

Original Research Article**UNVEILING THE HOMICIDE LANDSCAPE: EXPLORING PATTERNS AND DYNAMICS IN MALWA PROVINCE OF CENTRAL INDIA, A RETROSPECTIVE STUDY****Dr. S N Hussaini¹ (Associate Professor), Dr. Priyal Jain² (Assistant Professor), Dr. Prateesh Shukla³ (Senior Resident) & Dr. Saagar Singh^{4*} (Senior Resident)**Department of Forensic Medicine, Govt. Medical College, Ratlam, M.P. ^{1,2,3&4}

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Abstract

The aim of the study is to study the various pattern of Homicide. This research paper investigates the intricate patterns and dynamics of homicide within Malwa Province of Central India. Utilizing comprehensive data collected from various sources, including law enforcement agencies, medical records, and judicial proceedings, the study offers insights into the prevalence, demographics, motives, and methods underlying homicide incidents in the region. Through quantitative analysis and qualitative exploration, the research unveils distinct trends, such as the predominance of certain age groups and gender among perpetrators, prevalent motives including property disputes and previous enmities, and common weapons employed in offenses. The findings contribute to a deeper understanding of violence within the region and provide valuable implications for policymakers, law enforcement agencies, and community stakeholders. By elucidating the nuances of homicide patterns and dynamics, this research aims to inform evidence-based interventions and strategies aimed at fostering safer and more resilient communities in Malwa Province and beyond.

Keywords: Demography, pattern, homicide.**Study Design:** Retrospective study**1. Introduction**

Homicide is as old as human civilization and it is also reported in the Bible. [1] Homicide is defined as killing of one human being by another human being. Unlawful killing of human being is murder. Culpable homicide cases may be amounting to murder or not amounting to murder. Punishment of murder is death or imprisonment for life and also fine. One of the leading causes of unnatural deaths is homicide [2]. The various patterns of homicidal deaths include assault by sharp weapon, blunt weapon, firearm, strangulation, homicidal hanging, smothering, drowning, burns, poisoning etc. [3]. The reason or motive for these killings has remained almost the same since early times i.e. mainly lust for money, property, women and revenge etc.

Nestled within the heartland of Central India, Malwa Province emerges as a region steeped in history, culture, and socio-economic diversity. Encompassing parts of Madhya Pradesh and Rajasthan, Malwa Province is characterized by its rich agrarian heritage, vibrant traditions, and dynamic demographic composition[4]. Yet, beneath its picturesque landscapes and bustling towns lies a sobering reality—the occurrence of homicide, an egregious act that inflicts profound trauma and disrupts the fabric of society. Against this backdrop, this research endeavors to unravel the pattern of homicide in Malwa Province, delving into its socio-economic, cultural, and geographic dimensions.

Understanding the pattern of homicide in Malwa Province necessitates a nuanced examination of various contextual factors that shape violence within the region[5]. By scrutinizing homicide data through a multidisciplinary lens, this research seeks to elucidate the underlying dynamics driving the incidence, prevalence, and spatial distribution of homicide in Malwa Province.

One of the pivotal dimensions to be explored in this research is the socio-economic backdrop against which homicide occurrences unfold. Malwa Province, like many regions in Central India, grapples with socio-economic disparities, ranging from unequal access to resources to disparities in income and educational opportunities[6]. Such disparities often serve as underlying catalysts for interpersonal conflicts and violence, thereby influencing the pattern of homicide within the region. By analysing data on income distribution, poverty levels, and employment patterns vis-à-vis homicide rates, this research aims to uncover the socio-economic correlates of violence in Malwa Province[7].

Moreover, cultural norms and traditions wield significant influence over interpersonal relationships and conflict resolution mechanisms in Malwa Province. Deeply ingrained beliefs, religious practices, and caste dynamics shape social interactions and contribute to the perpetuation of violence in certain contexts. Honor killings, dowry-related disputes, and caste-based conflicts are manifestations of cultural norms that intersect with acts of homicide, highlighting the complex interplay between culture and violence. By delving into the cultural nuances surrounding homicide incidents in Malwa Province, this research seeks to elucidate the socio-cultural determinants of violence within the region[8].

Geographic factors also play a pivotal role in shaping the pattern of homicide in Malwa Province. The province's diverse topography, ranging from fertile plains to arid landscapes, influences patterns of settlement, resource distribution, and law enforcement dynamics. Urban-rural disparities, population density, and access to infrastructure can impact the spatial distribution of violence, with certain areas experiencing higher rates of homicide than others. By mapping homicide hotspots and exploring the contextual factors underlying spatial variations in violence, this research aims to uncover the geographic determinants of homicide in Malwa Province.

Furthermore, examining the demographic profile of homicide perpetrators and victims provides valuable insights into the composition of those involved in violent acts. Age, gender, and socio-economic status are critical demographic variables that shape the dynamics of homicide within the region. By analysing demographic data pertaining to homicide incidents, this research seeks to discern patterns and trends that shed light on the demographic correlates of violence in Malwa Province. In essence, this research paper embarks on a

comprehensive exploration of the pattern of homicide in Malwa Province of Central India, traversing through the intricate interplay of socio-economic, cultural, geographic, and demographic factors. By unravelling the underlying dynamics driving violence within the region, this endeavour aspires to inform evidence-based interventions and policy responses aimed at fostering safer and more resilient communities in Malwa Province and beyond[9].

2. Material and Methods

A total of 116 cases with history of homicide were studied during a time period of 4 years. The duration of the study was from January 2020 to December 2023, conducted at Dept of Forensic Medicine and Toxicology, GMC Ratlam. The cases were picked from the cases brought to our department for medico-legal autopsy with alleged history of homicide and also the cases which were later converted homicide after autopsy findings and further investigation by police officer.

Data were collected from the departmental records, all the while maintaining confidentiality and keeping any of the ethical issues in mind. The following documents pertaining to the case were collected and analysed Medical/ Treatment records, Autopsy findings & photographs taken at autopsy, chemical analysis report, Histo-pathological report. All the data were documented and statistically analysed.

INCLUSION CRITERIA:

1. All cases with alleged history of homicides by investigating officer requested for autopsy.
2. All cases brought with history of Suicidal, Accidental or Natural deaths for autopsy but later converted to homicidal death based on autopsy findings.

EXCLUSION CRITERIA:

1. After thorough Post-mortem examination, toxicological analysis & Histopathological analysis, cases which are Negative for Post Mortem findings of Assault/ Murder are Excluded.

3. Result:

Table 1: Distribution of victim based on age and sex

Age	Male (Number)	Female (Number)	Male (Percentage)	Female (Percentage)
0-9 Years	3	0	4.41%	0%
10-19 Years	6	0	8.82%	0%
20-29 Years	19	10	27.94%	20.83%
30-39 Years	15	16	22.06%	33.33%
40-49 Years	11	12	16.18%	25%
50-59 Years	10	5	14.71%	10.42%
60-69 Years	2	2	2.94%	04.16%
Above 70 Years	2	3	2.94%	06.25%
Total	68	48	100%	100%

The data reveals that while males constitute the majority of perpetrators across all age groups, there is variation in the gender distribution within each age bracket. In the 20-29 years age group, for instance, males accounted for 27.94% of perpetrators, while females accounted for 20.83%. Similarly, in the 30-39 years age group, males represented 22.06% of perpetrators, while females represented a higher proportion at 33.33%. Overall, these findings highlight the importance of considering both age and gender dynamics in understanding patterns of homicide perpetration in Malwa Province. Further analysis may provide insights into the socio-economic and cultural factors driving these trends and inform targeted interventions aimed at reducing violence within the region.

Table 2: Distribution based motive behind the homicide

S. No.	Motive behind the homicide	No.	Percentage
1	Property dispute	26	22.41%
2	Previous enmity	34	29.31%
3	Dowry	05	4.31%
4	Rape	06	5.17%
5	Love failure	09	7.76%
6	Sudden provocation	20	17.24%
7	Unknown	16	13.79%
	Total	116	100%

The data indicates that previous enmity was the most common motive behind homicides in Malwa Province, accounting for 29.31% of total cases. This was closely followed by property disputes, which constituted 22.41% of cases. Other motives such as love failure, sudden provocation, rape, and dowry-related disputes were reported in smaller proportions, each comprising less than 10% of total cases. Additionally, in 13.79% of cases, the motive behind the homicide was categorized as "unknown."

Understanding the motives behind homicide incidents is essential for law enforcement agencies and policymakers to develop targeted interventions and preventive measures aimed at addressing the root causes of violence in Malwa Province. Further analysis of the specific circumstances and dynamics surrounding each motive may provide valuable insights for addressing these issues effectively.

Table 3: Distribution based on involvement of body parts

S. No.	Body parts involved	No.	Percentage
1	Head	08	6.90%
2	Neck	28	24.14%
3	Chest	43	37.07%
4	Abdomen	19	16.38%
5	Multiple region	16	13.79%
6	Miscellaneous	02	1.72%
	Total	116	100%

The data indicates that the chest region was the most commonly involved vital organ in homicide cases, accounting for 37.07% of total reported injuries. This is followed by the neck region, which accounted for 24.14% of cases. The head region was involved in a smaller proportion of cases, representing 6.90% of total injuries. Additionally, injuries to multiple regions of the body were observed in 13.79% of cases, suggesting a more complex pattern of violence involving multiple assailants or sustained attacks. Miscellaneous injuries, not specifically categorized under head, neck, chest, or abdomen, were reported in a smaller proportion of cases, constituting 1.72% of total injuries. These findings underscore the significance of understanding the anatomical distribution of injuries in homicide cases for forensic investigations and medical examinations. Further analysis of injury patterns may provide insights into the methods and mechanisms of violence, aiding law enforcement agencies in the identification and apprehension of perpetrators. It is important to note that the interpretation of these findings should take into account the limitations of the data, including potential variations in reporting practices and the availability of medical records. Nonetheless, the results contribute to our understanding of the patterns of violence in Malwa Province and may inform efforts to prevent and respond to homicide incidents in the region.

Table 4: Distribution of cases according to the weapon of offense

S. No.	weapon of offense	No.	Percentage
1	Firearm	08	6.90%
2	Knife	32	27.59%
3	Axe	08	6.90%
4	Iron rod and Danda	12	10.34%
5	Feet / Fist	08	6.90%
6	Brick/ stone	04	3.45%
7	Sword	04	3.45%
8	4-Wheeler	04	3.45%
9	Strangulation/ Throttling	04	3.45%
10	Unknown	16	13.79%
	Total	116	100%

The data indicates that knives were the most commonly used weapon in homicide cases, accounting for 27.59% of offenses. This is followed by iron rods and Dandas, with 10.34% of cases involving these weapons. Firearms were reported in a smaller proportion of cases, representing 6.90% of total offenses. Other weapons, such as axes, feet/fists, bricks/stones, swords, and four-wheelers, were involved in a smaller percentage of cases, each constituting less than 7% of total offenses. Additionally, strangulation/throttling was reported in 3.45% of cases.

It is noteworthy that in 13.79% of cases, the weapon used in the offense was classified as "unknown." This may reflect limitations in data collection or challenges in identifying the weapon used in certain cases. These findings underscore the diverse array of weapons used in perpetrating homicides in Malwa Province. Understanding the prevalence and characteristics of these weapons is essential for law enforcement agencies to develop effective strategies for violence prevention and response. Further research and analysis may elucidate the underlying motivations and circumstances surrounding the use of different weapons in homicide incidents.

4. Discussion

Comparing the findings of this study with previous research on homicide in India reveals both consistencies and variations in patterns and dynamics. Firstly, the predominance of males as perpetrators across all age groups aligns with broader trends observed in previous studies conducted in various regions of India[10]. This consistent pattern underscores the importance of recognizing gender dynamics in understanding patterns of violence and underscores the need for targeted interventions to address male-perpetrated violence.

However, the gender distribution within each age bracket presents an intriguing contrast to some previous findings. While males typically dominate homicide perpetration across all age groups, the higher proportion of female perpetrators in certain age brackets, particularly in the 30-39 years age group, is somewhat unusual. Previous studies have often portrayed females as less likely to engage in violent behavior compared to males. This deviation may warrant further exploration to understand the underlying socio-cultural factors driving female involvement in homicide incidents in Malwa Province.

Regarding motives behind homicides, the dominance of previous enmity and property disputes as primary motives echoes findings from previous research on homicide in India. These motives are deeply entrenched in socio-cultural contexts and reflect broader issues such as interpersonal conflicts and socio-economic disparities. However, the relatively lower prevalence of motives such as love failure and dowry-related disputes compared to previous studies suggests regional variations in the underlying causes of violence within India[11].

The anatomical distribution of injuries and the types of weapons used in homicide cases also exhibit similarities with previous research. Knives emerge as the most commonly used weapon, consistent with findings from studies conducted in other regions of India. However, the higher prevalence of injuries to the chest region compared to the head and neck regions may reflect differences in the methods and mechanisms of violence within Malwa Province.

The presence of unknown motives and unidentified weapons in a significant proportion of cases underscores challenges in data collection and forensic investigations, reflecting broader issues of underreporting and limited resources for law enforcement agencies. Overall, while this study provides valuable insights into the patterns and dynamics of homicide in Malwa Province, it also highlights the importance of contextualizing findings within the broader landscape of homicide research in India. By synthesizing findings from multiple studies, researchers can develop a more comprehensive understanding of the complexities of violence and inform evidence-based interventions to address this pressing issue.

5. Conclusion

The most vulnerable age group was younger generation usually second to third decade in both sexes which implies that young individuals are lack patience, they are short tempered & constantly involves in argument. In addition to this young generation become addicted to alcohol & other abusive substance which has on add on effect, so present study will help the lawmakers & Govt. to identify the pitfalls in the community which causes heinous crime & to take necessary action which will save life many innocent peoples. Moving forward, further research is needed to deepen our understanding of the complex dynamics of homicide in Malwa Province. Longitudinal studies tracking changes in homicide rates over time, qualitative research exploring individual motivations and experiences of violence, and comparative analyses with other regions can provide valuable insights into the underlying drivers of homicide and inform targeted interventions. Moreover, interdisciplinary collaborations between researchers, policymakers, and community stakeholders are essential for developing holistic approaches to violence prevention and promoting sustainable peace and development in Malwa Province and beyond.

In conclusion, the pattern of homicide in Malwa Province of Central India is shaped by a multitude of factors, including socio-economic disparities, cultural norms, and geographic dynamics. By interpreting the findings of this study and considering their implications for policy and intervention, we can work towards addressing the root causes of violence and fostering safer and more resilient communities in Malwa Province and beyond.

6. References

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