SUMMARY OF CONCLUSIONS

The word 'woman' evokes the thought of giving birth to new life, of tenderness of love and of pursuing a career. It has many definitions mother, friend, wife, daughter, student and a professional. In the fields of economics, politics and society, she plays many roles. There are many examples of women who have excelled in art and literature. However, on the other hand, there are millions of women who are treated as second-class citizen.

The nature and the extent of crime against women may vary according to class, region, culture and the strata of the society across the country. However, it affects women in all age groups. Crime against women in our society and some similarly placed societies in south Asia begin as early as conception — in the act of deliberately selecting the sex of a child. It becomes visible in the early childhood & adulthood itself, when women are often subjected to covert and overt acts of physical and emotional abuse, sexual exploitation and even violence, all of which may not be easy to capture in term of data as such. Incidences are often not reported or, if reported, the cases may not be registered for various reasons.

Women in India continue to suffer from societal discrimination, physical attacks, rape, molestation, abduction, dowry deaths, violence and cruel cultural practices. According to National Crimes Records Bureau the crime report of the year 2005, total crimes against women in India were 1,55,553. Delhi had the highest crime rate of 69.69 against women, where as Nagaland had the lowest crime rate of 3.92 of the total female population.

Women also face discrimination, violence and cruel cultural practices. The National Commission for Women confirmed that witch-hunting was one of the many forms of violence against women in Bihar, Chhatisgarh, Orissa, Rajasthan, Madhya Pradesh and Andhra Pradesh. Often women were accused
of practising witchcraft by their relatives who wanted to seize their properties and they were killed in the name of witch hunting. It is also seen that many a times even the state governments continue to glorify evil practice like Sati. The Rajasthan Tourism Development in its guidebook, Popular Deities of Rajasthan, released on 30 May 2005 glorified Sati and described Rajasthan as “best-known for various Sati Matas” Even in this modern time, one case of Sati was reported from Rajasthan during the year 2005.

The present study is a modest attempt to explore and analyse the spatio-temporal variations of crimes against women in India at district level. The spatial distribution of recorded crimes has been mapped to show the trends of various crimes. The recorded crimes have been calculated with the help of the following formula:

\[ \text{Crime Rate} = CR_i = \frac{CX_i}{TFP_i} \times 100000 \]

Where:
- \( CR_i \) = Rate of Crime 'X' in district/state i.
- \( CX_i \) = Crime 'X' in district/state i.
- \( TFP_i \) = Total Female Population in district/state i.

Further an attempt has been made to explain the relationship between various crime rate and 15 selected demographic indicators at district level. For this multiple correlation and stepwise regression technique with the help of statistical package for social science (SPSS 12.0 version) has been used. Where crime rate is dependent variable and various demographic indicators are independent variables.

It may not be out of place to mention here that there is difficulty of inferring explanations from a real observation. The ecological fallacy (the problem of making inference about individuals from aggregate data) and
geographic inference problem (a number of different area processes may produce the same effect) combine to limit the theoretical insights of area associational analyses.

Basically this study is based on secondary data sources. The Data have been collected from the official reports of the National Crime Research Bureau (NCRB), New Delhi. It is based on the crime reported under various sections of the Indian Penal Code (IPC). The disaggregated data at district level pertaining to crime against women is available only from 1996 onwards. The census publishes data every decade at its beginning year. Hence, crime data of the years 1996 and 2005 may be considered as synchronous with 1991 and 2001 for which data for the same unit (i.e. district) is available. Data for demographic indicators have been taken from the various censes publication of 1991, 2001 and primary census abstract 1 to 12 volumes of 2001, C D of religion 2001. Other sources which have been tapped for useful information and statistics on the problem under review include the National Sample Surveys and Indian Penal Code.

Placed on the wrong side of power and hierarchies, in their homes and workplaces, women often face the brunt of crime. The crimes women face have been increasing. The first six categories of crime against women viz. rape, kidnapping and abduction, dowry deaths, torture, molestation and eve teasing (sexual harassment) for which the data has been collected, constitute 82 and 91 percent for the years 1991 and 2001 respectively, out of the total crimes committed against women. The crime rate was 18.37 for the year 1991 and 29.3 for the year 2001. The number of states above the national average increased from 7 during 1991 to 11 during 2001. Generally, the spatial pattern of crime against women does indicate localization of such crimes as a whole. Madhya Pradesh, Andhra Pradesh and Rajasthan all big states are spatially contiguous and fall in high rate of crime against women. Throughout this
period, the states/union territories of Nagaland, Manipur, Meghalaya, Sikkim, Daman and Diu, Dadra and Nagar Haveli, Goa, Punjab, Bihar and West Bengal remained very much below the national average. It is noticeable that no case of crime against women was ever reported in Lakshadweep during all these years.

Further, the crime rate of Bihar 4.51, 14.37 and 15.14 for the year 1991, 2001, 2005 respectively appear too low to be credible.

The importance of district level analysis lies in the fact that at state level analysis one gets an idea of various crimes against women. However, there may be considerable variations across the districts within the state. Even a state with a low average may have districts with higher crime rate against women and vice-versa. For example, in Bihar at state level, the rape rate is 3.53 i.e. below the national average, whereas district Gumla of Bihar has 17.10 rape rate. Similarly, in Madhya Pradesh at state level the rape rate is 10.23 i.e. above the national average, whereas district Sidhi of Madhya Pradesh has a crime rate of 2.43, below the national average of 3.68 for the year 1996.

What emerges out of district level analysis is that there are very clear spatial patterns. There are two categories, high and very high crime rate districts. Most often high crime rate districts griddle around the very high crime rate districts. In general the identified contiguous regions are roughly centered in Madhya Pradesh. There are significant number of districts recording no crime against women at all in specific categories. Certain types of crimes against women may be more or less absent in some areas for example, no case is reported of dowry deaths from Sikkim, Arunachal Pradesh, Nagaland, Manipur, Mizoram, Lakshadweep, Andaman & Nicobar Islands. But of the 37 districts of Bihar, 02 have no record of dowry deaths, 05 no case of molestation, 30 free of sexual harassment and two are without cases of cruelty at home. Bihar emerges as a state with remarkable low rates of crimes against women. This does not conform to the general impression one has about the
state. In all likelihood, the prevalence of districts without records of crime against women represents underreporting.

Most crimes against women go unreported because of attached social stigma, distrust in legal mechanism, fear of retaliation and so on. Institutional indifference makes matters worse.

The decadal change from 1991 to 2001 reveals that the total cognizable crime under IPC has increased by 5.42 percent whereas the total crime against women during the same period increased by 94.07 percent.

Further, it is important to mention that in the year 2005, Delhi showed a drastic increase in crime rate (69.69) against the national average of 31.33 and hence stood at the top in terms of crime against women.

In India, one can see alarming statistics of rape victims especially in Mizoram, Arunachal Pradesh and Madhya Pradesh. Even in 1991 the rape rate in these states was much higher than the national average for 2001.

In 2001 four states namely Jammu and Kashmir, Haryana, Orissa, Kerela were added to the list of states having a crime rate more than the national average but a reverse trend was experienced in Goa, Pondicherry and Meghalaya, which were above the national average in 1991 but stepped down and came below the national average for the year 2001. Further the rape rate in Bihar and Uttar Pradesh appears too low to be credible. In all likelihood these states are the examples of underreporting of rape cases.

Except for few, maximum number of districts of Madhya Pradesh fall into the high rape rate group. Further the district East Siang (Arunachal Pradesh) remained on the top in rape rate for both the reference years. It is noticeable that the districts in the States of Goa and Gujarat for both reference years remained below the national average.
The decadal change from 1991 to 2001 reveals that the rape cases have increased by 64.15 percent in 2001 over 1991, whereas the total crimes against women in India during the same period increased by 94.07 percent.

For the year 1991, 2001 maximum rape victims were found in the age group of 10 to 30 years. A sharp increase in the rape victims in the age group of 10 to 30 and above 30 years of age is witnessed. The statistics reveal that the child rape below 10 years came down considerably in the two reference years. However, statistics of 2005 reveal that from 2001 to 2005 there was an increase of 5.09 percent in the incidences of child rape (below 10 years).

It is important to mention that in the year 2005, Delhi was found to be on top, among states in order of crime rate. These increasing statistics in rape cases is matter of great concern keeping in mind that it is greatly underreported because of social stigma attached to it. Statistics are likely to under estimate the problem because the large number of cases being incest.

In India, in both the reference years, Delhi heads the list with a very high rate of kidnapping & abduction of women and girls. This is mostly a northern/north western and north eastern Indian phenomenon, Jammu & Kashmir, Himachal Pradesh, Haryana, Delhi, Chandigarh, Uttar Pradesh, Rajasthan and Gujarat, on one side; Arunachal Pradesh, Assam, Manipur on the other side of the country figure prominently high in this form of crime. The States with low rate of Kidnapping & Abduction of women and girls seem to have different locations of concentration.

Out of the 15 districts which constituted around 15 percent of cases of Kidnapping and abduction of women and girls in India maximum number of the districts were in Rajasthan in 1996 and Delhi in 2005. Further the rate of this crime was maximum in Bhilwara (Rajasthan) and north west Delhi (Delhi) in both the reference years respectively.

It is noticeable that all the districts of Goa, Andaman & Nicobar Island,
Pondicherry and Kerela registered lower Kidnapping and abduction of women and girls rate. No incidence of this crime was reported in Lakshadweep.

The decadal change from 1991 to 2001 reveals that Kidnapping and abduction of women and girls cases have increased 19.07 percent in 2001 over 1991.

The 2005, statistics reveal that Delhi which is an important national hub of international connections was found be on the top in order of the crime with a very high crime rate of 17.72 against the national average of 3.17.

In India, the spatial concentration of heinous crime of dowry death is mostly in the northern and central parts of India. States with low rates of dowry death are spatially dispersed. The north eastern states with no dowry deaths rate exhibit a spatial contiguity.

The district level study is important because using district level data crime prone areas can be identified and appropriate crime prevention strategies can be devised at micro level. In both the reference years maximum number of districts of the states of Uttar Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh registered higher rate of dowry deaths whereas the districts of Himachal Pradesh, Meghalaya, Pondicherry, Kerela and Goa had lower dowry death rates.

The decadal change from 1991 to 2001 reveals that the incidences of dowry deaths have increased by 32.85 percent. Increasing rate of dowry deaths is coming up as an alarming problem mostly in the northern and central India. It shows the inadequacy of measures adopted at various levels to help women. There is an urgent need to enforce and implement gender sensitive policies, to change the societal attitude towards women, thus changing their gender roles and relations. This is an uphill task but the one on which the future of one half of human race depends.

The increasing trend in cases of molestation can be attributed to the changing role of women in terms of active and dynamic participation in the social life such as playing leading roles in politics, education and other
Spatial pattern of molestation rate shows that this crime is concentrated in Madhya Pradesh and spreads out in Rajasthan, Maharashtra. The contiguity extends further in several southern states (Tamil Nadu, Kerela, Andhra Pradesh). The states with low rate of molestation indicate localization of this crime in the states of Bihar, West Bengal, Nagaland, Manipur, Meghalaya. The low rate of molestation in West Bengal may be real but the rate of Bihar may be due to non/under reporting of incidences. These regional patterns are perceptible at district level as well. The decadal change from 1991 to 2001 reveals that molestation has increased by 65.56 per cent in 2001 over 1991.

The unfortunate trend of increasing women victimization of molestation warrants a serious effort to curb this menace. Further many times in the crime of molestation, cases are withdrawn due to subsequent understanding between the parties involved on grounds of attracting social stigma and thus jeopardizing the social status of the concerned family.

In India, the pattern of sexual harassment shows that apart from northern India, south eastern India, the crime rate of sexual harassment has also increased in central India. The state with low rate of sexual harassment indicate localization of this crime in three main strips across the map of India (north-western, north-eastern and south-western parts of India)

Further, at district level, there has been an increase in the concentration of high sexual harassment rate districts in northern and central India. An alarming increase in number of districts from 6 to 13 is noticed in Haryana.

The decadal change from 1991 to 2001 shows that the incidences of sexual harassment have decreased marginally, whereas the total crime against women during the same period increased by 94.07 per cent. There has been an upward trend in the cases of sexual harassment from the year 1991 to 1993. However, a sharp decline in the number of such cases is noticeable in the later periods. The reason behind this decline is that till 1993, sexual harassment
cases under section 509 of the IPC used to be referred as eve-teasing, but from 1994 cases of eve-teasing and sexual harassment have been listed separately. Again, there has been an upward trend in the cases from 1995 to 2000, but a decline in such cases is noticeable in the year 2001.

Low proportion of sexual harassment cases most probably signifies the reluctance of victims to report these crimes due to social stigma and complications bound to arise - in the family and the social setting- from registration of such offences. Also it is not easy to establish such cases prime facie.

In India, spatially, the major areas of crime of torture/cruelty does indicate localization of this crime as whole. Rajasthan, Gujarat, Maharashtra, Madhya Pradesh, Andhra Pradesh all big states are spatially contiguous and fall in the high crime rate of torture group. Likewise the states with low incidences of torture also exhibit a spatial contiguity especially in the north eastern region of India.

At district level, maximum number of districts of Rajasthan, Gujarat, Haryana, Maharashtra, Andhra Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh, state seem to be specializing in this form of crime. Together these districts account for 50 percent of cruelty at home. Pondicherry, Andaman & Nicobar islands, Goa, Manipur remained below the national average.

The alarming increase in crime of torture is a matter of great concern. One of the most significant problems faced by survivors of cruelty/torture is the inability of the prosecution to prove the same. The requirement of being able to prove physical or mental cruelty “beyond reasonable doubt” (a requirement of criminal law) when such cruelty takes place within the confines of the home is extremely difficult to prove.

Although the analysis most pertinent to the main objectives of the study are multiple correlation and stepwise regression analysis yet the descriptive
statistics have been worked out to see the distributions of scores on various measures.

The correlation among all the possible pairs of the variables included in the study was computed by applying Pearson’s product moment method of correlation. The value of ‘r’ lies between +1 to -1. Positive value of r indicates positive correlation between the two variables (i.e. changes in both variables take place in the same direction), whereas negative value of ‘r’ indicate negative correlation i.e. changes in the two variables take place in the opposite direction. A zero value of ‘r’ indicates that there is no association between the two variables.

Among all the districts, majority of the districts reported the crime of rape followed by molestation, kidnapping and abduction of women & girls, dowry deaths, torture/cruelty by husband or his relatives and sexual harassment in India for referred years. It is important to note here that in all types of crime categories except kidnapping and abduction of women & girls, coefficient of variation has decreased. In other words variability has increased only in the crime of kidnapping & abduction.

Analysis of correlations shows that the positive and significant relationship between rape and kidnapping and abduction of women & girls, molestation and sexual harassment is reasonably strong. Similarly, there is a strong relationship between torture and dowry deaths during both the years 1996, 2005. In fact, the former usually precedes the latter.

In both the study periods multiple step-wise regression analysis indicates that percentage of female cultivators and percentage of female scheduled tribe population are positive, however, sex ratio is negative contributing predictors of rape rate in India. It means rape rate has increased in the districts which are having high percentage of female cultivators and percentage of female scheduled tribe population in India. This is because this section (Dalit/scheduled tribe) of society is weaker and easily becomes the
victim of rapist. However, districts which are having high sex ratio, the crime of rape always tends to decline. In central and western parts of the country the maximum districts of Andhra Pradesh and Madhya Pradesh rape rate is found the highest.

The percentage of female agricultural workers and sex ratio are negative and significant contributing predictors of kidnapping and abduction of women & girls in India. It means this crime has been increased in those districts which are having low percentage of female agricultural workers and sex ratio. Districts of Rajasthan, Arunachal Pradesh, Delhi are being the example. North-western and eastern parts of the country are prominently in this form of crimes against women.

The percentage of female scheduled caste population and average size of households are positive but sex ratio and percentage of total female workers are negative and significant contributing predictors of dowry deaths in India. It means that rate of dowry deaths has been increased in those districts which are having high percentage of female scheduled caste population, average size of households and low sex ratio and percentage of total female workers in India. The saving grace is that the dowry death rates are sharply lower in the districts with higher levels of total workers among women. This finding is in conformity with extensive micro level observations available in the literature on gender. Some districts of Uttar Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh and Bihar are the examples. As is well known the spatial concentration of this heinous crime is in the northern parts of India.

Rape, molestation and sexual harassment seem to go hand in hand. The concentration of high sexual harassment rate districts move a little more downward on the map compared to that of rape and molestation. Maharashtra districts join in larger number of this group, along with Andhra Pradesh and Tamil Nadu. Together with Madhya Pradesh, they constitute two/third of the districts with high rate of sexual harassment.
The percentage of female hindu population (which may be a case of ecological fallacy) and percentage of urban female population are positive and significant contributing predictors of torture/cruelty by husband or his relatives in India. It means torture/cruelty by husband or his relatives has increased in those districts which are having highest percentage of female Hindu population and percentage of urban female population due to awareness, urbanization and westernization in India. Some districts of Rajasthan, Maharashtra and Andhra Pradesh stand at the top in this crime rate.

Cruelty at home constitutes a large share in the aggregate of crime against women. Northern and western parts of the country account high rate of cruelty at home. It is noticeable that the personal offences and fraud were found to be the function of areas with high rate of growth of urbanization. However, it should be noted that association does not imply casual relationship.

The percentage of female urban population and percentage of Hindu female population is positive and significant predictors. However, sex ratio is negative and significant contributing predictors of total crimes against women in India. It means that the crime rate against women has increased in those districts which are having high percentage of female Hindu population (which may be a case of ecological fallacy), percentage of urban female population and low sex ratio in India. Most of the districts of Rajasthan, Madhya Pradesh, and Andhra Pradesh fall in top crime rate against women in India.

The overall results of the study are that the northern, central and western parts of the country are having higher rate of crime against women. It is to note that in these areas of the country the position of women in the society is low.

It is usually said that female is enemy of female. A close analysis of different crime reports appearing in national dailies or real crime stories reveals that behind almost every crime against women, involvement of woman is found. It is particularly seen in the cases of dowry death and torture/cruelty by husband or his relatives in India.
The decadal change shows that the cases of female arrests have increased in all types of crime categories (accept kidnapping and abduction of women & girls). It is pity as females are involved in crime against their own sex...

Throughout history, whatever women did they had to do it twice as well as men to be thought half as good. The discrimination against women resulted in recognition of the need for conscious intervention to bring gender equity and empowerment of women. In the light of the same the United Nations declared 1975 as the International Year of Women. India also actively participated in the quest for gender equality through implementation of constitutional provision and supportive framework of rules and procedures.

Despite the provision it is observed that the incidences of crime against women in 2001 reported an increase of 94.07 percent over 1991, whereas in the total IPC crimes there was an increase of only 5.42 percent during the same period. Only enactment of provisions is not enough, it is the duty of administration to make women aware of their rights and must work hard for implementing the legislations and providing them better administrative policies.

Crime against women needs a coordinated and systematic response from the justice system. While Sec. 498 A has been one of the most significant criminal law reforms protecting women but we need to remember that criminal law is indeed a blunt tool, as it is very likely that the police may not comply with law and not implement it effectively. The recently approved domestic violence bill, June 23, 2005 is significant in this context.

Geographic research has focused mainly on the criminal or the crime and much less frequently the judicial system. Little attention has been given to social control or to the operation of the criminal justice system on the
development or configuration of crime patterns. There is a need for a systematic consideration of the impact of legal and other social control measures on crime patterns. The social processes underlying crime patterns (including the process of control) are of key explanatory significance. This significance remains largely untested in the Indian geographic literature and need to be plugged through more research and findings.