



A STUDY OF HOMICIDAL DEATHS BROUGHT TO TERTIARY CARE CENTRE, IMPHAL.

Forensic Medicine

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ABSTRACT

Background: Homicide is one of the leading causes of unnatural deaths. It is considered to be the most serious crime afflicting human kind. **Objectives:** To find out the profile of homicide cases coming to Tertiary Care Centre, different means of method, motives, types of weapon used, different patterns of injuries and cause of death. **Materials And Methods:** A cross sectional study of homicidal deaths (54 cases) was conducted at the Tertiary care hospital, Imphal, Manipur between the period of August 2017 to July 2019. **Results:** Homicidal deaths was 12.71% of total autopsies conducted during the period. Firearm was found to be the most common method of homicide followed by explosives. Most of the victims died on the spot. The commonest cause of death was injury to the vital organs followed by shock and haemorrhages. **Conclusion:** Homicide is one of the worst forms of crime. Firearms were responsible for most of the homicidal deaths.

KEYWORDS

Homicidal, firearms, weapons

INTRODUCTION:

Homicide is defined as killing of one human being by another human being and is one of the leading causes of unnatural deaths¹. It is considered to be the most serious crime afflicting human kind. The incidence of homicide is increasing worldwide and the pattern is also changing because of population explosion, changing lifestyle, modern needs of the man and easy availability of various types of weapons. Everyday the newspapers scream headlines about raising incidence of these most horrific crimes taking place in different parts of country especially in metropolitan cities.

The aim of this study is to improve understanding of criminal violence in Manipur by providing a wealth of information about where homicide occurs and with what intensity, about who is most at risk, why they are at risk, why they are at risk and exactly how their lives are taken from them.

MATERIALS AND METHODS:

The post mortem report of 54 cases of homicidal deaths which were conducted in the Mortuary, JNIMS, Imphal, Manipur during the years 2017-2019 were studied and analysed.

RESULTS:

During the study period, 54(12.71%) cases of homicide autopsies out of total 425 medicolegal autopsies were conducted in the Department of Forensic Medicine and Toxicology, JNIMS, Imphal. It is observed that 20-30 years with 17(31.48%) cases were most commonly 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.2 Shows Gender Distribution Of Homicidal Case With Male Predominance (81.48%).

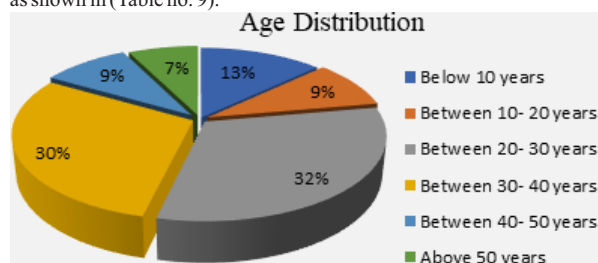
The cause of homicide could not be concluded in majority of case constituting 17(31.48%) of the total cause. 13(24.07%) of the total homicide cases were due to rivalry case followed by encounter 12(22.22%), land disputes 5(9.26%), Sudden emotional outburst 4(7.41%) and love matter with 3(5.56%) cases as shown in (Fig.No.3) The use of firearm was the most common method used for committing homicide which comprised of 26(48.15%), followed by bomb blasts in 10(18.52%), blunt force trauma in 8(14.81%) and 5.56% each in violent asphyxia and sharp force trauma, whereas 4(7.40%) of the total cases where the method of homicide could not be ruled out (Fig. No.4). Most of the victims comprising 28(51.85%) died on the spot and only 4(7.41%) cases lived beyond 6 hours as shown in (Table no.5).

In most of the cases, the victim were found to have history of past rivalry with the assailant i.e 29(53.70%) whereas 14(25.93%) of the victims assailant were not known to victim (Table No. 6)

Out of the organs involved, 27.78% cases had fatal injury only in brains while 31 (57.41%) of the total cases had fatal injury in two or more parts of the body as shown in (Fig. No.7).

Regarding the pattern of injuries observed on the bodies of the victims, it was found that a majority of 57.41% of the victims had fatal injuries at multiple parts of the bodies or multiple organs and the remaining 42.59% of the victims were to have single injury site (Table no.8)

Injury to the vital organs was the most common cause of death in 24(44.44%) cases followed by shock and haemorrhages 17(31.48%) as shown in (Table no. 9).



$\chi^2 = 18.963, d.f. = 4, p = 0.001$.

Fig. No.1: AGE WISE DISTRIBUTION OF CASES:

Table No.2 : Gender Distribution

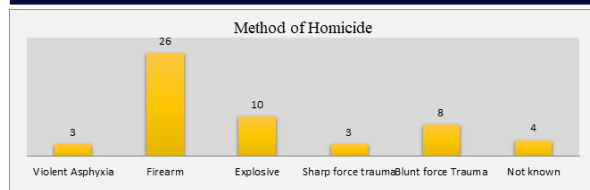
GENDER	TOTAL	PERCENTAGE
Male	44	81.48
Female	10	18.52
	54	100.00

$\chi^2 = 21.407, d.f. = 1, p = 0.000$



$\chi^2 = 18.444, d.f. = 5, p = 0.002$

Fig.No.3 : CAUSE OF HOMICIDE



$\chi^2 = 43.111$, $d.f. = 5$, $p = 0.000$

Fig. No. 4 : METHOD OF HOMICIDE

Table No. 5 : Survival Duration

Survival duration	Total	Percentage
Spot dead	28	51.85
Within 6 hours	7	12.96
6 hours-24 hours	4	7.41
Not known	15	27.78
	54	100.00

$\chi^2 = 25.555$, $d.f. = 3$, $p = 0.000$

Table No. 6: Assailant Victim Relationship

Assailant victim relationship	Total	Percentage
Acquaintance other than rivals	7	12.96
Family members	4	7.41
Rivals	29	53.70
Not known	14	25.93
	54	100.00

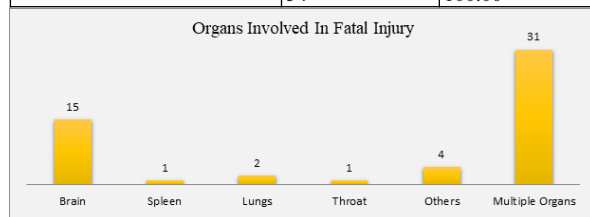


Fig. No. 7 : Organs Involved

Table No. 8: Pattern Of Injuries Causing Death

Pattern of injury	Total	Percentage
Single injury	23	42.59
Multiple injury	31	57.41
	54	100.00

Table No. 9: Cause Of Death

Cause of death	Total	Percentage
Asphyxia	5	9.26
Injury to vital organs	24	44.44
Shock and haemorrhages	17	31.48
ICH	4	7.41
Not known	4	7.41
	54	100.00

DISCUSSION:

The incidence of homicides varies from country to country and in the same country from region to region.

In the present study, which was done from 1st August 2017 to 31st July 2019, 454 Medicolegal autopsies were conducted in JNIMS Mortuary, Imphal of which 54(12.71%) cases constituted homicidal deaths. The finding is consistent with the study done by Murty et al² with 15.1%. Similar studies done in other countries by other workers like Farukh Aziz et al³ with 63.49%, Rekhi T et al⁴ with 21%, found much lower incidence rate. This might be due to implementation of law, effective role of law enforcing agencies, high literacy rate, good economic conditions and cultural values of the population in which the studies were done. This increase in trends of homicide in India over the years could be due to increase in population, industrialization and urbanization superimposed by poverty and animosity.

AGE WISE DISTRIBUTION:

The present study shows that people of all age group were involved. No age group has appeared to be safe from homicides. The 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 al⁵,

Shiva kumar BC et al⁶, Scott K.W.M⁷, Prashant Mada et al⁸, Shailesh Jhaveri et al⁹, Sheikh Mohammad Ilyas et al¹⁰, Padamraj R.Y. et al¹¹, Prajapati Pranav et al¹², Mishra Pradeep K et al¹³ and is in contrast to the observation made by Wahlsten P et al¹⁴ where most of the victims belonged to 31- 40 years, and in study done by Kominato Y et al¹⁵ belonged to 36-45 years Saint Martin P et al¹⁶, 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, status etc and in carrying out the responsibilities, they have to interact quite frequently with other persons.

Gender Distribution:

In the present study male victims (81.48%) outnumbered females (18.52%). The findings are consistent with the findings done by G.Angam et al¹⁷ (86.31%), Shailesh Javeri et al¹⁸ (86.79%), Hilal A et al¹⁹ (83.6%), Meel B²⁰ (82%). Similar observation where male is preponderance to female is also found in the studies done by Hougen H et al²¹, Perry MJ and France²², Ghangale A L et al²³, Scott KWM⁷, Alan fox et al²⁴, Rygol K et al²⁵, studies done by workers in other region like Bhupinder S et al²⁶ (75%), Asad ullah et al²⁷ (67.24%), Bashir MZ et al²⁸ also revealed almost similar findings.

The cause for male predominance may be because they are more involved in outdoor activities, risk taking behaviour, 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.

Cause Of Homicide:

In the present study, the motive is rivalry (24.07%) followed by encounter (22.22%) which can be between police and militants or among militants. Rivalry includes real estate enmity, gang rivalry, terrorists activity, revenge business contracts etc. Money matter or land disputes constitutes 9.26%. Homicides caused due to love matter constitute 5.56% whereas the motive could not be ascertained in 31.48% cases. Vougiouklakis T, Tsiligianni C³¹ supported our observation. Similar observations were made by Gupta et al³² where the main motive were conflicts (23.1%) and revenge (23.1%). Sudden provocation was the main motive for homicide in another study conducted at RIMS, Imphal by Rekhi T et al⁴ which is contrary to the study.

Method Of Homicide:

The victims of homicide due to firearms were maximum with 26(48.15%) cases followed by explosives with 10(18.52%) cases, by blunt force trauma in 8(14.81%) cases, 4(7.41%) cases were not known, sharp force trauma and asphyxia constitutes 5.56% of the total cases. Similar observations were made by Assad Ullah et al²⁷, Arjun Zia Munawar et al³³.

Survival Duration:

Most of the victims died at the spot (51.85%) which is in consistent with the study done by Dr.Hugar BS¹. This could be attributed to the lethality of weapon. 12.96% cases were died within 6 hours, where brought dead also counted and died on the way to hospital. 7.41% cases of the total homicidal cases were hospitalised and died within 24 hours. Whereas survival duration of 27.78% cases could not be known.

The huge number of spot dead cases was found in the present study and it is because as it is contributed mostly by firearm cases where most of the victims die immediately on the spot.

Assailant Victim Relationship:

In most of the cases, the relationship between assailant and victim were found to have rivalry in 29(53.70%) cases where maximum assailants were known to the victim. In 14(25.93%) cases the assailant were unknown to the victims and in 4(7.40%) cases the assailants were their family members. In the study done by Dr. Bisappa s. Hugar et al³⁴, Islam MR and Swapon MR³⁵, BC Shivkumar et al¹ where the homicide offenders were known to the victims which is similar to our findings.

Pattern Of Injury:

The injury pattern in our study was multiple in 57.41% and the cases of

single injury were 42.59%. Similar findings were also seen in study done by Afzal Memon et al³⁶.

Cause Of Death:

The commonest cause of death observed was injury to the vital organs in 24(44.44%) cases followed by shock and haemorrhages with 17(31.48%) cases. Asphyxia contributed in 5(9.26%). Intracranial haemorrhages contributing 4(7.41%) cases of the total cases.

CONCLUSION:

Homicide is one of the worst form of crime. State, society and legal officers should take firm steps to control this heinous crime. Socio-economic wellbeing, removal of poverty and enhanced employment opportunities will also help to check it. Continuous research in this field is the need of hour to frame strategies to counter unlawful human killings.

The present study based on Manipur area has provided a number of revealing information as summarized above regarding the homicidal firearm and explosives deaths, that are certainly going to be of much help to the Forensic pathologists and members of law enforcing agencies in understanding the various epidemiological, motivational, socio-cultural and pathological characteristics of the homicidal firearm and explosive fatalities occurring in this part of the country. Further and more in depth studies using many more parameters over larger series of firearm and explosive deaths are strongly recommended.

Ethical Clearance: Taken

Conflict Of Interest: None

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Contribution Of Authors: We declare that this work was done by author(s) on this article and all liabilities pertaining to claim relating to the content of this article will be borne by the authors.

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