is included. The provisions under criminal law includes the Indian penal Code 1860, Indian Evidence Act 1972, and Criminal procedure code. The Indian Penal code consists of 511 sections. Moreover, the lack of efficiency, regularities, and a rise in corruption has been noticed in the police hierarchy, which has brought disappointment among individuals. It has been observed that most of the women show hesitation in registering FIR against culprits. The reason is that women have lost faith in police stations and judicial systems. As far as the judiciary system is concerned, it has shown both positive and negative responses towards violence against women. The National Commission of Women was established in 1992 to protect and promote the interest of women in India. Other policies and programs such as the National Plan for Action of a

Girl Child and the National Policy for the Empowerment of Women were established for the development of girl children and women. **Therefore the hypothesis, ‘the constitution, voluntary organizations, NGOs, and central authority have failed to protect women from violence. The ineffectiveness of legislation and lack of speedy trial of the cases related to women's delayed justice to them’ seems to be true to a certain extent.**

As far as Bihar is concerned, the crime against women is prevalent in most of the places. Many women fall into the trap of violence at home and in public spaces. Moreover, child marriage and dowry demanding is a pervading custom. The Gaya district also witnesses more cases of child marriage, especially in rural areas. This is mainly confined to illiterate and marginalized families of low income. Meanwhile, out of 38 districts, 35 districts had women helpline services and district protection officers in 2015. Some major initiatives have taken in Bihar to combat atrocities against women. These initiatives include policies, programmes, and Non-Governmental Organizations. These include Women Development Cooperation, ‘Mahila Dastak Samiti,’ ‘Women Helpline,’ ‘National Rural Employment Guarantee Act and Rural Women Workers in Bihar,’ ‘National Rural Employment Guarantee Act,’ ‘Mukhyamantri Nari Shakti Yojna,’ ‘Mukhyamantri Kanya Vivah Scheme,’ ‘Jeevika,’ ‘Mukhyamantri Child Protection Scheme,’ ‘Integrated Child Development Scheme,’ ‘Do Kadam Barabri Ki Ore,’ ‘Swadhar Greh,’ ‘Gender sensitization in college,’ ‘Assistance for marriage of girls in shelter homes.’ The Gaya district also has women helpline and Mahila Thana to register their complaints and provide safety to women. Various case studies in the Gaya district were done on crime against women. Therefore, **the research shows, ‘in the past, many measures, efforts, plans, and schemes were sanctioned by the state government to reduce the violence against women and improve the status of women in various sectors. Unfortunately, improvements in the status and condition of women are hardly observed. Only a few women get benefited from the PWDV Act in Bihar’.**

This thesis explains the different dimensions of violence faced by women in the Gaya District. In the present study, the problem of violence is addressed through the personal experiences of victims. The present study illustrates the nature, forms, causes, and consequences of violence. Furthermore, it also depicts the perpetrator and disclosure or help-seeking mechanisms against violence.

In the present study, demographic variables including respondent's area, age, education, occupation, income, husband education occupation, income, marital status, types of family and religion were also studied to understand its impact on the condition of women.

The study is based on the existing violence between the rural and urban areas of respondents. Table 6.1 depicts that the majority of women victims between the age group of 25-35 belong to rural areas. Similarly, table 6.2 described the marital status of respondents. More than half of the married respondents were the victims of violence as compared to unmarried respondents in both rural and urban areas. Similarly, table 6.3 illustrated that the majority of the rural respondents belonged to the Hindu religion, i.e., 78%.

Table 6.4 explained the type of violence in families. The majority of the respondents in rural areas belonged to a joint family, i.e., 82%, whereas many respondents in the urban areas belonged to a nuclear family, i.e., 72%. Table 6.5 depicted that the majority of the respondents in rural areas got married at the age of 15-17 (37%) and below 14 years (16%). Therefore, the marriageable age of females was younger in rural as compared to urban areas.

Table 6.6, 6.7, and 6.8 were closely associated with each other, which depicts the education, employment, and income of the respondents. In rural areas, the majority of women victims had attained higher secondary education, engaged in petty jobs, and the income range lay between 3500-8000. In urban areas, the majority of the respondents were at least graduate and mostly engaged in private jobs with the income range of rupees 150000-25000. This depicts that in both areas, women suffered from violence. It is crystal clear that atrocities against women in rural areas exist among less educated, low occupation and poor income groups. In urban areas, it is an astonishing fact that most of the victims lie among educated, employed, and higher-income groups.

Moreover, in Table 6.9, 6.10, and 6.11, the respondents' husbands' educations, occupation, and income were discussed. Likewise, in rural areas, violence is common among respondents whose husbands were educated and engaged in menial jobs and low income but shocked to witness the prevalence of violence among the educated, good occupation and income of respondent's husbands in urban areas. Here, apart from

education and financial constraints, the moral values, ethics, and positive mindsets of individuals towards women is significant.

Table 6.13 includes violence, i.e., physical, sexual, emotional, psychological, and financial violence. The majority of the respondents in rural (32%) and urban (40%) suffer physical violence. Figure 6.14 illustrated that the majority of men in rural areas slap their wives and twist their arms, which is explicit physical violence. In both urban and rural areas, stalking was one of the common types of sexual violence which were experienced by the majority of the respondents (figure 6.14). Under emotional violence (figure 6.16), silent treatment was suffered by the majority of the women in urban and rural settings, i.e., 33% and 31%, respectively. Moreover, figure 6.17 illustrated that in an urban area, insult (40%) and in rural areas, demands for a male child (28%) were the psychological violence suffered by a large percentage of women. The figure 6.18 represented that urban women are often suffered from financial violence in the form of controlling choice for occupation 33%, and in rural areas, 32% of women suffer from forcibly taking away money by family and in-laws.

Table 6.14 and 6.17 explains that the majority of the respondents in rural areas agreed that women are at high risk of domestic violence, and the male child is considered as a matter of pride. Similarly, table 6.18 depicts that both urban and rural respondents have opined that they have noticed a patriarchal structure at the husband's home. Table 6.19 clarifies that a large proportion of rural respondents, i.e., 58% replied that short dress is responsible for rape, and table 6.20 demonstrated the unawareness of an IPC or laws enacted for women among 84% of rural respondents.

Moreover, Table 6.15 analyzed that a large number of rural respondents agreed that dowry is mandatory. Lack of awareness and social sanctions were found as prominent reasons that encourage dowry practice in urban and rural settings (table 6.16). Therefore, the ***research finds that 'Bihar and Gaya are no exception in the matter relating to brutality against women. The domestic violence, dowry and child marriage, son preference is prominent in Bihar, particularly in Gaya District (rural areas). Marriage gives a license to a husband to rule over the body and mind of women. They experience violence in their entire lives. Despite demographic differences, violence is present in almost all categories. In the Gaya district, the differences lie in the method of atrocities committed against women in rural and urban areas'.***

Table 6.21 showed the causes of violence. It was observed that dowry is one of the prominent causes of violence faced by the majority of urban and rural respondents. It was observed that the rest of the causes of violence varied in an urban and rural area. Similarly, Table 6.22 highlighted the consequences of violence. It was noticed that no common consequence was found in rural and urban areas. However, the majority of the respondent in urban areas had a sense of insecurity, i.e., 24%, meanwhile in rural areas, the majority of the respondents suffered from psychological illness such as depression and anxiety, i.e., 26%. **The research explores that ‘Women have become a target of several causes of violence, which are directly or indirectly harming individuals. Except for a few, other consequences have damaged the lives of respondents at an extreme level. It was observed that the problem of violence is multidimensional in nature’.**

Table 6.23 explained that the perpetrator of violence in both urban and rural were husbands. Similarly, table 6.24 highlighted that the majority of the rural and urban respondents disclosed that victims had approached police for help. Therefore, the present **research finds that ‘a change in the mindset and attitude of women towards violence is necessary. The strong public opinion and stringent laws are not enough to reduce the continuous prevalence of violence perpetrated against women.’**

The case studies were done in the Gaya district. It was found the crime against women is customary practice in Bihar. The lower caste women were put on exploitation. They are raped, killed, and molested by landlords and upper-caste men. The demand for land rights was initiated in Bodhgaya Movement. Since 1991, many cases of matrimonial violence, torture, child marriage were rampant in Bihar and Gaya District. After 2000, the rape culture was incremented in Gaya, Bihar.

## Suggestions

After scrutinizing the overall results, some suggestions were made to combat violence against women in general and Gaya district in particular. The researcher suggests a few points to protect women and prevent violence against them.

- The awareness should be promoted through education. Literacy is one of the indicators that help in the development of personality. The human rights education should be facilitated to women so that they become aware of their responsibilities, rights, and duties. Moreover, technical measures, including

vocational education, must be given to women to become skilled workers and achieve employment. As far as the Gaya district is concerned, women belonging to both rural and urban areas should be provided with vocational, technical, and human rights education programmes. Educated women who suffer violence should not remain silent. They must take the help of legal service and enforcement agencies for justice.

- Media is a powerful instrument to address the public. Therefore, the media should broadcast the sensitive issues related to violence against women so that affirmative action can be taken by the government and public to reduce crime against women. In the context of the Gaya District, media should reach violence-prone areas highly, both in rural and urban settings, and broadcast the hidden reality of crimes. This would help the public and government to take positive measures towards the concerned issues in Gaya District.
- The change in the attitude of family and society is necessary to reduce crime against women. Women who are suffering from the patriarchal culture in all groups; rich and poor; illiterate and literate; employed and unemployed women should not hesitate to express their miseries to police and legal advisers. The change in the behavior of women is necessary to prevent and protect violent behavior against them. Women (mothers) should not marry their daughters to the greedy parties rather than teach them to take bold steps against such heinous acts. Society and family should show compassion, condolence to the rape victims rather than avoiding, accusing, or isolating the victim. The patriarchal culture is highly prevalent in Gaya District. Women still follow orthodox practices and rituals in marriages. Therefore, awareness is required among the womenfolk of the Gaya district to reduce atrocities against women.
- Property is one of the issues that instigate violence against women. Therefore, provisions in the existing laws should be made in such a manner that the in-laws should not be able to enjoy the benefit of property given to the bride at the time of marriage.
- Child marriages should be prevented. In Gaya District, child marriage still prevalent. In order to reduce child marriages, women should be made aware of the negative impacts of early marriages. The government should provide poor

families the adequate resources and schemes to reduce poverty. A reward should be given to a person who informs the police about the practice of child marriage.

- The custom of female feticide is a part of patriarchal society. In the concerned areas, women, as well as men, should be taught that both boys and girls are equal, and if the daughter is made capable of learning, skill training, and receiving knowledge, then she will no longer be a burden on society and family.
- Violence hampers the grooming of women to an extreme level. The government should provide relief systems, medical facilities, counseling services at low cost to victims in concerned areas so that they would be able to find a means of subsistence.
- Domestic violence is not considered a crime in Indian culture. Police personnel believes domestic violence as a family matter. Therefore, human values and human rights are essential among police personnel, as well. In Gaya, the Mahila Thana is not in proper functioning. Therefore, there is an urgent need for trained police who would deal efficiently with the cases of violence against women, such as dowry harassment, suicides, bride burning. Moreover, in the process of investigation, too, the presence of women police personnel is also needed.
- Many social welfare organizations, women organizations, and NGOs are working in the Gaya district to increase awareness among the womenfolk. These organizations should strengthen their horizons and adopt different means and methods such as dramas, posters, and short films on women's issues to create awareness among the masses. These organizations should be given the power to register the complaints of aggrieved and harassed women.
- Women should be economically independent. Economically independent women confront less violence. Parents should not only focus on the education of their girl child but also make their daughter financially independent. The housewives should be engaged in self-employment activities such as catering, stitching, sewing, and others. In the Gaya district, violence was found among educated and employed women. In this case, men should change their attitude towards women. If men earn less than wives, they should appreciate their wives' earnings. Appreciation and acknowledgment play an important role in leading a happy and prosperous life.

- Man is not the only one who is violent against women. There are also cases where women become violent against other women. It is the woman (mother-in-law) who starts violence against daughter in law. There are different ways of seeing a daughter and daughter-in-law. The attitude of women towards women should be changed. Parents of a girl child should be punished for giving money and movable items to the bridegroom and his parents. There should be awareness among the girls and their parents.
- At the state and local level, family court, a special court for women should be established for the trial. A woman magistrate should be appointed at the state and local levels for the cases relating to domestic violence.
- The perpetrator of violence against women should be punished. It was found that in Gaya, men were the perpetrator of the crimes. Strict and strong action should be taken against the perpetrator. Such persons should not be bailed by any other person.
- In most cases, the mother teaches her daughter to remain obedient towards her husband and in-laws, even if they practice ill behavior towards her. Such wrong teachings further exploit their daughter. Instead of forcing their daughters to tolerate crime, mothers should teach their daughter a lesson of self-respect, dignity, self-esteem, and self-confidence.
- It is often observed that most people misinterpret the word 'feminist' as 'someone who hates men.' This false notion is carried out by the people who perceive the empowerment and liberation of women as a threat to patriarchy. Even women organizations, who are supposed to help other women, look victims with suspicion. Therefore, the involvement of both men and women is necessary to improve the condition of women. More and more men association should come up for the cause of women. It has been observed that throughout history, women organizations have focused on the betterment of women only. However, not even a single organization has been established to provide counseling and train men to teach that crime against women is a heinous and wrong practice.

Violence free society is the demand of every individual. Women are subjected to various cruelties. The atrocities against women begin at home and then outside the home. The patriarchal culture is largely responsible for crimes against women. Men and women should be treated equally. However, the attitude of not only men and women should be

changed, but the behavior of judiciary and police officials are also needed to be changed towards women. In the end, women should not be taken as a commodity; rather, the perspectives of men and society towards women should be changed to achieve a violence-free family, society, country and world.

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