

Potency of the Indian Women-Specific and Women-Related Legislation to Diminish Crime against Women: An Analysis of Trend and Structural Break

Chameli Mandal

Assistant Professor, Department of Economics
Sarsuna College, Sarsuna, Kolkata

Shrabanti Maity

Associate Professor, Department of Economics
Vidyasagar University, Midnapore

Ummey Rummana Barlaskar

Research Scholar, Department of Economics
Assam University, Silchar, Assam.

Sanchita Roy

Research Scholar, Department of Economics
Vidyasagar University, Midnapore

Abstract

The study aims to explore twin objectives. Initially, to identify the particular law and act that is most effective to ensure safeguard to women against crime and further to explore the effectiveness of that law and act in reducing the growth rate of crime against women. This pre-dominantly empirical study is based on the secondary data compiled from the database of the National Crime Record Bureau. The empirical analysis is facilitated by the CUSUM of Squares tests and Poirier's Spline function approach. The empirical finding authorised us to conclude that although Indian laws and acts empower women to voice against crime they need to stand against crime with a mighty voice. The study ends with appropriate policy measures.

Keywords: *Crime against women; Structural break; Growth rate; CUSUM of Squares tests; Poirier's Spline function approach.*

1. Introduction

Although men and women are considered two equal parts of the human creature but often the women face several discriminations which lead to crime against women. It was found in the earlier studies that globally 1.2 billion people are living below poverty, 70% of which are women (Hazarika 2017). In fact, out of 4 at least 1 women who are in relation aged 15-24 years experienced violence by their intimate partner (WHO 2021). Women are also paid less than men in work (Buckley, 1971) as 67% of the household works are done by women but they only get 10% of the world's income (Hazarika 2017). In India, the constitution of the country provided equal rights to both women and men. Article 14 of the Indian Constitution talked about equal rights for men and women before law and order while Article 15 safeguarded discrimination against religion, race, caste, sex or place of birth. But still, the

women of this country face extreme discrimination and are considered inferior to men in society (Parihar et al. 2015). Women are subjected to crimes like molestation, rape, abduction, honour killing, dowry death, domestic violence and so on. They are not only targeted physically or mentally but are deprived of their fundamental rights such as education also (Mangoli and Tarase 2009). In India, there are certain laws also to prohibit particular crimes against women, suchlike Minimum Wages Act, 1948; The Immoral Traffic (Prevention) Act, 1956; The Dowry Prohibition Act, 1961; Domestic Violence Act, 2005, etc. Even after having so much safeguarded Indian women are not free from violence against them. From 2018 to 2019 the crime rate against women had increased by 7.3% (Ghosh 2020). Unfortunately, the severities of the crime against women in India are not reflected accurately by the reported figures, (Gupta 2014; Maity and Sinha 2018). The reason is that in Indian family men are the indubitable head of the family and any affair is considered a private family matter, grant adequate room for violence to occur within the family, (Niaz 2003; Maity and Sinha 2018). The most common form of violence faced by Indian women is domestic violence and sexual assault (Bhattacharyya 2015). Out of 10, at least 4 women encounter domestic violence in their lifetime (Kalokhe et al. 2017). The most common reason for domestic violence is dowry (Flood and Pease 2009). The attitude of the Indian society concerning dowry results in two other form of crimes, viz., dowry deaths and sex-selective-feticides (Gundappa and Rathod 2012). In fact, it is the patriarchal attitude of Indian men about domestic violence that is responsible for the escalation of the crime against women in the form of domestic violence (Flood and Pease 2009). More than 65% of Indian men believed that women are the synonyms of forbearance and should tolerate all injustice to keep the family unimpaired (Visaria 2000). The overwhelmed preference for the male child acts as a catalyst for domestic violence (Oldenburg 1992; Gundappa and Rathod 2012; Maity and Sinha 2018).

To protect women from crime and injustice the Indian government has administrated and implemented various laws and acts from time to time. In fact, India is the first country in the world that administrated India Maternity Benefit Act, 1961 (<https://www.bbc.com/news/world-asia-56521171>). This parliamentary act allows the woman to have maternity leave after a miscarriage. Besides, there are both “Women-specific Legislation” (The Immoral Traffic (Prevention) Act, 1956; The Dowry Prohibition Act, 1961 (28 of 1961) (Amended in 1986); Protection of Women from Domestic Violence Act, 2005; The Sexual Harassment of Women at Workplace (PREVENTION, PROHIBITION and REDRESSAL) Act, 2013; The Criminal Law (Amendment) Act, 2013) and “Women-related Legislation” (The Indian Penal Code, 1860; The Indian Evidence Act, 1872) administrated by the government of India in the pre-and-post independence era to empower women to voice against crime (<http://ncw.nic.in/important-links/List-of-Laws-Related-to-Women>). Under such a scenario it will be interesting to explore the efficacy of the Indian laws and acts to protect women as well as to provide a voice to women against crime. As mentioned we have reviewed a comprehensive amount of literature but we failed to find any single literature exploring the mentioned issue.

This backdrop motivates us to explore a single research question: do the Indian laws and acts are competent to protect women against crime? This research question when unfolding results in twin objectives. Initially, to identify the particular law and act that is most effective to ensure safeguard to women again crime and further to explore the effectiveness of that law and act in reducing the growth rate of crime against women.

The paper is structured as follows: after a brief introduction, the methodology and data sources are discussed in section-2. The empirical results are analysed in section-3. The discussion of the empirical results is presented in section-4 under the heading “Discussion”. The paper concludes with suitable policy prescriptions in section-5.

2. Methods

In this section, we are going to discuss the data sources and the econometric model utilised for exploring the said objectives.

2.1. Data

This pre-dominantly empirical study is based on secondary data. The main data source for the *crime against women* is the “National Crime Record Bureau”. Any kind of direct or indirect mental and/or physical cruelty to women is considered a crime against women. More specifically, crimes that are directed specifically against the women and in which women are the victims are pervaded as the crime against women. There is a concrete definition of the *crime against women* in the Indian Penal Code. “Although Women may be victims of any of the general crimes such as ‘Murder’, ‘Robbery’, ‘Cheating’ etc., only the crimes which are directed specifically against women are characterised as ‘Crimes against Women’. Various new legislations have been brought and amendments have been made in existing laws with a view to handle these crimes effectively. These are broadly classified under two categories i.e. (A) The Crimes under the Indian Penal Code (IPC) and (B) The Crimes under the Special & Local Laws (SLL).

1. The Crimes under the Indian Penal Code (IPC): Seven Crimes included under this head are as follows:
2. Rape (Section 376 IPC),
3. Kidnapping & Abduction (Sec. 363-373 IPC),
4. Dowry Death (Sec.302, 304B IPC) and Dowry Prohibition Act, 1961,
5. Torture (Cruelty by Husband & Relatives) (Sec.498-A IPC),
6. Molestation (Sec.354 IPC),
7. Sexual Harassment (Sec.509 IPC),
8. Importation of Girls (Sec.366-B IPC)
9. The Crimes under the Special & Local Laws (SLL) although all laws are not gender specific, the provisions of law affecting women significantly have been reviewed periodically and amendments carried out to keep pace with the emerging requirements. The gender specific laws for which crime statistics are recorded throughout the country are as follows:
10. Immoral Traffic (Prevention) Act, 1956,
11. Dowry Prohibition Act,
12. Indecent Representation of Women (Prohibition) Act,
13. Sati Prevention Act, 1987” (India, Ministry of Home Affairs, National Crime Records Bureau, Crime in India, 2011, p.79)” (Crime in India, (2015), <https://ncrb.gov.in>).

Based on this definition the “Rate of total Crime against Women” is collected over the time-period 2000 to 2019 from “National Crime Record Bureau”.

2.2. Methodology

The econometric models to explore the said objectives are discussed in this section.

2.2.1. Stationarity checking

The stochastic process must be stationary for the reliability and validity of the result. The prediction and policy prescription based on the non-stationary stochastic process is not reliable. Thus before executing any estimation process it is mandatory to check the “stationarity” of the variable otherwise the result could not be used for prediction as well as

for policy prescriptions. Two non-parametric tests, viz., “*Augmented Dicky Fuller Test (ADF)*” and “*Phillips Perron Test (PP)*” are available for this purpose. However, we will conclude the “*stationarity*” of the stochastic process based on the “*Phillips-Perron (PP)*” test. Because *PP test* has greater power than the *ADF test* (Banerjee et al. 1993) and is robust to general forms of heteroskedasticity in the error term (Phillips, and Perron 1988). Moreover, unlike the ADF technique, the researcher does not need to specify a lag length for the test regression in the PP technique (Debnath and Roy 2012).

The test equations in two cases are presented below.

Augmented Dicky Fuller Test:

$$\Delta Y_t = \delta Y_{t-1} + \sum_{i=1}^n \gamma_i \Delta Y_{t-i} + u_t \quad (1)$$

Phillips Perron Test:

$$\Delta Y_t = \delta Y_{t-1} + u_t \quad (2)$$

In both cases the hypothesis to be tested is $H_0 : \delta = 0$ and the corresponding test statistic is

$$\hat{\tau}_{\delta} = \frac{\hat{\delta} - \delta}{SE(\hat{\delta})}. \quad (3)$$

2.2.2. Structural break and growth rate

The efficacy of different Indian legislations to protect women can only be explored by analysing the growth rate of the incidences of crime against women. The study period for the empirical analysis is from 2000 to 2019. The selection of the study period is guided by the availability of data. The study period is susceptible to various policy changes for the “*Protection of Women and Child Rights*”. The “*Ministry of Women and Child Development*” has been administrating various special laws focusing on women and child protection. These special laws include: “*The Protection of Women from Domestic Violence Act, 2005*”, “*The Dowry Prohibition Act, 1961*”, “*The Indecent Representation of Women (Prohibition) Act, 1986*”, “*The Sexual Harassment of Women at Workplace (Prevention, Prohibition and Redressal) Act, 2013*” (Ministry of Women and Child Development, Press Information Bureau, 2019). Naturally one can expect to have a *structural break* during this period. The normal time series analysis will not give appropriate result if there is *structural break* in the stochastic process. Therefore, the identification of the breakpoint is important. The growth rate should be calculated separately considering different regimes in the presence of structural break. The identification of the *break* or *switching point* should be facilitated by some statistical criterion, viz., “*Chow Test*” (Chow 1960), “*CUSUM*” and “*CUSUM of Squares (CUSUMQ)*” tests. As the “*Chow Test*” is criticised for the arbitrariness problem, we have utilised the “*CUSUMQ*” test. After the identification of the switching points, the growth rate will be calculated following the “*Poirier’s Spline function approach, (Poirier and Garber 1974)*”. Poirier’s Spline function approach, (Poirier and Garber 1974), helps us to determine the trend in the growth of the variable of interest in different regimes.

The postulated model is presented by the follows with the assumption of linear trend:

$$\left. \begin{aligned} \text{Regime - 1: } \ln(Y_t) &= \alpha_1 + \beta_1 t + u_t, \text{ for } 2001 < t \leq t_1 \\ \text{Regime - 2: } \ln(Y_t) &= \alpha_2 + \beta_2 t + u_t, \text{ for } t_1 < t \leq 2018 \end{aligned} \right\} \quad (4)$$

Where, t_1 is the switching point.

We next define the following variables:

$$\phi_{1t} = t; \quad \phi_{2t} = \begin{cases} 0 & t \leq t_1 \\ t - t_1 & t_1 < t \end{cases} \quad (5)$$

By reparameterise we rewrite the function as follows:

$$\ln(Y_t) = \alpha_1 + \gamma_1 \phi_{1t} + \gamma_2 \phi_{2t} + u_t \quad (6)$$

By utilizing equation-(7) we obtain the percentage growth rate of the j th regime ($j= 1,2$).
 $[\exp(\beta_j) - 1] * 100 \quad (7)$

Where, $\beta_1 = \gamma_1$ and $\beta_2 = \gamma_1 + \gamma_2$. It is noteworthy that equation (3) will be utilised to compute the growth rate of the desired variable for different regimes. It is possible to obtain more than one switching points. Under such circumstances, the corresponding growth model will be modified accordingly. The growth rate for the entire study period will be computed by utilising the following equations:

$$\ln Y_t = \alpha + \beta t + u_t \quad (8)$$

3. Results

In this section, the empirical results are presented.

3.1. Descriptive statistics of the rate of crime against women in India

Historically crimes against women have been a hidden problem in India and are largely ignored both in social discourse as well as by the criminal justice system. In Indian society, man is the undisputed ruler of the household and activities within the family are seen as private, allows violence to occur at home (Niaz 2003). Moreover, due to the attached social stigma, distrust in legal mechanisms, fear of retaliation and so on, most crimes against women are unreported (Mukherjee et al. 2001). Thus the actual figures of crime against women are much larger than the reported figures. In the present study based on the NCRB data, we have presented the summary statistics of the *rate of crime against women* in table-1. The time- period for this analysis is from 2000 to 2019. The selection of the time-period is mainly guided by the availability of data.

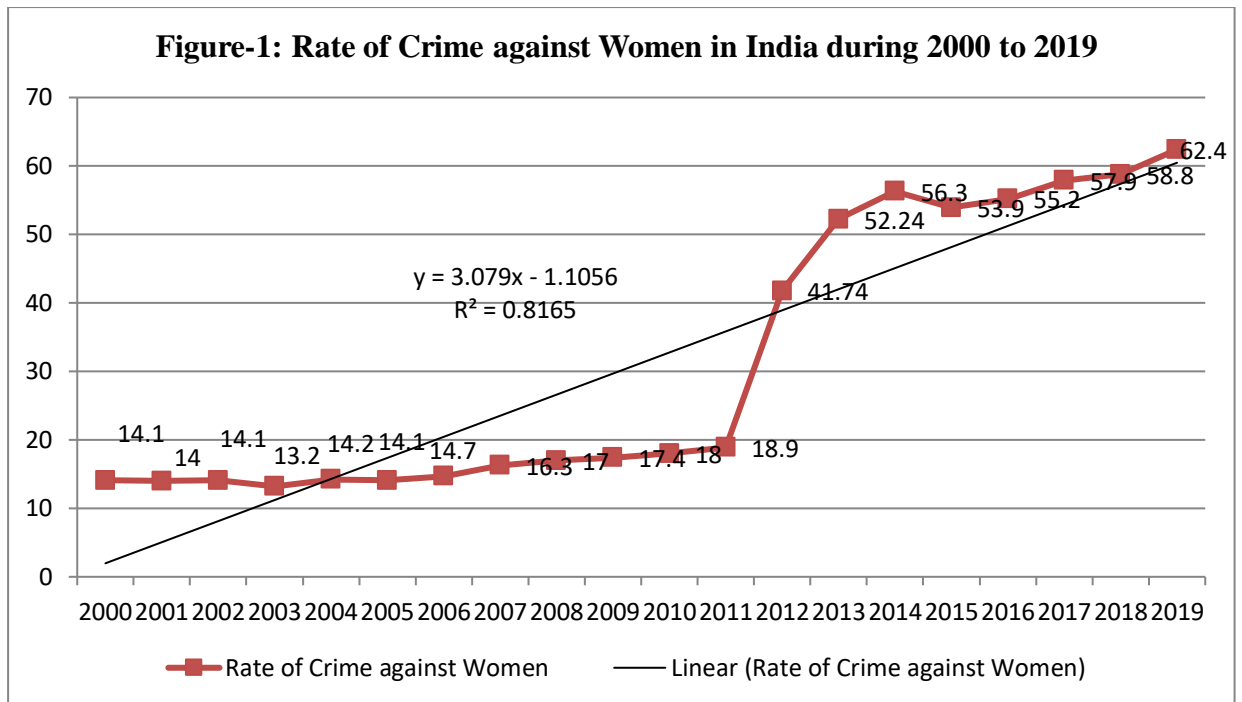
Table-1: Descriptive statistics of rate of crime against women in India

Variable	Mean	Median	S.D	Maximum	Minimum
Rate of Crime against Women (RCW)	31.22	17.70	20.16	62.4	13.2
ln(RCW)	3.24	2.87	0.65	4.13	2.58

Source: Authors' own calculation based on NCRB data

The data on the rate of crime against women is an aggregate data of different crimes caused by different factors such as dowry system, lower level of girl child education, sexual violence, religious and cast discrepancies, etc. The table discloses that the mean rate of crime against women during the study period is 31.22. The corresponding S.D value is also high, 20.16. The discrepancies in the rate of crime against women are also reflected by the fact of the differences in the two measures of central tendency, viz., mean and median. The result of descriptive statistics is true in the sense that data comprises distinct factors of different characters and it is expected that they will not vary uniformly. Wide discrepancies are also evident from the maximum and minimum values.

The rate of crime against women is also presented graphically over time.



Source: Authors' own calculation based on NCRB data

Figure 1, discloses that there are comprehensive fluctuations in the *rate of crime against women* during the period 2000 to 2019 in India. The figure also divulges that the *rate of crime against women* was lower during the period 2000 to 2006. However, it rises slowly after 2006 and gained momentum in the year 2012. The rising trend continues up to 2014. Nevertheless, the rate slightly decreases in 2015 but it steps up from 2016 and continues to rise slowly after that. An in-depth analysis is required to find the possible reasons behind this. This is particularly important in the current scenario, particularly when the priority of the Indian government is the reduction of *crime against women and children*. To achieve the goal of zero tolerance of crime against women the Indian government of India has administrated various special laws, suchlike, 'The Protection of Women from Domestic Violence Act, 2005', 'The Dowry Prohibition Act, 1961', 'The Sexual Harassment of Women at Workplace (Prevention, Prohibition and Redressal) Act, 2013'. It will be interesting to explore the aftermath of these laws on the *rate of crime against women*. This is exactly investigated in the next section. It is noteworthy that in the same figure we have also presented the linear trend line as well as the trend.

3.2. Unit root test

The stationarity in the stochastic process is the *apriori* condition for the reliability of the estimated results and appropriateness of prediction. Hence, before the exploration of the first objective, it is mandatory to check the "stationarity" of the said variable. The stationarity of the time series is tested by using both "Augmented Dickey and Fuller (ADF)" and "Phillips-Perron (PP)" tests. However, to conclude about the stationarity of the stochastic process we emphasise the "Phillips-Perron" test as it has greater power than the ADF test (Banerjee et al. 1993). Moreover, PP tests are robust to general forms of heteroskedasticity in the error term (Phillips and Perron 1988) and unlike the ADF technique, in the PP technique it is not required to specify the lag length (Debnath and Roy 2012). The result of the unit root test on the natural logarithms of "*rate of crime against women*" is presented in table-2.

Table-2: Unit root test of the rate of crime against women

Variable	Test statistics	Level		First difference	
		Adj. t-Stat/ t-Statistic	Prob.*	Adj. t-Stat/ t-Statistic	Prob.*
$\ln(RCAW)$	Phillips-Perron	-0.239	0.917	-3.299	0.030
	Augmented Dickey-Fuller	-0.133	0.932	-3.296	0.031

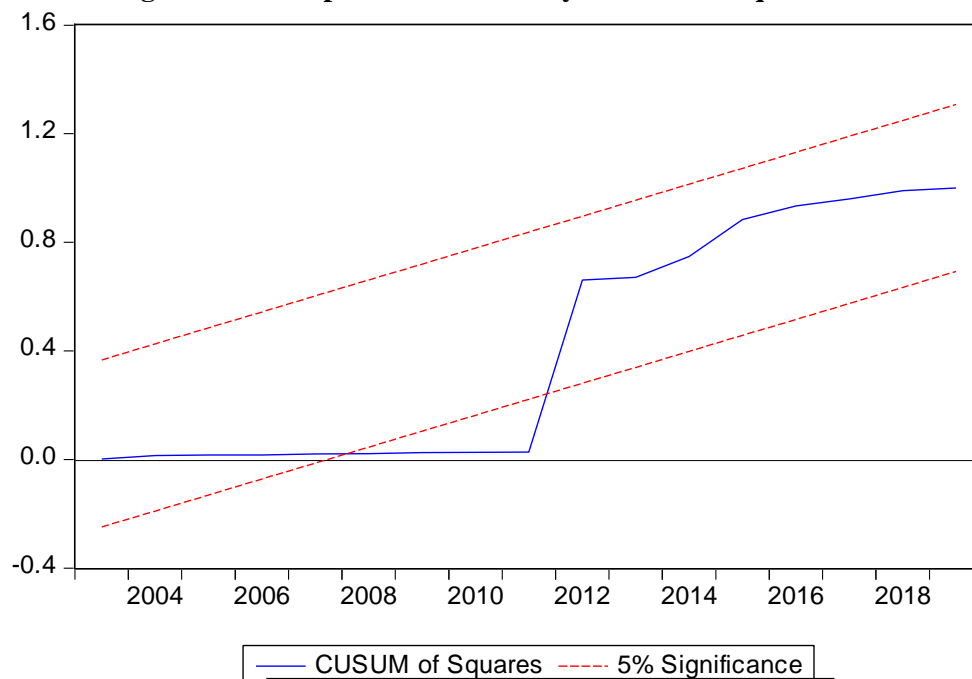
Source: Authors' own calculation based on NCRB data

The table divulges that the series is non-stationary at level (the null hypothesis of unit root is not rejected). However, the first difference of the variable makes it stationary and both the tests come to the same conclusion. Therefore for the analysis of the implication of “*The Protection of Women from Domestic Violence Act, 2005*”, we must proceed with a first difference as the differencing makes the stochastic process stationary. However, because of differences, we lost one observation. Thus the empirical investigation of the said objective will be executed by considering the “*rate of crime against women*” for the time-period 2001 to 2019.

3.3. Structural Break or Switching Points

The structural break may appear due to the changes in economic policy. The empirical analysis of the present paper involves the time-period 2000 to 2019 on the crime against women in India. To protect women from any injustice and/ or crime against her the “Ministry of Women and Child Development” administrated various special laws focusing on women and child protection. Under such circumstances, it is apparent that we may find some switching point during the study period. If we analyse the rate of growth of crime against women during the time-period without recognising the switching point, it may give some misleading results. Thus it will appropriate to identify the structural breakpoints, if any, for our study period. To perform this we have practised “*CUSUM of Squares (CUSUMQ)*” tests. The corresponding test result is presented in figure-2.

Figure-2: Break point determined by CUSUM of Squares test



Source: Authors' own calculation based on NCRB data

The figure discloses that there exist two breakpoints, viz., 2007 and 2011. These breakpoints divide the total observations into three regimes- Regime-I (2001-2007), Regime-II (2008-2011), and Regime-III (2012-2018). The Protection of Women from Domestic Violence Act, 2005; administrated by “Ministry of Women and Child Development” may be the cause of first break point of the stochastic process. It is noteworthy that this act going through some changes as and when required based on different legal cases. Two such circumstances appear, in 2008 and 2010, based on two court cases, viz., “State Vs: Vishesh Chaudhary, on 16 May 2008” and “Sate Vs: MrSona Ram Son of MrNimba Ram, on 27 August 2010” respectively. Because of these two changes, we may obtain the second switching point in 2011. These two switching points divide the entire study period into three regimes, viz., Regime-I (2001 to 2007), Regime-II (2008 to 2011) and Regime-III (2012 to 2019).

After the identification of the switching point, we proceed for analysing the implication of these changes on the growth rate of crime against women in India in the next section.

3.4. Growth rate of crime against women in India

In this section, we are now going to discuss the growth rate of crime against women in Indian from 2001 to 2019. Based on the “*CUSUM of Squares (CUSUMQ)*” test the study period is divided into three regimes and we need to analyses the growth rate for these three regimes separately. These three regimes permits us to explore the how effectively the changes in Indian legislations protects women form any form of violence. The growth analysis is conducted by considering different regimes as well as for the entire study period and the empirical result is presented in table-3.

Table-3: Growth rate of crime against women in India

Regime-1 (2001 to 2007)	Regime-2 (2008 to 2011)	Regime-3 (2012 to 2018)	Entire regime (2001 to 2018)	\bar{R}^2	CV	Cuddy-Della Valle index (I_x)
3.236	-8.354	-10.563	0.529	0.403	65.207	50.363

Source: Authors' own calculation based on NCRB data

The table divulges that the growth rate of crime against women from 2001 to 2007, that is, in Regime-I, is 3.236. No doubt the growth rate was very high during this regime. But after that from 2008 to 2011 the growth rate of crime against women had reduced significantly to -8.354. In fact, during Regime-II the positive growth rate of the previous period turned to a negative value. Courageously, the changes in the law and acts had assisted to reduce the crime against women in India. We have another breakpoint in 2011 and that we got Regime-III extending from 2012 to 2018. The efficacy of the law the “Protection of Women from Domestic Violence Act, (2005)” can be viewed through the analysis of growth rate of this regime. It is noteworthy that the law was adopted to provide a stronger safeguard to women from any form of domestic violence. Because of the influence of this modification the growth rate of crime against women had reduced exorbitantly to -10.563. The empirical result exhibits that the “Protection of Women from Domestic Violence Act, (2005)”, has enormous potential to protect women from domestic violence if it is reported. The timely modification makes this law a strong safeguard for women.

However, unfortunately, if we consider the entire study period we observe that the growth rate against women has increased significantly to 0.529. This high growth rate is supported by the high value of both C.V (65.207) and the instability index (50.363). The high values of

these statistics reveal that even if we achieve a reduction in the growth rate of crime against women the achievement will be for a short period. The likelihood of the growth rate escalating is very high as disclosed by these high statistical values. The possible reason for such a paradoxical result is discussed in the discussion section.

4. Discussion

The objective of the present paper is to explore the efficacy of Indian laws and act to protect women from violence. The empirical scrutinies of the objectives are facilitated by the “CUSUM of Squares (CUSUMQ)” tests and Poirier’s Spline function approach, (Poirier & Garber, 1974). The “CUSUM of Squares (CUSUMQ)” test discloses that there exist two breakpoints, viz., 2007 and 2011. These breakpoints divide the total observations into three regimes- Regime-I (2001-2007), Regime-II (2008-2011), and Regime-III (2012-2018). The first switching point may be due to the influence of the “Protection of Women from Domestic Violence Act, 2005”, administered by the “Ministry of Women and Child Development”. This Act was implemented aiming to empower women against domestic violence. Suppositionally a challenging affair, as the sign of domestic violence is critical to identify and become a serious threat to Indian women. We observe a second switching point in 2011. It is worth noting that this breaking point is not a result of a single policy change, rather it is the aftermath of the several facts and program that had taken place during this short period from 2008 -2011. Moreover, the dowry death, a scare to the society, has escalated during this time-period significantly, (NCRB, 2012). To protect women from such social evils government has enacted the “Dowry Prohibition Act, 1961”. Based on the situational demand the act was amendment twice. Unfortunately, a crime like a dowry system invents another crime, sex-selective-feticide (Ahmad, 2010). To control such crime the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare in India introduces “The Mother and Child Tracking System (MCTS), 2009”. The programme aimed to collect data on maternal and child health. The “Sexual Harassment of Women at Workplace Act, 2013” needs special mentioning here. Though this act was implemented in 2013 the legislative progress of the act was a long process where the bill was first introduced by women and child development minister “Krishna Tripath” in 2007 and approved by the Union Cabinet in January 2010.

The efficacy of these protective laws and acts for women are scrutinised based on the growth analyses for different regimes. Therefore, the growth rates of crime against women in India are obtained for three different regimes and the entire study period. The empirical finding divulges that the growth rates of the crime against women show a falling trend. The growth rate of the crime against women declines from 3.236 in Regime-I to -10.563 in Regime-III. Interestingly, the growth rate decreases both in the Regime-II and Regime-III. It is noteworthy that the falling rate is notably much higher in Regime-III. These empirical results evidence the efficacy of the Indian laws and acts to furnish a caveat to women against any injustice. However, unfortunately, for the entire study period, the growth rate of crime against women has escalated significantly over time.

It is worth noting that the escalation of the crime against women can be visualised from the reported data as revealed by “National Crime Record Bureau (NCRB)”. The economic development of India is also transmitted to the development of women, in the form of a higher rate of education, workforce participation rate, gross enrolment in higher education, political participation, etc. Simultaneously, the “Ministry of Women and Child Development” has administered time-to-time new laws and acts to protect and empower women. These steps vouchsafe “voice to the voiceless”. Consequently, the NCRB record revealed in 2010, the reported cases of Acid attack, sexual harassment at the workplace, rape have increased.

This may be because now women are empowered to contravene the social stigma and raise the voice against the crime (Byard, 2020).

5. Conclusion and Policy Implications

Since ancient time India has a rich culture where women enjoyed an important role in society (Hazarika 2017). But gradually the position of women degraded and they were targeted for many crimes like domestic violence, molestation, abduction, rape, etc. To safeguard women from such crimes Indian constitution and the Indian Penal Code introduced many laws from time to time. The fast track courts are also established for a quicker solution to the existing cases. These laws helped in controlling crime against women. But sometimes despite the strict laws and action, women face serious physical and mental torture. Thus it is important to understand the efficacy of the laws enforced and to analyse how far the women are safe in this country. In an era where 'Beti Bachao Beti Padhao' (Save and educate girl children) has become a nationwide mission, how far the females are safer reveals the possibility of the success of such missions. Thus the paper tried to identify the most successful law to control the crime against women. Further, the paper tried to unfold the effectiveness of the laws to control the growth of crime against women. Based on the "*CUSUM of Squares (CUSUMQ)*" test the entire study period is divided into three regimes, viz., Regime-I (2001-2007), Regime-II (2008-2011), and Regime-III (2012-2018). Accordingly, the growth rates of crime against women are also obtained for these three regimes separately. We have also calculated the growth rate of crime against women for the entire study period. It was found in the study that the mean rate of crime against women during the study period is as high as 31.22. The corresponding standard deviation is also high at 20.16, depicting that of crime occurred are not of the same nature, rather it ranges widely with different nature. The growth rate of the different regimes reveals that during *Regime-I* the growth rate of crime against women was as high as 3.326. Fortunately, the rate went down to -8.354 during Regime-II and further down to -10.563 during Regime-III. These two regimes help us to understand the influence of the "Protection of Women from Domestic Violence Act, (2005)", as the negative rate in Regime-III is followed by the timely modification of this law. The growth rate (0.529) of the overall study period is not very satisfactory. Hence, timely and strict actions can prohibit crimes against women. Keeping these results in the backdrop, we have suggested the following policy measures to control the growth of the crime against women.

Firstly, the strict implementation of the existing laws that protect women against crimes is extremely necessary. The laws need to be timely and sincerely implemented, with proper modifications, if required. Secondly, women should be given proper education regarding their rights and should make aware of the kinds of exploitation that they face. Thirdly, to enhance the successful implementation of the laws, the police administration should be properly trained and should have a positive attitude. Fourthly, civil society should be more aware of the rights of the victims and support them in need, often in the fear of societal defamation many crimes go unreported. Non-Governmental Organisations can be given the responsibilities to spread awareness. Fifthly, the financially constrained victims should be given governmental assistance, as often many cases close down due to the heavy financial burden to run a case. Last but not the least, the fast track courts should be operating properly for a quick solution to the reported cases.

Declarations

Availability of data and material: The study is based on the secondary data and all the data sources are clearly mentioned in the text. For further details kindly consult Table-1.

Competing interests: The authors declared and specified that they have no competing interest and/ or conflict of interest.

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