

An analysis of approach of people towards sexual offenders in India

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1. Abstract

Purpose – The main purpose of the research is to scale down the perception of the community towards sex offenders in India from the perspective of few factors like social isolation, deviance, punitive attitude and deterrence. This study aims to validate this perception of community.

Design/methodology/approach – literature review, questionnaire with 5 variables along with 5 point Likert scale then hypothesis testing has been done. SPSS and Amos have been used for the same. A systematic questionnaire has been divided into 5 sections. Total 293 responses have been collected through google form.

Findings – The result of this research has opined that social isolation, deviance and punitive attitude are the main aspects of the perception of the community towards the sex offenders. This research has invalidated the deterrence aspect in the perception of the community with respect to the sex offenders.

Research limitations/implications – This research is limited to the participants who can be accessed through online platforms only. Offline research will yield more positive research with greater sample size.

Originality/value – considering the available literature, this research is the first, to the best knowledge of the author, study with this regard in India to deal with the scaling down the perception of people towards sex offender.

Keywords – Community attitude towards sex offender, CATSO, Social isolation, Deviance, Punitive attitude, Deterrence

Paper type Research paper

1. Introduction

Many researches have already been carried out to test the approach or attitude towards sexual offenders but still there is no unanimity among the researchers about how that attitude should be defined (Ferguson & Ireland, 2006). In Britain the attitude of British people which is called as a punitive attitude, has played a very powerful role that lead for overcrowding of prison. It has set a tone for policies required to prevent a crime. (Gerber and Jackson, 2013 and Palasanski and Neil, 2016) Generally after conviction concerned culprits face various unforeseen repercussions like social isolation and harassment. Mostly it has been observed by Klein et al (2020) that people's mindset is not well informed and mostly they connect emotionally with the concerned incident. Wills et al. (2010) opined that emotionally driven and uninformed public responses relating to sex offenders severely damage the process of criminal justice administration. Similar study has also been conducted on the Chinese mindset. Even though very less information is available on the mind set of Chinese population towards sexual offenders, Chui et al. (2013) found Chinese female population is in favor of having very strict punishments to sexual offenders. While dealing with the same issue, Shelton et al. (2012), that CATSO scale is not much useful to assess the community attitude with this regard as the variables as they found social isolation, capacity to change and deviancy matching with the factor construct found by Church et al. (2008) but the same was not possible with the factor of dangerousness.

Not only a common man but even public authorities are harsher towards the sexual offenders if they are young. As they grow older they become more positive towards sexual offenders. Attitude of these police officers depends upon the various factors like age, experience etc. (Cunha and Goncalves, 2016). Even

Kewley (2016) has similar observation where the need for having balanced application of assessment and management of these culprits was reiterated to improve a climate punishment and to reduce the probability of social boycott. Vignette study has been carried out by Higgins and Ireland (2009) on forensic staff, prison officers and the general public in Northern Ireland, where it was found that forensic staff and females were comparatively more hopeful to sexual offenders; prison officers were more negative towards them; males expressed very harsh attitude towards these culprits. Even though the findings are not beyond 12 months, still Craig et al. (2012) did not find any reconviction rate in the already convicted sexual offender, may be on account of community based treatment program specifically designed for sexual offenders with limited intellect. However Dealey, (2020) stressed the need for holistic approach towards the sexual offenders to experience the reform in their behavior. A very interesting study has been carried out by Mellor and Duff (2019), where they identified that general public does not have a favorable view towards a sex offenders having access to pornographic content than a mere violent or an innocent person. There are certain jurisdictions, in the globe, where the adolescents, who engage themselves in sexual intercourse with the underage partner, should be charged as a rapist. Mohammad and Nooraini, (2020) have studied this attitude and found it more suitable and stressed the need for having comprehensive and systematic sex education. Along with this, human dignity of an offender has also been discussed by Gur-Arye (2012)

where irrespective of societal attitude the need for protection of human dignity of an offender was considered. However, Palasinski and Shortland, (2017) have right wing authoritarianism favors harsher punishment for sexual offenders. Importance of Moral conversations with the offenders are also considered as an important tool to enable the thinking process of offenders to modify the offending behavior of offenders in the right direction Manders (2015). Even the attitude towards the legal system matters a lot. After the study of almost 7 years Fine and Cauffman (2015) came to the conclusion that race, color matters

a lot as black people doesn't believe a system as a most legitimate. When the similar study was conducted in entirely British context by Harper (2014), one of the conclusion of their research work was the need for reintroduction of death penalty for sexual offenders. Belief in a just world and gender were also held to be contributory factors for expressing the need for harsher punitive approach.

The study the researcher wants to do here is to address the attitude towards different sexual offenders using students and faculties population. The study has an aim to explore the influence of media, judicial system, politics etc. on the minds of youth to consider their attitude towards the sexual offenders. There has been difference of opinions as far as which approach towards the sexual offenders should be considered by the legal system to regulate the treatment for these sexual offenders.

Objective of this research:

1. To review the findings of the research on the attitude of the people towards sexual offences
2. To suggest concrete steps to improve criminal justice administration

In this paper researcher has planned to do literature review first to identify the gap to tackle the issues of approaches towards sexual offenders in better manner. Literature review has been done from the perspectives of social isolation, punitive attitude, deviance as well as deterrence. Hypothesis has been included in the literature review itself. 3rd section deals with research methodology. Result analysis has been included in the 4th section followed by the discussion and implications. Section 6 deals with the limitation of the study along with the future scope of the study.

2. Literature Review

2.1 Social Isolation

When the study was conducted on the perspective of the partners of sex offenders then it was observed that, just not with respect to the sex offender, in fact, anyone specifically a woman living with the sexual offender is also not considered as a trusted one (Marten et al. 2020). It has also been observed that, the issue of social isolation is only with respect to the sex offenders. Generally, people do not feel safe with their association and many a times feel to be isolated from them but they do not feel the same with reference to the officers dedicated for risk management and community reintegration of these sex offenders. (Kewley, 2017). Even

though social isolation has been considered as a very much observed attitude towards the sex offenders, it has been noted that, this isolated attitude has actually contributed for the offensive attitude of the concerned culprit (Meredith, 2007).

When the survey was conducted on the sex offenders of New Jersey about the experience that they had been through, average feeling that almost of them had was nothing but feeling isolated resulting in depressed mental state and hopelessness (Levenson, 2018). According to the observation made by Lyn et al. (2012) social isolation along with capacity to change are two main factors to measure community attitude towards sex offenders. Along with this, while testing the reliability of CATSO scale, good internal consistency (Schmitt, 1996) was observed in two factors and one of the factor was Socialisolation.

While dealing with the people's attitude towards sex offenders Klein, (2015) has observed a negative attitude towards sex offenders and also did not observe much difference between the attitude of parent as well as non-parents towards them. Even sex offenders face the same isolative attitude from community on account of punitive laws that they were subjected to.

According to the study conducted in the three states that is Pennsylvania, Texas and Wisconsin (Bowen et al. 2016), it was observed that on account of SORN that is Sex Offender Registration and Notification, concerned registered sex offender have already started feeling isolated due to loss of friendship. Even though there is a general attitude the sex offenders that they should be in social isolation, still a surprising observation has been noted from the perspective of criminal justice officials (Mustaine et al. 2015) that more contact with the sex offenders tends to soften the one's perspective towards sex offenders. It has also been interestingly observed that, media also plays a very important role in creating a moral panic against the sex offenders. It has been observed (Fox, 2012) that, the impact of 24*7 running channels, the language that those reporters use, they create this socially isolated attitude towards sex offenders. This kind of reporting has contributed for public perception against sex offenders.

It is a general observation (Grijffin et al. 2006) that the sex offenders are considered as outsiders for our civilized community. They have been labeled and somehow expatriated by almost each and every section of our community including law enforcement officers, journalists, other criminals etc.

Hence researcher want to propose hypothesis as follow:

H1 – “General Public feel to maintain society as a secure place sex offender should be isolated from them”

2.2 Deviance

There has been continuous study over the deviant aspect of these sexual offenders. In a study conducted over the treatment for inpatient as well as outpatient sexual offenders then surprisingly inpatient sex offenders were found to be with more sexual fantasies than outpatient sex offenders (Miller, 2007). There was a polygraph test conducted on the sex offenders regarding their past history. Most of them generally do not disclose it. Hence when this test was conducted on 26 sex offenders. These participants disclosed more deviant sexual behavior than others (Jung et al. 2020)

It has also been observed that if a child is exposed for violence at home, that child eventually develops a deviant behavior, which is one of the factor that leads for sexual offences (Eric and Matt, 2018). Hence there is a close connection between sex offenders and deviant behavior. Even though medically it is somehow testable fact that sex offenders develop deviant attitude, but Lyn et al. (2013) have observed that after applying CATSO scale sketched by Church et al. (2008) that, the deviancy is not much considered factor by the participants. Even in the study conducted by Klein, (2015) it has been observed that in comparison with the other factors like social isolation, capacity to change, seriousness etc., factor of deviance is of least consideration for both parents as well as non-parents.

While dealing with deviancy the aspect of race is also identified by Kelin et al. (2020). According to their study race matters as non-white respondents had more belief in the deviant attitude of sex offenders.

People who were morally panic and more hostile towards sex offender, were more form about the deviancy in the sex offenders...

Even though academicians and professionals have tried to ensure that the sex offender with the history of commission of sex offences be portrayed as a person which is open to change rather than a deviant still the attitude of the people significantly vary for a question, whether sex offenders are moral strangers or deviants

(Wills et al., 2010) It has also been observed (Church et al. 2008) that the factors of capacity to change and deviancy factors were not correlated. Along with this it was also noted that even though people support the treatment of offenders but general perception towards them is still a negative one. Need for further investigation has also been felt. However totally different view has been observed by Kewley, (2017), where it was appeared that participants have not hold any negative perception about these sexual offenders as far as deviancy is considered.

While developing CATSO scale for Chinese context Chui et al. (2014) found that irrespective of cultural context even Chinese people do believe in the deviant behavior of the sex offenders. According to Quinn and Forsyth, (2010), strict penal measures, commitment parameters as well as community notification rules to deal with sex offenders are made because of the popular belief about their deviant behavior their presumed recidivistic tendency etc.

Even though there has not much discussion over the deviant aspect of any sex offender, researcher wants to propose second hypothesis as

H2 – “Society has a negative perception about the deviant nature of sex offenders.”

2.3 Punitive Attitude

There has been a continuous research regarding various factors that decide the approach of the community towards sex offenders. It has been found that women are more emotionally driven than men hence men hold more punitive attitude towards the sex offenders more particularly rapists (Hough and Kirby, 2013).

Punitive attitude of Britishers has played a very decisive role in formulation on penal policies and practices for Britain (Palasinski and Shortland, 2016; Chung et al., 2006; Shackley et al., 2014). The attitude of the people towards sexual as well as domestic abused reflects in more retributive aspect which further leads for punitive attitude (Palasanski and Shortland, 2016; Gerber and Jackson, 2013)

People generally hold more strict and punitive approach towards street crime than white collar crimes irrespective of the fact that white collar crimes damages the society in the larger extent. (Holtfreter et al., 1983). It has been observed that, people who believe in capability of an offender to change, they hold somehow milder attitude towards criminals. (Maruna & King 2009)

Amazingly, it has also been found (Soot, 2013) that people are in favour of more punitive attitude towards white collar criminals than street offences. When the punitive attitude was tested applying CATSO scale then (Klein et al., 2020) have found that people with higher education hold less punitive attitude towards sex offenders but people influenced by Moral panic theory are more prone towards having more punitive attitude. Green et al., 2000 have found an element of race as determinant factor while dealing with the attitude of the people towards criminals. Authors have found that white people are more prone towards the punitive and harsh treatment for offenders.

In Poland, population does not consider the policy of the judiciary as much punitive but they expect it to be harsher as most of them have supported even capital punishment also. (Krajewski and Krzysztof, 2009). A very interesting observation has been noted by Willis et al., 2010, where it was opined that on account of emotionally driven and misinformed public opinion about the sex offenders contributed largely to the punitive attitude of people towards them.

Attempt has also been made to analyze the factor responsible for punitive approach towards offenders (Kaariainen, 2018). Punitive attitude was found to be in inverse proportion with knowledge. In other words, if knowledge of the fact is less than people are more punitive towards offenders and if knowledge is more than people are less punitive. While dealing with the #MeToo movement Shi, (2021) has found the time factor as important element to determine the punitive attitude of people towards the offender or accused. In case there is a delay in the reporting the sexual assault then people generally question the credibility of the victim. But in case of immediate reporting of the same then punitive attitude towards an offender or accused increases.

Considering the literature available at this juncture, researcher wants to propose third hypothesis as

H3 – “Society does hold a punitive attitude towards sex offender and expects law to consider the same”

2.4 Deterrence

The way people look at sex offenders, more it is because of the deterrence (Palasinski and Shortland, 2017). It has also been observed that, Community does hold the deterrence or perception of risk about these sex offenders but this can be minimized by the role of media by minimizing their misinformative tactics.

Irrespective of the fact that the sex offenders are portrayed as modern day demons or worst of the worst (Cesaroni 2002; Simon 1998). Evidence wise it has been observed that they are not so dangerous and even the rate of recidivism in the sex offender is very low (Griffin and West 2006)

Even prison officers of United States have portrayed the sex offenders as more grievous, damaging, fierce etc.. (Weeks et al. 1995) Professionals and paraprofessionals who work with the sex offenders possess varying approaches towards these sex offenders, which are highly optimistic at one end and at the other end those views are highly pessimistic. (Lea and Auburn, 1999). Police officers are harsher towards the sex offenders than any other officers ((Cunha and Goncalves, 2016). even than students studying in the university, graduates and also than guards.

While examining the attitude of MOSOVO officers that is Management of Sexual Offenders and Violent Offenders officers (Stephanie, 2017), researcher has also found similar observation towards Sexual offenders. Even though they were not holding any prejudices about the sex offenders but still they held a view about the dangerousness of sex offenders in more negative manner.

Growing “Breaking-News” culture of various news channels along with the politician’s attitude of seeking political advantage has contributed in substantial manner for a vengeance which is being

developed in the general public towards sex offenders. That’s why there is a growing demand for having serious punishments for sex offences. Even India is also not an exception for the same. Recently India has also amended Indian criminal law that is Indian Penal Code which has made certain sex offence more serious one by enhancing their punishment. On account of these developments, punishments which are generally imposed on serious criminals like armed robber or other dangerous offenders, have been imposed on sex offenders (West, 2000)

After dealing with this aspect of sex offenders and available literature, researcher wants to propose 4th hypothesis as follows

H4 – “Community feels that sex offenders are dangerous for a society.”

Research methodology

189 Samples have been collected from the individuals of different age who are residing in the Lavasa located in Dasave village of Pune District. Participants have been selected only from Lavasa as it is like a residential area located far away from a city. There have been instances reported regarding sex offences in such remote location. Lavasa is also situated in a remote location. Hence there is a need to deal with the mindset of the people about their perception regarding sex offender, as such study has not been conducted in India yet.

Research Instrument

16 questions were asked to the participants. These questions are based on 4 variables that is “Social Isolation”, “Deviancy”, “Punitive Attitude” and “Deterrence”. Questionnaire was shared on 19th January 2023 and responses have been collected till 22nd January 2023 on a google form, where their identity is totally protected.

3. Research Methodology

3.1 Data Collection

Sample of 293 participants has been taken into consideration. It is inclusive of the individual who are residing in remote location from city. This study focuses in the untouched area of attitude towards sex offender from the perspective of people who live in remote location, far from any city. The data for this study has been collected by sharing a google form to all the people who are living in the secluded area of all ages. While collecting the data the anonymity of the participants has been maintained strictly. This research focuses upon their mindset towards sex offenders that is who are convicted for sex offence or offences.

3.2 Research Instrument

The Questionnaire which is used for this study has been laid down in the Table no. 1. It comprises total 16 questions regarding community attitude towards sex offenders from (Chui et al, 2014). The variables social isolation has 3 items. Deviance has 3 items. Punitive attitude as well as Deterrence also have 3 items each. These 4 variables that is social isolation, deviance, punitive attitude and deterrence are independent variables. Community attitude towards sex offender that is CATSO is a dependent variable which has 4 items. The questionnaire has 5 point Likert scale ranging with the value like 5 for strongly agree, 4 for agree, 3 for neutral, 2 for disagree and 1 for strongly disagree.

Table no. 1 Measurement Construct

Items	Variables	Author
	Social Isolation	
SI1	Do you agree with the following statements? [Sex offenders generally prefer staying at home rather than socializing.]	Chui et al.
SI2	Do you agree with the following statements? [It is difficult for sex offenders to make new friends.]	Chui et al.
SI3	Do you agree with the following statements? [Generally people avoid being with sex offenders.]	Chui et al.
	Deviance	
D1	Do you agree with the following statements? [Sex offenders generally have greater rate of sex activity.]	Chui et al.
D2	Do you agree with the following statements? [Sex offenders are generally more prone towards having frequent sex activity.]	Chui et al.
D3	Do you agree with the following statements? [Generally sex offenders create porn content out of their sex activity.]	Chui et al.
	Punitive Attitude	
PA1	Do you agree with the following statements? [Sex offender should not be given any civil rights (liberty, equality, etc..)]	Chui et al.
PA2	Do you agree with the following statements? [Sex offenders should be sent to prison forever.]	Chui et al.
PA3	Do you agree with the following statements? [Sex offenders should be connected with connected with tracking device always to trace their location at any given time.]	Chui et al.
	Deterrence	
DET1	Do you agree with the following statements? [If the sexual offender is known to the victim, the situation is less severe than if the sexual offender is a stranger.]	Chui et al.
DET2	Do you agree with the following statements? [If someone is using emotional tool while committing sexual offence, the situation is less severe than someone is using physical control during commission of similar offence]	Chui et al.
DET3	Do you agree with the following statements? [Not every sex offender is dangerous to the society]	Chui et al.
	CATSO	
CAT1	Do you agree with the following statements? [If social offenders are isolated from a civil society then society will become a secured place]	Chui et al.
CAT2	Do you agree with the following statements? [Abnormality in the sex offenders hinders the process of making society a secured one.]	Chui et al.
CAT3	Do you agree with the following statements? [Sex offenders should be punished just as harshly to deter like-minded people]	Chui et al.
CAT4	Do you agree with the following statements? [Sex offenders contribute to a great extent to the climate of fear in the society.]	Chui et al.

3.3 Descriptive statistics

Demographics of the questionnaire has been laid down in the Table no. 2. It includes constructs like Age, Gender, Education and Family income. The Age is divided into 4 sub categories: Up to 20 years; 20-25 years, 26-35 years and 36 or above. Out of 293 participants age category of 'up to 20 years' has a highest frequency

of 120 with the percentage of 41. The next highest category is of '20-25 years with the frequency of 62 and has a percentage of 21.5. Lowest category for age is of 36 or above with the frequency of 49 and total percentage is 16.7. Next construct that is gender has three subcategories: male, female and transgender. Male participants are highest with the frequency of 164 along with the total percentage of 56. Female participants are not much far from them. Female participant's frequency is 128 with the percentage of 43.7. Only one participant is reported as Transgender.

The next construct is of Education that has 3 categories: UG, PG and Others. In this construct Frequency of UG is highest that is of 194 with the percentage of 66.2. PG has second place in this construct that has a frequency of 67 with the percentage of 22.9.

Last construct under the demographics is nothing but Family income that has 4 categories: up to 5 lac, 5 lac to 10 lac, 10 – 20 lac and more than 20 lac. Subcategory of '10-20 lac' has highest frequency of 83 with 28.3 percentage. Subcategory of 'more than 20 lac' has lowest frequency of 53 with the percentage of 18.1.

These demographics will provide clear perspective of the data that researchers have collected.

4. Results

Table No. 2 Demographics

SI No.	Classification	Category	Frequency	(%)
1	Age	Upto 20 Years	120	41
		20-25 years	63	21.5
		26-35 years	61	20.8
		36 or above	49	16.7
2	Gender	Male	164	56
		Female	128	43.7
		Transgender	1	0.3
3	Education	UG	194	66.2
		PG	67	22.9
		Others	32	10.9
4	Family Income	upto 5 lac	81	27.6
		5 lakh - 10 lac	76	25.9
		10 - 20 lac	83	28.3
		more than 20 lac	53	18.1

To test and analyze the data, SPSS and Amos have been used. The detailed use of these two software will give us the exact result of the research and will also help us to prove or disprove framed hypothesis. The data analysis includes the psychometric property of measurement, Cronbach's alpha, discriminant validity, regression coefficient, reliability of the variables and structural equation modelling.

4.1 Construct reliability

Initially Cronbach's alpha test was used to ascertain the reliability of the data. The score above 0.7 is considered to be satisfactory one for the construct. Table three has Cronbach's alpha for all 5 constructs. Out of five, three have satisfactory alpha rating. It means out of five, three constructs are reliable. The average variance extracted is more than 0.5 except the last construct. Table three lists out all the figures relating to Factor loading, AVE (Average Variance Extracted), CR (Composite reliability) and Cronbach's Alpha along with the mean as well as standard deviation.

Table No.3 Construct reliability

Construct	Items	Factor	Mean	Std. Deviation	Ave	CR	Alpha
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Social Isolation	SI1	0.754	3.013	1.094	0.551	0.784	0.632
	SI2	0.823	3.112	1.136			
	SI3	0.639	4.146	0.966			
Deviance	D1	0.861	3.430	1.140	0.668	0.857	0.72
	D2	0.871	3.634	1.069			
	D3	0.712	3.460	0.977			
Punitive Attitude	PA1	0.806	3.375	1.309	0.651	0.848	0.806
	PA2	0.798	3.474	1.304			
	PA3	0.817	3.535	1.203			
Deterrence	DET1	0.81	2.662	1.346	0.644	0.844	0.772
	DET2	0.802	2.675	1.303			
	DET3	0.797	2.580	1.270			
Community attitude	CATSO1	0.508	3.774	1.386	0.424	0.742	0.542
	CATSO2	0.803	4.255	1.088			
	CATSO3	0.644	4.453	1.041			
	CATSO4	0.618	4.324	1.193			

4.2 Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Test

KMO test that is Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin test is generally used to check whether our data is useful for factor analysis or not. KMO is nothing but an indicator that determine the adequacy of the sample. To consider factor analysis KMO value should be more than 0.6. Table no. 4 lays down the KMO values of all the variables. KMO value of all is more than 0.6 except first construct.

Table No. 4 Discriminant validity

	KMO	Social Isolation	Deviance	Punitive Attitude	Deterrence	CATSO
Social Isolation	0.588	0.742				
Deviance	0.609	.309**	0.817			
Punitive Attitude	0.701	.207**	.441**	0.807		
Deterrence	0.683	.275**	.290**	.233**	0.802	
CATSO	0.661	.430**	.496**	.544**	.229**	0.651

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

4.3 discriminant validity

The main purpose of dealing with discriminant validity is to see whether each and every element has mapped with the other attributes. These constructs have been correlated by using the standardized linear correlations. As they are assumed to have values far from one, Table 4 shows that, correlation confidence interval between any pair of the constructs is not equal to 1. This simply shows that these variables relegate two separate impressions. This was needed to establish the suitability of the demonstrated model using the indicators pointed in Table 5 after establishing the discriminatory validity of the scale.

The square root of AVE of every component and its squared correlation with other considered components are compared to determine the discriminant validity. Table 4 demonstrated that, AVE's value is greater than the correlations of the other cross cutting constructs.

4.4 Regression Coefficient

To check whether independent variables are responding to dependent variables or not, the predictive values of

logistical regression are examined. The R² value of regression is .446 which means, there is 44.6% relation between the dependent as well as independent variables. Table 6 describes the regression coefficient for all the variables in this research. As per these values, it can be interpreted that Social isolation, deviance and punitive attitude defines the attitude of the community towards sex offenders. Hence their hypotheses are proven. However, community's attitude towards sex offenders does not treat them dangerous one. Hence corresponding hypothesis has not been proven.

Table No. 5 Regression coefficient

Unstandardized Coefficients				Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
Regression	Value	B	Std. Error	Beta		
(Constant)		1.177	0.216		5.442	0.000
Social Isolation		0.296	0.050	0.278	5.888	0.000
Deviance		0.263	0.055	0.245	4.796	0.000
Punitive Attitude		0.299	0.039	0.380	7.702	0.000
Deterrence		-0.006	0.042	-0.007	-0.149	0.882
R	0.668					
R ²	0.446					
Adjusted R ²	0.439					
Std. error of the estimate	0.576					

4.5 Structural equation model and hypothesis testing

To analyze the impact of independent variables on dependent variables an analytical tool that is SEM can be used. The proposed model is analyzed using SEM to define and prove relations between two variables. Table 7 deals with the result of SME and of hypothesis testing

The hypothesis in the model is as follow:

$$\text{CATSO} \leftarrow \text{PA}, \text{CATSO} \leftarrow \text{SI}, \text{CATSO} \leftarrow \text{DV}, \text{CATSO} \leftarrow \text{DET}.$$

The p value with *** indicates that the hypothesis is strongly supported that has a value which is less 0.01.

In Table 7, by looking at the value of p, it can be observed that the hypothesis between Community attitude towards sex offenders and punitive attitude, Community attitude towards sex offenders and Social Isolation as well as Community attitude towards sex offenders and deviance are proven because their value is less than 0.05. The hypothesis between Community attitude towards sex offenders and Deterrence is not proven, because p value for the same is greater than

0.05. The proven hypothesis established the relationship and interdependence between two variables. This simply proves that the hypothesis formulated in the literature review that is H1, H2 and H3 are proven and H4 is not proven.

Table No. 6 Structural equation model results

Structural equation model				Estimate	S.E.	C.R.	P	Label
H1	Community Attitude Towards sex offenders	<---	Punitive Attitude	0.299	0.034	8.721	***	Supported
H2	Community Attitude Towards sex offenders	<---	Social Isolation	0.296	0.046	6.378	***	Supported
H3	Community Attitude Towards sex offenders	<---	Deviance	0.263	0.047	5.631	***	Supported

	Community Attitude Towards								
<i>H4</i>	sex offenders	<---	Deterrence	-0.006	0.039	0.161	0.872	Not supported	

5. Discussion

The study and analysis of the research finding actually vindicate the statement that the community does have an attitude which somehow against sex offenders even though they are not deemed to be much dangerous for the community.

The main aim of this research is to build up a scale that can calculate the attitude towards sex offenders and also to deal with the policies from Indian context. Researchers had 16 items taken from the Chui et al (2014), and rephrased those items considering Indian Scenario. In those 16 items researchers found four independent variables and 1 dependent one.

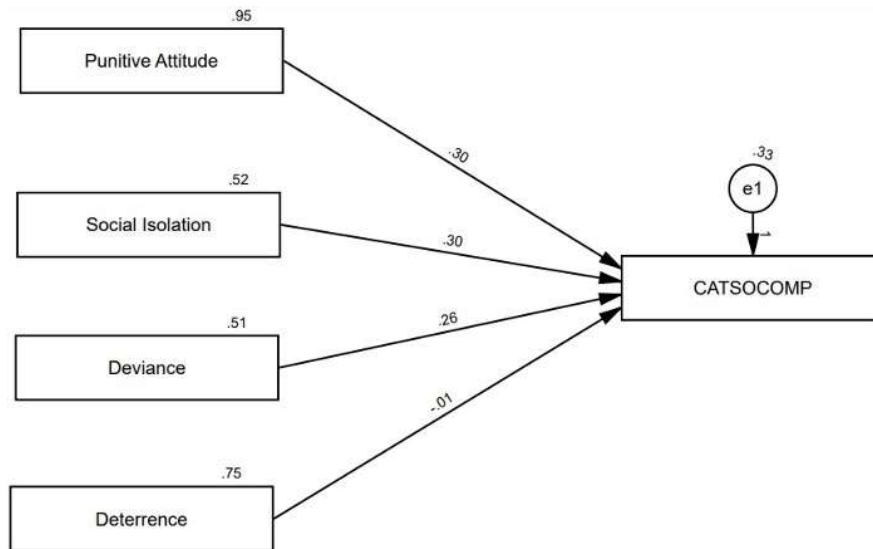
Out of those first three factors showed good internal consistency with greater alpha value above 0.6 (Chui et al 2014; Moss et al 1998).

Most of the items have been revised which are proposed by original framer. The items measured about the variables of Social isolation, punitive attitude as well as perception about the deviant behavior of the sex offenders is somehow the same throughout the globe irrespective of the sex and nationality.

When researchers equate the results of this research with the research done by the original framer of this scale that is Church et al. (2008), researchers found that there is a difference in the finding of this research and original developer's research. The original developer has found the dangerousness or deterrence as a main factor however our study has found different dimension. As per the present research, researchers have found that community does not consider the element of dangerousness. Instead of that, community expects that they should be isolated to make this society a better and secured place. Community feels that these sex offenders should be severely punished to teach lesson to the likeminded people. Community also feels that; these people should not be given certain civil rights like right to vote etc... Along with this society does hold a view about the deviant behaviors of these sex offenders. So there is strong nexus between the attitude towards their deviant behavior and a perception that these sex offenders should be isolated from a society to make society a better or a secured place to live.

There is another interesting observation researcher has made. Researchers have equated the results of this research with the findings of Chui et al. (2008) with reference to punitive attitude. Majority participants for previous researchers were women and they found more punitive attitude towards sex offenders. According to them, even in China mostly in case of sex offences female is a victim. That's why they could draw this conclusion. In the present research even though majority of the participants are men and Indian laws do have similar provision where in most of the sex offences victim is a woman, results are in favor of having more punitive attitude for sex offenders.

(Figure 1) SEM model



Even though there is still scope for further research in this area still researchers believe that while making policy to deal with sex offender as this is a very sensitive issue, just single perception of community should not be considered. Recent development in the criminal law of India immediately after Nirbhaya incident happened in Delhi, that is Criminal Law Amendment Act, 2013 has been passed. This amendment has made Indian penal code more punitive towards sex offenders. But these steps are not enough to control this menace. The main reason for this is nothing but apart from punitive attitude community or people feel that these sex offenders pose a threat for security of society. These antisocial elements should be kept far from people. So this aspect should be considered by the policy makers. After passing criminal law amendment Act, 2013 whether rate of commission of sex offence has been curtailed? That is big question.

This needs to be answered affirmatively. Unfortunately, answer is negative. Policy should be addressed to this attitude of community to keep these people in isolation not only from their family but from entire society. Hence even if considering deviant behavior of sex offenders if society is expecting different treatment to sex offenders apart from harsher punishment, policy makers should take a note of the same.

In this research researchers have analyzed the perception of community towards sex offenders. However, researchers do believe that this is an endless affair as more other constructs or variables could have been added to have better view of the same. Indian society is still largely driven by moral values. So further study can be carried out to consider the same attitude from the perspective of morals of our society, which may lead for a policy to treat these offenders in more efficient way than the opinion expressed by this research.

6. Limitation and further scope of a study

In India, very less attempts have been made to scale down the attitude of community towards the sex offenders on a scientific parameter. This research is limited to those individuals who live in somehow secluded place, far from city. Further study can be done considering larger population. This study deals with only four independent variables that is social isolation, deviant, punitive attitude and deterrence. Further research can be carried out by adding more independent variables so that researcher will have deeper insight in the attitude of community towards sex offenders. This study has been conducted by sharing a google form with the participants. If similar research is carried out on ground by offline way, then it will definitely yield more positive and fruitful results. This research is one of the few studies conducted in India to scale down the attitude of community towards sex offenders.

One important issue has been missed out in this research that is nothing but the addiction of sex offenders. Further study can be carried out in this direction also.

Even though the findings of this study or research are more prone towards excluding these sex offenders from society and also considering their deviant attitude, punishing those in stricter manner still study is needed with reference to the treatment of these offenders. It should be a right for each and every sex offender to get at least one chance to show improvement. But before formulation of such policies 360 degree should be

explored by the researchers.

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