

## **Urban Crime: A Sociological Study of Jorhat Town**

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**Abstract:** In this paper an attempt has been made to depict the crime scenario of urban areas. Crime is increasing rapidly in today's society. Now there is hardly any society, which is not beset with the problem of crime. It is a serious social problem faced by the every society. Crime is largely an urban phenomenon but the specifically urban areal dimensions of the social process (John Balduin,A,Ebottoms 1976).Crime is the relative concept. It varies from society to society and in different period of time. Crime is an inevitable part of human society, crime exists and increasing in every society. In this present study it has been focused that in Assam the crime rate was increased due to different factors. But the causes are different according to the area of study such as Jorhat town; were crime rate has increased rapidly in last few year.

**Keywords:** Crime, Criminals, Crime reported, Urbanization.

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### **I. INTRODUCTION**

Crime is an inevitable part of human society. The human nature is selfish which comes in conflict with the general welfare of the people and some of the acts which come in conflict with societal norms are labeled as crimes (Srivastava, s, s. 2002). It is generally believed that the criminal is not born but the circumstances and social surroundings make a man criminal .Crime exists and increasing in every society .The crimes at international level are posing new dangers to the wealth and security of the society .No country alone can effectively control these crimes .On the other hand crime and criminals have been associated with human society from time immemorial ever since human society came in to existence. Crime has played an important role in human life Manu ,a great social thinker who laid down the social system of Hindus defined the various crimes and the punishment. Therefore, it is otherwise that his theory may not fit these days and is being subjected to severe criticism .crime is a relative concept. It varies from society to society, country to country and also time to time in the same society. So it is very difficult to put forth a universal definition of crime. The sociological approach of crime incorporates the anti social activities. But with the advancement of Industrialization urbanization, globalization, westernization etc, crime is gradually rearing its ugly head all over the world and their forms are also changed. Urbanization has been a crucial indicator of development leading to the change in economic, social, political, ecological and even cultural life of people. This is specially true in the case of less developed countries of the world(Breeze 1967).The newly developing countries are industrially less effected and hence, urban growth in much context has been the outcome of various other forces apart from Industrialization .However, urbanization is essentially a process of population redistribution from rural to urban areas, from one region to another causing geographical or territorial mobility and of continuous increase of social diffentiation .Due to the impact of urban growth, rural society is undergoing changes, often occupational change causing increase of material weak of the people. But it was formerly a phenomenon attributed primarily to those people residing in lower socio-economic areas such as slum areas.

Therefore, in the present study an attempt would be made to deal with urban crime of Jorhat town in Assam to find out the urban crime criminals and other related issues and also to examine the role of police for prevention of crime .The urban crime scenario in Jorhat town weather it increasing or decreasing and to examine the factors behind the criminal activities and show how to prevent it in future. Significance of the study:-crime exists in all societies, but this problem is by no means all, the same in all societies. In the present crime analysis that most of the crime incidence is occurred in rural and urban areas, Due to some factors such as urbanization, migration, westernization, modernization etc .The incidence of crime increased in urban areas. Therefore many studies are conducted into the urban crime, but there is no serious study on the trend and patterns of urban crime in Assam, specially Jorhat town.

Jorhat is a major city and one of the important urban centers of the state of Assam in India. Jorhat is one of the fastest growing towns in Assam. The town underway becomes sunshine town of Assam as declared by the central government.

## **II. METHODOLOGY**

A sound methodology is an integral part of any systematic study. Therefore, the researcher depends upon the well-knit research design in accordance with the pre-set objectives of the study. The process of research setting and techniques used make great differences in the quality of the collected data, interpretation and thereby reaching conclusions.

The universe of the study includes the administrative authorities of Jorhat town such as Superintendent of police (SP), addl. Superintendent of police (ASP), officer in charge (OC), sub Inspector (SI), Deputy Commissioner (DC), ADC, Municipally chairman, chief judicial magistrate. The study covered entire police Thana and its outposts and also judiciary, administrative authorities at Jorhat town. In this study respondent choose as administrative authorities, judiciary, and police administration authorities as prononately. On the other hand, the selection of the respondent was made at random in both official and non-official.

**Tools and data collection:** The present study is both explanatory as well as exploratory in nature. Therefore both primary as well as secondary data were used for the purpose of successful and intensive study. The primary instruments for collecting the information was a set of structural questionnaires prepared and administered to all the categories of respondents by the researchers. In addition to the structured questionnaires the researchers own observation during the face to face interview also formed a part of the technique adopted in collecting information from the respondents. Apart from the primary data, the secondary sources were also explored, so as to have a comprehensive picture of the study in conformity with its objectives. The secondary sources of data included various official records, books, journals, newspaper reports, article and so on. In addition to that for primary data the researcher also visited the Thana in-charge (OC), Sub Inspector (SI), Constable, Nayak, Women police. The police administrative authorities, Superintendent of police (SP), Addl. Superintendent of police (ASP), Deputy commissioner (DC), Addl. Deputy commissioner, chief judicial magistrate (CJM), District and session judge from judiciary and P.I Inspector of Jorhat town to obtain their views.

On the other hand, the views obtained from various secondary sources found to have dealt with various recorded data from police Thana of Jorhat town and its out posts, the aspects of such police records (F.I.R), Khatian (crime record maintain register), yearly comparative crime figure(register)etc to show the actual urban crime scenario of the city. The sum and substances of the views and the findings of the causes that urban crime basically increasing in city or town areas, due to increasing trends of urbanization, industrialization, modernization, westernization etc.

**Theoretical framework of the study:** The Research literature on urban crime is generally of two types. There are studies that compare cities, seeking to understand why some have higher crime rates than others. However, both types of studies use similar theories and focus on the same social forces to understand their observations. The primary theories used to study urban crime as social disorganization, subculture and conflict theories. So it has become concerned mainly with explaining why urban crime rates vary, why some social, economic and spatial characteristics are co-related with variations in urban crime rates and how certain crime characteristics of urban places affect individual criminality.

### **Social Disorganization Theory:**

This concerned with the way in which characteristics of cities and neighborhoods influence crime rates. The root of this perspective can be traced back to the work of researchers at the University of Chicago around the 1930s. These researchers were concerned with neighborhood structure and its relationship to level of crime. Classical Chicago school theorists and Shaw and McKay and others researchers who adopt the macro social approach to the study of urban crime have identified a number of additional disorganizing factors including family disruption (Sampson and Groves), relative poverty (Messner 1982) and racial segregation (Peterson and Krivo). Researchers in this area believe that characteristics such as these are likely to lead to higher levels of social disorganization which in turn increase the likelihood of crime and criminal violence.

### **Subculture Theory:**

This theory to explain urban crime is of the two types such as subculture of violence and subculture of poverty. The subculture of poverty explanation have focused more on urban crime than have subculture of violence explanations have been used explain crime in urban and nonurban settings. Both types is belief that certain groups carry sets of norms and values that make them more likely to engage in crime. The subculture of

violation holds that high rates of violation result from culture where criminality in general and violence in particular. Subcultures of violence are quicker to resort to violence than others. Situation that normally might simply anger others could provoke violence by those carrying subculture of violation values. In the formation of these ideas, subcultural theories claim that social institutions themselves contribute to the development and persistence of a subculture conducive to criminality and violence. On the other hand subculture of poverty have focused more on urban crime, it have been concerned primarily with the criminal behavior.

**Conflict Theory:**

The most notable expression of conflict theories as an explanation of urban crime has focused on income inequality (Blau and Blau) were scholars have argued that frustration is a byproduct of income gaps that are viewed an unjust by those in subordinate positions. Marxist scholars (Chambliss, quinney, lynch and grova) describe how the contradictions inherent in advanced capitalism make crime particular where populations are concentrated such as in the city-more likely most of their cities assert that conflict theorists are inaccurate it is not income inequality that predicts crime.

**Findings and Analysis:**

Crime is an act, which the group regards as sufficient means to its fundamental interests to justify formal reaction to restrain the violation (Johnson 1978).To show the crime scenario of Assam it could be found that the rapid changed in the pace of urbanization and industrialization, migration of people from neighboring of places, growth of slum areas, has mainly responsible for the increasing rate of crime in modern age. As Don Gillbons has stated that the greater the degree of industrialization, urbanization, modernization and the higher is the rate of crime. On the other hand crime is a common and dangerous thing in our society. Specially criminal activities damage the basement of a country.

In the present study it was going to analyze the trend of crime in Jorhat town. The town has one of the fastest growing cities after Guwahati. The crime scenario of Jorhat was significant from the available data. But the general statistics of crime and criminals are probably the most unreliable and most difficult of all statistics. It is impossible to determine with accuracy the amount of crime in any given jurisdiction at any particular time. Obviously a large proportion of the crimes committed go undetected, others are detected but not reported, and others are reported but not officially recorded. But from the crime statistics of the town it has been found that due to some cause i.e. urbanization, unemployment, migration of people from neighboring places, poverty etc. The causes are directly or indirectly related with the increasing crime in the town. In last five years (2011-2015) in the town several cases were reported to the police station (Sadar thana). In Jorhat town there is one Sadar Thana and its five outposts. In the town the crime pattern was increased in the following manner.

**Table No. 1**  
**Year wise cases reported**

Year	No. of cases reported	p/c
2011	951	79.25%
2012	1361	113.41%
2013	1878	156.5%
2014	2461	205.08%
2015	2821	235.08%

The above table indicates that there has been continuous increased of crime rate in the town throughout the whole period. In 2011 crime rate was quite less in number comparatively 2015. In 2012-2013, it shows that the rate of crime has continuously increased over the previous year. Therefore the study reveals that the crime rate kept on rising in every year, though the rise was gradually. The table also shows the trend of crime in the town which gradually has increased.

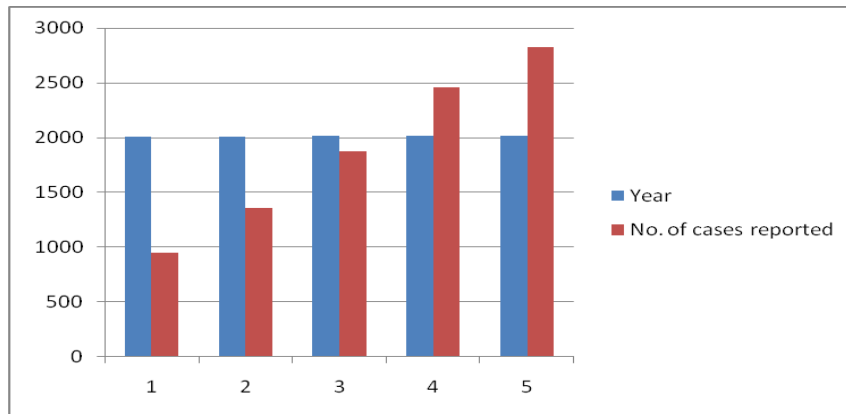


Fig. 1: Bar diagram (Reported cases)

**Crime reported and Conviction:**

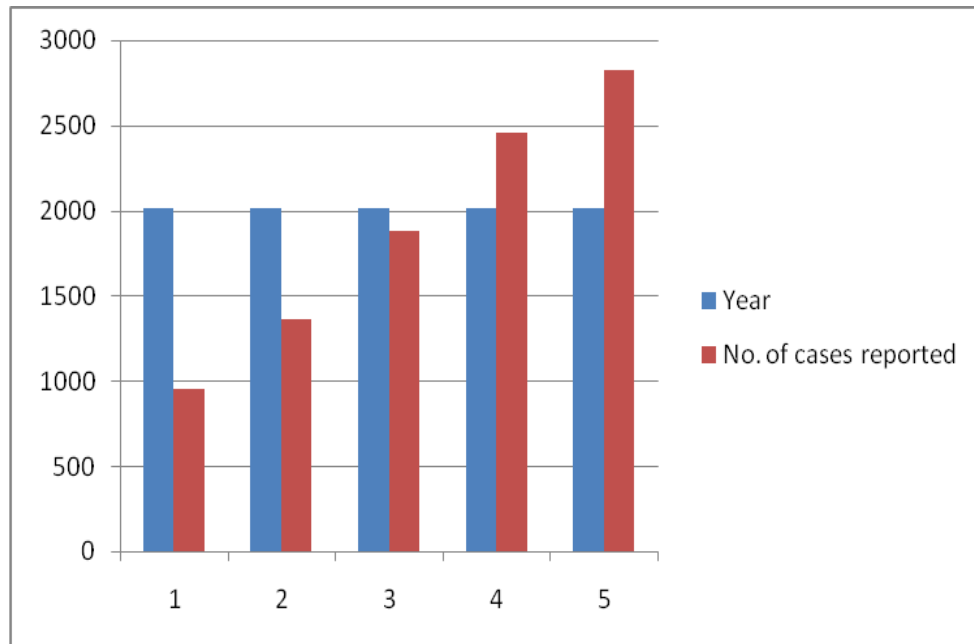
Here the researcher has analyzed that there was a difference between crime reported and criminal convicted by the court of law that means the researcher tried to find out the relationship between reported cases and convicted of criminal in Jorhat town. It was a known fact, that each crime that has reported in police station is not always conviction. In every year only a few cases were out of total reported cases were conviction. The majority of the cases were resulted in acquittal or not detection. The researcher studied only the proportion of convicted cases to the reported cases. The following table has shown the picture of crime reported and conviction.

**Table No. 2**  
**Year wise cases reported**

Year	Reported cases	Convicted cases
2011	574	138
2012	509	125
2013	387	38
2014	376	52
2015	571	63

(Source: Jorhat Police Station and P.I Court)

The table no has revealed that there was a fluctuating increased in the rate of crime in the town. The table also shows that the increased of reported cases was high in compared to conviction. Because in every year there has been very less number of cases were convictions in every year. In 2011,574 cases were reported but only 138 cases were conviction. It can be inferred from the table that the reported cases of crime shows increased in 2015 ;but the conviction was less i.e. 63 in comparison to reported. On the other hand, from a statistical fact that those reported cases has not been conviction, that was registered as under trial or acquitted, in under trial cases has hearing at court on date by date with proper evidence. However, the total number of reported cases shows an all time high in 2015 compared to any of the preceding years. The whole scenario defined that the rate of reported cases were increased but gradually the number of conviction was less due to lack of proper



Source: (Jorhat P.I court)

The above diagram shows that in last five years only a small proportion of cases were ended in convicted comparatively reported, whereas a majority case goes to unpunished or under trial.

#### Nature of Crime:

The present study has been analyzed crime pattern in Jorhat town. The recorded statistical data from police static define the incidence of crime exhibit a general increased in the rate of criminality in the town. In this research work-study has been focused that all crimes are not similar because there are different types of crimes. In some crimes, only one individual is involved and in some other crimes there are many persons who are organized for the purpose of crime. So the crime trend seems to have increased in the town (from the recorded data), it was necessary to understand what are the major crimes was increased in last five years (2011-2015). The nature of crime or offence divided into two categories such as property offences and another was offences against person. The nature of crime different in the town. The police station of the town recorded all the offences or crime even traffic related crime registered. In the year 2011, 2012 and 2015 the violent crime has less in number, as compared to 2013 and 2014 it was (33.416%)(25.16%). on the other hand, the table also shows that in the town property crime has been increased day by day mostly theft cases. In 2011, 2012-2013 the highest number of property crime i.e 490(), 573() 694(). Therefore it was also observed that different expectations' of standard behavior appear to be important in the genesis of criminal activity.

#### Causation of Crime:

Crime is an act which causes harm to man's social interest. There are different causes of crime which influence a person to commit crime. Causation refers to the fact that the concurrence of a guilty mind and a criminal act must produce or cause harm. There are different causes of crime which influence a person to commit crime. These are socio-economic, psychological, geographical etc. There are many causes or factors of urban crime, Different situation are mainly responsible for this social problem, young people take drugs and then their mental situation become abnormal. Sometime many facilities are also responsible for becoming frustrated to younger. So it's clear to that psychological cause is one of the basic cause of urban crime. Criminologist believes that certain predispositions of an individual and his personality traits have a predominant role when it comes to his criminal behavior. These predispositions and personality traits rise from the occurrences in the surrounding and the person's tendency to relate to these occurrences the two factors which comes into play are genetics and neurological development of the individual.

The socio-economic causes of crime are the broken family, lack of morality, absence of social control, use of alcohol and changes in social values. However, Family disorganization is one of the causes increasing crime rate. In a family when deviant parental attitudes, values and family conflict are intermediate strength and factors associated with family disruption are the predictors.

Economic causes of crime that has people involved in committing crime, these economic causes are basically poverty, unemployment, and income inequality etc. The is an evident from the force going account of the

economic cause is the main root of crime. According to Marxian approach crime is caused by a criminogenic milieu which is created by the ever present disparity between effort and reward. Many authors and researchers have indirectly linked crime and poverty. It is widely believed that the poor commit more of the crime, at least street crime. However, it is more a link to property crime, not violent crime (Chester, 1976) Therefore, poverty, unemployment and income inequality have all consistently been found to render areas crime prone. Poverty and unemployment increase the risk of individuals becoming involved in crime. So it has been seen as the cause of criminal behavior. Therefore it is evident that social and economic stress acts an important distal influence on crime, their effects being mediated by family factors. This possibility is supported by empirical evidence. On the other hand, poverty is a major cause of crime, since a hungry man can do literally anything in order to appease his hunger, for example thefts increased in number when the prices of wheat went up and decreased when wheat prices fell. In this way, a close relation is found to exist between the number of crimes and the prices of food grains. On the other hand it was found in the course of a study conducted is poverty. One even comes across news of suicides and murders of families due to poverty.

Heredity, have demonstrated that is very strong predisposing factor as far as committing crime was concerned. According to some criminologists it is one of the main causes of crime. This view no longer regards as scientific but there can be no doubt that lineage and decent have some influence upon crime. Some people became criminal due to the influence of psychosis. On the other hand physical development may also involved people in crime because as general rule it can be said that it is between the age group of 20 to 30 that the highest number of crimes are committed.

Due to geographical causes people stimulate to crime, according to criminologist the geographical factors influence crime indirectly. In this regard Lombroso has collected evidence and to show that crime of rape are more common in plain areas than in mountains. According to Quetlet crime against person predominated increased in summer and while crimes against property increased during the winter.

So, thus from the force going account of the socio-economic, physical and moral condition, social environment etc have impact on individual towards crimes, it was primarily caused by society.

#### **Findings:**

1. Keeping in view the increasing crime rate against property in the town last five years. Basically theft cases were increased such as motor cycle and car, mobile, laptop theft has been increased in the town. The police for regularly patrolling for caught such thefts.
2. It was found that there are numbers of factors were responsible for the criminal activities. Such as socio-economic conditions unemployment, poverty, growth of slum area, migration etc we observed that above factors somehow directly or indirectly related with increased crime rate in the town.
3. In present study we observed that the crime increased in the town was inactive in pattern, because the compared with the crime has reported the number of conviction was less than the reported cases.
4. Therefore, the present study is an attempt to find out nature of crime according to the statistical data. According to the pattern some new kind of crime has been emerged such as cyber crime.

### **III. CONCLUSION**

From this present study we have found that due to several causes the crime rate has been increased in the town. We observed that the crime and criminality are rampant our society. In every year registered of cases were increased. So for the control and prevent of the rate of crime not only the role of government is essential but also awareness among the masses or people is also important .on the other hand in police department should be increased of men power as population increasing.

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