

IMPACT OF SOCIOECONOMIC FACTORS ON COMMUNAL CRIMES IN INDIA

Mentor:- Dr. Lokendra Kumawat

Authors:- Amal Varghese

Ashish Kumar

Nicku Kumari

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ABSTRACT

This project is an attempt to analyse the determinants of communal crimes, with respect to social and economic factors. The project attempts to analyse various theories that affect attributes like Gross Enrolment Ratio, Unemployment, and Per Capita Income on the rate of communal crimes. The analysis is done using panel data of Indian states for a period of 9 years. It tests whether there is a significant relationship between the factors listed above and the crime rate. Three important results emerge. First, there exists a positive association between the unemployment ratio and communal crimes in India. Second, GER and per capita income and youth unemployment have a negative association with communal crimes. Also, this study opts for a unique analysis through a lens, which focuses primarily on the impact of socio-economic factors on the rate of crimes in the name of religion.

JEL Classification: J62, K42, R23

Keywords: Communal Crimes, Socio-Economic Factors, Panel Data Analysis

BACKGROUND AND RESEARCH QUESTION

A communal riot in India typically results in markets closing, businesses being affected and individuals hiding behind closed doors, which disrupts the social and economic fabric of the community. Several instances of racial unrest have been reported at an alarming rate throughout the years, despite the government's secular and religious inclusiveness. International Human Rights Organizations such as Amnesty International and Human Rights Watch has published reports on acts of communal violence in India. An average of 130 people died every year from communal violence, or about 0.01 deaths per 100,000 population.

Major sectarian tensions occurred in modern India in the years 1969, 1984, 1989, 2002, 2008, 2013, and 2020. The aforementioned issue is influenced by a number of variables, but economic and social elements are particularly important in relation to these crimes. These crimes are influenced by socioeconomic conditions in one way or another and the consequences of such crimes have an impact on the nation's social and economic pillars, creating a cyclical relationship.

Does unemployment directly affect racial or social unrest? Does it serve as a spark for similar events? Does education have an impact on how often the nation's communal atrocities occur? These thoughts led us to ask the question **what is the impact of social and economic factors on communal violence in India?**

The hypothesis that we are taking is that education and income have a negative relationship with crimes and unemployment and youth unemployment will have a positive relationship with the same.

DATA AND METHODOLOGY

The project uses state-wise secondary data available from various government sources (as listed in the Table 1) taken for the years 2011-2019. Data has been taken on five variables: Communal crime rate, Per Capita Income, Unemployment rate, Youth unemployment rate & Gross Enrolment Ratio. The particular description of what we mean by the variables under study is shown in Table 2.

Table 1: Description of data source

Data	Classification	Sources
Communal crime rate	Dependent	National Crimes Records Bureau
Unemployment rate	Independent	Reserve Bank of India
Youth Unemployment rate	Independent	Reserve Bank of India
Per capita Income (Current Prices, ₹)	Independent	Reserve Bank of India
Gross Secondary Enrolment Ratio	Independent	World Bank

Table 2: Description of the variables

Conceptual variable	Measurable variable	Description
Crimes in the name of religion	Communal crime rate	Communal Crime Rate is Incidence of communal crime against Public Order per 1,00,000 Population
Unemployment	Unemployment rate	The unemployment rate is the percentage of the total labour force that is unemployed but actively seeking employment and willing to work.
Unemployment of youngsters	Youth Unemployment rate	The youth unemployment rate is the number of unemployed 15–24-year-olds expressed as a percentage of the youth labour force.
Income	Per capita Income	Per Capita Income (NSDP) at current year prices
Education	Gross Secondary Enrolment Ratio	Gross secondary enrolment ratio i.e., students enrolled in secondary education

The relationship of the aforementioned variable was studied via creation of line graphs, pie charts and in particular, scatter plots. **The period of study is 2011-2019.** The scatter plot of certain independent variables with respect to the dependent variable were developed zonal wise as well as year wise for intricate analysis. **The major scatterplots and summary statistics were generated via R programme and other graphs as well as zonal analysis was done via MS Excel.**

RESULTS AND ANALYSIS

Following is the result in a nutshell from Table 3 and Table 4

Table 3: Summary Statistics

Variable	Summary Statistics					
	Min	1st quartile	Median	Mean	Third Quartile	Max
Unemployment rate	2.28	4.17	6.41	5.419	6.73	6.9
Youth Unemployment rate	19.66	20.68	21.74	21.56	22.58	23.05
Per capita Income	2793431	3377219	4118014	4223242	5044663	5958370
Gross Secondary Enrolment Ratio	66.25	69.01	73.79	72.09	74.14	75.09

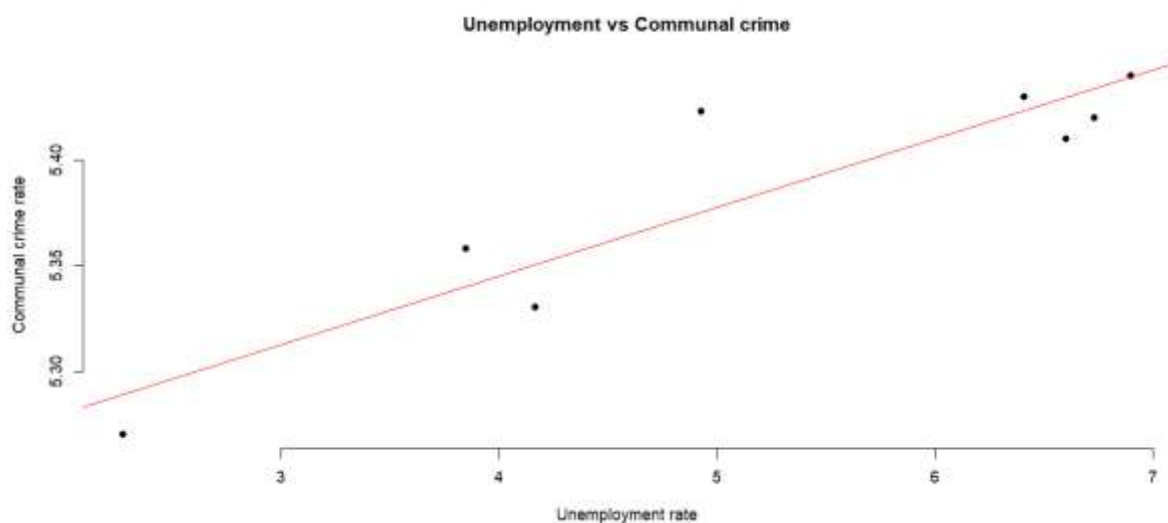
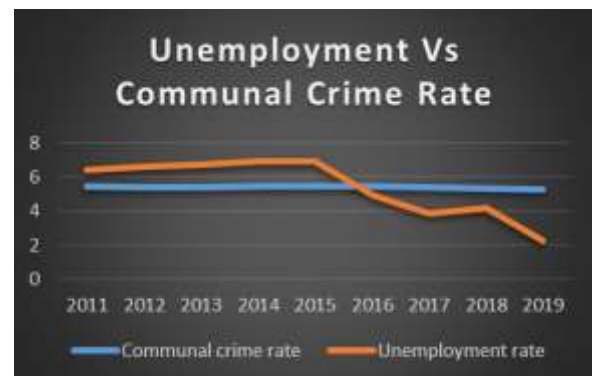
Table 4: Analysis Summary

Variable	The relationship with Communal crime rate	Further Inferences
Unemployment rate	Positive	-
Youth Unemployment rate	Negative	Positive till 2014.Negative from 2015
Per capita Income	Negative	The associated trendline is relatively flatter in the central and eastern zones
Gross Secondary Enrolment Ratio	Negative	-

Unemployment rate

Unemployment rate was above the communal crime rate till 2016. However the latter was above the former in recent years.

As far as the relationship is concerned, as expected, there is a positive relationship between the two.

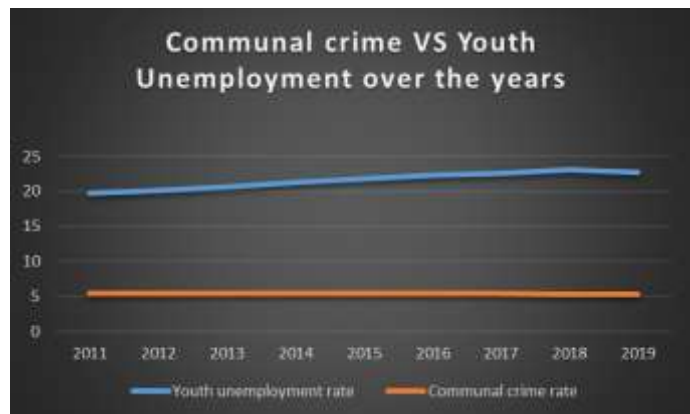


Youth Unemployment Rate

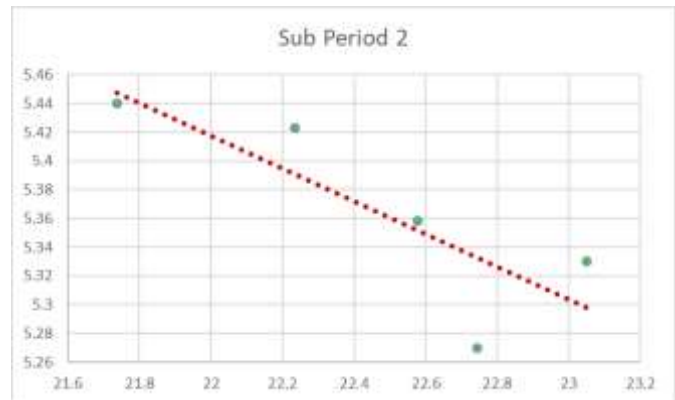
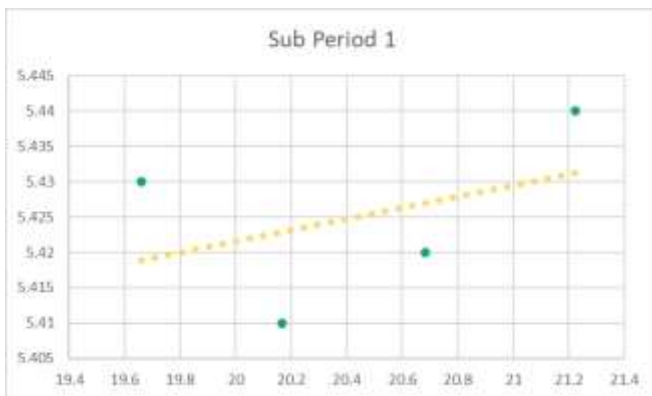
Youth Unemployment was always above unemployment and the gap between the two increased recently.

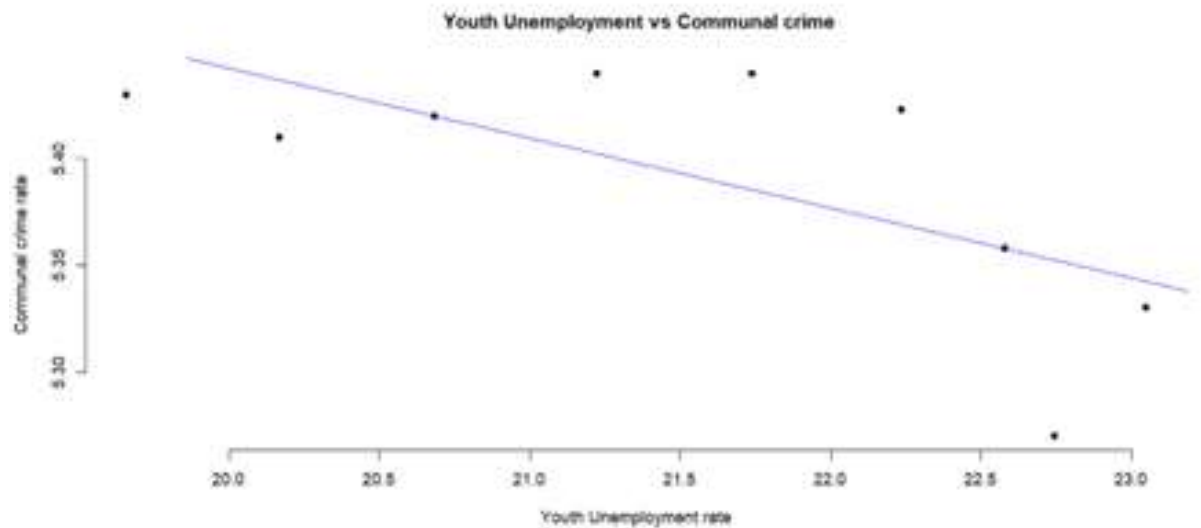
The relationship of communal crime and Youth unemployment is negative interestingly.

However, if we bifurcate the period of study (2011-2019) into two i.e., Sub-Period 1 (2011-2014) and Sub-Period 2 (2015-2019), the result aligns with our hypothesis for Sub-Period 1. The sudden dearth of communal crime rate in the recent years as cited by the data sources is the reason for the strong positive behaviour between the two variables in Sub-Period 2.



Since 2014, the riots of communal/religious nature are being reported separately under 'IPC Crimes against Public Order'. Prior to that, NCRB's crime in India categorized any riots under one larger head 'Riots', which also included Industrial, Political, sectarian, caste related etc. among others. Over this 4-year period, since the NCRB report has been categorizing the communal/religious riots separately and differently, the rates are reported and seen to be low.

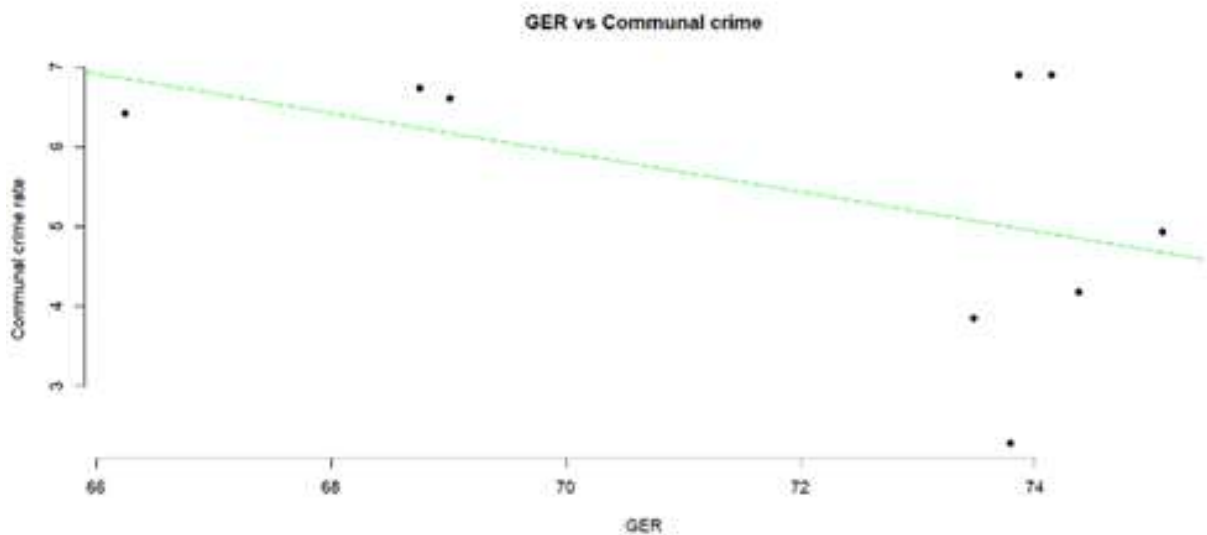




Gross Secondary Enrolment Ratio

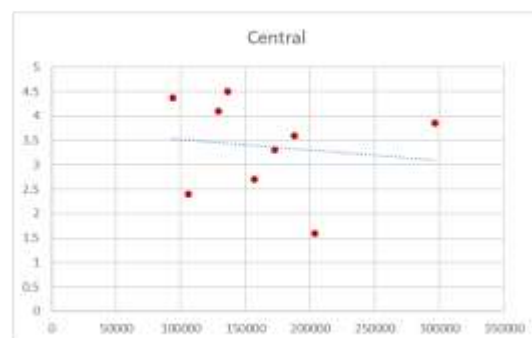
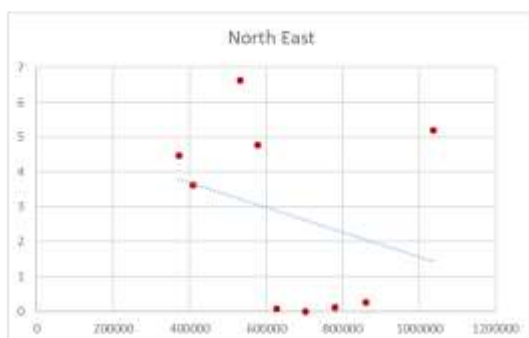
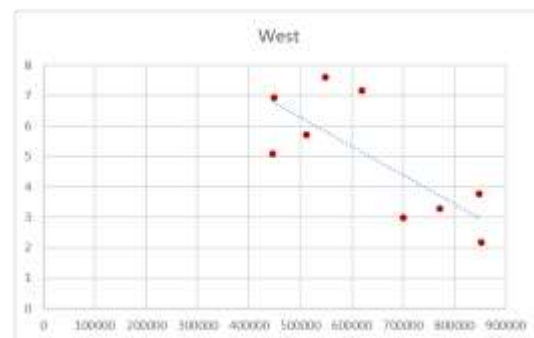
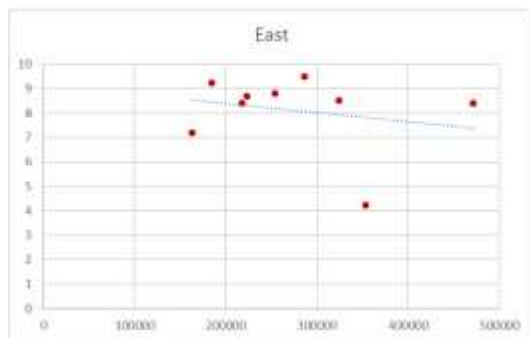
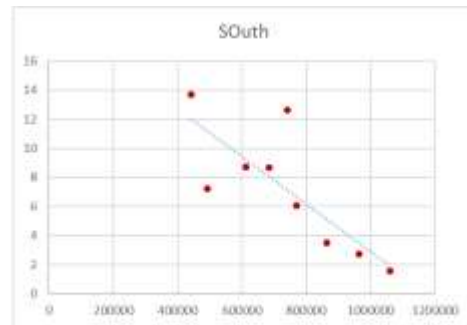
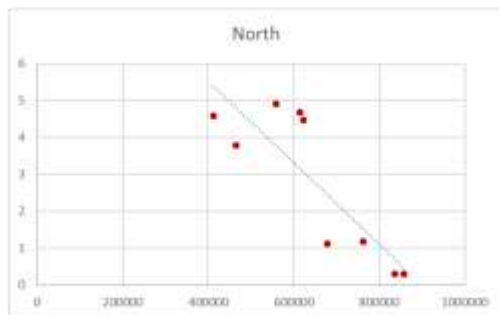
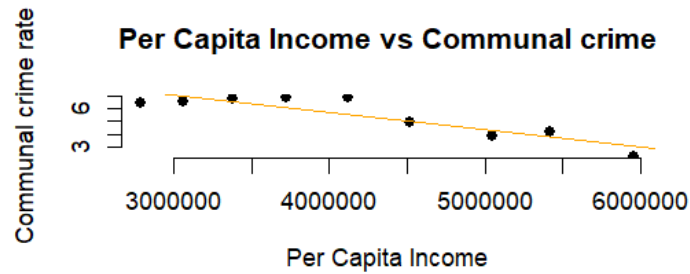
Following graph shows the trend of GER. Our country has seen a significant progress when it comes to enrolment.

GER exhibits a positive relation as expected



Per Capita Income

It shows a negative relation but the relation is relatively weak in case of eastern and central zones, probably due to the lower number of constituent states in these zones.



The various other plots and charts of analysis for the same are attached in the excel file.

SCOPE AND CONCLUSION

The project tries to measure the impact of socio-economic factors on crimes against women. This research can be enhanced by checking the impact of these factors on not just India as a whole, but also on a much-decentralised level so that appropriate policy recommendation suitable to the region be made. For instance, a state with an active communal disturbance might show a very strong positive relationship between unemployment and communal crime rate relative to other factors and hence the state may focus more on this factor to curb the menace.

Further research can be done by taking different indicators of these factors, with intersections of other social, cultural, and legal factors into account, such as conviction rates, reporting rates, political freedom, press freedom etc to check the relationship. The changes made in the criteria of including incidents under the head of riots under Section 152 of the IPC, 1860 from 2014 must be studied in a much intricate manner to get into the depth of the relationship in a more accurate manner.

The Cantor and Land (1985) model shows that unemployment and income can have both positive and negative relationships with crime rates. According to this concept, there are two different pathways through which unemployment's impact on crime develops. The first is the so-called "motivational impact," which holds that if a people's economic circumstances deteriorate, i.e., there are insufficient employment and incomes, it results in an elevated level of criminal motivation within that population. The second is the "opportunity impact," which holds that as economic situations worsen, people turn to routine, domestic tasks and, in the near term, have less access to public areas and social interaction, which reduces the likelihood that they will commit a crime. However, the study can be further enhanced to get more accurate results if a larger panel of data is considered.

Along with such quantitative aspects proper qualitative initiatives must be implemented without any agenda other than reducing such crimes in the name of God.

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