



SOCIO-DEMOGRAPHIC PROFILE OF VICTIMS OF HOMICIDAL DEATHS: A STUDY IN A TERTIARY CARE HOSPITAL IN IMPHAL

Forensic Medicine

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ABSTRACT

Background: Homicide is defined as killing of one human being by another human being. Cases of homicides had been there since the starting of existence of human being. **Materials And Methods:** A cross-sectional study of homicidal deaths (54 cases) was conducted at JNIMS, Imphal, Manipur between the period of August 2017 to July 2019. **Results:** Homicidal deaths were 12.71% of total autopsies conducted during the period. Incidence is more in rural area with 45(83.33%). Most of the victims were married 33(61.11%) and were unemployed 32(59.26%). Most of the crimes occurred at workplace of victims with 13 (24.07%). Majority cases (27.78%) occurred in the morning. **Conclusion:** Homicide is the most serious crime afflicting humankind. Socio-economic wellbeing, removal of poverty and enhanced employment opportunities and continuous researched in this field is very much needed to counter the unlawful killing of humans.

KEYWORDS

Homicide; Rural area; Unemployment; Imphal.

INTRODUCTION

Homicide is one of the leading causes of unnatural deaths¹. It is much more common in countries with low levels of human development, high levels of income inequality and weak rule of law than in more equitable societies, where socio-economic stability seems to be something of an antidote to homicide². According to National Crime Records Bureau (NCRB), there were a total of 28,522 FIRs of murders registered in 2022. The rate of murder per lakh population across the country stood at 2.1, while the charge sheeting in such cases was 81.5. Uttar Pradesh saw the highest number at 3491 in 2022 followed by Bihar (2,930), Maharashtra (2,295), Madhya Pradesh (1,978) and Rajasthan (1,834). And the top five states with the least number of murder cases in 2022 were Sikkim (9), Nagaland (21), Mizoram (31), Goa (44) and Manipur (47)³. Thus, homicide patterns vary from one region to another and are influenced by many factors such as social, cultural and economic. Our study was conducted to find out the various factors influencing the homicidal rates in this part of the country to create awareness among the people about deaths which are mostly related to violence.

Aims And Objectives

To study the sociodemographic profile of victims of homicidal death in Manipur.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

A prospective cross-sectional study was conducted at the Forensic Medicine and Toxicology Department, JNIMS, Imphal, Manipur from August 2017- July 2019 on 54 alleged homicidal cases brought for autopsy.

Inclusion And Exclusion Criteria:

All deaths due to homicides and all deaths with suspected homicide cases were included in the study.

Deaths due to suicide, decomposed bodies and deaths due to Road traffic accidents were excluded in the study.

Prior to the study approval of institutional ethical committee was taken

Statistical Analysis:

Data was statistically analysed using the SPSS version 23.0 and was summarized using descriptive statistics such as Mean and standard deviation

RESULTS

Out of 425 medicolegal autopsies conducted, 54(12.71%) cases were homicidal in nature.

Young adults between 20-30 years with 17(31.48%) cases were the most affected age group followed by 30-40 years with 16(29.63%). It was also observed that 4 (7.41%) victims were aged above 50 years and 7(12.96%) victims were aged below 10 years, out of which 5 cases were of infanticides (Fig. No.1).

Table no.1 shows gender distribution of homicidal case with male predominance (81.48%)

Most of the victims were Christian (44.44%) followed by Hindus (35.19%) as shown in Table No.2.

And maximum cases happened during in winter season (37.04%) than summer (24.07%). (table no.3)

Also, the incidence of homicidal deaths in rural (83.33%) were more than urban population (7.41%). fig 2

Surprisingly table No.4 shows that educated individuals with 49(90.74%) exceeded illiterate person as far as incidence of homicidal deaths were concerned.

Most of the victims in our study were married constituting 61.11% as shown in Fig.No.3.

The victims were mostly unemployed (59.26%) with only 27.78% of them having government job or engaging in some kind of business (12.96%) as seen in fig no.4.

Table no. 5 shows that maximum number of victims were from upper middle-class families as per Prasad's modified formula of socioeconomic status grading criteria constituting 46.74% followed by upper class 40.74% and only 3.7% were from middle class families.

Of the total homicide events, 15(27%) occurred during the morning hours followed by afternoon (24.07%) as shown in Fig.No.5.

Regarding the place of occurrence of the crime, maximum crime occurred at the workplace of victims 13(24.07%) followed by victim's house 9(16.67%) as shown in Table No.6.

DISCUSSION

The incidence of homicides varies from country to country and in the same country from region to region. In the present study, which is done from 1st August 2017 to 31st July 2019, a total of 454 medicolegal autopsies were conducted in JNIMS Mortuary, Imphal out of which 54(12.71%) cases were homicidal deaths.

The present study shows that people of all age group were involved. No age group appears to be safe from homicides. However peak incidence of homicide was reported in age group 21-30 years (n= 17, 31.48%) followed by 30-40 years (n=16, 29.63%). Similar findings were observed in the studies conducted by Sachidananda Mohanty et al⁶, Shiva Kumar BC et al⁷, Scott K.W.M⁸, Prashanth Mada et al⁹, Shailesh Jhaveri et al¹⁰, Sheikh Mohammad iliyas et al¹¹, Padamraj R.Y. et al¹², Prajapati Pranav et al¹³, Mishra Pradeep K et al¹⁴ and is in contrast to the observation made by Wahlsten P et al¹⁵ where most of the victims belonged to 31- 40 years, and in study done by Kominato Y et al¹⁶ belonged to 36-45 years Saint Martin P et al¹⁷, most of the victims belonged to 50-59 years.

This adult age group of 21-40 years being more common victims of homicide may be attributed to the fact that the persons in this age group bears the thrust of responsibilities of various kinds including family, social, economic, etc. and in carrying out these responsibilities, they must interact quite frequently with other people.

In the present study male victims (81.48%) outnumbered females (18.52%). The findings are consistent with the findings done by G.Angam et al¹⁸ (86.31%), Shailesh Javeri et al¹⁹ (86.79%), Hilal A et al²⁰ (83.6%), Meel B²¹(82%). Similar observation where male is preponderance to female is also found in the studies done by Hougen H et al²², Perry MJ and France²³, Ghangale A L et al²⁴, Scott KWM⁸, Alan fox et al²⁵, Rygol K et al²⁶, studies done by workers in other region like Bhupinder S. et al²⁷ (75%), Asad ullah et al²⁸ (67.24%), Bashir MZ et al²⁹ also revealed almost similar findings.

The cause for male predominance may be because they are more involved in outdoor activities, risk taking behavior, unemployment, jealousy, revenge, lack of patience, intake of alcohol, more aggressive, violent, more exposure, bread earners and they have more opportunity for interpersonal interactions. Sometimes these interpersonal interactions can turn into heated debate and conflict, which may culminate into end of one's life.

In the present study, 44.44% were of Christian, followed by Hindu (35.19%) and Muslim (7.41%) respectively which is in contrast with the findings done by Kalpesh Zanzrukiya et al¹, Sachidananda Mohanty⁵ where most of the victims belong to Hindu religion.

Seasonal variation shows highest incidence in winter with 20(37.04%) cases followed by summer with 13(24.07%) cases. Homicidal follow a seasonal distribution with a bimodal pattern, with winter (December to March) and (April to June) peaks over the other seasons.

The reason could be the extreme and rapid changes in environmental temperature associated changing moods which favours greater mortality. The findings were almost consistent with Mohanty S. et al⁵ and Rastogi AK et al⁶ where they observed summer and winter season to be the commonest season of occurrence.

Community character of homicidal victims in the present study depicted that maximum victims were from rural area (83.33%) followed by urban (7.41%). Studies conducted in the eastern India by Rajeev Ranjan et al⁷, Anjum Zia Munawar et al⁸ suggested rural predominance whereas in some studies done by Shivkumar BC et al⁹, G Angam et al¹⁰ suggested an urban predominance.

The rural pre-dominance could be attributed to poverty, unemployment, low level of education, lack of entertainment, early marriage and easy availability of alcohol etc resulting in intolerance and hostility. It may be said that there are more opportunities of cross personal, familial and social interaction and clashes upon objects of common interests in rural than urban areas and more mutual interdependency in rural, while more independency in urban people.

In our study, 61.11% victims were married, which is in conformity with those of Shailesh javeri et al¹¹, Rajeev Kumar¹², Claas T. Buschmann et al¹³, Prashanth Mada et al¹⁴, Sachidaanda Mohanty et al⁵. It is noted that marriage takes place comparatively at earlier age in

our (Manipur) area. Thus, till they are grown to the age they are already married and burdened with family and other social responsibilities. Problems out of marriage including, poor marital relation, domestic quarrels and conflict over properties affect homicidal incidences.

In our study, 90.74% were alleged literate which is in consistent with the study done by Shivkumar B.C et al⁹, Rajeev Ranjan et al⁷. These results differed from the study done by Prashanth Mada et al¹⁴, Rajeev Kumar¹², Sachidananda Mohanty et al⁴ where most of the victims were found to be illiterate.

Majority of the homicide victims were literate, it may be assumed that involvement of more literate persons is probably due to increasing literacy rate, unemployment, competition and depression in day-to-day life and rapid industrialization in urban areas.

Also maximum of the victims were unemployed with 59.26% which may be explained by the fact that being unemployed these people have more frustration, more time in their hands.

In the present study, maximum number of victims was from upper middle class as per Prasad's modified formula of socioeconomic status grading criteria constituting 46.30% of total cases. Least number of cases observed among middle class with 3.70%. The finding is consistent with findings of B.C.Shivkumar et al⁹.

This might be since the income generated in this class is not enough to cover the expenses. The pursuit for more income, pressure to meet the family requirement including basic needs and children's education with not much employment avenue might had led to adopting more risky behaviour including money borrowing, involvement in drug related crime and to the extent of joining the underground groups for quick money.

In the present study, homicides were found to be evenly distributed during all parts of the day, which may be interpreted as "no particular part of the day seems to be safe for the victims". Though we observed that majority of the incidents in the present study had taken place in the morning (27.78%) which is similar with the findings done by Bhupinder S et al¹⁵, Vougiouklas T, Tsiligianni C¹⁶. These findings are not consistent with the studies done by B.C. Shivkumar et al⁹, Prashanth Mada et al¹⁴, Sachinada mohanty et al⁵, where the incidents had taken place in the night.

It was observed that in 24.07% of the victims dies at their workplace followed by the victim's house, which is in contrast with the findings of the study done by Lo M et al¹⁷, Fernandez CC and La Harpe R¹⁸, Kominato Yet al¹⁹, Dr. Basappa S. Hugar¹, Prashanth Mada et al¹⁴, where the incidents had occurred in victim's house.

The possible reason for the crime to occur outdoors in this study may be linked to the motive of the crime and most of the cases arises due to rivalries which usually occur in the workplace and insurgent related where most of the encounters took place in the outskirts areas.

CONCLUSION

Homicide is the most serious crime afflicting humankind. Trends of homicide differ from country to country, region to region and from time to time. The social and cultural values along with demographic variables affect the crime.

Continuous research in this field is the need of hour to frame strategies to counter unlawful human killings.

The investigating officers, forensic pathologists and the judiciary system work independently. Hence, they should work/ co-ordinate together in solving the crimes.

Not only the law enforcement forces but every individual should feel responsible and help the state in the deliverance of criminal justice system.

Tables And Figures

Table No.1: Gender Distribution

GENDER	TOTAL	PERCENTAGE
Male	44	81.48
Female	10	18.52
	54	100.00

Table No.2: Religion

	2017	2018	2019	Total	Percentage
Hindu	7	8	4	19	35.19
Christian	6	7	11	24	44.44
Muslim	0	2	2	4	7.41
Others	0	2	0	2	3.70
Not Known	1	4	0	5	9.26

Table No. 3: Season distribution

	2017	2018	2019	Total	Percentage
Winter	0	12	8	20	37.04
Summer	3	5	5	13	24.07
Rainy	6	2	4	12	22.22
Autumn	5	4	0	9	16.67

Table No.4: Educational Qualification

	2017	2018	2019	Total	Percentage
Illiterate	0	0	0	0	0
Below 10 th	7	8	7	22	40.74
10 th to Graduate	5	9	6	20	37.04
Graduate and above	1	2	4	7	12.96
Not applicable	1	4	0	5	9.26

Table No.5: Socio-economic Distribution

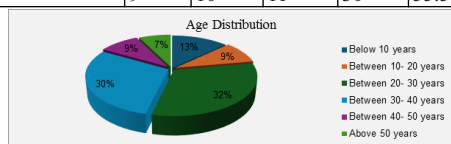
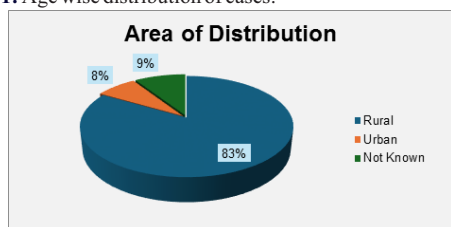
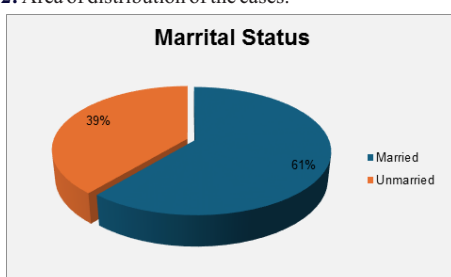
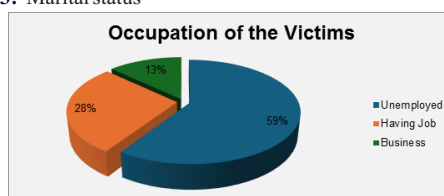
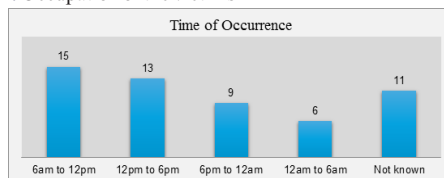
Socio-economic classes	Modified Prasad's classification Rs/month per Capita Income for 2017
I - Upper Class	6254 and above
II - Upper Middle Class	3127-6253
III - Middle	1876-3126
IV - Lower Middle	938-1875
V - Lower	below 938

SOCIO-ECONOMIC DISTRIBUTION

	2017	2018	2019	Total	Percentage
Class-I	4	10	8	22	40.74
Class-II	8	9	8	25	46.30
Class-III	1	0	1	2	3.70
Class-IV	0	0	0	0	0.00
Class - V	0	0	0	0	0.00
Not Known	1	4	0	5	9.26

Table No.6: Place of occurrence

	2017	2018	2019	Total	Percentage
Victim's house	1	5	3	9	16.67
Victim's locality	0	1	0	1	1.85
Victim's work place	4	7	2	13	24.07
Custodial death	0	0	1	1	1.85
Others	9	10	11	30	55.56

**Figure 1: Age wise distribution of cases:****Figure 2: Area of distribution of the cases.****Figure 3: Marital status****Figure 4: Occupation of the victims****Figure 5: Time of occurrence****REFERENCES**

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