

# Theoretical Perspectives on a Murder Case in Kerala, India: A Criminological Analysis

Dr Vinod Kumar P N<sup>1</sup>, Abdul Rasak T<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Asst. Sub Inspector of Police

<sup>2</sup>Joint Director & HoD (Forensic Science), Kerala Police Academy, Thrissur, Kerala.

## Abstract

This study explores the tragic Soumya murder case, a horrific crime that took place on February 1, 2011, aboard a passenger train in Kerala. Utilizing criminological theories such as Routine Activity Theory, Situational Crime Prevention, and Reintegrative Shaming Theory, the research investigates the socio-economic and cultural factors that contributed to the incident. It examines the victim's vulnerabilities, systemic shortcomings that enabled the crime, and the behavioral profile of the accused, a repeat offender with a lengthy criminal record. The study emphasizes the importance of comprehensive crime prevention strategies, including improved security measures, rehabilitation initiatives, and gender-sensitive policies, to address systemic challenges and curb violence against women. Additionally, it highlights the crucial role of public awareness, community involvement, and robust legal frameworks in creating a safer and more just society.

**Keywords:** Soumya murder case, criminological theories, Situational Crime Prevention, Reintegrative Shaming Theory, gender-sensitive policies, violence against women, public safety, habitual offender, systemic failures.

## 1. Introduction

In recent years, India has experienced a concerning rise in crimes targeting young women, particularly those from economically and socially marginalized communities. Despite significant socio-economic changes driven by rapid urbanization and technological progress, these vulnerable groups continue to face disproportionate levels of violence and exploitation. Incidents of domestic abuse, sexual violence, and trafficking have increased, exposing persistent inequalities and systemic shortcomings. Factors such as poverty, limited educational opportunities, and entrenched patriarchal norms further exacerbate the vulnerabilities of these young women, placing them at greater risk of exploitation and perpetuating cycles of abuse and marginalization<sup>1</sup>.

Although legislative frameworks and policies are in place to protect women's rights, their effectiveness is often undermined by societal attitudes, weak enforcement, and structural barriers. This study examines trends in violence against young women from marginalized backgrounds over the past two decades, with a focus on variations in crime rates across different states. By analyzing contributing factors such as

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.ncrb.gov.in/>

socio-economic status, cultural dynamics, and gaps in legal protections, the research aims to provide actionable insights to inform policy development and drive societal change<sup>2</sup>.

As part of this broader analysis, the study explores the Soumya murder case, a widely publicized crime that occurred in Kerala on February 1, 2011. Using criminological theories, the research investigates the underlying factors contributing to such violent offenses and seeks to develop practical guidelines for prevention. By applying criminological frameworks, the study emphasizes their value in understanding the complexities of violent crimes and constructing effective strategies to address and reduce their occurrence<sup>3</sup>.

### 1.1 Research Objectives:

- **Examine the Socio-Economic and Cultural Influences on Crimes against Women.**
- **Assess the Applicability of Criminological Theories in Explaining Violent Crimes.**
- **Develop Evidence-Based Policy Recommendations for Preventing Crime.**

### 1.2 Scope and Relevance of the Study:

In recent years, there has been a troubling increase in crimes against young women from economically and socially marginalized communities, exploiting their heightened vulnerability. Evidence suggests that habitual offenders deliberately target these women, monitoring their movements in public spaces, on roads, at home, and in workplaces. These offenders carefully observe their routines, plan their actions, and commit crimes at opportune moments.

This study focuses on addressing the challenges faced by young women in Kerala, India, while enhancing the operational capabilities of the Kerala Police to prevent such crimes. By examining the socio-economic and psychological factors that render these women vulnerable, the research aims to identify proactive measures to reduce risks and empower law enforcement to take preventive action. Through the lens of criminological theories, the study proposes innovative strategies for crime detection and prevention.

It emphasizes the importance of public awareness campaigns to educate young women about potential dangers, encourages societal accountability in addressing the root causes of crime, and advocates for collective efforts to safeguard vulnerable individuals as if they were one's own. Ultimately, this research seeks to foster a safer environment for women and establish a more robust, responsive framework for law enforcement to effectively deter and combat crime.

## 2. Literature Review

**2.1 Rising Crimes against Women Over Two Decades: A State-Wise Analysis:** This study investigates the alarming rise in crimes against women in India over the past two decades. By analyzing state-wise data, it identifies trends, underlying factors, and potential strategies to address this growing issue. The research covers various forms of violence, including domestic abuse, sexual harassment, and human trafficking, offering a comprehensive review of the current situation and evolving patterns. (Ghai\*, 2024)

**2.2 Criminology: Theories, Patterns, and Typologies:** This book offers a comprehensive exploration of criminological theories and their applications in understanding crime

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<sup>2</sup> <https://www.ncrb.gov.in/>

<sup>3</sup> FIR Cheruthurauthi PS, Kerala, India.

patterns, including violent offenses. It examines both classical and modern frameworks, providing valuable insights into the dynamics of crime and violence within societal contexts. (Ph.D., 2015) **2.3 Evolutionary Theory and Violence against Women: A Criminological Perspective:** Published in the Criminal Justice Review, this article examines the applicability of evolutionary and sociological criminological theories to the phenomenon of violence against women. It highlights how these perspectives contextualize the motivations and societal structures that perpetuate gendered violence, offering a critical lens for understanding such crimes. (Daly, 1988)

### 3. Methodology

#### 3.1 Case Selection

This study focuses on a tragic and highly controversial murder case involving a young woman from a socially disadvantaged background in Kerala, which occurred on February 1, 2011.

#### 3.2 Data Sources

The research draws on multiple sources, including case diaries and reports from the Kerala Police, legal documents from the Sessions Court, Kerala High Court, and Supreme Court of India, media articles, as well as information obtained from investigating officers and secondary victims connected to the case.

#### 3.3 Analytical Framework

The study emphasizes analyzing various aspects and critical turning points of the case in establishing evidence through the application of criminological theories. This approach aims to provide deeper insights and foster a broader understanding of the case.

### 4. Case Study

#### 4.1 Case Background

This study investigates the tragic murder case that occurred in Kerala on February 1, 2011, aboard the Ernakulam Junction–Shoranur Junction passenger train (train number 56608), shortly after its departure from Vallathol Nagar railway station. The victim, a 23-year-old woman from a financially struggling family in Shoranur, worked in Ernakulam to support her younger brother and widowed mother. She regularly traveled between Ernakulam and Shoranur, relying on the passenger train for her commute. On the day of the incident, the victim boarded the ladies' coach at 5:30 PM to return home for her betrothal ceremony scheduled the next day. As the journey progressed, the train compartment gradually emptied, leaving her alone. The accused, Govindaswamy, a habitual offender, took advantage of her isolation after the train resumed its journey. He entered the women's compartment and attacked her. Despite her desperate resistance, she was violently assaulted, her head repeatedly slammed against the walls, leaving her unconscious<sup>4</sup>.

The accused then pushed her out of the moving train and followed her to the tracks, where he sexually assaulted her. After robbing her belongings, he left her severely injured and exposed near the railway track. Passengers in a nearby compartment heard her screams but failed to intervene. The victim's mutilated body was discovered later that evening by local residents and railway workers. She was rushed to the hospital but succumbed to her injuries. The case garnered widespread attention due to its brutal nature and the systemic failures in ensuring passenger safety. This paper uses criminological theories to

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<sup>4</sup> FIR Report of Kerala Police,(Cheruthuruthi PS, Thrissur District)

analyze the factors contributing to the crime, including the socio-economic context, the psychological profile of the offender, and the failure of bystanders to act. By examining this case, the study aims to highlight the structural, behavioral, and systemic issues that facilitate such heinous acts, offering insights into crime prevention and the effectiveness of justice delivery systems<sup>5</sup>.

## 4.2 Socioeconomic and Cultural Context

### Profile of the Accused in the Soumya Murder Case

The accused, Govindaswamy, also known as Govindachamy (referred to as Charlie Thomas in Tamil Nadu police records), was 30 years old at the time of the crime and hailed from Virudachalam, Cuddalore district, Tamil Nadu. Govindaswamy had a lengthy criminal history, having served eight prison terms across Tamil Nadu and Andhra Pradesh. At the time of this crime, he was also under trial for another robbery case.

On October 31, 2011, the Thrissur Fast Track Court, presided over by Judge K.N. Ravindra Babu, convicted Govindaswamy in the rape and murder of Soumya, a young woman from Kerala. The sentencing was postponed until November 4, 2011, after the public prosecutor presented evidence detailing his extensive criminal background. The court then sentenced him to death for his crimes.

The Kerala High Court upheld the trial court's verdict in a detailed 359-page judgment. However, the Supreme Court of India, in a ruling delivered by Justices Ranjan Gogoi, Prafulla C. Pant, and Uday Umesh Lalit, overturned the murder charge while retaining the rape conviction. The court sentenced Govindaswamy to seven years of rigorous imprisonment under Section 325 of the Indian Penal Code (IPC). The judgment stated that the victim's death was caused by a combination of injuries leading to anoxic brain damage, resulting from blood flow obstruction to the airways during the sexual assault. Regarding the second injury (a fall from the train), the court noted that it could not definitively prove that the accused pushed the victim from the train and allowed the possibility that she may have jumped voluntarily.

The Supreme Court maintained the life imprisonment sentence for rape, emphasizing the brutal and grotesque nature of the crime. It upheld the severity of the punishment as previously determined by the trial court and the High Court, with all sentences to be served concurrently.

## 5. Theoretical Analysis

### 5.1 Application of Criminological Theories

#### Criminological Analysis of the Soumya Murder Case

The tragic murder of a young woman aboard the Ernakulam Junction–Shoranur Junction passenger train on February 1, 2011, highlights significant failures in individual, systemic, and societal safeguards. Applying criminological theories helps to analyze the factors contributing to this crime and offers insights into preventing similar incidents in the future.

#### 5.1.1 Routine Activity Theory

Routine Activity Theory, developed by Lawrence Cohen and Marcus Felson, suggests that crimes occur when three factors converge: a motivated offender, a suitable target, and the absence of capable guardianship<sup>6</sup>.

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<sup>5</sup> FIR Report of Kerala Police, (Cheruthuruthi PS, Thrissur District)

<sup>6</sup>Cohen, L., & Felson, M. (1979). Routine Activity Theory. *American Sociological Review*.

- **MOTIVATED OFFENDER:** The accused, Govindaswamy, had a history of violent crimes, indicating a high likelihood of reoffending. His repeated criminal behavior was likely fueled by inadequate rehabilitation and monitoring in the justice system.
- **SUITABLE TARGET:** The victim, traveling alone in an empty ladies' coach, became an easy and vulnerable target due to her isolation. Her lack of immediate support or intervention further heightened her vulnerability.
- **ABSENCE OF CAPABLE GUARDIANSHIP:** The lack of security personnel on the train and the failure of fellow passengers to act created an environment where the crime could unfold without deterrence.

This theory underscores the systemic shortcomings, such as insufficient surveillance in train compartments and inadequate safety measures for women passengers.

### 5.1.2 Social Disorganization Theory

Proposed by Clifford Shaw and Henry McKay, Social Disorganization Theory examines how structural and environmental factors contribute to criminal behavior.

- **ECONOMIC MARGINALIZATION:** Both the victim and the offender came from economically disadvantaged backgrounds. The victim's reliance on public transport due to limited financial resources exacerbated her vulnerability. Similarly, the offender's repeated criminal activity may stem from socio-economic exclusion and lack of opportunities for education and employment.
- **COMMUNITY APATHY:** The failure of passengers who heard the victim's screams but did not intervene points to a breakdown in collective responsibility and moral accountability. This apathy reflects social disorganization, where individuals prioritize personal safety over communal well-being.<sup>7</sup>

### 5.1.3 Strain Theory

Robert Merton's Strain Theory posits that individuals engage in deviant behavior when they are unable to achieve societal goals through legitimate means. Govindaswamy's criminal history can be viewed through this lens. His persistent involvement in crime suggests frustration with societal expectations and his inability to achieve success within lawful boundaries. His actions may have been an attempt to exert control or achieve material gain through unlawful means<sup>8</sup>.

### 5.1.4 Bystander Effect and Diffusion of Responsibility

The inaction of passengers who heard the victim's cries can be understood through the psychological concept of the Bystander Effect, introduced by Bibb Latané and John Darley. This phenomenon occurs when individuals fail to act in emergencies, assuming others will intervene. In this case, the diffusion of responsibility among passengers in neighboring compartments allowed the crime to escalate without intervention. This highlights the need for public awareness campaigns that encourage proactive bystander intervention during emergencies<sup>9</sup>.

### 5.1.5 Labeling Theory

Howard Becker's LABELING THEORY examines how societal labels affect individual behavior. The label of "habitual offender" attached to Govindaswamy may have reinforced his criminal behavior. Once

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<sup>7</sup> Shaw, C. R., & McKay, H. D. (1942). Social Disorganization Theory. *Juvenile Delinquency and Urban Areas*.

<sup>8</sup> Merton, R. K. (1938). Strain Theory. *Social Structure and Anomie*.

<sup>9</sup> Bibb Latané and John Darley



labeled, individuals may internalize this identity, leading to continued criminality due to societal rejection or the lack of rehabilitation opportunities<sup>10</sup>.

### 5.1.6 Feminist Criminology

FEMINIST CRIMINOLOGY explores how gender dynamics and patriarchal systems contribute to crimes against women. The systemic neglect of women's safety on public transport highlights institutionalized gender inequality. The absence of preventive measures, such as security personnel in ladies' compartments, reflects the marginalization of women's safety in public policies.<sup>11</sup>

### 5.2 Key Findings from Criminological Theories

- **Enhanced Security Measures:** The deployment of security personnel and the installation of CCTV cameras in train compartments can act as deterrents to crime.
- **Rehabilitation Programs:** Comprehensive rehabilitation and reintegration programs for habitual offenders can help reduce recidivism.
- **Bystander Intervention Training:** Public awareness campaigns and training programs for passengers should emphasize the importance of intervention during emergencies.
- **Gender-Sensitive Policies:** Transport policies should prioritize women's safety by incorporating measures like dedicated help lines and panic buttons in train compartments.
- **Community Engagement:** Strengthening community vigilance programs can promote collective responsibility and moral accountability.

## 6. ANALYSIS THROUGH VICTIMOLOGY THEORY

The tragic case of Soumya, a 23-year-old woman who was brutally raped and murdered, can be analyzed through the lens of VICTIMOLOGY THEORY, which focuses on understanding the victim's role, vulnerabilities, and interactions within the socio-criminal framework. This approach offers critical insights into how specific circumstances, societal structures, and the dynamics between the offender and the victim contributed to the crime<sup>12</sup>.

### 6.1 Victim Vulnerability

Victimology underscores that certain individuals or groups are more susceptible to victimization due to their socio-economic or situational factors. In Soumya's case, her financial hardships made her reliant on public transportation, specifically passenger trains, which often lack proper security monitoring. Her decision to travel alone late at night in an empty compartment further heightened her vulnerability to predatory behavior. VON HENTIG (1948) highlighted factors like economic status, gender, and routine activities that increase the risk of victimization, all of which align with Soumya's circumstances.

### 6.2 Routine Activity Theory (A Subset of Victimology)

This case also aligns with ROUTINE ACTIVITY THEORY, proposed by Cohen and Felson (1979), which posits that crimes occur when three elements converge:

- **A Motivated Offender:** Govindaswamy, a habitual criminal, recognized Soumya's isolation as an opportunity to commit the crime.
- **A Suitable Target:** Soumya, alone in the ladies' coach, was an accessible and vulnerable target.

<sup>10</sup> Becker, H. (1963). Labeling Theory. *Outsiders: Studies in the Sociology of Deviance*.

<sup>11</sup> Chesney-Lind, M. (1989). Feminist Criminology. *Theoretical Criminology*.

<sup>12</sup> von Hentig, H. (1948). *The Criminal and His Victim: Studies in the Sociobiology of Crime*.

- **The Absence Of Capable Guardians:** The lack of passengers, security personnel, and active bystanders allowed the crime to unfold without deterrence<sup>13</sup>.

### 6.3 Societal and Systemic Failures

Victimology also highlights how systemic deficiencies contribute to victimization. Several failures were evident in Soumya's case:

- **Lack of Train Security:** The absence of surveillance or security personnel on passenger trains created an environment where crimes could occur with little risk of detection or intervention.
- **Bystander Apathy:** Passengers in nearby compartments who heard Soumya's screams but failed to intervene demonstrate societal tendencies to ignore critical situations, reflecting a breakdown in collective responsibility.
- **Structural Neglect:** Public transport systems, which largely cater to economically disadvantaged populations, often lack adequate safety measures, putting vulnerable individuals like Soumya at greater risk.<sup>14</sup>

### 6.4 Psychological and Socio-Economic Impact on the Victim and Family

Victimology theory also explores the broader consequences of victimization on both the individual and their family. Soumya's tragic death had profound emotional and financial effects on her widowed mother and younger brother, both of whom depended on her for support. The psychological trauma experienced by secondary victims, such as her family, underscores the wider societal costs of violent crimes.

### 6.5 Role of Secondary Victims

The theory of SECONDARY VICTIMIZATION is also relevant in this case. The prolonged legal process and the subsequent debates surrounding the accused's culpability—such as the downgrading of the murder charge by the Supreme Court—only worsened the family's distress. These delays often retraumatize victims' families, reflecting the inefficiencies in the justice system and its role in exacerbating their suffering.

### 6.6 Recommendations for Crime Prevention

Drawing from Victimology Theory, several preventive measures can be suggested:

- **Enhanced Public Transport Security:** Implementing CCTV cameras, increasing patrols by railway police, and strict monitoring of women's compartments could deter criminal activity.
- **Awareness Campaigns:** Educating the public on the importance of active bystander intervention could help prevent similar crimes.
- **Socio-Economic Support for Vulnerable Populations:** Providing better economic opportunities and social safety nets for disadvantaged individuals can reduce their exposure to high-risk environments.
- **Victim-Centric Policies:** Implementing faster, victim-sensitive judicial processes could alleviate secondary victimization and ensure swift justice.

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<sup>13</sup> <sup>13</sup> Cohen, L., & Felson, M. (1979). "Social Change and Crime Rate Trends: A Routine Activity Approach." *American Sociological Review*, 44(4), 588-608.

<sup>14</sup> Mawby, R. I., & Walklate, S. (1994). *Critical Victimology: International Perspectives*.

### 6.7 Conclusion


Analyzing Soumya’s case through the framework of Victimology Theory reveals how socio-economic vulnerabilities, systemic failures, and the motivations of offenders converge to create conditions ripe for victimization. Addressing these factors can help reduce the risk of similar crimes and ensure justice for victims and their families.

**Table 1 Soumya Murder Case and NCRB Data.**

Sl.	City	2020	2021	2022	Actual Population (in Lakhs) (2011)*	Rate of Total Crime against Women (2022)	Chargesheeting Rate (2022)
[1]	[2]	[3]	[4]	[5]	[6]	[7]	[8]
1	Agra	589	1093	962	8.0	119.7	76.7
2	Allahabad	625	454	496	5.6	88.4	82.1
3	Amritsar	227	292	226	5.5	40.8	79.1
4	Asansol	794	790	447	6.0	75.1	95.5
5	Aurangabad	670	757	834	5.7	146.5	81.2
6	Bhopal	1141	1442	2047	9.0	228.0	88.6
7	Chandigarh City	301	343	325	4.6	70.3	62.2
8	Dhanbad	354	346	297	5.6	52.9	66.4
9	Durg-Bhilainagar	484	538	589	5.2	113.6	78.1
10	Faridabad	1107	1303	1213	6.5	185.4	62.1
11	Gwalior	1135	1241	1128	5.1	219.8	88.8
12	Jabalpur	662	943	1039	6.0	171.9	79.1
13	Jamshedpur	367	389	330	6.4	51.5	78.6
14	Jodhpur	914	1070	1380	5.4	256.3	65.5
15	Kannur	107	418	370	8.9	41.8	93.3
16	Kollam	493	635	809	5.8	139.4	97.9
17	Kota	799	939	1090	4.7	231.1	61.2
18	Ludhiana	418	520	626	7.4	84.7	80.1
19	Madurai	228	272	283	7.3	38.8	90.0
20	Malappuram	300	401	401	8.9	45.1	91.3
21	Meerut	427	634	825	6.7	123.1	74.5
22	Nasik	477	405	550	7.4	74.5	76.1
23	Raipur	512	466	825	5.4	151.6	97.4
24	Rajkot	212	242	345	6.6	52.3	95.3
25	Ranchi	375	295	332	5.4	61.5	79.9
26	Srinagar	294	367	446	6.0	74.8	74.9
27	Thiruvananthapuram	395	508	591	8.7	67.8	94.0
28	Thrisur	463	690	822	9.8	84.0	93.3
29	Tiruchirappalli	87	194	110	5.1	21.4	93.2
30	Vadodra	354	238	218	8.7	25.0	93.1
31	Varanasi	646	733	534	6.7	79.2	83.1
32	Vasai Virar	610	845	1154	5.7	201.9	63.5
33	Vijayawada	971	1466	2366	7.4	319.5	94.5
34	Vishakhapatnam	1035	1890	1329	8.6	155.4	95.2
<b>TOTAL 34 CITIES</b>		<b>18573</b>	<b>23069</b>	<b>25339</b>	<b>226.0</b>	<b>112.1</b>	<b>82.7</b>

\* Crime Rate is calculated as Crime per one lakh of population.  
 \* Population Source : Registrar General of India Actual Population based on 2011 Census.  
 \* As per data provided by States/UTs.

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### 7. Discussion

#### 7.1 Implications for Criminology

The key findings of this study have significant implications for the development and validation of criminology theories:

**7.1.1. Validation of Routine Activity Theory:** The study reaffirms the crucial role of **Guardianship** in preventing crimes, as emphasized by **Routine Activity Theory**. The implementation of measures such as enhanced security, CCTV surveillance, and bystander intervention programs supports the theory’s assertion that reducing opportunities for offenders can effectively deter crime.

**7.1.2. Integration Of Situational Crime Prevention Strategies:** The findings align with the principles of **Situational Crime Prevention**, which advocates for modifying environments to reduce opportunities

<sup>15</sup> NCERB Data 2022 and Case Diary Cheruthuruthi PS, Kerala, India.



for crime. The emphasis on enhancing security in public transport settings highlights the practical application of this theory in real-world scenarios.

**7.1.3. Rehabilitation And Recidivism:** The study's recommendation for rehabilitation programs for habitual offenders supports **Reintegrative Shaming Theory**. By focusing on the reintegration of offenders into society, these findings align with criminology theories that promote restorative justice and aim to reduce recidivism rates.

**7.1.4. Bystander Apathy And Social Responsibility:** The critical role of bystander intervention underscores the importance of incorporating **Social Learning Theory** into crime prevention strategies. Educating the public about their responsibility in preventing crimes can foster pro social behavior and strengthen collective moral responsibility.

**7.1.5. Gender-Sensitive Policies And Feminist Criminology:** The focus on women's safety supports **Feminist Criminology**, which addresses how gendered power dynamics contribute to victimization. Implementing gender-sensitive transport policies, such as panic buttons and reserved compartments, can help reduce the structural inequalities that increase women's vulnerability.

**7.1.6. Community Engagement And Collective Efficacy:** The emphasis on community vigilance is aligned with **Collective Efficacy Theory**. Strengthening community responsibility and promoting moral accountability can enhance informal social controls and serve as a powerful tool in crime prevention.

**7.1.7. Contributions To Crime Prevention Frameworks:** The findings contribute to the validation of established crime prevention frameworks, such as the **Crime Triangle** (offender, target, and guardian). Practical applications, such as improved security and active community engagement, are key to reducing crime opportunities.

By analyzing the case through these criminological theories, the findings not only validate existing frameworks but also emphasize the need for an interdisciplinary approach to address the systemic and structural factors contributing to crime. This study serves as a foundation for refining theories and developing practical interventions that align with criminological principles.

## 7.2 Policy Recommendations

- 1. Strengthen Public Transport Security:** Implement measures such as deploying security personnel, installing CCTV cameras, and ensuring regular patrols, especially in isolated areas and during off-peak hours, to enhance public transport safety.
- 2. Introduce Comprehensive Rehabilitation Programs:** Establish targeted rehabilitation programs for habitual offenders, incorporating psychological counseling, vocational training, and community reintegration efforts to reduce the likelihood of reoffending.
- 3. Encourage Bystander Intervention:** Launch nationwide awareness campaigns and offer training on bystander intervention to empower the public to act effectively in emergency situations. Introduce incentive mechanisms to recognize proactive bystander actions.
- 4. Develop Gender-Sensitive Transport Policies:** Formulate transport policies prioritizing women's safety, including reserved compartments, helplines, and panic buttons connected to real-time monitoring systems to ensure quick responses to distress calls.
- 5. Promote Faster Justice Delivery:** Implement fast-track courts for cases involving violence against women to ensure timely justice and alleviate the trauma caused by prolonged legal proceedings for victims and their families.

6. **Increase Community Policing Efforts:** Strengthen community-policing initiatives to build trust and foster collaboration between law enforcement agencies and the public, ensuring safer public spaces.
7. **Enhance Victim Support Services:** Provide comprehensive support for victims and their families, including psychological counseling, legal aid, and financial assistance, to mitigate the impact of crime and aid in their recovery.
8. **Improve Safety Infrastructure On Trains:** Equip trains with advanced safety mechanisms such as emergency alarms, automated alerts for suspicious activities, and improved lighting in train compartments and stations.
9. **Regular Assessment And Monitoring:** Conduct regular audits of safety measures and policies to identify gaps and implement necessary improvements, ensuring that public safety systems evolve to meet emerging challenges.
10. **Introduce Offender Monitoring Systems:** Develop offender-tracking systems for released convicts with histories of violent crimes, integrating GPS monitoring and regular check-ins to prevent recidivism.

## 8. Conclusion

The Soumya murder case highlights the urgent need to address systemic vulnerabilities, socio-economic disparities, and cultural factors that perpetuate violence against women. By analyzing the case through criminological lenses, this study offers valuable insights into the structural, behavioral, and environmental dynamics that contribute to such crimes. It emphasizes the importance of comprehensive rehabilitation programs for habitual offenders, gender-sensitive safety measures, and efficient legal processes to deter violence and ensure justice.

The findings validate key criminological theories, including **Routine Activity Theory, Situational Crime Prevention, And Reintegrative Shaming Theory**, demonstrating their practical relevance in crime prevention. Recommendations for improved public safety, community engagement, bystander intervention, and targeted rehabilitation programs underscore the necessity of a multi-faceted approach to fostering safer and more equitable societies.

This study calls for collaborative action from policymakers, law enforcement agencies, and communities to tackle the root causes of crime and enhance justice delivery systems. By integrating these strategies into comprehensive policy frameworks, society can take significant steps toward reducing recidivism, empowering vulnerable populations, and preventing preventable acts of violence.

"You must be the change you wish to see in the world."<sup>16</sup>

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<sup>16</sup> Mahatma Gandhi, *the Collected Works of Mahatma Gandhi*, Volume 3, p. 320.

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