

Research Study

On

**VIOLENCE AGAINST DALIT WOMEN
IN RAJASTHAN**

Conducted By:-

Kundan Welfare Society

Supported By:-

National Commission for Women

Preface

Women in India, particularly in a state with a long feudal history like Rajasthan, face persistent discrimination not just on the basis of gender but also numerous other factors like caste, community and religion. Most Dalit girls in the country are still dropping out of schools owing to poverty but even more so to escape humiliation, bullying and ostracism by their classmates, society and even the teachers.

Behind these 'atrocities' lies an even grimmer reality that numerous Dalits experience every day of their lives—a reality that rarely makes the news. Through numerous quotidian acts, Dalits are constantly reminded of their subordinate status. “Don't walk through the village street wearing bright clothes or sunglasses, or even with your shirt tucked in; you'll be harassed by upper castes making snide comments or worse.” “Don't draw water from the village well or hand pump; your touch will make it 'dirty' for the upper castes.” “At the village tea shop, use the glass that is set aside for you and wash it after you have finished drinking.” These are routine instructions that every Dalit has been accustomed to hearing in the course of his/her life.

With their total number estimated to be 150 million, Dalits presently comprise about one-fifth of the entire population of India, yet bear a disproportionate share of its socio-economic burdens. Not only do they usually fare the worst according to almost all indices of economic well-being or quality of life, but among all the underprivileged groups in India, only Dalits have to bear the legacy of the most humiliating social degradation inflicted on them through the centuries-old tradition of untouchability. The stigma of untouchability entails a distinctive form of suffering that pervades all aspects of everyday life, and encompasses the present, past and future. Unlike the tribal people in India, who have lived until recently in relative isolation from the dominant culture, society and economy, Dalits have always been an integral part of these, but are

placed firmly at the bottom of the social hierarchy, below the ritually sanctioned 'line' of pollution.

The word 'Dalit' literally means a poor and oppressed person, but it has acquired a new cultural connotation to mean 'those who have been broken, ground down by those above them in a deliberate and active way' (Zelliot, 1978). Its meaning has thus shifted from simply ascribing a condition to identifying a process and a set of social relations. The term has been used chiefly to refer to ex-untouchables or Scheduled Castes (SCs) though, more recently, *adivasi* activists and others have also embraced it to signify their solidarity with the SCs, thereby extending it to include other oppressed groups such as women, bonded labourers, and minorities, among others.

In spite of all the Constitutional safeguards as well as the enactment of different laws meant to support women's honour and dignity, the strong impact of caste even on the judicial system has been witnessed in Rajasthan as in the infamous case of Bhanwari Devi. An analysis of the implementation of laws on reforms like the PCR Act and the Atrocities against SCs/STs Act for Dalits shows that many laws have been introduced in the country to ensure social equality but they have hardly had any impact on the mindset of the upper castes. As per the directions of the state governments, the district collectors have been authorised to provide monetary compensation to the victims of caste-based atrocities but the total compensatory amount distributed is disproportionately meagre as compared to the number and magnitude of offences.

This necessitates an objective assessment of the violence perpetrated against Dalit women in Rajasthan as also the impact of the actions taken by the state government and the administration to improve the situation and to protect the Dalits from sustained mental and physical violence. The objectives of the study included the type and extent of physical and social atrocities inflicted on Dalit women, the role of the society and the government in preventing these atrocities, the exertion of the rights of Dalit women on their lands, and the difficulties faced by them in attaining justice. Five districts were selected for the study and detailed case studies were undertaken in a total of ten cases from all the districts. The districts selected were Sri Ganganagar, Kota, Jodhpur, Bharatpur, and Tonk.

Various secondary sources including newspaper reports, magazines, and the reports of other governmental and non-governmental agencies addressing these issues of violence against the Dalits were used for undertaking situational analysis. In addition, key informant interviews with the administrative officials, judges, NGOs and other members of the public groups including Dalit organisations were conducted to analyse the process of delivery of justice to Dalit women who were victims of atrocities.

It was found that a Dalit woman is far weaker than not only an upper caste woman but also her counterparts from among the higher sub-castes of the SCs and, therefore, vulnerable to all forms of atrocities. The upper castes impose constant pressure on the Dalit families to circumvent justice and even other members of the Dalit society hardly extend any support to the Dalit victim. The discrimination starts at an early age when the Dalit girl has to leave school because she is teased and addressed by humiliating caste-based names. The widely prevalent practice of untouchability is strongest in the rural areas, where a majority of the population resides. As is well known, the Dalits are not allowed to enter temples and the Dalit Panchas are not allowed to sit on chairs during any meeting, while the upper caste members always harass the Dalit elected representatives and interfere with their work.

The study reveals that the police officials routinely demand bribes, intimidate witnesses, cover up evidence, and beat up the women's husbands. Little or nothing is done to prevent attacks on rape victims by gangs of upper-caste villagers who try to prevent a case from being lodged or pursued. The police often refuse to register FIRs in any case of violence or atrocity against the Dalits. Further, the registration of cases is delayed not only due to the indifference of police officials but also because the accused prevent the victims and their families from going to the police stations. And even if a case has been registered, the police fail to investigate it in a fair manner. At times, the victim herself changes her statement due to social pressures. There are also instances of false cases being registered by the so-called victims whose families bear a grudge against the accused and want to settle scores with the latter. In a few cases, the accused get arrested but are eventually released on bail by the court, even though the granting of bail to an accused in an atrocity case is

against SC/ST Act. In such cases, the victims suffer a lot of mental, economic, social and financial trauma.

An examination of the cases of violence in the five districts selected for the study clearly brings out that the enforcement of laws designed to protect Dalits is highly lax in Rajasthan. Although legislation exists, the measures to ensure their full implementation, including communicating the provisions of the laws to the public, imparting proper training to the officials responsible for administering the legislation, providing legal support services to enable the potential beneficiaries to invoke legislation, monitoring the implementation of the laws and ensuring the further development of legislation in response to the reality on the ground, — have been grossly inadequate. Even the existing machinery for implementation of the law comprising commissions like the SC/ST Commission and the Human Rights Commission, has not been able to achieve its goals. Attempts made by Dalit women to seek justice through the criminal justice system are also regularly forestalled. Hence, the study concludes that the legislation for ensuring social protection to Dalits and safeguarding them against violence is hardly being implemented in the country.

The study also suggests that national human rights institutions should be granted special powers to establish an independent complaints and monitoring mechanism to for dealing with the discrimination and violence inflicted against Dalit women. While the provisions of the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes (Prevention of Atrocities) Act, 1989, must be effectively enforced, the law itself needs to be made more stringent at the grassroots level. It has also been suggested that the law mandating the creation of separate cells at police stations to be manned by SC/ST officials for dealing with such cases and Section 4 of the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes (Prevention of Atrocities) Act 1989, which relates to 'punishment for neglect of duties' need to be amended to bring public servants belonging to the SCs and STs under its ambit.

Acknowledgement

The study is a product of efforts of all those participants, respondents, well-wishers, formal authorities, organizations and active social field workers who are directly and indirectly involved in this venture.

I wish to extend thanks to the following personalities and officers without which this study could never appear in the concrete shape:

1. Chairperson & All members, NCW, New Delhi
2. Richa Ojha, SRO, NCW, New Delhi
3. Dr. Ashok Pankaj, senior research fellow, CSD, New Delhi

We again, are thankful to all who participated in this study and we wish that their cooperation will continue in future ventures also.

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Statement of the Problem

Historically, the caste system constitutes the socio-cultural and economic fabric of the entire population of India. It may be reiterated here that the caste system is based on the *Manusmriti*, which lays down the norms to be followed by different social groups. The caste system divides people into different social groups for which the respective rights are assigned and determined by birth and heredity. These rights are unequal and hierarchical. Those on top of the social ladder enjoy all the benefits and do little work whereas those at the bottom of the hierarchy enjoy virtually no benefits and are condemned to do most of the works that are considered menial and impure. This system is maintained through a strict system of enforcement, whereby the deviants are meted out stringent punishments. It is obvious that the doctrine of inequality lies at the core of this highly oppressive and discriminatory caste system.

Albeit, the caste system has been abolished by law, and the right to equality, regardless of gender and caste, has been enshrined as a fundamental right in the Constitution of India. However, in spite of this Constitutional provision, the Government has acknowledged the prevalence of powerful institutional forces like caste, class and community, and religion, and their role in shaping people's mindsets, which, in turn, cause them to accept inequality, social and economic persecution, and segregation.

The sections of society that are beneath the entire caste system, who have historically been known as outcastes or untouchables, are called 'Dalits'. The word 'Dalit' means 'broken' or 'ground down'. They are actually seen as 'non-people'. The caste system has also been applied to Dalits to further divide them into several sub-castes. The renowned Dalit leader, Dr. B.R. Ambedkar actually encouraged the use of the term 'Dalit' not only to highlight the plight of the lowest castes but also to imbue them with a sort of collective identity as 'outcastes', which could motivate them to unite against the injustice and

ignominy that they are constantly subjected to. The government uses the term 'Scheduled Castes' (SCs) for this marginalized section of society.

As mentioned earlier, the practice of caste-based discrimination exists even today. An incident, which **recently occurred in Delhi, the capital of the country, highlights the prevalence of this practice throughout the country. During the marriage of a Dalit, as the groom performed the standard ritual of riding a horse, some upper caste people who were in the vicinity, strongly protested against the action, insisting that Dalits do not have the right to ride a horse or perform such rituals.** Among other forms of discrimination experienced by the Dalits, members of the higher castes refuse to marry Dalits. The latter are still compelled to perform jobs considered to be as impure such as cleaning of human waste, working with leather, and conveying news of someone's death. Dalits are also not allowed to take water from the water sources used by the higher castes, and members of the upper castes refuse to eat with the Dalits. Further, when the Dalits show any signs of economic or social mobility or emancipation, they are cut down to size by the dominant castes through the perpetration of atrocities or acts of violence and humiliation, which largely go unpunished. The Dalit children are made to sit separately in schools. Public health workers also refuse to enter Dalit homes to provide healthcare to them. In some places, the Dalits are not permitted to sell their produce in the local market, and in the fields and other workplaces, they are paid lower wages than the non-Dalits. Hence, the Dalits face extreme physical and psychological abuse in every sphere of life. The situation has been exacerbated by the recent spurt in crimes against the Dalits, with the figure rising from 35,501 crimes in 2001 to 40,508 in 2011. The incidence of reported crimes against women also increased from 1,43,795 in 2001 to 1,70,892 in 2011.

While all Dalits face violence and discrimination in their lives, it is the Dalit women who are the worst affected. The total population of Dalit women in India is 80.517 million. They comprise 48 per cent of the total Dalit population and 16 per cent of the total female population in the country. It is well known

that they form the back-bone of the nation's agricultural production. A large number of them are employed as domestic workers, who are grossly under-paid and ill-treated. Arguably, Dalit women are the most affected by poverty, ill-health and malnutrition among all sections of society in India. They are also the targets of physical and sexual violence by the dominant castes.

Violence against Dalit women occurs at two levels. Firstly, it is an inherent part of the caste system, which uses violence to reinforce the caste norms. The Dalit women are also vulnerable to other forms of violence, especially seasonal violence. When they transgress the caste norms, the dominant castes do not hesitate to resort to violence to teach them a lesson. In fact, violence against Dalit women is socially legitimized. Since 1990, around 158 Dalits have been massacred, with most of them being women. The other endorsement of violence against Dalit women ensues from their gender, as being women, their male counterparts too routinely inflict physical abuse on them, making them targets of pervasive domestic violence. Hence, Dalit women have to shoulder the double burden of marginalization their caste and gender.

The perpetuation of discrimination is even more pronounced in a state with a long feudal history like Rajasthan, where discrimination is based not just on gender but on numerous other factors like caste, community and religion. Most Dalit girls in the state are dropping out of schools not only due to poverty but more so in order to escape humiliation, bullying and ostracisation by their classmates, members of the higher castes and even teachers. They continually face the danger of molestation if the school they commute to is located away from the Dalit habitation. Rajasthan ranks second in terms of the overall crime rate against SCs, with its per percentage share in the all India figure of crimes committed against Dalits being 14.8 during 2009, and the figure rising to 15.2 in 2011.

The status of Dalit women in Rajasthan is thus among the worst in the country. There is no doubt that both mental and physical violence against them has increased during the last few years but even after registration of such cases of

violence, neither the police nor the prosecution has shown any sensitivity to the cause of Dalit women. Various studies have shown that most such cases end with the final report submitted by the police being duly accepted by the court, where after the accused are let off on the ground that such an incident 'never took place'.

Statistics show a huge gap between the literacy and health indicators of general caste women and Dalit women. Indeed, it may take decades for a Dalit woman to reach the level of general caste women. In most of the villages, the Dalits cannot wear *chappals* if they are passing through a lane in which the upper castes live. This was substantiated recently when an official found a man walking down a lane with his slippers in hand. When asked the reason for doing so, he revealed that he was a Dalit. Even when he was told to wear his slippers, he refused for fear of retribution from the upper caste living in that lane. He told the official that his safety lay in bowing to social norms as even if the official extended protection to him on this occasion, he would have to face the consequences of his insubordination later on.

1.2 Review of Literature

The theme of Dalit women is of a crucial importance in the contemporary Indian situation, particularly in the context of new social movements silenced today by narrowing their democratic space. By using the term '*Dalit women*' we are creating an imagined category. This imagining is necessary because we hope that Dalit women in near future will give new crucial dimensions to Indian feminist movement as well as Dalit movement.

Since 1975, *we feel that voices and protests of Dalit women are almost invisible*. This invisibility is so deep that leaders from left politics and leaders who are trying to build new 'Hindutva' do not take due cognisance of '*dalit women*' at all. In fact when we use phrases like, marginalization of women in the development process, or feminization of poverty or women's contribution in the unorganized sector we are referring to dalit women without even being conscious about the specificity. Dalit were actively participating in the Ambedkar led movement in the pre-independence period. Today we see no protest again 30% reservations for women in the local self-government which further denies the possibility of dalit women getting any representation. Women who are part of toiling masses are leading their life as beast of burden and often as victims of dominant caste onslaught. It is but natural that they are mute.

Today dalit women are working in various government offices, they are active members of Zilla Parishads but they are still bearing the burden of double-day, sexual division of labour and overall patriarchal ideology and not saying anything about it. Why is it so? It is not sufficient to answer it only in terms of political economy or brahminical ideology.

We must keep in mind that both the dalit and non-dalit women are on the margin of Indian society. The upper caste women have put up resistance and made some space, but we all know this is not sufficient. Moreover, in order to create a challenge to patriarchy's structures we in India need to know all the details of patriarchy's open and subtle modes. Feminist scholars not belonging

to dalit castes might not be able to carry this task. Conscious women from dalit castes will produce this critique more ably.

Dalit Women in India is an extremely volatile and sensitive issue. Indeed this theme is very much relevant in current times, especially in the context of current debate on deregulation and liberalization of Indian economy.

In urban areas Dalit women are found concentrated in the unorganized sector,. This sector can be divided into two: (i) self-employment, and (ii) wage employment. The first cover activities like hawking, scrap collection, petty trade or home based production or service activity. Dalit women mostly staying in slums or hutment colonies carry on these activities for survival and family support. These self-employment activities generally provide very meager financial returns and also have uncertainties and insecurities.

Dalit women suffer the most if they are without kinship support and other social and political linkages including contact with municipal bureaucracy, police etc. there are health risks also which often cut into their already meager earnings. Survey of bottle collecting women in poona (who consisted largely of Dalit women), and studies of women hawkers and vendors by the SEWA, Ahmedabad amply demonstrate that self-employment activity is perennially insecure and unstable.

Let us review the different ways in which the issue of violence against women has been addressed in the last two hundred years in India. The basic question that rise then is pertaining to the forms of violence, the location of individuals and groups addressing the issue and specific context of their addressal. The missionaries, the orientalist, colonial administrators, social reformers and the post independent Indian nation-state have all addressed the issue of violence against women as a part of either their 'civilizing mission', 'revival or modernization of Indian tradition' or 'Women as weaker sections' projects. The Edwardian and feminists addressed the issue as the white women's burden while the first wave Indian feminists lobbied for amendments in the Hindu law of property and marriage; for 'status' rather than 'survival'. All these

discourses, in universalizing the category of Indian women, often encroached on the customary rights of the lower women. Much of the American and British, second wave, white feminist discourse on third world women carries the notion of third world women as 'always and already victims'. The second wave feminists in India who formed autonomous women's groups in the 1970's, had broken away from the 'larger/mass' movements which overlooked gender for the fear of dividing the movement. The autonomous women's groups politicized the issue of violence against women and attempted to build a sisterhood in struggling against violence. The divisions by caste and religion that threaten this sisterhood have become apparent in recent times. Steven Lukes' 'Racial View of Power' (Lukes, 1974) and Harding's 'Epistemology of Rainbow Coalition Politics' (Harding, 1991) provide relevant theoretical framework for the analysis of violence and the strife in sisterhood. The violent practices against women reveal definite variation by caste; while upper castes are subjected to controls and violence within the family, it is the absence of such controls that makes lower caste women vulnerable to rape, sexual harassment and the threat of public violence.

For the majority of women in India, the uppermost problem is of survival. Poverty, dowry murders, widow burning, female infanticide have assumed new forms with modernization and technological advancement. These contexts of fatal aggression seem to normalize the everyday practices of violence by the family, community, state and global economy.

Dalit woman is a social force, a cultural symbol and has a historical background. She is the prominent feature of a farming culture. She is the true builder and heir of prominent face in the industrial center. She plays a big role in the construction of buildings and lay in roads. Dalit women are estimated to contribute eighty percent of total labour to strengthen the national economy. In India basically women are oppressed and are not treated on par with men. Moreover the dalit women are oppressed among the oppressed and slaves of slaves. A number of studies have been conducted to know the oppressive conditions of dalit women and a few are given below.

Sudhakar (2008) points that as per the 2001 census 9,867 Arunthathiyars (4,993 men 4,874 women) were in Tirunelveli district. Because of their economic backwardness and illiteracy, they are doing the night soil cleaning works.

Shinde (2005) explains that as dalit men migrate the cities in search of jobs, women are left to work as agricultural labourers in rural areas. They, then become targets to high caste men. Further, he states that most Indian girls and women in India's urban brothels come from lower-castes tribal or minority communities. Like other forms of violence against women, ritualized prostitution, activists believe, is a system designed to kill whatever vestiges of self-respect the untouchable castes have in order to subjugate them and keep them underprivileged. By keeping dalit women as prostitutes and by tying prostitution to bondage in rural areas, upper caste men reinforce their declaration of social and economic superiority over the lower castes. High drop out rate among dalit women in primary schools is the discriminatory and insulting treatment that they receive first from their non-dalit teacher and from their fellow students.

Malhotra (2004) lists out numerous violations of the rights of dalits. Dalit women suffer threefold discrimination on the basis of gender because they are women, on the basis of caste, because they are dalits and as dalit women, by their own menfolk. In India caste and gender discrimination are perpetrated in their worst forms on dalit women. Dalit women's labour is labelled as unskilled unrecognised, underpaid, and even unpaid. About 85 per cent of dalit women work in the agricultural sector, which is unorganised and does not have the social security benefits such as maternity benefits and medical support found in organized sectors. Dalit mothers have to bring their infant children with them to work in the fields. Sometimes they are not allowed to do the work as the employers link that the children they bring are disturbances to do the work given. In urban areas, dalit women also work in the unorganised self-employed sector as hawkers, scrap collectors, petty traders and house servants or they may earn wages in domestic work, construction or small-scale manufacturing. In some areas dalit women work as night-soil removers, without any

considerations for hygiene, for as little as one roti per day. Almost all dalit woman workers enter the labour market before the age of 20 and it is stated that 31 per cent of all girl children from dalit communities are child workers. According to Khandela (2004) violence against Dalit women continued from infanticide to dowry-related deaths to attacks on women whose male relatives were sought by the police. A major campaign on Dalit rights gathered strength, but some human rights defenders were targets of a state-sponsored backlash against their activism. Caste violence continued to drive the impoverished state of Bihar.

Roy (2003) states that poverty, illiteracy, ignorance are the reasons of prostitution and two third of the total Hindu girl prostitutes were from the SC/ST and other backward castes. Poverty is the main reason behind child prostitution and girls being pushed back into the trade by the parents even after they were rescued.

Human Rights Watch (1998) states that women are attacked by members of the upper castes, the police, security forces and private militaries or armies hired by Thevars. Again it states that dalits and other poor minorities found that they disproportionately represented among those detained and tortured in police custody because of their caste discrimination. A report of Human Rights Watch (1998) points out that rape of dalit women is a common phenomenon in rural areas. Women are raped as part of caste custom or village tradition. According to Dalit activist, dalit girls have been forced to have sex with the village landlord. In rural areas, women are induced into prostitution (Devadasi System) which is forced on them in the name of religion. The prevalence of rape in villages contributes to the greater incidence of child marriage in those areas. Early marriage between the ages of ten years and sixteen years persists in large part because of Dalit girls' vulnerability to sexual assault by upper caste men. Once a girl is raped, she becomes unmarriageable. An early marriage also gives parents greater control over the caste into which their children are married. Dalit women are also raped as a form of retaliation. Women of scheduled castes and scheduled tribes are raped as part of an effort by upper caste leaders to suppress movements to demand payment of minimum wages, to settle share cropping disputes, or to reclaim lost land. They are also raped by the policeman in the pursuit of their male relatives.

1.3 Objectives of the Study

1. To find the causes of violence against Dalit women by the dominant caste.
2. The role of the society and the government in preventing the violence.
3. To find out the nature of violence committed.
4. To find the attitude of dalit women towards these violence.
5. Difficulties face by the dalit women in getting justice.
6. To suggest measures for policy maker to protect and vanish this violence.

Research Questions

- i. To compare and contrast the factors which have led to violence against dalit women in Rajasthan.
- ii. To expose and explain the causes of violence. Impact of urbanization, modernization.
- iii. What is the common violence committed?
- iv. What are the actions taken by the government against the perpetrators of this violence and its impact.
- v. What are the strategies to be adopted by the Dalit women against the violence?

1.4 Research Design and Methodology

The study is based on field investigation it tests present facts and prepare models for advanced research. The study is organized in to three parts. The first part is introductory. It makes a factual presentation of the study area and elaborates the research design and methods. The second part is devoted to field investigation, data analysis and evaluation. The third part of the study enumerates the findings and conclusions of the research along with summary recommendations and suggestions for reform.

1.4.1 Universe of the study

The universe of the proposed study pertains to rural and urban communities in the Rajasthan across occupations relating to agriculture to modern trades in society. The victims and the offenders involved in the incidents of violence against Dalit women become the primary concern of the study. In order to obtain a comprehensive view on various issues and aspects of violence against Dalit women the related units, organization NGO's, law officers, various units of the criminal justice administration are involved to participate and make contribution during the various stages of the research investigations.

1.4.2 Sample Frame

An inclusive and wide range of sampling has become part of the present research project primarily dalit women from urban and rural areas would constitute the basic portion of our sampling frame.

1.4.3 Sampling Procedure

In order to active the study objectives both the quantities and qualitative data is collected. Qualitative data is generated on violence against Dalit women by way of survey method by using structured / semi structured questionnaires. To get detail of violence, the following indicators are used to generate data. Caste, age, marital status, level of education, income, occupational status of women, children in the society. Role of Panchayat, political participation and

working condition of the women. Questionnaires schedule interview observations are used as tools for data collection for the study. A comprehensive questionnaire for each category with open and closed ended question multiple choice questions etc. is prepared. Questionnaire is titled personally by contracting the respondents.

Selected urban towns, districts, villages

S. No.	Name of District	Name of Urban Town	Name of Villages
1	Kota	Talwandi	Digod, Latoori, Notara, Jatwara
2	Sri Ganganagar	Shyamnagar	Jodhewala, Ganeshgarh, Burjwali, Ramnagar
3	Bharatpur	Bharatpur City	Naroli, Kurka, Tehra, Khangri
4	Tonk	Malpura	Elahipura, Gafurpura, Bamor, Devpur
5	Jodhpur	Bilara	Kakela, Mogra, Luni, Dangiawas

1.4.4 Units of Observation and Sample Size

- i. Data base – Rajasthan divided into 34 administrative districts, has one of the highest proportion of scheduled castes and a high proportion of Scheduled Tribes too. The caste composition is distinctive and relations between castes, as well as networks and local understandings, have been built over generations. There is a clear division between the ‘upper’ and ‘lower’ castes, with upper castes usually being the more economically and socially powerful groups in the local hierarchy. They mediate between the poor and the State and also exercise influence in social affairs at the local level. Present study covers Rajasthan all 34 districts related data collect from the secondary sources. Then we divide Rajasthan in high prevalence area low prevalence area. We selected highly Schedule Caste populated districts.
- ii. Sample size -The studies based on primary data. The purpose of the study and divide into high and low prevalence area two districts with high prevalence area and two districts from low prevalence area are selected. We selected 5 districts from Rajasthan i.e. Jodhpur, Sri Ganganagar, Bharatpur, Kota and Tonk. Further from each district we

selected 4 villages and 1 urban town, there were 40 respondents from each village and town.

- iii. Data Processing – Data is process and presented in tabular, chart and graph forms for easy and quick comprehension and interpretation of facts and realities.

1.5 Geographical Distribution in the State

Jodhpur and Ganganagar as are in western Rajasthan in the desert zone;

Bharatpur and Kota are in the eastern Rajasthan which is agriculture based;
and

Tonk is in central Rajasthan which is predominantly an SC district near Jaipur,
the capital of the state.

No district was selected from southern Rajasthan because it has high tribal
population and there are not many scheduled castes.

1.6 Significance of the Study

We studied secondary data like national crime record bureau, newspapers and other findings and made following conclusions. The status of dalit women in Rajasthan is one of the worst in the country. There is no doubt that violence both mental and physical has increased during the last few years but neither the police nor the prosecution have been sensitive to the cause of the dalit women. Various studies have shown that most of the cases have ended with a final report duly accepted by the court in which the accused have been let off because the 'incident never took place'.

In the absence of any objective assessment on status of Dalit women recently in Rajasthan it was necessary to assess the impact of the action taken by the state government and the administration to improve the status of dalit women and to prevent them from total marginalization.

Statistics show that there is a huge difference in the literacy and health indicators between the general caste women and the dalit women. It may take decades for a dalit woman to reach the level of general caste women.

The study has also looked into the background of violence. The sheer helplessness in getting to police, the delay in getting justice if the hurdle of the police is crossed, the weakness of the legal procedures, the feudal mindset and the torture when asking for justice has also been studied. Whether the fear of violence has any impact on dalit women exercising their social, economic and political rights has also been examined.

CHAPTER 2

CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

2.1 Concept of Dalit or Untouchability

To be an Untouchable in the Indian caste system is to be very low in, and partially excluded from, an elaborately hierarchical social order. Untouchables are persons of a discrete set of low castes, excluded on account of their extreme collective impurity from particular relations with higher beings (both human and divine). They make up about 16 per cent of the Indian population and number about 1.50 million. They have been called by various names, such as 'Untouchables', 'Harijans' (a glorified term, coined by Narasimha Mehta and adopted and popularized by Mahatma Gandhi), 'Exterior Castes' (used by J.H. Hutton), 'Depressed Classes' (by British officials), 'Outcastes', 'Pariahs' (commonly, but undoubtedly derived from the Tamil word para or parai, the drum [see Deliege, 1997]). In more ancient times the terms Mlechha', 'Chandala' (used by Man), also Panchama (the fifth class), Avarna (i.e., outside the four varnas), Nishada, Paulkasa, Antyaja, Atishudra, etc., were used.

The term 'Scheduled Castes' appeared for the first time in April 1935, when the British government issued the Government of India (Scheduled Caste) Order, 1936, specifying certain castes, races and tribes as Scheduled Castes. Prior to that these population groups were generally known as 'Depressed Classes'. The term 'Dalit', first used in journalistic writings as far back as 1931 to connote the Untouchables, did not gain currency until the early 1970s with the Dalit Panther Movement in Maharashtra.

As it is now used, it implies a condition of being underprivileged and deprived of basic rights and refers to people who are suppressed on account of their lowly birth.

The Origins of Caste and Untouchability

The origins of caste and of untouchability lie deep in India's ancient past and the evidence of these origins provided by the archaeological and literary sources now available is, at best, circumstantial. Consequently, scholars have been forced to engage in considerable speculation in their efforts to reconstruct the past history of untouchability. What we now have are not hard and clear facts but a variety of competing theories, all of which have proved difficult to substantiate in a convincing manner.

The dominant view traces the origins of caste and untouchability to the Aryans and to their ways of relating to the peoples of India with whom they came into contact. The Aryans, a set of related and highly self-conscious tribes sharing a common language and religion, began their invasion of India from the north-west in around 1500 B.C. For centuries they remained in seemingly constant conflict with the indigenous peoples, whom they looked down upon as culturally inferior and shunned as ritually unclean. Once conquered by superior military technology, some of these peoples withdrew into regions as yet unoccupied by the Aryans, while others were incorporated as separate and inferior castes within Aryan-dominated society. In post-Rigvedic literature there are more frequent references to primitive forest-dwellers who were kept on the fringes of Aryan society in the conquered regions. Among these were the Chandalas.

Although the Chandalas were severely stigmatised in the later Vedic age, it was only in the period between 600 B.C. and A.D. 200 that untouchability appeared as such (Webster, 1994: 2). In the Dharmasutras and in Kautilya's Arthashastra the Chandalas are treated as Untouchables and the 'mixed caste theory' of the origins of untouchability is enunciated. However, it is in the Manusmriti that this theory as well as the varna theory and the classification of castes in a hierarchy based on occupation and degree of pollution, receives its classic statement.

According to Manu, the ancient Indian law-giver, untouchability is the punishment for miscegenation, between a member of a high caste and that of a low caste or an outcaste. The children of such an unequal pair become Untouchables, and the greater the social gap between the two parents, the lower the status of their children. The consequences are also more severe if the mother is of the superior caste. Thus the offspring of a Brahmin father and a Shudra mother is called Nishada; the child becomes a fisherman. The offspring of a Shudra father and a Brahmin mother is called Chandala; he is the most degraded of all mortals. To Manu, a degraded occupation is not the cause of untouchability, rather untouchability condemns a person to a low and impure occupation. In later times, racial mixture was added as a factor of impurity. In the period after Manu, increasing numbers of the members of the lower castes belonged to different races and cultures. The practice of untouchability was intensified and applied to more groups in the years following A.D. 200, while Chandala became a label not simply for a tribe but for all whom the Aryans considered to be at the very bottom of society. What has been described thus far relates to North India. The literature from South India suggests that the people whom the Aryans conquered were Dravidians, who subsequently moved south subjugating the indigenous people. It was only later, when Aryan influences spread to the south that the varna system and untouchability came into being there.

Dr. Ambedkar's thesis on the origin of untouchability, as expounded in his book *The Untouchables* (1948) is an altogether novel one. The distinction between the Hindus and the Untouchables in its original form, before the advent of untouchability, was the distinction between Tribes-men and Broken Men from alien tribes. It is the Broken Men who subsequently came to be treated as Untouchables. There are two roots from which untouchability has sprung: a) Contempt and hatred for the Broken Men, as for Buddhism by the Brahmins, b) Continuation of beef-eating Broken Men after it had been given up by the others.

Dr. Ambedkar tries to explain what he means by Broken Men. He proposes an ingenious hypothesis: When primitive society began to settle down and to cultivate, certain tribes remained nomadic and warlike. They began to attack the settled tribes as the latter were wealthier. In addition, they had grain which the nomads wanted but did not possess. The settled men needed defenders as they had lost their warlike spirit. They employed 'Broken Men'—defeated nomads, and stray individuals who needed protection and shelter. These became mercenaries of the settlers, but were not allowed to stay within the settlement. They were kept at a distance, as they belonged to a different tribe. They were treated with disrespect, as 'Broken Men' and as mercenaries. Dr. Ambedkar provided supporting evidence for such a process from Ireland and Wales. The difference was that in those countries the outsiders were absorbed into the settled community after nine generations. This did not happen in India, for the Hindus had contempt for the Broken Men who were Buddhists and beef-eaters.

2.2 Status of Scheduled Castes in Rajasthan

Rajasthan, the largest state in terms of area, has the scheduled caste (SC) population of 9694462 as per 2001 census constituting 17.2% of the total population (56507188) of the state. The SC make up 17% of the population according to the 2011 census. The state holds 7th rank in SC population and 10th rank in terms of proportion of SC population to total population among all states and UTs. Fifty nine (59) have been scheduled in respect of Rajasthan. Scheduled castes are predominantly rural as 79.8% of them live in the villages: District wise distribution of SC population shows that they have the highest concentration in Ganganagar with a share of 33.7% to the total population, followed by 26.1% and 23.2% in Hanumangarh and Karauli districts respectively. Both Dungarpur and Banswara district (4% each) have the lowest share of SC population to total population of districts preceded by Udaipur (6%).

❖ Literacy and Educational Level

2.1 Comparative Literacy rate

	Scheduled Castes	Overall
Total	54.7%	66.11%
Male	74.3%	79.19 %
Female	35.8%	47.76 %

The scheduled caste of the state have a literacy rate of 52.2% which is slightly lower than the national average (54.7%) in respect of all SCs. Among the major SCs Khatik have registered the highest literacy rate 64.4% followed by Jatav, Balai, Koli etc. Meghwal has a considerably lower literacy rate. Khatik also have female literacy rate 45.6% higher than that of the national average 41.9%. Other major SCs namely Jatav, Balai, Koli have revealed female literacy higher than the state average but lower than national average. Baori has shown the lowest overall as well as female literacy.

2.3 Status of Dalit Women

The Dalit community constitutes about 250 million people and almost half of them are women. Dalits are the most marginalized caste group in the hierarchy of Indian society (Mittal, 2010) and highly prone to incidents of violence against them, ranging from verbal abuse to physical assault, sexual harassment, rape and even murder.

According to Ruth Manorama, an active member of the National Campaign on Dalit Human Rights and the National Alliance of Women, “Dalit women face a triple burden of **caste, class and gender.**” Dalit women, therefore, need to be distinguished from both “women” and “dalits”. According to Manusmriti, a brahmin, Kshatriya or vaishya could sexually exploit any shudra woman. Even the killing of a shudra woman was justified as a minor offence for a Brahmin. It was equal in gravity to the killing of an animal. Most of the dalit girls are still dropping out of schools owing to poverty but more to escape humiliation, bullying and isolation by classmates, society and even the teachers. There is still the danger of molestation if school is some distance away from the dalit habitation which itself is far outside the main village.

According to the Ministry of Labour, 85% of the dalit women work as agricultural labourers, scavengers, sweepers and disposers of human waste.

Human Right Watch is on record that sexual abuse and other forms of violence against dalit women are frequently used as tools by landlords and the police to inflict “political” lessons and to crush individual or collective dissent within dalit communities. They are arrested and raped in custody as a means of punishing their male relatives who are hiding from the police. There is a pattern of impunity in attacks on women. In most cases there is no investigation even, let alone conviction. The atrocities are much more vulgar and parading in the naked, gang rapes, eating human excreta are common. Sexual violence is even linked with debt bondage.

Dalit women are often victims of trafficking and forced sexual labour, such as the devadasi and jogini systems of forced prostitution in India and in Nepal. In Pakistan, women from “scheduled castes” fall victims to sexual abuse, abduction and forced conversion of religion. Although it is alarming, crimes are grossly underreported and the levels of enduring violence against dalit and other minority women and girls is much higher than official data shows.

Violence is perpetuated against Dalit women each day in both public and private spheres by the family, community and State actors. Dalit women and girls who challenge caste hierarchies or stand up for their rights are frequently targeted with violent retaliation by those who benefit from the caste system.

“National Crime Records Bureau data records reveal that more than 5 Dalit women are raped every day in India”

2.4 Provisions in the Indian Constitution

The right of equality is a fundamental one. However, the institution forces arraigned against it are more powerful and extent control and shape people's mindsets. Factors like caste, class, community, religion, locality, family, occupation all combine to affect dalit women and men alike, making them accept caste inequality as something given without the need for questioning.

Art 14 of the Constitution provides that "State shall not deny to any person equality before law of the equal protection of the laws". Art 15 states that "State shall not discriminate against any citizen on grounds only of religion, race, caste, sex, place of birth or any of them."

However, in spite of all the Constitutional safeguards and the Indian Penal Code and the Criminal Procedure Code safeguards for women as well as different laws meant to support women's honour and dignity, the strong impact of caste of Bhanwari Devi. It is a typical case of rape of a lower caste woman as a weapon of retaliation use to punish and silence women's right activists. After the rape, when Bhanwari approached the police, she was told that she was too old to be attractive to man and no one would like to rape her. When there was furor and the case was registered, the trial judge held that as all the accused were middle-aged they could not have penetrated her. Also no upper caste man would defile himself by raping a lower caste woman!

This is also not an isolated case. There are many reported from all over the country. There is a strong prejudice which women, especially, dalit women face all the way to the top of the judicial system.

❖ Crimes Against Women

Although women may be victims of any of the general crimes such as murder, robbery, cheating, etc., crimes that are directed specifically against women are characterized as crimes against women.

Crimes are broadly classified under two categories:

- 1) Crimes under the IPC like Rape (Sec 376IPC), Kidnapping and Abduction (Sec 363-373IPC), Homicide for dowry, dowry deaths or their attempts (Sec 302/304-B IPC), torture- both mental and physical (Sec 498A IPC), Molestation (Sec 354 IPC), Sexual Harassment (Sec 509IPC), Importation of Girls (Sec 366B IPC).
- 2) Crimes under the Special and Local Laws like Immoral Traffic (Prevention) Act 1956, Dowry Prohibition Act 1961, child Marriage (Restraint) Act 1979, Indecent Representation of Women (Prohibition) Act 1986 and commission of Sati (Prevention) Act 1987.

❖ **CRIMES AGAINST WOMEN BELONGING TO SC/STs**

Two major legal enactments have been made at the national level to protect the SC/STs:

- 1) Protection of Civil Rights Act 1955; and
- 2) SC/ST (Prevention of Atrocities) Act 1989.

The PCR Act was enacted in furtherance of Art 17 of the Constitution to abolish untouchability and its practice in any form. The SC/ST (Prevention of Atrocities) Act was brought into force to check and deter crimes against SC/STs by persons belonging to other communities.

Crimes against women belonging to SC/ST can be broadly categorized under two major heads:

- 1) Under the IPC like murder, hurt, rape, kidnapping and abduction
- 2) Under Special Laws like the PCR Act and SC/ST Act.

2.5 The Indian Caste System

The Indian caste system is not a “divine proclamation” and the Vedas do not refer to any mandated caste system as a part of the Hindu religion. Moreover, other religions like Muslim, Sikhs and Christians also practice it in some manner. Broadly speaking, the caste system can be viewed as a system of exploitation of the poor, low ranking groups by more prosperous high-ranking groups. For ages, land has been largely held by dominant castes, high ranking owners of property that economically have been exploiting the low ranking, landless labour and poor artisans, simultaneously looking down upon them with ritual emphasis on their “God-given inferior status”.

2.6 Human Rights Violations

There is now near-universal consensus that all individuals are entitled to certain basic rights under any circumstances. These include certain civil liberties and political rights, the most fundamental of which is the right to life and physical safety. Human rights are the articulation of the need for justice, tolerance, mutual respect, and human dignity in all of our activity. Speaking of rights allows us to express the idea that all individuals are part of the scope of morality and justice.

To protect human rights is to ensure that people receive some degree of decent, humane treatment. To violate the most basic human rights, on the other hand, is to deny individuals their fundamental moral entitlements. It is, in a sense, to treat them as if they are less than human and undeserving of respect and dignity. Examples are acts typically deemed "crimes against humanity," including genocide, torture, slavery, rape, enforced sterilization or medical experimentation, and deliberate starvation. Because these policies are sometimes implemented by governments, limiting the unrestrained power of the state is an important part of international law. Underlying laws that prohibit the various "crimes against humanity" is the principle of nondiscrimination and the notion that certain basic rights apply universally.

The number of deaths related to combat and the collateral damage caused by warfare are only a small part of the tremendous amount of suffering and devastation caused by conflicts. Over the course of protracted conflict, assaults on political rights and the fundamental right to life are typically widespread. Some of the gravest violations of the right to life are massacres, the starvation of entire populations, and genocide. Genocide is commonly understood as the intentional extermination of a single ethnic, racial, or religious group. Killing group members, causing them serious bodily or mental harm, imposing measures to prevent birth, or forcibly transferring children are all ways to bring about the destruction of a group. Genocide is often regarded as the most offensive crime against humanity.

The term "war crime" refers to a violation of the rules of jus in bello (justice in war) by any individual, whether military or civilian. The laws of armed conflict prohibit attacks on civilians and the use of weapons that cause unnecessary suffering or long-term environmental damage. Other war crimes include taking hostages, firing on localities that are undefended and without military significance, such as hospitals or schools, inhuman treatment of prisoners, including biological experiments, and the pillage or purposeless destruction of property. Although clearly outlawed by international law, such war crimes are common. According to Kofi Annan, Secretary-General of the United Nations, it is increasingly true that "the main aim of conflicts]... is the destruction not of armies but of civilians and entire ethnic groups."

Women and girls are often raped by soldiers or forced into prostitution. For a long time, the international community has failed to address the problem of sexual violence during armed conflict. However, sexual assaults, which often involve sexual mutilation, sexual humiliation, and forced pregnancy, are quite common. Such crimes are motivated in part by the long-held view that women are the "spoils" of war to which soldiers are entitled. Trafficking in women is a form of sexual slavery in which women are transported across national borders and marketed for prostitution. These so-called "comfort women" are another example of institutionalized sexual violence against women during wartime. Sexual violence is sometimes viewed as a way to destroy male and community pride or humiliate men who cannot "protect" their women. It is also used to silence women who are politically active, or simply inflict terror upon the population at large. Mass rapes may also form part of a genocidal strategy, designed to impose conditions that lead to the destruction of an entire group of people. For example, during the 1990s, the media reported that "rape and other sexual atrocities were a deliberate and systematic part of the Bosnian Serb campaign for victory in the war" in the former Yugoslavia.

Rather than simply killing off whole populations, government forces may carry out programs of torture. Torture can be either physical or psychological, and aims at the "humiliation or annihilation of the dignity of the person." Physical torture might include mutilation, beatings, and electric shocks to lips, gums,

and genitals. In psychological torture, detainees are sometimes deprived of food and water for long periods, kept standing upright for hours, deprived of sleep, or tormented by high-level noise.

Torture is used in some cases as a way to carry out interrogations and extract confessions or information. Today, it is increasingly used as a means of suppressing political and ideological dissent, or for punishing political opponents who do not share the ideology of the ruling group.

In addition to torture, tens of thousands of people detained in connection with conflicts "disappear" each year, and are usually killed and buried in secret. Government forces "take people into custody, hold them in secret, and then refuse to acknowledge responsibility for their whereabouts or fate." This abduction of persons is typically intended to secure information and spread terror. In most cases, interrogations involve threats and torture, and those who are arrested are subsequently killed. Corpses are buried in unmarked graves or left at dumpsites in an attempt to conceal acts of torture and summary execution of those in custody. Because people disappear without any trace, families do not know whether their loved ones are alive or dead.

Various lesser forms of political oppression are often enacted as well. Individuals who pose a threat to those in power or do not share their political views may be arbitrarily imprisoned, and either never brought to trial or subject to grossly unfair trial procedures. Mass groups of people may be denied the right to vote or excluded from all forms of political participation. Or, measures restricting people's freedom of movement may be enforced. These include forcible relocations, mass expulsions, and denials of the right to seek asylum or return to one's home.

Political oppression may also take the form of discrimination. When this occurs, basic rights may be denied on the basis of religion, ethnicity, race, or gender. Apartheid, which denies political rights on the basis of race, is perhaps one of the most severe forms of discrimination. The system of apartheid in South Africa institutionalized extreme racial segregation that involved laws

against interracial marriage or sexual relations and requirements for the races to live in different territorial areas. Certain individuals were held to be inferior by definition, and not regarded as full human beings under the law. The laws established under this system aimed at social control, and brought about a society divided along racial lines and characterized by a systematic disregard for human rights.

In addition, women are uniquely vulnerable to certain types of human rights abuses -- in addition to the sexual abuse mentioned above, entrenched discrimination against women is prevalent in many parts of the world and leads to various forms of political and social oppression. This includes strict dress codes and harsh punishments for sexual "transgressions," which impose severe limitations on women's basic liberties. In addition, women in some regions (Africa, for example) suffer greater poverty than men and are denied political influence, education, and job training.

2.7 Violence against Women

Let us begin with the definition of the word 'violence' for our purpose. Violence is an act of aggression and abuse that causes or intends to cause injury, harm to persons. It also connotes an aggressive tendency to act out destructive behavior. Violence can be both random as well as coordinated, which includes actions carried out by sanctioned or unsanctioned violent groups. Aggression is behaviors that are intended to cause not only harm but also pain. Aggression can be physical as well as verbal. Abuse causes harm. In the context of a dalit woman it can be sexual, physical and verbal. It can inflict harm to the body and can also injure feelings. An atrocities describes crimes or excesses ranging from an act committed against a single person to one committed against an ethnic group. When we are talking about violence or atrocities dalit women, we have to take into consideration all these aspects.

Violence against women is a term used to collectively refer to violent acts that are primarily or exclusively committed against women. Victim's gender is the primary motive for the violence. The United Nations General Assembly defines "violence against women" as "any act of gender-based violence that results in, or is likely to result in physical, sexual or mental harm of suffering to women, including threats of such acts, coercion or arbitrary deprivation of liberty, whether occurring in public or in private life.

2.8 The position of cases under the PCR Act and SC/ST Act in Rajasthan

The protection of Civil Rights Act is an Act for which the Social welfare department has been made the nodal department by the State government but the implementation of the Act is with the Home department, Police, Law and various judicial courts.

After the SC/ST Act came into force, cases under the PCR Act are gradually declining in number. As per the directions of the State government, the district collectors have been authorized to provide monetary compensation to the victims as per their wisdom. as per the provisions of the scheme, the state and the central government share the burden of this compensation equally.

A special public prosecutor has been appointed in some sensitive districts. An IG rank officer looks after the atrocities against SC and ST population. Investigation in each case is done by a deputy SP and the case has to be challenged within a fortnight. All these cases are registered as special FIRs. In 17 districts the district police headquarters have set up SC and ST cells under deputy SP for monitoring the progress.

However, there are many laws to bring about social equality but they have hardly made an impact on the mindset of the upper castes.

Rajya Sabha (Upper House) and 25 to the Lok Sabha (Lower House). Local government is based on 33 administrative districts.

The huge portion of the state of Rajasthan is desiccated and houses the biggest Indian desert- the Thar Desert known as the 'Maru-kantar'. The oldest chain of fold mountains- the Aravali Range splits the state into two geographical zones- desert at one side and forest belt on the other. Only 9.56% of the total geographical region lies under forest vegetation. The Mount Abu is the only hill station of the state and houses the Guru Shikhar Peak that is the highest peak of the Aravali range with an elevation of 1,722 m. The capital city of Rajasthan is Jaipur.

The Thar Desert or the Great Indian Desert encompasses about 61% of total landmass of Rajasthan and hence it is identified as the "Desert State of India". The Rajasthan desert which forms a major portion of the Thar Desert is the biggest desert in India and encompasses the districts of Jaisalmer, Barmer, Bikaner and Jodhpur. In fact the Rajasthan Desert comprises the desert triangle of three cities - Jaisalmer, Bikaner and Jodhpur. The desert becomes very hot during the summer and it experiences extreme climate with an average annual rainfall less than 25 cm. Days are hot and the nights are cold. Vegetation consists of thorny bushes, shrubs and xerophilious grass. Various species of lizards and snakes are found here.

3.1.1 Area: The north-western state of Rajasthan is the largest Indian state with an area of 3,42,239 sq.km comprising of the 10.41% of the total geographical area of the country. This state has a type of rhomboid shape and stretches lengthwise 869 km. from west to east and 826 km. from north to south.

3.1.2 Topography: Rajasthan has varying topographic features though a major part of the state is dominated by parched and dry region. The extensive topography includes rocky terrain, rolling sand dunes, wetlands, barren tracts or land filled with thorny scrubs, river-drained plains, plateaus, ravines and wooded regions. In a more broad way the topography of Rajasthan can be

divided in the following regions- the Aravalli or the Hilly regions, the Thar and the other arid regions, the Plateaus including Vindhya and the Malwa, the Fertile plains including the Mewar, the Forest Regions and the Waterbodies including Rivers and Salt Lakes.

3.2 Regional characteristics

Rajasthan has a tropical desert climate. It is extremely cold from October to February while the scorching sun tortures the land from March to September. Due to scanty rainfall, women can be seen carrying water for miles to meet their daily needs during summers. To the south of Rajasthan, River Luni and River Chambal River and its tributaries bless the people with their water and form an alluvial basin in Kota.

3.2.1 Temperature: There are distinct temperature range variations diurnal and seasonally throughout the state, revealing the most typical phenomenon of the warm-dry continental climate. The summer begins in the month of March while the temperature keeps rising progressively through April, May and June. West of Rajasthan and the eastern side of Aravalli Range, in the region of Bikaner, Phalodi, Jaisalmer and Barmer, the maximum daily temperature hovers around 40°C to 45°C. Sometimes, it even reaches as high as 49°C during the summer months. Nights of summers see a considerable temperature fall with a minimum daily temperature around 20°C to 29°C. However, Udaipur and Mount Abu, have a pleasanter climate in summers with a relatively lower daily maximum temperature that reaches 38°C and 31.5°C, respectively. The daily minimum temperature at nights for these two stations hovers around 25°C and 22°C, respectively. The major portion of the state consists of the arid west and the semi-arid mid-west has an average maximum of 45°C in June.

January is the coldest month in the state of Rajasthan. The minimum temperature sometimes falls to -2°C in the night at places like Sikar, Churu, Piloni and Bikaner. The sandy land gets even colder with occasional secondary Western winds that cross the western, northern and eastern Rajasthan during

winter months, and even cause light rainfall and chilly winds can be experienced during this period. Most of the Rajasthan, except the southeast Rajasthan comprising of Kota, Bundi and Baran and western Barmer have an average temperature of more than 10°C. Due to the cold western winds, the whole of Rajasthan sometimes come under the spell of the cold wave for 2 to 5 days during winters.

3.2.2 Rainfall: Rajasthan being the desert area, its climate varies mostly from arid to sub-humid. To the west of the Aravallis, the climate is marked by low rainfall, extreme diurnal and annual temperature, low humidity and high velocity winds. In the east of the Aravallis, the climate is semi-arid to sub-humid marked by lower wind velocity and higher humidity and better rainfall. The annual rainfall in the state differs significantly. The average annual rainfall ranges from less than 10 cm in north-west part of Jaisalmer region (lowest in the state), to 20 to 30 cm in the regions of Ganganagar, Bikaner and Barmer, 30 to 40 cm in the regions of Nagaur, Jodhpur, Churu and Jalor and more than 40 cm in the regions of Sikar, Jhunjhunun, Pali and the western fringes of the Aravalli range. The more fortunate eastern side of the Aravallis see 55 cm rainfall in Ajmer to 102 cm rainfall in Jhalawar. Mount Abu in the Sirohi district in the southwest region receives the highest rainfall in the state (163.8 cm).

The southwest monsoon begins in the last week of June in the eastern parts and may last till mid-September. There are occasionally pre-monsoon showers in mid-June while post-monsoon rains may occur in October. Winters may also receive a little rainfall with the passing of western distribution over the region. However, Rajasthan receives most of its monthly rainfall during July and August.

3.2.3 Soil & Vegetation: The soil and vegetation of Rajasthan alters with its wide-ranging topography of the state and the availability of water. The varied kind of soils available in Rajasthan are mostly sandy, saline, alkaline and chalky (calcareous). Clay, loamy, black lava soil and nitrogenous soils are also found.

Owing to the limited rainfall seasonal vegetation such as a few grass species, shrubs and dwarf trees can be found. However food crops are grown in the plains that are drained by the rivers and streamlets owing to the alluvial and clay soil deposits. The hilly tracts of the Aravali are characterized by the black, lava soils that sustain the growth of cotton and sugarcane.

3.2.4 Flora and Fauna: Rajasthan is a classic example of bounty; seemingly stingy, but generous to the core. The state's vast size and latitudinal variations 1,700 metres above the sea provide it with varied vegetation semi-green forests, dry grasslands, deciduous thorn forest and even wetlands.

Geographically speaking, Rajasthan lies between 22 degrees and 30 degrees north latitude and 69 and 70 degrees east longitude, in the tract of Arabian Sea branch of the southwest monsoon. The Aravallis and, in the southeast, the plateau of Hardoti being the only highlands, they channel the monsoons coming from Kathiwar and stop the drier eastern flow, creating a desert in the west.

Unlike most deserts of the world, Rajasthan's Thar Desert is neither barren nor uninhabited. It is covered with bushes and shrubs and even trees, the most common being babul (*Acacia nilotica*) and the khejri, (*Prosopis cineraria*). It is a great sandy tract with no streams and just a few rocks that protrude above the lower land now covered with seemingly immobile sand dunes. The grasses on these dunes grow in clumps, indicated the availability of water just below the sandy soil.

The area of Malwa, a tableland extending up to the Vindhya is covered with green forests on black lava soils because of the rain from the monsoons. The wetter parts east and southeast of the Aravallis have taller trees than the drier west. The south and eastern parts between 270 metres (2,530 ft) has the axlewood (*Anogeissus latifolia*), dhokra (*Anogeissus Pendula*) and dhak (*Butea monosperma*) forests. Characteristic of the wetter regions are

the Banas basin and northwards to the northeastern hilly tracts with mesquite or “salai” (*Boswellia serrata*) forests.

Travelling westwards across the Shekhawati and the Godawar tract, the rainfall decreases and so do the khejri forests. Grasses which are tall and yellow fill the patches between the amla trees (*Emblica officinalis*) with their yellow blossoms. This land with the pipal (*Ficus religiosa*) marks a boundary with the desert.

It is therefore no wonder that Rajasthan is home to several species of animals and birds. Its bosom abounds with prey, the life force for many exotic species. In season, its woods echo with enchanting sounds of many indigenous varieties of birds and even some winged-visitors from Russia; the majestic span of their wings make for a visual treat.

Its sanctuaries attract both the benign and the fierce. Tigers, leopard or the panther, jungle cat (jungle bilao) and the caracal (*svjagosh*) are found here. As a matter of fact, despite having seen a decline in tiger count over the decades, Ranthambhore once again boasts of young cubs, as does its neighbour, Sariska.

The prominent members of the dog family, once quite abundant in Rajasthan are the jackal (*gidar*), the wolf (*bhedia*) and the desert fox (*lomdi*).

Antelopes and gazelles are found in most of the regions of Rajasthan. Black buck (*kala hiran*) are seen in the Jodhpur region and the small herds of Indian gazelle (*chinkara*) are found in the sandy deserts. The robust blue bull (*Nilgai*) is spotted frequently on open plains and in the foot hills of the Aravalis. The four horned antelope (*chau singha*) lives in the hilly regions.

Of the deer family, sambar and the spotted deer (*chital*) is found in forests interspersed with patchy open meadows. Of the monkeys only rhesus macaque (*bandar*) and langur are found near the Aravalli ranges.

The wild boar which was once extensively hunted by Maharajas of Rajasthan is found around Mount Abu. Sloth bear can be seen, though rarely, in the deciduous forests of Ranthambhore.

The common mongoose (newla) and the smaller Indian mongoose mostly found in the arid zone live on rodents, birds and even snakes. The reptile species commonly sighted are Indian python (ajgar), the Indian chameleon (girgit) and the garden lizard (chhipkali). The crocodile and the ghariyal are also found in large water bodies like rivers and lakes.

Rajasthan is a bird watcher's paradise. The state is not only a safe haven to the endangered water birds migrating from Siberia (over 6000 km) but also those that come from the southern part of the Himalayas. The Keoladeo National Park in Bharatpur has almost 375 bird species and of great interest is the world's tallest black necked stork standing up to 1.8 meters and its black and white wings span up to 2.5 meters. Hordes of demoiselle cranes can be sighted at Khichan and Sambhar. The rare Indian bustard and the grey partridge are the birds of open scrub forests of Rajasthan.

3.2.5 National parks and wild life sanctuaries: The diverse landscape of the state, houses a number of well-known wild life sanctuaries and national parks. It is a home to some of the most majestic beasts that the whole world is struggling to save. Here one can have a rendezvous with a variety of animals which include the world-famous Indian tigers, chinkara, black bucks, the greatly threatened caracal and the great Indian bustard. Exotic birds like the common crane, ducks, coots, pelicans and the rare Siberian cranes, imperial sand grouse, falcons, buzzards flock to the state to escape the bitter cold in their homeland. Rajasthan has two national parks, over a dozen sanctuaries and two closed areas. Most of these are open for tourists around the year except for the monsoon months. Ranthambhore National Park and Sariska Wildlife Sanctuary are both known worldwide for their tiger population and considered by both wilderness lovers and photographers as the best places in India to spot tigers. Prominent among the wildlife sanctuaries are Mount Abu Sanctuary, Bhensrod Garh Sanctuary, Darrah Sanctuary, Jaisamand Sanctuary, Kumbhalgarh Wildlife Sanctuary, Jawahar Sagar sanctuary and Sita Mata Wildlife Sanctuary.

3.3 Cultural Milieu of Rajasthan

3.3.1 History: The history of Rajasthan is about 5000 years old and the mythological origin of this gigantic land is related to the famous myth of Ram, the seventh incarnation of Lord Vishnu. In the ancient period, Rajasthan was a part of different dynasties including the Mauryan Empire. The first batch of Aryans who came to India settled in the region of Dandhmer and the first inhabitants of this area were the Bhils and the Minas. The earliest Rajput dynasty that emerged around 700 AD was the Gurjara and Partiharas and since then Rajasthan was known as Rajputana (the land of the Rajputs). Soon, the Rajput clan gained supremacy and the Rajputs were divided into 36 royal clans and 21 dynasties. The armed conflicts and the struggle for supremacy among the Parmars, Chalukyas, and Chauhans resulted in a lot of bloodshed.

In the medieval era, the major regions of the state such as Nagaur, Ajmer and Ranthambhore became a part of the Mughal empire, which was headed by Akbar. The most famous Rajput warriors of this era were Rana Uday Singh, his son Rana Pratap, Bappa Rawal, Rana Kumbha and Prithviraj Chauhan. With the end of the Mughal regime in 1707, the Marathas gained supremacy and captured Ajmer in 1775. The Maratha ascendancy ended in the late 17th century with the arrival of British. **The present state of Rajasthan was formed in 1956.**

3.3.2 Cuisine: Rajasthan has a rich tradition of cuisines – for this land of princes had some of the finest cooks in the palaces. The common-folk also took epicurean delight in the culinary art. Aptly has it been said that the royal kitchens of Rajasthan raised the preparation of food to the level of a sublime art. It is not surprising therefore that the 'Khansamas' (the royal cooks) who worked in the State palaces kept their most prized recipes to themselves. Some recipes were passed on to their descendants and the rest were passed on as skills to the chefs of semi States and the branded hotel companies.

3.3.3 Festivals: Falsely accused of being devoid of life, Rajasthan celebrates the generosity of nature through its countless festivals and fairs. Such is the spirit of its people that the state capital was lovingly anointed 'The City of Festivals'.

Festivals hold an unusual lure for the Rajasthanis and they need little reason to celebrate, be it the turn of a season, a wedding or simply a dry time of the year, the desert folk are in love with gaiety. The frequent pageantry serves well for trade too as it makes for a thriving market, of which live off its artists and tradesmen. Each region boasts of its own form of folk entertainment, traditions and dialect, adding to the state's diversity. The festivals make way for fairs. Originally a congregation of cattle breeders and small vendors, these gatherings retain their rustic charm, but today they are far from being merely utilitarian. Of the several hundred fairs that have grown over the years some major ones, like the Pushkar Fair, the Desert Festival, Elephant Festival and Camel Festival. Other fairs, like Kajli Bundi, Kaila Devi Fair, Ramdevra Fair and Banehswar Fair to name just a select few, were purely celebrations of faith and remain so even today.

3.3.4 Costumes:

Rajasthan is the state of India which is full of colors in almost everything like festivals, costumes, food, the colorful spirits of the people to wear the bright colors of makeup. The jewelery of the desert people are very precious and are not only considered as the ornament as it is the most precious possession for all the people of Rajasthan.

The costumes of the Rajasthani people are very colorful costume from head to toe like the turban, clothes, jewelery, and even the footwear that is worn by the people is also counted in the costume of the Rajasthan.

Mens' Attire: In Rajasthan, there is a proverb that states that 'a raga in music, taste in food and knots in a pagari are rare accomplishments.' The color of the turban, its style and how it is tied gets special attention from the people here as it symbolizes the caste and region from which the person belongs. People of Udaipur wear a flat pagari, while pagaris of Jaipuris are angular while Jodhpuri safa has distinction of having slightly curved bands. Angarakha (translated as the body protector) is usually made up of cotton. On festive occasions, people can be seen wearing tie and dye or printed angarakhas. The two main types of angarahkas prevalent in this region are - frock-style and

waist-length kamari angarakha and long angarakha that reaches below one's knees. Dhotis or pyjamas serve the purpose of covering the lower part of the body. The dhoti is a 4 m by 1 m cotton cloth that needs some practice to tie perfectly. Usually white dhotis are in vogue but on special occasions, people also wear silk dhotis with a zari border. People of royal families and upper class used to wear patka, 1 ½ m by 1m cotton cloth that was kept on the shoulders or worn around the waist to tuck in the weapons in the medieval days. Now, it is no longer used and has become obsolete, though, one can still see Brahmins, which continue to put traditional dupattas on their shoulders.

Women's Attire: Rajasthani women wear ankle-length long skirts with narrow waist that gain width like an umbrella at the base. It is called 'ghaghara'. However, the length has been kept a little short on purpose, so that foot ornaments are visible. The width and the number of pleats in the 'ghaghara' symbolize one's prosperity. It comes in many colors and styles. The skirt is not folded at the lower end like normal skirts but a broad colored fabric known as sinjaf is sewn underneath to make it stronger. Ghagaras come in many styles but the most popular ones are dyed or printed cotton ghagharas with laharua, mothra and chunari prints just like the turbans of the males. The odhani is a cotton cloth 2.5 to 3 meters long and 1.5 to 2 meters wide that acts as a veil for women.

3.3.5 Art & Culture

Culture: The state is known for its rich and varied artistic and cultural traditions, which depict the Indian way of life. The inspiration for the dances and the music of Rajasthan has been derived from nature, as well as the day-to-day relationships and chores, more often focused around fetching water from wells or ponds. Ghoomar dance from Udaipur and Kalbeliya dance of Jaisalmer have gained international recognition. Folk music is a vital part of Rajasthani culture. Kathputali, Bhopa, Chang, Teratali, Ghindar, Kachchhighori, Tejaji, parth dance are the examples of the traditional Rajasthani culture. Folk songs are commonly ballads which relate heroic deeds and love stories; and religious or devotional songs known as bhajans and banis (often accompanied by musical instruments like dholak, sitar, sarangi etc.) are also sung. Rajasthan

is famous for semi-precious stones and handicrafts, and for its traditional and colourful art. Rajasthani furniture has intricate carvings and bright colours. Block prints, tie and dye prints, Bagaru prints, Sanganer prints and Zari embroidery are major export products from Rajasthan. The blue pottery of Jaipur is quite famous.

A state of paradoxes: Rajasthan is renowned the world over for its hand-printed textiles, jewellery, painting, furniture, leatherwork, pottery and metal craft. The use of exuberant colours and ornate, designs are some unique features of the artwork of the state. Extensive areas of Rajasthan are monotone, beige –brown desert but the dramatic spectacle and visual variety that pervade it make it one of the most vibrantly colourful of Indian states. These paradoxes are seen again and again- a recurring motif reflected in its decorative arts and crafts.

Though time and again, it has been ravaged by invaders from all across the world, Rajasthan still houses the most opulent and rich treasures. Its history is a long saga of blood feuds and violent battles, but the forbidding stone battlements of its forts shield mirrored rooms and marble carvings of delicacy and grace.

The high-balconies that sometimes were a deterrent to the freedom of women were also marvels of exquisite ornamentation. The jewelled belts and anklets that adorned them were not just ornaments but also rich symbols of love and pride. Needless to say, as an intimate part of everyday life, **Rajasthani art and culture has withstood the vicissitudes of industrialism and tourism.** Rajasthan and its crafts are a source of endless fascination-whether one approaches them for purely visual, aesthetic pleasure or pauses to savour the underlying history, culture and symbolism.

Arts and crafts through the centuries: Not all Rajasthani crafts however, have originated locally. Rajasthan was on the ancient trade route, which exposed its people to different cultures and traditions. Traces of these can be still seen in the various art forms. **Sculptures that date back to 10th century** have been

found along with **cave paintings, terracotta works** in **Baroli and Hadoti** regions are live testimonials of Rajasthan's allegory of love.

History reveals that kings and their kinsmen were patrons of arts and crafts and they encouraged their craftsmen in activities ranging from wood and marble carving to weaving, pottery and painting.

Mughal influence: The constant battles amongst the Rajputs and other invaders were not only a time for change for the people but also art and culture. When a kingdom fell and a new ruler took over, it was time for change paintings depicting the new ruler's victory, scenes from the battle and processions of the victorious march were faithfully reproduced on the walls and handmade paper. **Rajputs**, who sacrificed wealth, power, territory and life itself, to withstand the **Mughals were also impressed by their art and aesthetics, taking styles, symbols and techniques, often stealing artisans and incorporating them into their own eclectic, rich tradition.**

Jewellery: Clothes-their colour, design and cut-may tell people which village and caste someone comes from, but it is the jewellery in which people's wealth is invested. In most Rajasthani villages, it is silver. Huge and heavy chunks of it are worn around ankles, waist, neck and wrists, dangling in rings from ears, nose and hair, in chains of buttons down the kurta or choli fronts. The beautiful, ornate designs of Adivasi jewellery have now become fashionable among the urban elite and can be bought everywhere. The aristocracy and the well-to-do did not wear silver. Kundan and enamel jewellery inlaid with precious stones was a speciality of Rajasthan, particularly of Jaipur. Rajasthan has abundant deposits of semi-precious and precious stones that are much in demand these days.

Ivory: The ivory bangles that most Rajasthani women wear are considered auspicious. Ivory is also inlaid and shaped into intricate items of great beauty. Miniature paintings were also painted on ivory.

Lac and Glass: Lac bangles are made in bright colours and sometimes inlaid with glass. Other decorative and functional items are also available.

Sandalwood and Wood: Carved wood is presented in a wide range of objects and is simple and inexpensive.

Crafts: Stone statues on religious themes can be seen all over the state. In fact in some cities, there are still entire lanes where the stone carvers can be seen giving final touches to statues or even pillars. Other crafts like blue pottery, hand block printing, tie and dye, terracotta sculptures, painting on camel hide, embroidery, cloth painting, carpets, durries, inlay work on brass and wood are to be found all over Rajasthan.

3.4 Socio-Economic Milieu of Rajasthan

3.4.1 Demography and administration: Rajasthan has a population of 68,621,012 as per the 2011 census. The population growth over the last ten years has been around 21.44%. The sex ratio of Rajasthan is 926 per 1000 males. The largest cities of Rajasthan are Jaipur, Jodhpur and Kota. The state of Rajasthan has 33 districts and 25 Parliamentary constituencies. Rajasthan has a single-chamber legislative assembly with 200 seats. The state sends 35 members to the Indian national parliament: 10 to the Rajya Sabha (Upper House) and 25 to the Lok Sabha (Lower House). Local government is based on 30 administrative districts. In politics, Rajasthan is dominated by two major parties: the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) and the Indian National Congress (INC).

Table no. 3.1: Rajasthan Population in comparison with Population of India

State / UT	Population			Proportion of SC Population	Proportion of ST Population
	Total Population	Scheduled Castes (SC) Population	Scheduled Tribes (ST) Population		
India	1,028,737,436	166,635,700	84,326,240	16.2	8.2
Rajasthan	56,507,188	9,694,462	7,097,706	17.2	12.6

Table no. 3.2: Rural and Urban Population of Rajasthan

Total Population	Absolute			Percentage		
	Total	Rural	Urban	Total	Rural	Urban
Persons	68548437	51500352	17048085	100.0	75.1	24.9
Males	35550997	26641747	8909250	100.0	74.9	25.1
Females	32997440	24858605	8138835	100.0	75.3	24.7

Table no. 3.3: Decadal change in population of Rajasthan

Scheduled Caste Population	Absolute			Percentage to total population		
	Total	Rural	Urban	Total	Rural	Urban
Persons	12221593	9536963	2684630	17.8	18.5	15.7
Males	6355564	4958563	1397001	17.9	18.6	15.7
Females	5866029	4578400	1287629	17.8	18.4	15.8

Table no. 3.4: Scheduled Caste population of Rajasthan

Decadal Change 2001-2011	Absolute			Percentage		
	Total	Rural	Urban	Total	Rural	Urban
Persons	12041249	8207539	3833710	21.3	19.0	29.0
Males	6130986	4215107	1915879	20.8	18.8	27.4
Females	5910263	3992432	1917831	21.8	19.1	30.8
Sex Ratio	928	933	914			

3.4.2 Education: The literacy rate in Rajasthan has increased significantly in the recent year. From an average of 38.55 % (54.99% male and 20.44% female) in 1991, the state's literacy rate has increased to 67.06% (80.51% male and 52.66% female) in 2011. Rajasthan has a number of well-known universities and more than 250 colleges. It has more than 50,000 primary and 7,000 secondary schools. There are many engineering colleges with an annual enrolment of approximately 11,500 students. The state has more than 20 polytechnics and more than 100 Industrial Training Institute (ITIs) which impart vocational training.

3.4.3 Economy: The economy of the state is primarily agricultural and pastoral. Wheat, barley, pulses, sugarcane and oilseeds are the main food crops, while cotton and tobacco are the state's cash crops. A major portion of edible oils is produced by Rajasthan, which is also the second largest producer of oils seeds. Rajasthan is the biggest producer of wool and opium in the country. The crops are irrigated using water from wells and tanks. The north-western region of the state receives ample water from the Indira Gandhi Canal.

Mineral-based, agriculture-based and textile industries dominate the scenario in the state: Rajasthan is the second largest producer of polyester fibre and cement in India. Several prominent chemical and engineering companies are located in the city of Kota, in southern Rajasthan. The state is also known for its marble quarries, copper, zinc mines and salt deposits in Sambhar Lake.

Agriculture: Despite all the appearances to the contrary, the soil of Rajasthan does support a substantial agricultural population (almost eighty percent) who harvest protein-rich crops like jowar and bajra. As a matter of fact, the agricultural sector account for almost 22.5 percent of the state's GDP. Crops galore: The state is the second largest producer of oilseeds (17.71 percent), and spices like coriander, cumin and fenugreek (10.89%). It is also the largest producer of rapeseed and mustard and accounts for 44.61 percent of the total national produce.

It accounts for close to 70% of the country's production of guar. About 9.18 percent of country's soyabean is produced by Rajasthan, which makes it the third largest producer of the crop. The state tops in the production of bajra (31.28%). It is also a major producer of food grains, gram, groundnut and pulses.

With the arrival of high-input extensive agriculture, people have been able to make considerable profits by turning to the production of cash crops such as sugar cane and cotton. As a result, this sector has boosted the economy of Rajasthan to a great extent. Wheat, corn and millets are the three most important crops of the region, along with pulses. The water from Indira Gandhi

canal has proved to be a boon for the semi-arid regions, which are now being used to cultivate citrus fruits, including tangerines, oranges and lemons.

Though there are vast tracts of the desert in western Rajasthan, the ecological environment is semi-arid; in eastern Rajasthan, where rivers and a lush green cover are present, there is more rain, and the seasonal crops, fruits and vegetables are plentiful. The farms are mainly irrigated with the help of tanks and wells.

Barmer district in Rajasthan ranks second in crude oil production in the country. Currently, the state government in collaboration with Cairn India, is in the process of setting up an oil refinery in Barmer.

3.4.4 Tourism: Rajasthan's historical forts, palaces, art and culture attract millions of national and international tourists every year. Endowed with natural beauty and a great history, Rajasthan has a flourishing tourism industry. The palaces of Jaipur, lakes of Udaipur, and desert forts of Jodhpur, Bikaner and Jaisalmer are among the most preferred destinations of many tourists, Indian and foreign. As a matter of fact, Jantar Mantar in Jaipur and the hill forts of Rajasthan which include Chittorgarh Fort, Kumbhalgarh Fort, Ranthambore Fort, Gagron Fort, Amber Fort, Jaisalmer Fort and Amber Fort have recently been declared world heritage sites by UNESCO (United Nations Educational Scientific Cultural Organisation). Tourism accounts for eight percent of the state's domestic product. Many old and neglected palaces and forts have been converted into heritage hotels. Tourism has increased employment in the hospitality sector.

CHAPTER 4

VIOLENCE AGAINST DALIT WOMEN IN RAJASTHAN

4.1 Analysis of Cases Studied in Various Districts of Rajasthan

BHARATPUR

The SCs in the district are Ashari, Badi, Bagdi, Bhairwa, Balai, Bedia, Bhangi, Bulakia, Chamar, Chandal, Dangia, Kalbelia, Kanjar, Khatik, and Koli. The largest number is of kolis. The largest percentage of SCs is in Bayana, Ver, Bari and Nadbai Tehsil.

JODHPUR

The largest population of SCs in Jodhpur district is in Jodhpur tehsil followed by Bilada, Osian, Phalodi, and Shergarh. The largest group is the Meghwal followed by Chamar, Bhambi, Jatva, Jatia, mocha, Raidas and Raigar. The Bhangi form the third largest group followed by Bawaria, Sargara, Nayak, Dom, Sansi, Garo and Balai. Also present are Nat, Khatik, Kalbelia, Bedia, Bhand, Heda, kandia, Ankia, Koli, Mehtar, Rawal, Balmiki, Kanjar Mehar and Bairwa. Polygamy present among the Mali, Nai, Sansi, bhambi, Bhangi, Kalbelia and Bhils. However, this is restricted to cases in which the wife is barren or is declared as immoral. Widow marriages are common in the form of Nata.

TONK

Tonk is predominantly a dalit district and there are nearly 400 cases of violence/atrocities against dalits. Victims are from the Kanjar, Sansi, Nat, and Bavariya castes. It is presumed that the women of these castes are sex workers although most of them are not now. On the basis of this presumption, these women are constantly exploited sexually by the upper castes. When the victim approached the police she is sent back on the plea that she is otherwise also a sex worker.

The poorest sub-caste among dalits in Tonk is Valmiki. They seldom send their children, especially girls to school. They have their own hand pumps to fetch water because no one allows them to touch theirs. They are basically scavengers and also keep pigs. They still take left over food from the upper castes and eat it.

In the schools, there is a clear divide between upper caste and dalit children. The upper caste teachers are visibly supporting the upper caste children.

The upper caste girls sit in front rows. A number of dalit girls leave schools because they are teased on caste-based names. It is obvious that schools have not made any sincere efforts to erase the caste lines. The dalit children are made to realize every day by some incident or the other that they are different and are at a lower strata than the upper castes.

Generally the schools are also nearer the upper caste population and away from the dalit basis.

The Berwas consider themselves superior to Raigars, Nayaks and Valmikis and do not mingle socially among them.

In the same village, each SC sub-caste lives in different portions which can be easily demarcated.

The largest group among the SCs in Tonk is the Chamar who form nearly 30% of the total population of SCs in the district. They work as tanners, day labourers, village menials and agriculturists. Other castes include khatik, Koli, Bhangi and Balai. They all permit marriage of widows as Nata. Polygamy marriages are still seen amongst Jats, Gurjar, Meena, Daroga, Bhambi, Dhakar, Mali, Chamar, Raigar and other SCs.

KOTA

The district of Baran was earlier a part of Kota district which has the major concern about the Sahariyas who were perpetually in news owing to the reports about hunger deaths as a result of acute poverty.

Kota was a very prosperous industrial town till some time back. A large number of dalits were employed in the factories. Now most of the industries are sick

and there has been a massive loss of jobs, the burnt falling on the dalits. Most of the harijan women are still carrying night soil in the poorer areas of the Kota town.

The Ladpur tehsil has the largest number of SC persons and Shahbad the least in Kota district Chamar, Bhambi, Jatav, Jatia, mocha, Raidas, raigr from the largest single group amongst the SCs followed by Balai, Koli, Nehar, Meghwal, and others. Amongst the ST Meena form the majority followed by Saharia, Bhil and others. Monogamy is prevalent amongst the Dhalar, Meena, Gurjar, Mali, Chamar, Saharia, Kirar, Sudhar, Sunar, Lohar, Dhobi, nayak, Koli, Balai and kalal. Child marriages are prevalent amongst most of them. In Dhakar, Mali, Kumhar, Gadrails, Kalal, Chanar etc. dowry is offered to the parents of the bride. Widow marriages are also permitted amongst Dhakar, Meena, Gurjar, Chamar, Saharia, Harijan, Nai, Dhimar, Bairwa and Jat. Generally, a widow is married to a widower and this is known as Nata.

Table No. 4.1: Population of SCs in selected Districts. 2011

Sl. No.	District	Total Population	Scheduled Caste Population	Percentage of SC Population
1	Sri Ganganagar	19,69,168	7,20,412	36.58
2	Bharatpur	25,48,462	5,57,305	21.87
3	Jodhpur	36,87,165	6,08,024	16.49
4	Tonk	14,21,326	2,87,903	20.26
5	Kota	19,51,014	4,05,408	20.78

Table No. 4.1 shows, among the 5 selected districts, Sriganganagar has highest SC population, followed by Jodhpur, Bharatpur, Kota and Tonk has lowest SC population.

Table No. 4.2: Head wise incidents of crime against women in India

S. No.	Crime Head	Year					Percentage variation in 2012 over 2011
		2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	
1	Rape (Sec. 376 IPC)	21,467	21,397	22,172	24,206	24,923	3.0
2	Kidnapping & abduction (Sec. 363 to 373 IPC)	22,939	25,741	29,795	35,565	38,262	7.6
3	Dowry death (Sec. 302 / 304 IPC)	8,172	8,383	8,391	8,618	8,233	-4.5
4	Cruelty by husband and relatives (Sec. 498-A IPC)	81,344	89,546	94,041	99,135	106,527	7.5
5	Assault on women with intent to outrage her modesty (Sec. 354 IPC)	40,413	38,711	40,613	42,968	45,351	5.5
6	Insult to the modesty of women (Sec. 509 IPC)	12,214	11,009	9,961	8,570	9,173	7.0
7	Importation of girl from foreign country (Sec. 366-B IPC)	67	48	36	80	59	-26.3
A	Total IPC crime against Women	186,616	194,835	205,009	219,142	232,528	6.1
8	Commission of Sati Prevention Act, 1987	1	0	0	1	-	-100
9	Immoral Traffic (Prevention) Act, 1956	2,659	2,474	2,499	2,435	2,563	5.3
10	Indecent Representation of Women (Prohibition) Act, 1986	1,025	845	895	453	141	1-68.9
11	Dowry Prohibition Act, 1961	5,555	5,650	5,182	6,619	9,038	36.5
B	Total SLL crime against Women	9,240	8,969	8,576	9,508	11,742	23.5
	Total(A+B)	195,856	203,804	213,585	228,650	244,270	6.8

Source: National Crime Record Bureau

Table no. 4.2 shows that rape cases increased by 3 per cent in 2012 as compared to 2011. Kidnapping & abduction increased by 7.5 per cent. But, Dowry death decreased

by 4.5 per cent. Cruelty by husband and relatives increased by 7.5 per cent. Cases of Assault on women with intent to outrage her modesty increased by 5.5 per cent. Insult to the modesty of women increased by 7 per cent. Importation of girl from foreign country decreased by 26.3 per cent

Table No. 4.3: Comparative incidence of crime against scheduled castes in India

Sl. No.	Crime Head	Year					Percentage variation in 2012 over 2011
		2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	
1	Murder	626	624	570	673	651	-3.3
2	Rape	1,457	1,346	1,349	1557	1576 1.2	1.2
3	Kidnapping and Abduction	482	512	511	616	490	-20.5
4	Dacoity	51	44	42	36	27	-25.0
5	Robbery	85	70	75	54	40	-25.9
6	Arson	225	195	150	169	214	26.6
7	Hurt	4216	4,410	4,376	4,247	3,855	-9.2
8	Protection of Civil Rights Act	248	168	143	67	62	-7.5
9	SC/ST (Prevention of Atrocities) Act	11602	11,143	10,513	11,342	12,576	10.9
10	Others	14,623	15,082	14,983	14,958	14,164	-5.3
	Total	33,615	33,594	32,712	33,719	33,655	-0.2

Source: National Crime Record Bureau

Table no. 4.3 shows a total of 651 cases of murder were reported in the country during the year 2012 compared to 673 cases in the year 2011 thereby reporting a decrease of 3.3 per cent.

A total of 3,855 cases of hurt were reported during the year 2012 as compared to 4,247 cases in the year 2011 in the country thereby reporting a decrease of 9.2 per cent during the year 2012 as compared to the year 2011. A total of 1,576 cases of rape of women belonging to Scheduled castes were reported in the country during the year 2012 as compared to 1,557 cases in the year 2011, thereby reporting a marginal increase of 1.2 per cent. A total of 490 cases of Kidnapping & abduction of Scheduled castes were reported during the year 2012 as compared to 616 cases in the year 2011 thereby reporting a decrease of 20.5 per cent. A total of 40 cases of robbery were reported during the year 2012 as compared to 54 cases in the previous year thereby reporting a decrease of 25.9 per cent. A total of 27 cases of dacoity were reported during the year 2012 as compared to 36 cases in the year 2011 thereby reporting a decrease of 25.0 per cent. A total of 214 cases of arson were reported during the year 2012 as compared to 169 cases in the year 2011 thereby reporting an increase of 26.6 per cent.

Crime Against Scheduled Castes during 2012

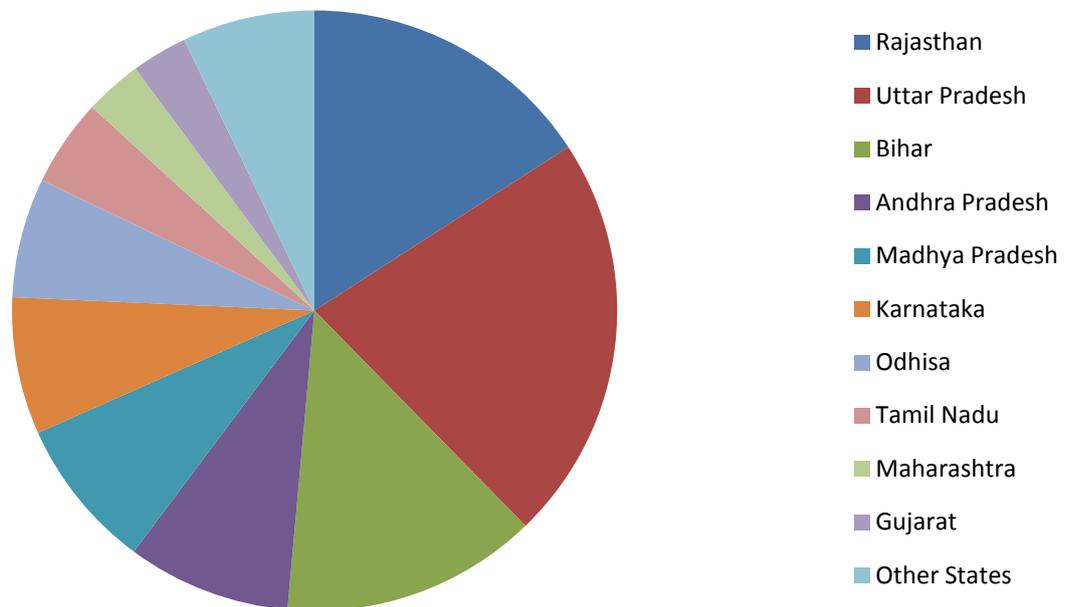


Table No. 4.4: Incidence of crime Against Scheduled castes in Rajasthan

Sl. No.	Crime Head	Year					Percentage variation in 2012 over 2011
		2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	
1	Murder	60	65	56	51	53	3.9
2	Rape	151	163	200	216	240	11.1
3	Arson	24	39	31	28	25	-10.7
4	Hurt	485	557	564	510	495	-2.9
5	Protection of Civil Rights Act	2	0	0	5	4	-25
6	SC/ST (Prevention of Atrocities) Act	95	110	103	102	115	12.7
7	Others	4005	4051	3922	4270	4354	1.9
	Total	4882	4985	4876	5182	5286	2

Source: State Crime Record Bureau, Rajasthan

Table no. 4.4 shows a total of 53 cases of murder were reported during the year 2012 as compared to 51 cases in the year 2011 in Rajasthan thereby reporting an increase of 3.9 per cent during the year 2012 as compared to the year 2011. 240 cases of rape were reported during 2012 as compared to 216 during 2011 thereby reporting an increase of 11.1 per cent during 2012 as compared to 2011. 25 cases of arson were reported during 2012 as compared to 28 during 2011 thereby reporting a decrease of -10.7 per cent during 2012 as compared to 2011. 495 cases of hurt were reported during 2012 as compared to 510 during 2011 thereby reporting a decrease of -2.9 per cent during 2012 as compared to 2011. 4 cases of Protection of Civil Rights Act were reported during 2012 as compared to 5 during 2011 thereby reporting a decrease of -25 per cent during 2012 as compared to 2011. 115 cases of SC/St (Prevention of

Atrocities) Act were reported during 2012 as compared to 102 during 2011 thereby reporting an increase of 12.7 per cent during 2012 as compared to 2011.

Table No. 4.5: District Wise Incidence of crime against scheduled castes in Rajasthan during 2011

Sl. No.	DISTRICS	MURDER	HURT	RAPE	ARSON
1	Tonk	1	42	4	1
2	SriGanganagar	1	18	29	0
3	Bharatpur	3	4	13	7
4	Jodhpur	0	119	6	0
5	Kota	2	6	12	0

Source: State Crime Record Bureau, Rajasthan

Table No. 4.5 shows cases of murder against SC during 2011 in Rajasthan were highest in Bharatpur and lowest in Jodhpur. Cases of Hurt against SC during 2011 in Rajasthan were highest in Jodhpur and lowest in Bharatpur. Cases of Rape were highest in Sriganganagar and lowest in Tonk. Cases of Arson were highest in Bharatpur.

4.2 Analysis of Respondents

Table No. 4.6a: Causes of Violence against Dalit Women (Frequency) District Wise

S. No.	Causes	Tonk		Sri Ganganagar		Bharatpur		Jodhpur		Kota	
		Rural	Urban	Rural	Urban	Rural	Urban	Rural	Urban	Rural	Urban
1.	Lack of Education	132	20	120	22	127	30	139	22	128	18
2.	Extreme poverty	110	14	90	20	123	15	119	25	141	20
3.	Lack of employment opportunities	135	20	140	18	132	27	129	22	126	17
4.	Dependency on resources of dominant castes	95	10	73	14	62	11	85	8	89	15
5.	Lack of knowledge about legal rights	125	28	117	11	112	15	113	21	98	18
6.	Lack of professional skills	85	24	123	19	95	17	127	18	111	17
7.	Weak economic conditions	145	22	147	18	135	21	139	27	141	20

Total no. of respondents: 1000; District wise: 200; Rural – 160 Urban – 40

*Multiple response

Source – Survey

Table No. 4.6b: Causes of Violence against Dalit Women (Percentage) District Wise

S. No	Causes	Tonk		Sri Ganganagar		Bharatpur		Jodhpur		Kota	
		Rural	Urban	Rural	Urban	Rural	Urban	Rural	Urban	Rural	Urban
1.	Lack of Education	82.5	50	75	55	79.37	75	86.87	55	80	45
2.	Extreme poverty	68.75	35	56.25	50	76.87	37.5	74.37	62.5	88.12	50
3.	Lack of employment opportunities	84.38	50	87.5	45	82.5	67.5	80.62	55	78.75	42.5
4.	Dependency on resources of dominant castes	59.38	25	45.63	35	38.75	27.5	53.12	20	55.62	37.5
5.	Lack of knowledge about legal rights	78.13	70	73.13	27.5	70	37.5	70.62	52.5	61.25	45
6.	Lack of professional skills	53.13	60	76.88	47.5	59.37	42.5	79.37	45	69.37	42.5
7.	Weak economic conditions	90.63	55	91.88	45	84.37	52.5	79.37	67.5	88.12	50

Total no. of respondents: 1000; District wise: 200; Rural – 160 Urban – 40 *Multiple response

Source – Survey

Table No. 4.6a & 4.6b shows that number of rural area respondents stating lack of education is a cause of violence against dalit women were highest in Jodhpur 86.87 per cent and least in Sriganganagar 75 per cent. With regards to extreme poverty highest were in Kota 88.12 per cent and least in Tonk 68.75 per cent. With regards to lack of employment opportunities highest were from

Sriganganagar 87.5 per cent and least from Kota 78.75 per cent. With regards to dependency on resources of dominant castes were highest in Tonk 59.38 per cent and least in Bharatpur 38.75 per cent. With regards to lack of knowledge about legal rights were highest in Tonk 78.13 per cent and least in Kota 61.25 per cent. With regards to Lack of professional skills highest were in Jodhpur 79.37 per cent and least in Tonk 53.13 per cent. With regards to weak economic conditions highest were in Sriganganagar 91.88 per cent and least in Jodhpur 79.37 per cent.

Whereas, number of urban areas respondents stating lack of education is a cause of violence against dalit women were highest in Bharatpur 75 per cent Jodhpur 55 per cent and lowest in Kota 45 per cent. With regards to “extreme poverty” highest were from Jodhpur 62.5 per cent and lowest from Tonk 35 per cent. With regards to Lack of employment opportunities highest were from Bharatpur 67.5 per cent and lowest from Kota 42.5 per cent. With regards to Dependency on resources of dominant castes highest were from Kota 37.5 per cent and lowest from Jodhpur 20 per cent. With regards to Lack of knowledge about legal rights highest were from Tonk 70 per cent and lowest from Sriganganagar 27.5 per cent. With regards to “Lack of professional skills” highest were from Tonk 60 per cent and lowest from Bharatpur and Kota 42.5 per cent. With regards to Weak economic conditions highest were from Jodhpur 67.5 per cent and lowest from Sriganganagar 45 per cent.

Table No. 4.6 c: Causes of Violence against Dalit Women in Rajasthan

S. No	Causes	Frequency		Percentage	
		Rural	Urban	Rural	Urban
1.	Lack of Education	646	112	80.75	56
2.	Extreme poverty	583	94	72.87	47
3.	Lack of employment opportunities	662	104	82.75	52
4.	Dependency on resources of dominant castes	404	58	50.50	29
5.	Lack of knowledge about legal rights	565	93	70.63	46.50
6.	Lack of professional skills	541	95	67.62	47.50
7.	Weak economic conditions	707	108	86.87	54

Total no. of respondents: 1000; District wise: 200; Rural – 160 Urban – 40 *Multiple response

Source – Survey

Table no. 4.6 a & b shows the data district wise but in table no. 4.6 c shows the data of Rajasthan. Weak economic condition is the main cause of violence against dalit women i.e. 86.87 per cent. With regards dependency on resource of dominant castes are the lowest i.e. 50.50 per cent in Rural areas whereas, no. of urban area respondents stating lack of education is a cause of violence against dalit women and lowest reason of violence against dalit women is extreme poverty.

Table no. 4.7a: Nature of Violence against Dalit women (Frequency) District Wise

S. No	Nature	Tonk		Sri Ganganagar		Bharatpur		Jodhpur		Kota	
		Rural	Urban	Rural	Urban	Rural	Urban	Rural	Urban	Rural	Urban
A	General Community										
1.	Physical Assault	123	8	132	9	127	11	134	12	141	11
2.	Verbal Abuse	135	22	141	18	135	25	142	23	133	15

3.	Sexual harassment	55	15	50	9	57	8	54	9	47	6
4.	Rape	23	3	27	8	22	8	29	4	41	6
5.	Sexual exploitation	32	7	83	10	78	12	85	19	65	4
6.	Forced prostitution	40	8	35	2	30	13	37	4	53	4
7.	Kidnapping and abduction	12	4	11	4	6	9	13	7	48	7
8.	Medical negligence	139	24	147	22	142	32	145	24	129	17
B	In the Family										
1.	Female foeticide and infanticide	48	11	41	11	53	15	37	10	60	9
2.	Domestic violence	128	21	125	21	120	36	127	2	124	34
3.	Child marriages	123	27	107	19	98	32	105	21	119	30

Total no. of respondents: 1000; District wise: 200; Rural – 160 Urban – 40 *Multiple response
Source – Survey

Table No. 4.7 b: Nature of Violence against Dalit women (Percentage) District Wise

S. No.	Nature	Tonk		Sri Ganganagar		Bharatpur		Jodhpur		Kota	
		Rural	Urban	Rural	Urban	Rural	Urban	Rural	Urban	Rural	Urban
A	General Community										
1.	Physical Assault	76.87	20	82.5	22.5	84.37	27.5	83.75	30	88.12	27.5
2.	Verbal Abuse	84.37	55	88.12	45	35.62	62.5	88.75	57.5	83.12	37.5

3.	Sexual harassment	34.37	37.5	31.25	22.5	35.62	20	33.75	22.5	29.37	15
4.	Rape	14.37	7.5	16.87	20	48.75	20	18.12	10	25.62	15
5.	Sexual exploitation	20	17.5	51.87	25	18.75	30	53.12	47.5	40.62	10
6.	Forced prostitution	25	20	21.87	5	3.75	32.5	23.12	10	33.12	10
7.	Kidnapping and abduction	7.5	10	6.87	10	8.75	22.5	8.12	17.5	30	17.5
8.	Medical negligence	86.87	60	91.87	55	66.87	80	90.62	60	80.62	42.5
B	In the Family										
1.	Female feoticide and infanticide	30	27.5	25.62	27.5	33.12	37.5	23.12	25	37.5	22.5
2.	Domestic violence	80	52.5	78.12	52.5	61.25	90	79.37	5	77.5	85
3.	Child marriages	76.87	67.5	66.87	47.5	84.37	80	65.62	52.5	74.37	75

Total no. of respondents: 1000; District wise: 200; Rural – 160 Urban – 40 *Multiple response

Source – Survey

Table no. 4.7a & 4.7b shows that number of rural area respondents stating Physical Assault is a one nature against dalit women were highest in Kota 88.12 per cent and least in Tonk 76.87 per cent. With regards to verbal abuse highest were in Jodhpur 88.75 per cent and least in Bharatpur 35.62. With regards to sexual harassment highest were from Bharatpur 35.62 and least from Kota 29.37. With regards to rape were highest in Bharatpur 48.75 and least in Tonk 14.37. With regards to sexual exploitation highest were in Jodhpur 53.12 and least in Tonk 20 61.25. With regards to prostitution highest were in Kota 33.12 and least in Tonk 7.5. With regards to Kidnapping and abduction highest were in Kota 30 and least in Sriganganagar 6.87. With regards to medical negligence highest were in Sriganganagar 91.87 and least in Bharatpur 66.87. With regards to Female feoticide and infanticide highest were in Kota 37.5 and least in Jodhpur 23.12. With regards to domestic violence highest were in Tonk 80 and least in Bharatpur 61.25. With regards to child marriages highest were in Bharatpur 84.37 and least in Jodhpur.

Table No. 4.7 c: Nature of Violence against Dalit women in Rajasthan

S. No.	Nature	Frequency		Percentage	
		Rural	Urban	Rural	Urban
A	General Community				
1.	Physical Assault	657	51	83.12	25.50
2.	Verbal Abuse	686	103	76	51.50
3.	Sexual harassment	263	47	32.87	23.50
4.	Rape	142	29	24.75	14.50
5.	Sexual exploitation	343	52	36.87	26
6.	Forced prostitution	195	31	21.37	15.50
7.	Kidnapping and abduction	90	31	12.25	15.50
8.	Medical negligence	702	119	83.37	59.50
B	In the Family				
1.	Female foeticide and infanticide	239	56	29.87	28
2.	Domestic violence	624	114	75.25	57
3.	Child marriages	552	129	73.62	64.50

Total no. of respondents: 1000; District wise: 200; Rural – 160 Urban – 40 *Multiple response

Source – Survey

Table no 4.7 c shows that no. of respondents stating medical negligence is most violent nature of violence. Medical negligence means doctors not giving proper or right examination report after rape infact they do not examine under the pressure of upper caste or influenced people and on the behalf of this negligence victims cannot register the case or FIR and kidnapping and abduction is lowest. In the family domestic violence is the main violence so that dalit women faces triple discrimination.

**Table No. 4.8a: Dalit women's attitude towards atrocities against them (Frequency)
District Wise**

S. No	Causes	Tonk		Sri Ganganagar		Bharatpur		Jodhpur		Kota	
		Rural	Urban	Rural	Urban	Rural	Urban	Rural	Urban	Rural	Urban
1.	Patriarchal norms	112	24	117	21	124	22	121	26	134	20
2.	Aspect of poverty	135	26	140	33	136	25	133	23	146	21
3.	Will of God	87	11	92	18	71	17	68	13	81	15
4.	Accept violence as their karma	78	5	83	19	61	8	58	10	93	9
5.	Frustrated of violence and want a change	141	25	146	33	149	31	146	24	139	21

Total no. of respondents: 1000; District wise: 200; Rural – 160 Urban – 40 *Multiple response
Source – Survey

**Table No. 4.8 b: Dalit women's attitude towards atrocities against them (Percentage)
District Wise**

S. No	Causes	Tonk		Sri Ganganagar		Bharatpur		Jodhpur		Kota	
		Rural	Urban	Rural	Urban	Rural	Urban	Rural	Urban	Rural	Urban
1.	Patriarchal norms	70	60	73.12	52.5	77.5	55	75.62	65	83.75	50
2.	Aspect of poverty	84.37	65	87.5	82.5	85	62.5	83.12	57.5	91.25	52.5
3.	Will of God	54.37	27.5	57.5	45	44.37	42.5	42.5	32.5	50.62	37.5
4.	Accept violence as their <i>karma</i>	48.75	12.5	51.87	47.5	38.12	20	36.25	25	58.12	22.5
5.	Frustrated of violence and want a change	88.12	62.5	91.25	82.5	93.12	77.5	91.25	60	86.87	52.5

Total no. of respondents: 1000; District wise: 200; Rural – 160 Urban – 40 *Multiple response
Source – Survey

Table number 4.8a & 4.8b shows that the number of rural areas respondents stating dalit women's attitude towards atrocities against them was that it is a patriarchal norm were highest in Kota 83.75 per cent and least in Kota 70 per cent. With regards to Aspect of poverty highest were in Kota 91.25 per cent and least in Jodhpur 83.12 per cent. With regards to "will of God" highest were in Sriganaganagar 57.5 per cent and least in Jodhpur 42.5 per cent. With regards to women accept it as their karma highest were in Kota 58.12 per cent and least in Jodhpur 36.25 per cent. with regards that women are frustrated of violence and want a change highest were in Bharatpur 93.12 per cent and least in Kota 86.87 per cent.

Whereas, the number of Urban areas respondents stating dalit women's attitude towards atrocities against them was that it is a patriarchal norm were highest in Jodhpur 65 per cent and least in Kota 50 per cent. With regards to Aspect of poverty highest were in Sriganaganagar 82.5 per cent and least Kota 52.5 per cent. With regards to "will of God" highest were in Kota 50.62 per cent and least in Tonk 27.5 per cent. With regards to women accept it as their karma highest were in Sriganaganagar 47.5 per cent and least in Bharatpur 20 per cent. With regards that women are frustrated of violence and want a change highest were in Sriganaganagar 82.5 per cent and least in Kota 52.5 per cent

Table No. 4.8 c: Dalit women's attitude towards atrocities against them in Rajasthan

S. No	Causes	Frequency		Percentage	
		Rural	Urban	Rural	Urban
1.	Patriarchal norms	608	113	76	56.50
2.	Aspect of poverty	690	128	86.25	64
3.	Will of God	399	74	49.87	37
4.	Accept violence as their <i>karma</i>	373	51	46.62	25.50
5.	Frustrated of violence and want a change	721	134	90.12	67

Total no. of respondents: 1000; District wise: 200; Rural – 160 Urban – 40 *Multiple response

Source – Survey

Table no. 4.8 c shows that the number of rural and urban areas respondents stating dalit women's attitude towards atrocities against them was that it is a frustrated of violence and want a change i.e. 90.12 per cent and lowest attitude towards atrocities is accept violence as their karma i.e. 46.62 per cent.

Treatment by non-Dalits as a means to establish authority and to humiliate the entire Dalit community. Some specific and serious issues shared by the Dalit women are:

- The issue of alcoholism and easy access to it due to large number of local liquor shops in and around the villages. They reported that most crimes (teasing, mob fighting, murder, etc.) are caused by drunk men.
- Wage discrimination
- While working as bonded labour, they face unpleasant, immoral sexual comments, eve-teasing, sexual exploitation and rape by the dominant castes. Physical pain, unwanted pregnancies and STDs are not uncommon but can be treated; the emotional and mental trauma and its impact on generations to follow is not even taken cognisance of.
- Dalit girls who attend school become vulnerable to eve-teasing, harassment and violence perpetrated by boys belonging to dominant castes. In cases where the school is at a distance from the village, such incidences and insecurity increases. This deters Dalit girls from going to school, resulting in a high dropout rate among them. When the girls do not go to school and live at home, parents prefer to marry them off at a young age. This leads to other problems related to early marriage such as early child bearing, lack of earning capacity, poor health, etc.
- Economic and social boycotts are a common tool used by the dominant castes that influences the overall access of Dalits to economic and social rights. Such boycotts are used as a form of retaliation by the upper castes against Dalits asserting their rights.

But perhaps what is most disturbing is that Dalits themselves are not aware that they are being abused or exploited, as such behaviour is considered to be the norm and accepted as necessary even to live in society. For example, Dalits might not protest at being called by their caste names, as this is the accepted mode of address by all sections of the community. A child made to sit at the back of the classroom or being asked to sweep the classroom is not considered discriminated against or exploited by either upper or lower castes.

Brutal measures to thwart any attempts by Dalits to secure their rights have a deep impact on the community and produce the desired results to silence voices of dissent that challenge existing societal norms. Violence against Dalit women is a systematically utilized tool to deny the entire community opportunities, choices and freedom at multiple levels. It undermines not only a Dalit women's dignity and self-respect but also the right of all Scheduled Castes to the benefits of development.

Table No. 4.9 a: Discriminatory treatment in Justice Mechanism (Frequency) District Wise

S. No	Causes	Tonk		Sri Ganganagar		Bharatpur		Jodhpur		Kota	
		Rural	Urban	Rural	Urban	Rural	Urban	Rural	Urban	Rural	Urban
1	Denial by police officials to register FIR	65	7	58	10	73	11	70	5	61	13
2	No proceedings on registered cases	107	9	118	12	131	10	112	7	121	12
3	Lack of knowledge about rights.	125	16	121	19	95	17	130	14	124	19
4	Lack of knowledge about procedure of getting justice	98	11	103	14	105	12	102	9	106	15
5	Withdrawal of complain due to pressure of upper castes	92	8	76	11	81	11	97	6	79	8

Total no. of respondents: 1000; District wise: 200; Rural – 160 Urban – 40 *Multiple response

Source – Survey

Table No. 4.9 b: Discriminatory treatment in Justice Mechanism (Percentage) District Wise

S. No	Causes	Tonk		Sri Ganganagar		Bharatpur		Jodhpur		Kota	
		Rural	Urban	Rural	Urban	Rural	Urban	Rural	Urban	Rural	Urban
1	Denial by police officials to register FIR	40.62	17.5	36.25	25	45.62	27.5	43.75	12.5	38.12	32.5
2	No proceedings on registered cases	66.87	22.5	73.75	30	81.87	25	70	17.5	75.62	30
3	Lack of knowledge about rights.	78.12	40	75.62	47.5	59.37	42.5	81.25	35	77.5	47.5
4	Lack of knowledge about procedure of getting justice	61.25	27.5	64.37	35	65.62	30	63.75	22.5	66.25	37.5
5	Withdrawal of complain due to pressure of upper castes	57.5	20	47.5	27.5	50.62	27.5	60.62	15	49.37	20

Total no. of respondents: 1000; District wise: 200; Rural – 160 Urban – 40 *Multiple response
Source – Survey

Table no. 4.9a & 4.9b shows that number of rural area respondents stating Denial by police officials to register FIR is a form of discriminatory treatment in justice mechanism against SC were highest in Bharatpur 45.62 per cent and least in Sriganganagar 36.25 per cent. With regards to “No proceedings on registered cases” highest were from Bharatpur 81.87 per cent and least in Tonk 66.87 per cent. With regards to “Lack of knowledge about rights” highest were from Jodhpur 81.25 per cent and least from Bharatpur 59.37 per cent. With regards to “Lack of knowledge about procedure of getting justice” highest were from Kota 66.25 per cent and least from Tonk 61.25 per cent. With regards to “Withdrawal of complain due to pressure of upper castes” highest were from Jodhpur 60.62 per cent and least from Sriganganagar 47.5 per cent.

Table No. 4.9 c: Discriminatory treatment in Justice Mechanism in Rajasthan

S. No	Causes	Frequency		Percentage	
		Rural	Urban	Rural	Urban
1	Denial by police officials to register FIR	327	46	40.87	23
2	No proceedings on registered cases	589	50	73.62	25
3	Lack of knowledge about rights.	595	85	74.37	42.5
4	Lack of knowledge about procedure of getting justice	514	61	64.25	30.50
5	Withdrawal of complain due to pressure of upper castes	425	44	53.12	22

Total no. of respondents: 1000; District wise: 200; Rural – 160 Urban – 40 *Multiple response

Source – Survey

Table no. 4.9 c shows that number of rural and urban area respondents highest in lack of knowledge about the rights i.e. 74.37 per cent in rural and 42.5 per cent in urban and lowest causes of discriminatory treatment in Justice Mechanism is Denial by police officials to register FIR i.e. 40.87 per cent in rural and 23 per cent in urban area.

**Table No. 4.10a: Role of Civil Societies and Government in preventing the violence against Dalits
(Frequency) District Wise**

S. No	Role of civil society and Government	Tonk		Sri Ganganagar		Bharatpur		Jodhpur		Kota	
		Rural	Urban	Rural	Urban	Rural	Urban	Rural	Urban	Rural	Urban
1.	Satisfied by steps taken by govt. to prevent atrocities	28	13	62	18	35	15	25	21	31	11
2.	Intervention of NGOs and other organization is effective in getting discrimination abolished	60	15	65	25	42	21	74	27	62	13
3.	Satisfied by efforts of local political leaders for upliftment of scheduled castes	38	19	48	16	45	13	37	19	40	17

Total no. of respondents: 1000; District wise: 200; Rural – 160 Urban – 40 *Multiple response

Source – Survey

**Table No. 4.10b : Role of Civil Societies and Government in preventing the violence against Dalits
(Percentage) District Wise**

S. No	Role of civil society and Government	Tonk		Sri Ganganagar		Bharatpur		Jodhpur		Kota	
		Rural	Urban	Rural	Urban	Rural	Urban	Rural	Urban	Rural	Urban
1.	Satisfied by steps taken by govt. to prevent atrocities	17.5	32.5	38.75	45	21.87	37.5	15.62	52.5	19.37	27.5
2.	Intervention of NGOs and other organization is effective in getting discrimination abolished	37.5	37.5	40.62	62.5	26.25	52.5	46.25	67.5	38.75	32.5
3.	Satisfied by efforts of local political leaders for upliftment of scheduled castes	23.75	47.5	28.12	40	30	32.5	23.12	47.5	25	42.5

Total no. of respondents: 1000; District wise: 200; Rural – 160 Urban – 40 *Multiple response

Source – Survey

Table no. 4.10a & 4.10b shows that number of rural respondents stating that they were satisfied by steps taken by government to prevent atrocities were highest from Sri ganganagar 38.75 per cent and least from Jodhpur 15.62 per cent. With regards to Intervention of NGOs and other organization is effective in getting discrimination abolished highest were from Jodhpur 46.25 per cent and least from Bharatpur 26.25 per cent. With regards to Satisfied by efforts of local political leaders for upliftment of scheduled castes highest were from Bharatpur 30 per cent and least from Jodhpur 23.12 per cent.

Whereas, number of urban area respondents stating that they were satisfied by steps taken by government to prevent atrocities were highest from Jodhpur 52.5 per cent and least from Kota 27.5 per cent. With regards to Intervention of NGOs and other organization is effective in getting discrimination abolished highest were from Jodhpur 67.5 per cent and least from Kota 52.5 per cent. With regards to Satisfied by efforts of local political leaders for upliftment of scheduled castes highest were from Jodhpur 47.5 per cent and least from Bharatpur 32.5 per cent.

Table No. 4.10 c : Role of Civil Societies and Government in preventing the violence against Dalits in Rajasthan

S. No	Role of civil society and Government	Frequency		Percentage	
		Rural	Urban	Rural	Urban
1.	Satisfied by steps taken by govt. to prevent atrocities	181	78	22.62	39
2.	Intervention of NGOs and other organization is effective in getting discrimination abolished	303	101	37.87	50.50
3.	Satisfied by efforts of local political leaders for upliftment of scheduled castes	208	84	26	42

Total no. of respondents: 1000; District wise: 200; Rural – 160 Urban – 40 *Multiple response

Source – Survey

Table no. 4.10 c shows that number of rural and urban respondents stating that they were Intervention of NGOs and other organization is effective in

getting discrimination abolished i.e. 37.87 per cent in rural and 50 per cent in urban areas.

4.3 Some other cases of atrocities reported in newspapers & other studies

BHARATPUR

However, there are some cases like Raju who was not willing to give up. In spite of the pressure of upper castes, she got the support of her family. Unfortunately the government lawyers instead of fighting the case forced the victim to compromise and demanded a share of her money received.

In cases like those of Vimla, neither the family nor the caste supports them. In most such cases they exert pressure for a compromise.

In some cases women help men in the act of rape. Nehni, only 15 year old, was lured by a woman to her house where she was raped by a man who was already inside. No one helped her and as she was married, her in-laws also threw her out of the house.

Even the intervention of DIG could not help Mohan Devi who was raped at gun point. There was no support by the lower level police officials.

JODHPUR

In the case of Kaili Devi, 13, not only was she thrown out by her in-laws after a rape for 11 days, her father had also to pay Rs. 2000/- as a fine to her husband's family.

A number of women interviewed said that neither they nor anyone in their families knew any law or procedure to make a complaint and what should be the ingredients of a FIR.

Chanduri, only 16 years of age, and many others like her, are deeply scared under terrible mental tension when they are consistently under threat and

pressure to withdraw the case. At such time if there is no support from the family and also the dalit society, they break down totally. Nobody understands the kind of trauma being faced by these very young girls for long periods. The members of the dalit society say that they are also deeply scared of the upper castes that are mostly in majority in the village.

Pramila, who was only 12, was also lured by a woman inside a house where a man raped her. In her cases we found the members of the family lost valuable time before they went to the police station because of the consultations with their society. They are most bothered about their own lives and the pressure they would have to face from the upper caste. Sometimes, we see that rapists are so powerful that they murder the eye witness also. It happened in the case of 17 year old Pista. The police was so biased in favour of the culprits that they neither registered the case u/s 302 IPC nor u/s the SC/ST Act.

During the survey, it was found that most of the victims are ultimately sent out from the village on Nata after the episode.

TONK

Immediately after such cases of rape, the victims get branded as characterless and called prostitutes not only by the upper castes but also by the members of the dalit community. It happened in the case of Suman, who was branded as a sex worker.

In the case of Gayatri, only 13 years of age, who was a student of 6th class, there was no support from the dalit society because of the various sub-castes living in water tight hierarchy. As she belonged to one of the lowest sub-castes which did not have more than a couple of houses in the village, her family was totally isolated.

In the case of Jamuna Devi, it was found to our dismay, that she had to share the compensation amount received from the government with the lawyer who kept on demanding more and more of it.

Geeta, 32, was raped and killed when she went to the contractor to get her wage but no challan was ever put up. The reason was simple. She and her husband were uprooted from their village, which came under submergence under the Beesalpur project and were rehabilitated in the village where the incident happened.

In her case we also found that the National Commission for Women and Dalit Human Rights Commission intervened but to no effect.

Lali Devi, Sarpanch, was not liked by the upper caste Panchs of the Panchayat who took the help of another dalit panch to assault her. She was stopped on her way to the panchayat and beaten up so that the SC/ST Act was not applicable.

Gulab bai, 46, was called 'Dakan', paraded naked in the village and sticks were put in her vagina and rectum. She was then killed. The SC/ST Act was not applicable in her case also as this barbarous act was reportedly committed by the close relatives of the victim. But there was generally a feeling that the upper castes had conspired to make it look as if only the relatives had attacked.

Another case of 'Daakan'

A 70 year old widow called Rajee Devi has been the victim. She sweeps the village. One day 5-6 persons came in a tractor, called her a Daakan and took her to another village and beat her badly as a result she was in bed for six months. Since then she is mentally deranged.

The police did not register the case for a long time. When it was registered, the sections under SC/ST Act were not included. There is no progress in the matter. The public prosecutor also did not take any interest in the case, which is still going on. The victim was supported by her elder son but he also died. The members of the family now want monetary compensation and closure of the case.

SHRINAGAR

Another reason why some of the victims give up easily, like Gurudas Kaur, is that their families are in the process of finalizing their marriage proposals and do not want to be embarrassed by any police officials or court proceedings.

Vidya Devi was also treated like Bhanwari Devi of Jaipur district. As she was 55 years old when alleged rape took place, the police never believed that anyone would rape an old woman like Vidya Devi.

Some other Cases of Atrocities Reported in Newspaper and other Studies

1. The case of a dalit woman magistrate is quite shocking. When she refused to be sexually exploited by a fellow officer, he started assassinating her character. When she complained to the district judge the officer had to apologize but he decided to take revenge. He continued to instigate lawyers against her and told them that she was not getting married because she was characterless. He kept on troubling her even when she did not get married. Not only was she humiliated in front of the staff but also false charges were leveled against her and she had to keep on giving explanations about the alleged charges against her. She has been suspended by the High Court although she is a very upright officer.
2. In a case of violence in Bharatpur, a woman's right leg was cut off by a gurjar, just to let off his anger against her son. For a long time the culprit was not arrested as he was an influential person in the village.
3. There is a wide spread practice of calling a woman 'Dayan' or a 'Dayan' and then grabbing her land by the upper castes. Even in a prosperous district like Bhilwara, in 2004, more than a dozen women were harassed and beaten up badly and called 'Dayans'. Two of them were killed also but the police did not take any action. On the other hand, they sent away that complainants by calling them liars.

The most vulnerable is the single, divorced, widow who is poor and is from a dalit caste. By calling her a 'Dayan' and constantly telling her family also that she is a 'Dayan' and ostracizing her from the society they convince the family members also who start hating her. The result that the woman becomes so

weak that she is helpless when her land is being grabbed and she either lives in the village in utter poverty or goes away from the village.

In an incidence on 13th November 2004, a 55 – year old dalit balai woman was called to the village chaupal by the upper caste Gurjars and was declared a 'dayan' on the allegation that she was eating one of the Gurjars slowly for the last 13 years. As a result he was growing weaker and weaker. The Bhopas also conspired with the upper castes and pronounced the woman a Dakan. It was decided to cut up the poor woman into pieces and to throw the remains away. She was badly beaten up and dragged around and was about to be burnt alive when some persons intervened and she was let off with a warning that she should not be seen in the village again.

In Tonk, a 70 year old woman was beaten up badly with the allegation that she was a Dayan in 2005.

4.4 Situational analysis of the status of Dalit Cases on the basis of interview and Group discussions

Looking at the alarming figures of acquittals in all five districts it was declared to interview all the officials, judges, NGOs and other members of the public involved in the process of giving justice to the dalit women. Interviews were held in all five selected districts with the Collectors, S.Ps, District and Sessions judges, Public Prosecutors and some other officials, especially women officers. Interviews were also held with women public representatives, teachers, lawyers, NGOs, journalists, dalit activists etc. The interviews were held on the basis of prepared Questionnaires.

On many questions, it was found that the views of the administrators, police, judiciary and public prosecutors were totally different from those of NGOs, academicians and dalits. The main differences were on the SC/ST Act and cases registered under it, the role of the two- police and the public prosecutor and the so-called caste based discrimination against dalit women. Most of the administrators, police officers and judicial officers were of the view that SC/ST Act was a very highly misused Act. They also said that:

- a) Most of the dalits register false cases under the Act
- b) As under the Act there is a provision of monetary compensation under serious offences, dalits register false cases to get the compensation.
- c) Most of the final reports are given because the cases are false and not because they are not investigated honestly.
- d) There are mostly compromises and the cases are taken back to he witnesses become hostile.
- e) Contrary to the presumption, police takes cases under this Act very seriously and it is under constant pressure to challan the cases even if there is no force in them. It is because of this reason that the accused are acquitted.
- f) As per the police, in cases under the Act, independent witnesses should be from the upper castes which seldom happen.

Many dalit activists, representatives of NGOs and independent persons accepted that an SC women is far weaker than an upper caste women and, therefore, faces much more atrocity. The reasons are:

- a) As a dalit woman has to be out of her home much more than an upper caste woman to meet the daily needs of food for the family, there is less control of the men in dalit households. The women have become outspoken otherwise they would be crushed. Their attitude is not liked by the upper castes who find it easy to attack their character. When there is sexual exploitation they are always accused as characterless women
- b) As violence against women in general has increased, the SC women also face much more violence now.
- c) Most of the SC men are landless and poverty ridden. They migrate leaving their women alone. These women then fall prey to the violence by the upper castes.
- d) If there is violence against SC women, all the upper castes unite against her.
- e) There is no unity even within the scheduled castes to help the SC victim.

Most of the police officers, district collectors, district judges and public prosecutors in the five districts believed that there was no caste-based violence against dalit women. Some NGOs also thought so. Although it was accepted by everybody that most of the women from scheduled castes were addressed by other castes as chamar, bahangi, balai, etc., in a very derogatory manner, no offence was meant and, therefore, it was not necessary to register such cases.

CHAPTER 5

CONCLUSION

It may be concluded from the above chapters and the concomitant findings that the society in India is still steeped in caste norms and discrimination, leading to a number of paradoxes and contradictions. We are well into the twenty-first century, and yet we continue to tolerate casteism and the inhumanity and injustice that the age-old caste system perpetuates. Even today, separate utensils are kept for Scheduled Caste (SC) customers in restaurants and *dhabas*. If any Dalit even touches a member of the upper castes, the latter feels constrained to take a bath. If a Harijan marriage is taking place in a village, most of the upper caste owners of the hotels and restaurants shut down their establishments. Many of the women agricultural labourers belonging to the lower castes are routinely raped or sexually exploited. They are also accused of being witches. They are never paid their full wages. Even in the Government-run Integrated Child Development Scheme, most of the upper-caste government officials refuse to touch the food prepared by a Dalit woman in the *anganvadi* or stay at her house. This mentality continues to prevail widely in most rural areas of the country.

The study reveals that the violence perpetrated against Dalit women is highly influenced by the latter's weak economic condition, and lack of education and awareness about their rights. Their extreme poverty compels them to work as agricultural labourers in the fields owned by the upper castes while lack of knowledge about their legal rights causes them to tolerate all kinds of violence inflicted against them.

Study found lack of education is a cause of violence against dalit women were highest in Jodhpur 86.87 per cent and least in Sri Ganganagar 75 per cent. With regards to extreme poverty highest were in Kota 88.12 per cent and least in Tonk 68.75 per cent. With regards to lack of employment opportunities highest were from Sriganganagar 87.5 per cent and least from Kota 78.75 per cent. With regards to dependency on resources of dominant castes were highest in Tonk 59.38 per cent and least in Bharatpur 38.75 per cent. With regards to lack of knowledge about legal rights were highest in Tonk 78.13 per cent and least

in Kota 61.25 per cent. With regards to Lack of professional skills highest were in Jodhpur 79.37 per cent and least in Tonk 53.13 per cent. With regards to weak economic conditions highest were in Sriganganagar 91.88 per cent and least in Jodhpur 79.37 per cent.

Whereas, number of urban areas respondents stating lack of education is a cause of violence against dalit women were highest in Bharatpur 75 per cent Jodhpur 55 per cent and lowest in Kota 45 per cent. With regards to “extreme poverty” highest were from Jodhpur 62.5 per cent and lowest from Tonk 35 per cent. With regards to Lack of employment opportunities highest were from Bharatpur 67.5 per cent and lowest from Kota 42.5 per cent. With regards to Dependency on resources of dominant castes highest were from Kota 37.5 per cent and lowest from Jodhpur 20 per cent. With regards to Lack of knowledge about legal rights highest were from Tonk 70 per cent and lowest from Sriganganagar 27.5 per cent. With regards to “Lack of professional skills” highest were from Tonk 60 per cent and lowest from Bharatpur and Kota 42.5 per cent. With regards to Weak economic conditions highest were from Jodhpur 67.5 per cent and lowest from Sriganganagar 45 per cent.

Study also found that the weak economic condition is the main cause of violence against dalit women in Rajasthan i.e. 86.87 per cent. With regards dependency on resource of dominant castes are the lowest i.e. 50.50 per cent in Rural areas whereas, no. of urban area respondents stating lack of education is a cause of violence against dalit women and lowest reason of violence against dalit women is extreme poverty.

The Dalit women are routinely subjected to physical assault, verbal abuse, sexual harassment and medical negligence, with the last being the leading cause of their victimisation. It has often been found that doctors do not examine the rape victims properly or file a correct and comprehensive report after the rape, as they face pressure from the accused, most of whom belong to the upper castes or the influential sections of society. The latter thus use their contacts and clout to intimidate the victims and their families and prevent the police from registering any case or FIR.

Study shows that number of rural area respondents stating Physical Assault is a one nature against dalit women were highest in Kota 88.12 per cent and least in Tonk 76.87 percent. With regards to verbal abuse highest were in Jodhpur

88.75 per cent and least in Bharatpur 35.62 per cent. With regards to sexual harassment highest were from Bharatpur 35.62 per cent and least from Kota 29.37. With regards to rape were highest in Bharatpur 48.75 and least in Tonk 14.37. With regards to sexual exploitation highest were in Jodhpur 53.12 and least in Tonk 20.61.25. With regards to prostitution highest were in Kota 33.12 and least in Tonk 7.5. With regards to Kidnapping and abduction highest were in Kota 30 and least in Sriganganagar 6.87. With regards to medical negligence highest were in Sriganganagar 91.87 and least in Bharatpur 66.87. With regards to Female feoticide and infanticide highest were in Kota 37.5 and least in Jodhpur 23.12. With regards to domestic violence highest were in Tonk 80 and least in Bharatpur 61.25. With regards to child marriages highest were in Bharatpur 84.37 and least in Jodhpur.

Study also shows that no. of respondents stating medical negligence is most violent nature of violence. Medical negligence means doctors not giving proper or right examination report after rape infact they do not examine under the pressure of upper caste or influenced people and on the behalf of this negligence victims cannot register the case or FIR and kidnapping and abduction is lowest. In the family domestic violence is the main violence so that dalit women faces triple discrimination.

The study highlights the attitudes towards atrocities against women that the number of rural areas respondents stating dalit women's attitude towards atrocities against them was that it is a patriarchal norm were highest in Kota 83.75 per cent and least in Kota 70 per cent. With regards to Aspect of poverty highest were in Kota 91.25 per cent and least in Jodhpur 83.12 per cent. With regards to "will of God" highest were in Sriganganagar 57.5 per cent and least in Jodhpur 42.5 per cent. With regards to women accept it as their karma highest were in Kota 58.12 per cent and least in Jodhpur 36.25 per cent. with regards that women are frustrated of violence and want a change highest were in Bharatpur 93.12 per cent and least in Kota 86.87 per cent

Whereas, the number of Urban areas respondents stating dalit women's attitude towards atrocities against them was that it is a patriarchal norm were highest in Jodhpur 65 per cent and least in Kota 50 per cent. With regards to Aspect of poverty highest were in Sriganganagar 82.5 per cent and least Kota 52.5 per cent. With regards to "will of God" highest were in Kota 50.62 per

cent and least in Tonk 27.5 per cent. With regards to women accept it as their karma highest were in Sriganganagar 47.5 per cent and least in Bharatpur 20 per cent. With regards that women are frustrated of violence and want a change highest were in Sriganganagar 82.5 per cent and least in Kota 52.5 per cent.

Study also shows that the number of rural and urban areas respondents stating dalit women's attitude towards atrocities against them was that it is a frustrated of violence and want a change i.e. 90.12 per cent and lowest attitude towards atrocities is accept violence as their karma i.e. 46.62 per cent.

It is also a well-known fact that the Dalits often face difficulties in getting justice. The main causes of the discriminatory treatment meted out to the victims are the refusal of police officials to register FIRs, lack of proceedings in the registered cases, Lack of knowledge about their rights and about the process of seeking justice among the victims, withdrawal of complaints by the victims' families due to the pressure exerted by the upper caste perpetrators of the crime.

Study shows that number of rural area respondents stating Denial by police officials to register FIR is a form of discriminatory treatment in justice mechanism against SC were highest in Bharatpur 45.62 per cent and least in Sriganganagar 36.25 per cent. With regards to "No proceedings on registered cases" highest were from Bharatpur 81.87 per cent and least in Tonk 66.87 per cent. With regards to "Lack of knowledge about rights" highest were from Jodhpur 81.25 per cent and least from Bharatpur 59.37 per cent. With regards to "Lack of knowledge about procedure of getting justice" highest were from Kota 66.25 per cent and least from Tonk 61.25 per cent. With regards to "Withdrawal of complain due to pressure of upper castes" highest were from Jodhpur 60.62 per cent and least from Sriganganagar 47.5 per cent.

Study also shows that number of rural and urban area respondents highest in lack of knowledge about the rights i.e. 74.37 per cent in rural and 42.5 per cent in urban and lowest causes of discriminatory treatment in Justice Mechanism is Denial by police officials to register FIR i.e. 40.87 per cent in rural and 23 per cent in urban area.

The study highlights the dubious role played by the civil society and the Government in preventing the violence against Dalit women. While the civil

society organisations claim that they are satisfied with the steps taken by the Government to prevent atrocities against the lower castes, Government agencies, on their part, claim that the interventions of non-governmental organisations (NGOs) and other civil society organisations have been effective in reducing caste-based discrimination and enabling the upliftment of the lower castes.

Study found that number of rural respondents stating that they were satisfied by steps taken by government to prevent atrocities were highest from Sri Ganganagar 38.75 per cent and least from Jodhpur 15.62 per cent. With regards to Intervention of NGOs and other organization is effective in getting discrimination abolished highest were from Jodhpur 46.25 per cent and least from Bharatpur 26.25 per cent. With regards to Satisfied by efforts of local political leaders for upliftment of scheduled castes highest were from Bharatpur 30 per cent and least from Jodhpur 23.12 per cent.

Whereas, number of urban area respondents stating that they were satisfied by steps taken by government to prevent atrocities were highest from Jodhpur 52.5 per cent and least from Kota 27.5 per cent. With regards to Intervention of NGOs and other organization is effective in getting discrimination abolished highest were from Jodhpur 67.5 per cent and least from Kota 52.5 per cent. With regards to Satisfied by efforts of local political leaders for upliftment of scheduled castes highest were from Jodhpur 47.5 per cent and least from Bharatpur 32.5 per cent.

Study also found that number of rural and urban respondents stating that they were Intervention of NGOs and other organization is effective in getting discrimination abolished i.e. 37.87 per cent in rural and 50 per cent in urban areas.

Allegations of discrimination against Dalit women were thus largely shrugged off by most of the invitees to the meetings organised by the researchers as part of the study.

The observations of our investigators who talked to the victims and the villagers were, however, in sharp contrast to the views expressed by the civil society and government agencies. The researchers confirmed the widespread prevalence of caste-based discrimination and violence against the Dalit women

in all the districts covered under the study. The victims are generally agricultural labourers working in the fields of upper-caste owners. They face wide discrimination in public places and also at the sources of drinking water, in addition to the perpetual threat of sexual exploitation, rapes and gang-rapes. The affluent and powerful men belonging to the upper castes constantly humiliate these Dalit women, address them by using derogatory language and fling casteist insults at them. Further, most of the accused continue to victimise the women they have raped even after the inhuman act and refer to the hapless victims as '*kultas*' or characterless women.

After committing the rape, most of the accused, who are influential persons, claim that what they indulged in was actually consensual sex. The victimised woman is already so disturbed mentally and in such dire straits financially that she is not able to hold up for long against the sustained pressure to withdraw her complaint. As regards the role of the police and administration in providing justice to the victims of sexual violence, it has been observed that the district administration is either indifferent or non-cooperative. Since the women are not even supported by the Dalit societies, they find themselves completely isolated and unable to seek justice. The study also finds that violence against Dalit women has been constantly increasing though a large number of cases still go unreported. Even the number of Dalit women working as bonded labourers has increased. In fact, most of the women listed as agricultural workers are bonded labourers and do not receive any regular wages. Incidences of abduction, sexual exploitation and rape have also gone up in the districts.

Along with the executive, the judiciary too has failed to play a constructive role in providing justice to these women. Usually, the judicial proceedings are so complicated that most of the Dalit women are unable to sustain their fight for justice, and consequently end up losing confidence even in the judiciary. They also cannot fight the general perception that most of the women lodge false complaints and are interested only in monetary compensation or that their cases stem from personal animosity against between the families of the victim and the accused.

Moreover, not much has been done to raise awareness levels about their rights among the Dalits. Most of the latter do not own any lands and as agriculture is the only occupation available in the districts, they are left with no option but to work as agricultural labourers or as labourers in brick kilns.

Another factor that complicates the issue is the lack of social unity among the Dalits themselves. Instead of fighting the injustice and violence perpetrated against them, and the sexual exploitation of their women, the Dalits are constantly fighting against each other. Historically, the Dalits constitute the weakest strata of the society. For instance, in the Sri Ganganagar district of Rajasthan, after the provision of canal waters, the Dalits have been subjected to exploitation by the rich and powerful landowners and upper castes like Jats and Sikhs. The Dalits have never come together to fight this exploitation. The only caste among them which united was that of the Meghwals, who boycotted work and refused to remove the carcasses of dead animals, which was their traditional occupation. Thus, in order to augment the status of Dalit women in the districts, it is important to raise their literacy levels. They should also be informed about the various laws under which they can seek justice, especially the Atrocities against SCs/STs Act. It is also important to raise their self-esteem and to provide them more and more opportunities for self-employment. Among other remedial measures, the accused need to be given exemplary punishment. It is also necessary to end regressive social customs and religious superstitions. Finally, the '*pardah*' system needs to be abolished, and the Dalit women should be provided opportunities for advancement and upliftment, especially by setting up residential schools where they can freely avail of education and training to take them out of the morass of poverty and exploitation that is currently their lot.

CHAPTER 6

RECOMMENDATIONS

6.1 Policy Issues

- Disaggregate all criminal, economic, social and political data on the grounds of gender and caste.
- Evolve and implement a comprehensive strategy to address impunity and ensure criminal justice for Dalit women.
- Grant powers to relevant national human rights institutions to enable them to make legally binding recommendations and establish an independent complaints and monitoring mechanism to redress the discrimination and violence inflicted against Dalit women.
- Enact domestic violence (prevention and protection) laws that acknowledge the unique vulnerability of Dalit women, allocate adequate resources and ensure comprehensive monitoring with the representation of Dalit women for ensuring the effective implementation of these laws.
- Provide support to establish informal organizations for enabling Dalit women to freely discuss the social, domestic and development issues in their own community and to strengthen leadership within local governance structures.
- Mandate a proportional representation of Dalit women elected into parliaments, legislatures and local governance systems, including equal distribution of other minority groups, such as Joginis/Badis (India/Nepal), irrespective of their faith, and provide adequate budget allocations in this regard.

6.2 SC/ST Act 1989

Action points for Ensuring Better Enforcement of the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes Act

- The machinery for effectively enforcing the provisions of the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes (Preventions of Atrocities) Act, 1989, needs to be made more stringent at the grassroots level, that is, at the police stations, by creating a separate cell to be manned by SC/ST officials for dealing with such cases.
- Section 4 of the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes (Prevention of Atrocities) Act, 1989, which relates to 'punishment for neglect of duties' needs to be amended to include public servants belonging to the SCs and STs.
- Not more than 10 per cent of the cases registered under the Protection of Civil Rights Act, 1955, end in conviction in the lower courts, which raises questions about fairness on the part of the investigators, and at the trial and judicial levels. There is hardly any instance wherein state governments have filed any appeal before the High Courts against a decision of the lower courts in cases under the PCR Act. Proper directions should thus be issued to the states to review all such cases and find out why an appeal against the judgments of the lower courts could not be filed in the High Courts/Supreme Court.
- Although special cells, headed by the Additional Director General of Police, have been set up for investigating cases registered under the SC/ST Atrocity Act in certain states including Rajasthan, they are ineffective because they have only the authority to inquire into the cases and supervise the investigation but no authority to chargesheet the accused in a court of law. The Government of India provides 50 per cent of the expenditure for maintaining this special enquiry cell while the balance 50 per cent of the expenditure has to be borne by the respective state governments. However, the state governments do not take much interest in strengthening this department. It is thus recommended that 100 per cent of the expenditure to be incurred on the enforcement of the SC/ST Act, from the police station level to the court level, should be borne by the Government of India.

- The stipulation of granting free legal aid for fighting the cases of SC/STs also needs to be reviewed thoroughly, as this provision has been reduced to a mere formality. Consequently, many SC/ST undertrials, deprived of legal assistance, continue to languish in jail for long periods without either being prosecuted or sentenced. No one comes forward to get them released on bail even when they are accused of only petty offences.

6.3 Central Level Recommendations

1. Ensure an enabling environment for Dalit women to access formal justice, by identifying and eliminating the barriers that these women face in their struggle for justice.
2. Ensure that law enforcement agencies and other state mechanisms and agents, including bureaucrats, welfare departments, medical and paramedical agencies, and local bodies, are sensitised to be able to effectively address the grievances of Dalit women. In instances where officials fail to undertake their duty to protect and assist Dalit women without subjecting them to discrimination, they must be held accountable for their actions.
3. Conduct fact-finding and research to assess the dynamics and reasons for caste-based violence and implement policies and programmes to address the root causes.
4. Evolve a national perspective plan aimed at specifically accelerating efforts to reduce the development gap between Dalit women and the rest of the population within fixed time-bound targets.
5. Introduce affirmative action policies to increase Dalit women's participation in the police, judiciary, legal professions and the education sector.
6. Produce and disseminate disaggregated data on the status of Dalit women, particularly in government plans and development programmes.
7. While ensuring the effective implementation and enforcement of laws, the Government should also address the attitudes and prejudices that lead to violence and foster a culture of impunity. They should conduct public campaigns to promote equality and challenge caste-based discrimination, for example, by launching awareness programmes through schools and the media.

8. Initiate processes to challenge discrimination based on caste and gender by encouraging the conduction of a dialogue and sensitisation among the non-Dalit communities and men.
9. The Central government should undertake more and more research studies related to violence against Dalit women in different parts of the country and should identify the most sensitive zones that are prone to such violence. Further, they should plan for preventive action and assistance for the victims in the event of violence in these areas because every area demands a different kind of approach rather than the implementation of a common policy for all the areas.
10. The rituals of 'Nathapratha' and 'Devdasipratha', which entail the exploitation of women and young girls, still prevail in Rajasthan. The Central Government thus needs to introduce stringent measures to counter and eliminate such practices.

6.4 State level Recommendations

6.4.1 The SC commission

1. The N/SHRIs can play a major role by strictly recommending the filing of cases under the SC/ST POA Act by ensuring the complete adherence of all the provisions and rules.
2. The National SC Commission can suspend the SP/DSP in cases that show a clear violation of the rights of Dalits. Net provides this provision and, it must be urgently used.
3. The State level human rights institutions need to be supported by professional legal experts.
4. The commission should also take preventive measures by spreading information about the SC/ST Act and associated legal services.
5. The SC/ST Act needs to be amended to provide protection to the witness-victim.
6. There is also an urgent need to review the SC/ST (KM) Act in order to get rid of the existing loopholes in it and to bring new offences under the purview of the Act as in the case of Dalit Christians.
7. Undertake a gender audit of the implementation of the SC/ST (PGA) urgently so as to ensure that Dalit women are able to make use of it more effectively.
8. The existing Act does not apply to new forms of violence and discrimination in the healthcare system. This matter should be urgently addressed and resolved.

6.4.2 The Criminal Justice System

1. The criminal justice system needs to be urgently brought under some kind of monitoring so as to ensure that it efficiently delivers justice in the case of Dalit women.
2. Criminal cases should be filed against officers who tamper with evidence, protect criminals and work to support criminals.
3. Sections of 4 and 166A in the SC/ST(POA) Act should be resorted to in cases of negligence by the police.

4. A woman should be appointed as the Deputy Superintendent of Police in violence-prone districts so that she can adroitly handle cases of violence against Dalit women.
5. Along with the above measures, there should be provisions to sensitize officers to the SC/ST (POA) Act, and other such issues related to the Dalit community and specifically to Dalit women in all aspects of police training imparted in the Police Academy.

6.4.3 Aid or Assistance

1. Accurate and timely information should be disseminated about the SC/ST (POA) Act and the existing legal services available to Dalit women.
2. The existing provisions for providing lawyers to Dalit women need to be effectively implemented.
3. The respective state level authorities providing legal services must be pressurised to offer these services to the Dalit women promptly as and when required. In case the victim is subjected to any atrocities, a lawyer has to accompany the victims from the very day that the case is registered.
4. Details of the new laws enacted after December 2012 should also be disseminated among the community.
5. Medical establishments and doctors and other medical practitioners, including both State level and private, should be brought under strong vigilance and made accountable for their actions.
6. The Medical Council of India should also be involved in this monitoring.

6.4.4 Strengthening Dalit Women in Local Governance

1. The Panchayati Raj Ministry needs to be informed with regard to the caste atrocities being perpetrated on Panchayati Raj members. The Ministry must also be assigned the responsibility of providing security to the Dalit panch, members and sarpanches in all the districts of various states.
2. It has been observed that women sarpanches are often attacked both for being Dalit and for the role that many of them play in resisting caste

structures. Therefore, they need to be accorded special protection that would help them perform their duties in a safe and free manner.

3. Land redistribution should be carried out to do away with the glaring inequalities between the dominant and Dalit communities. Simultaneously, provisions should be inserted in the Land Bill to guarantee land rights for Dalit women.
4. The women human rights defenders (WHRDs) are increasingly coming under attack and being subjected to violence for trying to protect the rights of Dalit women. The National Human Rights Commission (NHRC) should thus take up all such issues suo moto, especially cases of victimisation of Dalit women.
5. Finally, since the issue of human rights of the Dalit women can only be addressed by promoting an understanding of the intersection of caste and gender, there should be a way in which the SC Commission, the Women's Commission and the Human Rights Commission could come together and suggest concrete measures to curb the gruesome and unrelenting violence against Dalit women.

6.5 District Level Recommendations

1. Recognise Dalit women as a distinct social group rather than subsuming them under the category of general women or Dalits, and accordingly evolve and implement activities with a specific focus on Dalit women's rights within the broader framework of the national agenda for empowerment of both Dalits and women.
2. Ensure full and strict implementation of laws to protect the rights of Dalit women and implement measures to ensure the abolition of the practice of 'untouchability'. Also implement strict sanctions against any individual preventing or discouraging victims from reporting incidents of violence or accessing the criminal justice system, including the police and other law enforcement officers.
3. Ensure the implementation of national penal codes in their respective areas of jurisdiction, while also guaranteeing that law enforcement officials, judges, lawyers, social workers and medical professionals are duly trained to deal with the serious and criminal nature of domestic violence.
4. The district government should identify the problems and types of violence perpetrated against Dalits in all areas prone to such violence, and map these areas, while also informing the Central Government to enable it to take necessary action and implement the requisite policies for dealing with it.
5. Ensure that the Dalit women who report violence are protected from retaliation by the accused and prevent the perpetration of renewed violence against them through social boycotts and imposition of restrictions on them. Organise awareness programmes at the rural level and at regular intervals about their rights and government policies.
6. Appoint authorities offering legal services in every block as has been done in some states.
7. Free legal service should be made available and provided by the legal services authority/State District/*taluka* in cases of sexual violence and ensure that such cases are registered in a police station. Also offer medical aid to the victims of sexual violence.

8. Cancel the licences of medical practitioners who are guilty of medical negligence, malpractice and destruction of evidence in cases of atrocities against Dalit women.
9. Provide interim medical assistance to the victims of atrocities.

Case Studies

1. Village Mogra, District Jodhpur

Rajasthan

Sukhwanti Devi has been living in Mogra village of Jodhpur district for 30 years. She is poor, lives alone, and works as an agricultural labourer in the fields of landlords belonging to the dominant castes. Another such landlord, 35-year-old Mohan Lal, who works as a bus conductor, also lives in the same village.

One day in the evening, Sukhwanti Devi was passing in front of Mohan Lal's house. Chanderwati, the mother of Mohan Lal, called out to Sukhwanti Devi, asking her to bring a plate and take some food. Sukhwanti continued walking towards her own house, picked up a plate, and then returned to Mohan Lal's house to accept Chanderwati's offer. Chanderwati invited her inside and gave her food. When Sukhwanti had finished eating, Chanderwati told her to leave through the back door of the house. As Sukhwanti was going out, Mohan Lal suddenly appeared, seized her hand and forcefully took her to the roof of the building.

Sukhwanti Devi fell at the feet of Mohan Lal, crying that she was like a mother to him. Ignoring her pleas, Mohan Lal raped her. Her shouts were drowned out by the music blaring from loudspeakers at a nearby marriage celebration. Later, the old woman returned home, her body racked with fever, pain and swelling.

Thereafter, with the help of the local people, her relatives and social activists, Sukhwanti Devi went to the police station and registered a complaint four days after the incident. The police registered the case under Section 376 of the Indian Penal Code (IPC). However, even though the police began an investigation, they did not arrest the accused. Nor was the accused suspended from his job as a bus conductor, despite being a government employee who had been accused in a rape case. Even the victim did not receive any compensation from the government as stipulated under the law. It is suspected that the local landlords belonging to the dominant castes have since been trying to scuttle the case.

2. Village Kakela, District Jodhpur Rajasthan

This case refers to the killing of a Meghwal Dalit in the Kakela village of Jodhpur district by Rajputs as the Dalit affectionately addressed his daughter as 'Bai Sa'. The Rajputs warned the victim not to call his daughter 'Bai Sa' as the term was used by Rajputs for their daughters, and they insisted that only Rajputs can use the term, with no Dalit enjoying such a right. The Rajputs even threatened him of serious action if he did not stop using the term. Earlier, the victim had also been fined a sum of Rs. 11,500 by the village panchayat for his purported 'offence'.

The village does not have a large non-Dalit population but their fear and feudal influence still pervades everywhere. The killing of the Meghwal Dalit occurred when the victim was carrying water on his bicycle in the morning. As he passed in front of the house of a Rajput, a few Rajput men and women emerged from the shadows and attacked him with swords, *lathis* and knives. He tried to flee but was forcibly taken inside the house of the Rajput, where he was again beaten up and his limbs were broken. The injured victim kept on lying on the floor for more than two hours. Although the police were informed about the incident in the interim, they did not reach the spot for a long time, and came only when the victim was dying. They also failed to record his dying declaration.

Subsequently, a case was filed at the local police station after the police officers subjected the victim's family to a lot of humiliation and refused to register the case. However, despite the registration of the case, the police did not arrest the accused and no further proceedings were taken up.

3. Village Devpur, District Tonk Rajasthan

Sheela, a Dalit, and her family decided to settle in Devpur village in the Tonk district of Rajasthan when she was studying in class 10. Soon thereafter, she was married off to Ghansham Kumar, a health worker from a modest Dalit household in the village. Meanwhile, the *anganvadi* programme had been initiated in the village. As the women in the village were not allowed to work outside their homes, none of them applied for the job of a teacher at the *anganvadi*. Ghansham, however, put down his wife's name for the post as her salary would contribute to with household finances. When Sheela started working as a teacher at the *anganvadi*, all the children attended the classes.

When food rations arrived in the village for distribution to the children under the state government scheme, the entire village gathered at the venue of distribution and there was open opposition to the fact that the children would receive food from the hands of a Dalit woman. Sheela was humiliated and threatened, and told to leave her job. The *sarpanch* of the village even gave a written application to the *anganvadi* Supervisor to get Sheela ousted from the job. However, the Supervisor, Girijabai, supported Sheela and dismissed the application. A year later another woman, Chandrakala, was appointed as a helper to Sheela and she was assigned the task of distributing the rations to the children.

This move helped avert a caste confrontation in the village, but Sheela, who is now 30 years old and has been staying in the village for several years, continues to face other forms of caste-based hostility. During the monsoons, the roof of the building in which the *anganvadi* was housed was blown off. Since there was no place to store the foodgrain rations, Sheela volunteered to keep them in her house, but the upper caste villagers vehemently opposed this suggestion and threatened to drive Sheela out of the village if she took any such action. Sheela is harassed at the slightest pretext. Her family owns about an acre of land that yields a good crop of cotton. The *sarpanch* objected to their using the village road to transport the harvest from the fields to the market, and they were told to use the road that passes outside the village. Even Sheela's 7- or 8-year-old daughter is not spared. As the young girl was

returning from school one day, a few young boys insulted her and told her to step away from the main road when they were walking on it or else they would force her mother to leave the village and move elsewhere. Sheela says that by now she is used to these threats and has been able to survive in the village due to the backing of the Supervisor, and the support of her husband. Sheela's husband consoles her by saying, "Every roadside dog barks; we must learn to ignore them and move on in life." Sheela also claims that one must not give up one's rights notwithstanding opposition or hostility from anyone. She hopes to continue this fight and work for the betterment of her community.

4. Village Bamor, District Tonk Rajasthan

Kavita, a Dalit woman belonging to a landless family in the Bamor village of Tonk district in Rajasthan, was walking alone on the road one day when she was grabbed by Devadas, an upper caste man, who took her to a cowshed and raped her. When she screamed for help, her husband came to her rescue. Kavita's husband and others from their community reported the matter to the panchayat. However, the upper caste-dominated panchayat asked Kavita for proof that she had been raped and, in the absence of evidence from her, dismissed her case. When Kavita lodged a police case, she was again asked to provide evidence of the crime. The Dalits residing in the village believe that upper-caste villagers bribed the police to prevent it from investigating the matter. Hence, instead of being treated as the victim, Kavita is being accused of making false allegations against a 'respected' upper-caste man.

5. Village Naroli, District Bharatpur Rajasthan

Suresh Chand, a Dalit, works as a peon in an insurance company. However, as he owns three acres of fertile land, the Dalit managed to save enough money to be able to organise a decent wedding for his daughter Seema. The groom Ranjit is a student of fashion designing in a nearby district. The wedding party came packed in a bus, with several expensive cars including Scorpios, Sumos and Boleros, and a special, well-decorated *buggee* or horse-driven carriage for the groom in tow. The journey from the outskirts of Naroli village to the pink *shamiana* (tent) set up in the Harijan Chaupal in the village was quite majestic. There was plenty of dancing, with a local DJ setting the mood by playing catchy music. However, when the marriage procession reached the government school, all hell broke loose. A group of miscreants attacked the party, showering them with casteist abuses and assaulting them with rods and thick sticks. Even the groom was not spared. His gold chain and garland made of currency notes were snatched away. The only reason behind the attack was the contention of the upper castes that a Dalit had no right to ride on a horse-driven carriage. After three days of tension some miscreants set fire to the entire stock of animal fodder kept in the field owned by the bride's family. The situation was brought under control only by the intervention of the police, but the Dalits in the village are still scared and do not rule out the possibility of further attacks. The Jats, Gujjars and Dalits comprise the three most numerous castes among the population in Naroli village and the Dalits believe that the attacks on them are rooted in deeply-held caste prejudices. They allege that the upper castes react with jealousy and anger whenever the Dalits decide to have any kind of celebrations.

6. Village Khangri, District Bharatpur Rajasthan

One of the most alarming incidents that occurred in the Khangri village of Bharatpur district in Rajasthan pertained to the abduction and rape of a 16-year-old Dalit girl by an upper-caste man. The victim was also forced to eat a poisonous pesticide by the perpetrator of the crime and then dumped outside her house in the village.

According to the girl's statement, she was abducted by three men around 11.30 pm from outside her house when she was going to visit a relative nearby. The police arrested the prime accused, Jagmeet Singh, and his accomplices, Jagsir Singh and Chhaina Singh. The girl's mother had approached the Jaito police station and filed a missing person's complaint the same night.

The girl alleged that Jagmeet raped her while the other two stood guard outside the room where she was taken. She said that she was then threatened and forcibly made to eat something that made her unconscious.

She was found lying in front of her house by her parents, who immediately rushed her to the hospital, where the medical staff attending on her said that she had probably been forced to consume some pesticide. Meanwhile, the police registered have a case of rape, abduction, and wrongful confinement against the three accused.

7. Village Latoori, District Kota Rajasthan

In another incident in Latoori village in the Kota district of Rajasthan, a class 10 student attempted suicide at her home, five days after she was allegedly raped by her young neighbour.

The 16-year-old girl sprinkled kerosene and set herself ablaze when she was alone at home, and had to be admitted to the hospital in a critical condition.

Meanwhile, the district police arrested the accused, who was identified as Jasveer, also belonging to the Dalit community, within hours of the registration of the case following a complaint lodged by the victim's mother.

The girl narrated the incident to her mother when the latter probed her disappearance on the day of the incident. She alleged that Jasveer, who is a taxi driver, had abducted and raped her before dropping her back the same day. Her mother then decided to file a complaint about the incident against the youth; but as she left the house for some work in the afternoon, the girl set herself afire.

8. Village Pipakheri, District Kota Rajasthan

A 15-year old minor Dalit girl of village Pipakheri was gang-raped by five youths, including four belonging to the upper castes and one, a lower caste. While on her way home from school, she was forcefully taken to a secluded place and gang-raped. She was later dropped near her house.

The police arrested five youths in the case, who were remanded to judicial custody after being produced in court. This was the second such incident in the district in the preceding about 48 hours.

While revealing the identities of the accused as Vinod, Satawan, Balwan, Sandeep and Vikas, the police also said that the medical examination of the victim confirmed the rape and that the department was providing her counselling.

Later, due to the influential status of the parents of the four upper-caste youths, the entire blame for the incident was shifted to the lower caste boy and the all the four upper-caste boys were set free.

9. Village Ganeshgarh, District Sri Ganganagar Rajasthan

In a gruesome incident in the Ganeshgarh village of Sri Ganganagar district of Rajasthan, a minor Dalit girl was raped by a tailor, Rakesh, who belongs to an upper caste and owns a tailoring shop in the village.

The incident occurred when the victim went to the shop of the accused to collect some clothes that she had given him for stitching. Rakesh asked her to wait for 10-15 minutes, then lowered the shutter of the shop and raped her. The girl alleged that she was also verbally abused for being a Dalit.

On returning home, the girl narrated the incident to her family. Her father then approached the village *sarpanch* to complain against the accused but the latter refused to take any action, instead accusing the victim's father of lying and rhetorically asking why an upper caste boy would rape a Dalit girl. Subsequently, the accused also offered the victim's father some money to hush up the situation.

The father of the girl also had to face a lot of humiliation from the police, who repeatedly refused to register his complaint. Although a case was eventually filed by the police, it was only of academic interest as they did not either arrest the accused or pursue the matter any further.

10. Village Burjwali, District Sri Ganganagar Rajasthan

A rare case of police intervention in a rape case was witnessed in the Burjwali village of Sri Ganganagar district in Rajasthan. When a local Dalit complained that his minor daughter had been raped by two upper-caste youths as she went out to answer the call of nature in the wee hours of the morning, the police actually arrested both the accused. A medical examination of the girl also confirmed the rape. . However, soon thereafter, the family of the girl started receiving threats of being killed if they did not take back the case. The father of the girl also received several warnings from the family of the accused and other fellow villagers.

Obviously succumbing to this unrelenting pressure from the accused and his clan, the victim deviated from the statement given to the police and denied the rape charges during the trial of the case, and did not recognize the accused in the court. Her father too turned hostile in the court and did not support the prosecution. Their lower-caste status thus compelled the victim and her family to accept the crime perpetrated against them without seeking any redressal or justice.

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