

Profile of Dowry Death Cases Reported for Autopsy in Thoothukudi Medical College - A Retrospective Study

Seethalakshmi.M¹, Rajalakshmi. S.², Rajesh.R³, Vinoth K.V.⁴,

¹Associate Professor; Dept. of Forensic Medicine, Govt. Thirunelveli Medical College, ²Head of the Department I/C, Assistant professor(SS) , Dept. of Criminal Law and Criminal Justice Administration, The Tamilnadu Dr. Ambedkar Law University, ³Professor & HOD, Department Of Forensic Medicine, Govt. Kanyakumari Medical College, ⁴Associate Professor; Dept. Of Forensic Medicine, Govt. Thoothukudi Medical College

Abstract

Violence against women inside the family is a worldwide phenomenon. Violence against women traverses every geographical area, economic layers, education level, age, and employment status. It is seen that in spite of its high education status and all around acclaimed social method of advancement, India is at top position in Dowry Death. United Nation General Assembly in 1993 embraced the Declaration on the Elimination of Violence against Women. All the medicolegal cases brought to an autopsy that is registered under section 304 B IPC are included in this study. Inclusion criteria: Death of married women within 7 years of marriage. A total of 80 cases were analyzed retrospectively. 71(88.75%) cases belong to Hindu religion. 45(56.25%) cases are from urban regions, 40(50%) cases completed high school education, 44 (55%) of the deaths occurred in 2-4 years of marriage, 63(78.75%) cases belong to arranged marriage, 32(40%) cases belonged to nuclear family, 65 (75%)cases belong to the age group 18 to 25 years, 3(3.75%) cases were homicide, Hanging is the most common form of death in this study 44(55%) cases. The government of India has attempted to battle the developing rate of dowry death by instituting different laws to keep such deaths from happening and to punish those responsible when they do happen. Notwithstanding lawful forward leaps, stunning news on dowry deaths kept on appearing in Indian papers.

Keywords: Dowry deaths, Autopsy, Suicide.

Introduction

Violence against women inside the family is a worldwide phenomenon. Anyway its consequences are progressively intricate and its power a lot more noteworthy in India. The most wretched part of such monstrosities is violence at home. Violence against women traverses every geographical area, economic layers, education level, age, and employment status. It is seen that in spite of its high education status and

all around acclaimed social method of advancement, India is at top position in Dowry Death. United Nation General Assembly in 1993 embraced the Declaration on the Elimination of Violence against Women.

Announcement on the Elimination of Violence against Women characterizes violence against women as “any demonstration of gender-based violence that outcomes in, or is probably going to bring about, physical, sexual or mental damage, or enduring to women including dangers of such acts, pressure or self-assertive hardship of freedom; in the case of happening out in the public or private life”. customarily dowry is a onetime payment of ‘streedhan’ in lieu of her share of the family wealth at the time of her marriage (1). As far as access, participation, and prize the status of women in India isn’t equivalent to the status of men.

Corresponding author:

Dr. Vinoth.K.V,

Associate Professor, Department of Forensic Medicine
Kamaraj Nagar, Thoothukudi,
Tamil Nadu -628008,

E mail: drvinothkvacademics@gmail.com

Materials and Methods

All the medicolegal cases brought to an autopsy that is registered under section 304 B IPC in a period between January 2018 to August 2018 included in this study. Inclusion criteria: Death of married women within 7 years of marriage (Section 304 B IPC). Information about the deceased regarding marriage life, occupation, education, was collected from the inquest report, interview with the relatives, cause of death from postmortem certificates. The collected information was filled in the performa and analyzed.

Results and discussion

A total of 80 cases were analyzed retrospectively. With reference to the religion 71(88.75%) cases belong to Hindu religion, this is consistent with other studies^{(3),(4)} 5(6.25%) cases to the Muslim religion and 4(5%) cases belong to Christianity. **Fig: 1.**

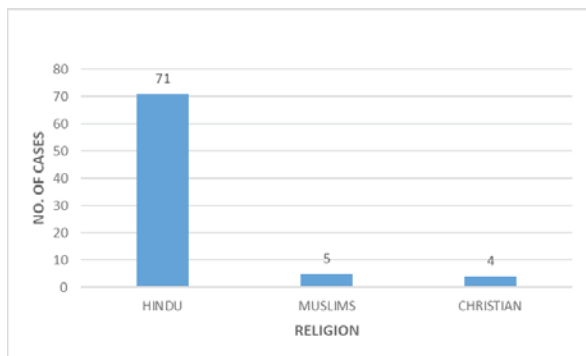


Fig:1. Distribution of religion in the study group

Out of which 45(56.25%) cases are from urban regions, 25(31.25%) from rural areas and 10(12.5%) cases belong to semi-urban areas.

In analyzing educational status among the deceased study population are, 40(50%) cases completed high school education and 25(31.25%) cases completed their degree education., 5(6.25%) cases masters degree and 10(12.50%) cases were illiterate.

Most of the deaths in this study occurred within 2- 4 years of marriage ie- 44 (55%) cases. This is consistent with the study conducted by Rao⁽²⁾ In 1- 2 years after marriage 18(22.5%) cases were noted . This is in contrast with the study conducted by Pankaj verma *et all*⁽⁶⁾, were 45% of cases occurred in this age group. In 4- 7 years after marriage 18 (22.5%) cases were seen. **Fig:2**

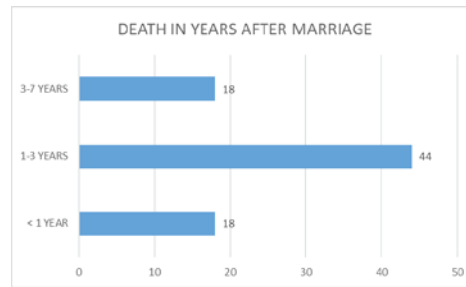


Fig:2: Death occurred –in study group number in years after marriage

In type of marriage 63(78.75%) cases belong to arranged marriage and 17(21.25%) cases love marriage.

Among the deceased 32(40%) cases belonged to nuclear and 48(60%) cases belonged to combined families. 47(58.75%) cases were working and 49 (61.25) cases were housewives and 4(5%) were students.

With reference to the age of the deceased - 65 (75%) cases belong to the age group 18 to 25 years this is consistent with study conducted by Rao⁽²⁾ were 75% of cases were seen in this age group and 17 (21.25%) cases belonged to the age group between 26- 30 years. 3 (3.75%) cases belong to 30 35 years.

In the analysis of the cause of death in the study group, 3(3.75%) cases were homicide. This is in contrast with the study conducted by naresh et all⁽³⁾ in which 16% of cases were homicide - 2 (2.5%)cases died of stab injury to the chest, 1(1.25%) case from ligature strangulation. Hanging is the most common form of death in this study 44(55%) cases. Which is consistent with the study conducted by Rao⁽²⁾ . and in contrast with the study conducted by Kulshrestha⁽⁴⁾ and Zine⁽⁵⁾ . where burns is the leading cause of death. Next to that burns was seen in 17 (21.25%) cases, poisoning in 15 (18.75%) cases, one case train traffic accident. **Fig:3**

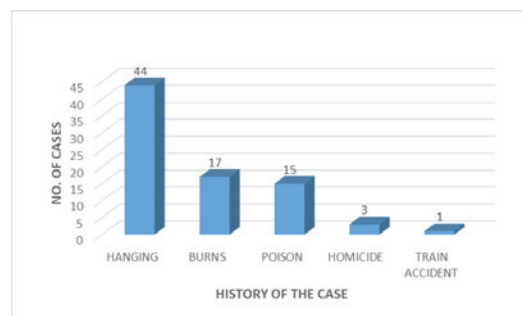


Fig:3. Distribution of cases according to the history of the case

Conclusion

The government of India has attempted to battle the developing rate of dowry death by instituting different laws to keep such deaths from happening and to punish those responsible when they do happen. The government's first effort came out with the Dowry Prohibition Act of 1961. To expand its adequacy, the government has twice revised the Act, in 1984 and 1986. The 1986 revisions require the police and a judicial magistrate to explore each unnatural death of a lady wedded under seven years. At present, the Act forbids the "giving, taking, or demanding of dowry." The Act characterizes "dowry" as property that is given or consented to be given to a newlywed by the other newlywed or either set of guardians "regarding the marriage." Violations of the Act are "punishable with a term of detainment of between a half year and two years, in addition to a fine of up to ten thousand rupees or the estimation of the dowry, whichever is higher. Notwithstanding lawful forward leaps, stunning news on dowry deaths kept on appearing in Indian papers.

Conflict of Interest: Nil

Ethical Clearance: Nil

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