



**Awareness about Acid
Attack on women in
India**

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Abstract

This paper has been written to reflect the burning issue that plagues India as a nation and that is 'Acid attack'. Women, Children and men are all affected by this, but predominantly women. These attacks reflect the poor thinking and thought process of the individuals and in some cases reflects their fragile ego which is crushed when a girl refuses their proposal and becomes a victim of this heinous crime. A vitriol attack damages not only a lady's face but also crushes her soul from within. Those who have been a prey to this crime, many a times close themselves up from the society and isolate themselves which impacts their mental health as well. I deem that it is very necessary to talk about this issue and highlight it. Hence, I have selected this topic for my research

Introduction

An acid attack, also called acid throwing, vitriol attack, or vitriolage, is a form of violent assault involving the act of throwing acid or a similarly corrosive substance onto the body of another "with the intention to disfigure, maim, torture, or kill". Perpetrators of these attacks throw corrosive liquids at their victims, usually at their faces, burning them, and damaging skin tissue, often exposing and sometimes dissolving the bones. Acid attacks can often lead to permanent blindness.

The most common types of acid used in these attacks are sulphuric and nitric acid. Hydrochloric acid is sometimes used, but is much less damaging.

Aqueous solutions of strongly alkaline materials, such as caustic soda (sodium hydroxide), are used as well, particularly in areas where strong acids are controlled substances.

The long term consequences of these attacks may include blindness, as well as eye burns, with severe permanent scarring of the face and body, along with far-reaching social, psychological, and economic difficulties.

Today, acid attacks are reported in many parts of the world, though more commonly in developing countries. Since the 1990s, Bangladesh has been reporting the highest number of attacks and highest incidence rates for women, With 3,512 Bangladeshi people acid attacked between 1999 and 2013, and in India acid attacks are at an all-time high and increasing every year.

Although acid attacks occur all over the world, this type of violence is most common in South Asia. The UK has one of the highest rates of acid attacks per capita in the world, according to Acid Survivors Trust International (ASTI).

In 2016 there were over 601 acid attacks in the UK based on ASTI figures, and 67% of the victims were male, but statistics from ASTI suggest that 80% of

victims worldwide are women. Over 1,200 cases were recorded over the past five years. From 2011 to 2016 there were 1,464 crimes involving acid or corrosive substance in London alone.

History

Acid has been used in metallurgy and for etching since ancient times. The rhetorical and theatrical term "La Vitrioleuse" was coined in France after a "wave of vitriolage" occurred according to the popular press where, in 1879, 16 cases of vitriol attacks were widely reported as crimes of passion perpetrated predominantly by women against other women. Much was made of the idea that women, no matter how few, had employed such violent means to an end. On October 17, 1915, acid was fatally thrown on Prince Leopold Clement of Saxe-Coburg and Gotha, heir to the House of Koháry, by his distraught mistress, Camilla Rybicka, who then killed herself. Sensationalising such incidents made for lucrative newspaper sales.

The use of acid as a weapon began to rise in many developing nations, specifically those in South Asia. The first recorded acid attacks in South Asia occurred in Bangladesh in 1967, India in 1982, and Cambodia in 1993. Since then, research has witnessed an increase in the quantity and severity of acid attacks in the region. However, this can be traced to significant underreporting in the 1980s and 1990s, along with a general lack of research on this phenomenon during that period.

Research shows acid attacks increasing in many developing nations, with the exception of Bangladesh which has observed a decrease in incidence in the past few years.

Causes

Most of the acid attack cases which are caused in India are due to the chauvinistic attitudes of males in India which causes them to have fragile ego. When this ego is disrupted or insulted in any manner the perpetrator throws acid on the body and face of the victim.

A. Frustrated:

This condition would lead the individual to either Dejection or Hostility because of claim disappointments. Individual may mean to overcome by disappointment and feels to help out his own advancement. This may wind up with extreme vengeance. Relationships, Additional Conjugal Relationship, Unfaithfulness, Ex-Accomplice Cruelty and so forth. The vast majority of the

women focused thus as the reprisal, deforming her for all time would ruin her whole life.

B. Egoistic:

This sort of behaviour is extremely hurtful; this can be seen as "Objectification" of Women and Male-controlled Predominance. Individual when he neglects to accomplish great connection or closeness may cause genuine sort of animosity swings into to do assault by pouring corrosive. A proposal to be engaged, Love recommendations, physically stalking, coercion, persuasively tries to build closeness.

C. Seductive:

This condition is exceptionally criticised in the societal perspectives. To increase sexual favour, sexual ill-treating. In the event that anybody flops in this, He will assault on her body, with a specific completion motive to deform her for all time.

Impact Of Acid Attack On The Victims

Most commonly available acids used to attack victims are hydrochloric, sulphuric, or nitric acid, which quickly burns through flesh and bone. Acid attacks cause immediate damage, disfigurement, pain, and long lasting medical complications for victims. Acid can melt away a victim's skin and flesh, going as far as dissolving bones. The burned skin dies, turning black and leathery, and severe scarring results.

It takes 5 seconds of contact to cause superficial burns and 30 seconds to result in full-thickness burns. After the attacks, victims are at risk of breathing failure due to the inhalation of acid vapours which cause either a poisonous reaction or swelling in the lungs. In the weeks or even months after the attack, acid burn victims may suffer from infections, which can also cause death if not treated properly.

Psychological Impact

Acid Assaults are the most frightful act against human body particularly to make harm on the body and in addition rationally the victims of these kinds of incidents will suffer lot through their life with so much of agony. Psychologically

the assessment of acid victims especially women victims should be deliberated all over the world to make awareness and to aid victims.

1. Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder:

This issue can be influenced by the people the individuals who neglect to recover from the experience of horrendous circumstances,. Corrosive victims appallingly get influenced in the most the cases, because of their inclination. Acid victims terribly get affected in the most the cases, due to their proneness. Acid attacks are such offences where the victim's cognitive experience pushes them into the traumatic conditions. Victims often suffer from tragic memory. There are two kind of PTSD occurs, chronic a profound impact of the cognitive memory and the other one is acute, where the memories are very short. Usually women victims are more prone to this kind of disorders. The affected person may feel severe fear of culprits and the events may further lead them into be lonely or hatred-ness towards such acts.

2. Obsessive Disorder:

This disorder can be seen in the person mind set who suffer from repeated thought of particular traumatic event. Victims who develop such obsessive disorder may suffer themselves by cursing; also there are chances of developing the hatred-ness, revenge attitudes towards culprits because of those mentally imaged memories.

3. Frustration:

It creates in the victims of corrosive assaults by reviling themselves since they met a sad condition.

4. Body Dimorphic Disorder (BDD):

Acid victims of BDD suffer about their looks, about their appearance. It's difficult to feel in the event that they get harmed to their body. Particularly in women they can't control emotions and get discouraged and stressed of their condition. Here victim may feel they can't confront society and social circumstance. That additionally may make them feel such variety of issues. They endure in disguising, contrasting themselves with others, consistent checking in mirror, makes them distress.

5. Misandry:

This regularly found in women, it hatred towards men and young men. This is due to objectification of women for sexual lust. The victims who develop misandry feel much furious and dread.

Literature Review

“Animosity towards Acid Attacks - Critical Study on Acid Victimization” by Chandrashekar.S.V and Eldo Johny. This paper deals with the hatred or animosity that the general public has towards the heinous crime of acid attack/vitriol attack. It assess criminal behaviour of the perpetrators and motives, along with the outcomes and the kind of laws made to combat acid attacks while proving composition to the victims. What struck me most about the paper was the fact that it highlighted the psychological damage that the victim incurs. This paper uses the Explorative Descriptive method for research which is what my paper is aimed at.

“Acid Attack and Women in India: A Critical Analysis” by Chinmaya Kumar Mohapatra and Hiranmaya Nanda. This paper deals with the law aspect of acid attack. It discusses the past and present scenario in terms of law, prior to 2013 there were no laws related to acid attack. The Criminal Law (Amendment) Act. 2013 resulted in insertion of sections 326A and 326B for specifically dealing with acid violence. It also mentions treatment free of cost, to the victims of any offence covered under section 326A, 376, 376A, 376B, 376C, 376D or section 376E of the Indian Penal Code and shall immediately inform the police of such incident. It also deals with preventive measures that the government has used to avert acid attack incidents.

Methodology

The Objectives of the study

- To analyse and explicate the problems of Acid Victimization.
- To create awareness about acid attack amongst the public
- To analyse the number of acid attacks taking place over the years

Methods:

- The motivation behind this investigation is to examine the animosity towards acid victimisation along with full filling the objectives stated above. This analysis receives the Explorative Descriptive methods. This data gathered through the secondary source from the organisation Acid Survivors Foundation India. This is a retrospective observational, analytical study of acid attack victims
- Using social media campaigning as a way to spread awareness

- Instagram
- Youtube
- Facebook
- Twitter

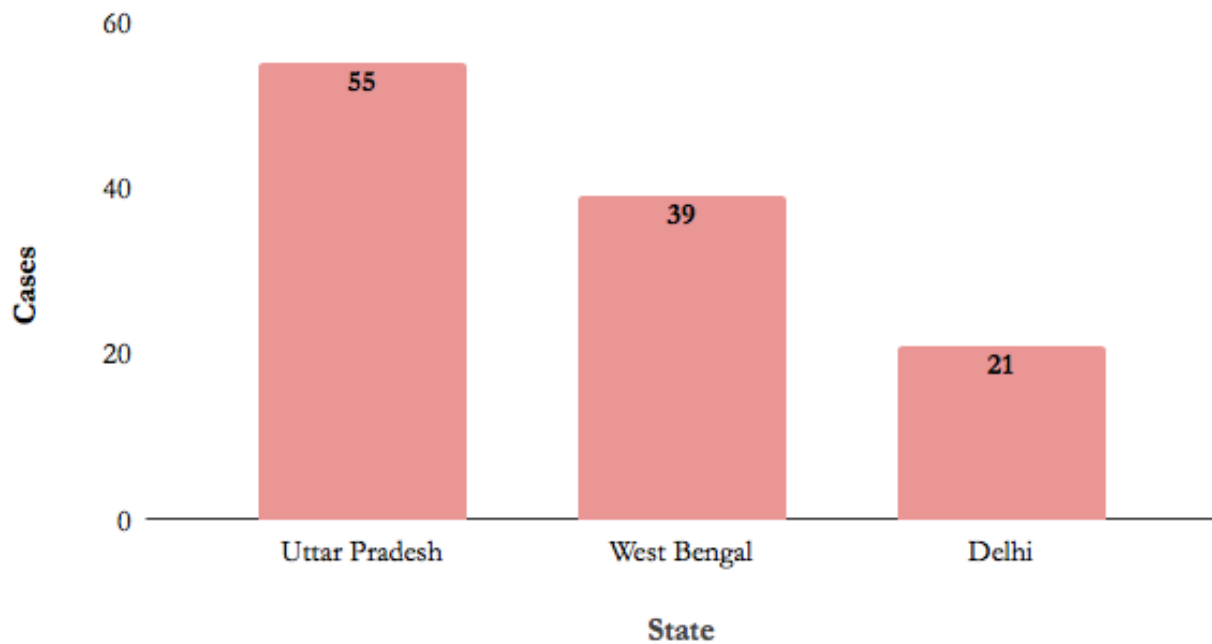


Acid attacks from 1999 to 2018:

Period	Number of incidents	Number of persons attacked			
		Women	Men	Children	Total
1999	165	70	25	72	167
2000	240	114	32	94	240
2001	351	133	91	128	352
2002	494	236	137	123	496
2003	417	209	121	90	420
2004	326	193	65	75	333
2005	222	154	71	52	277
2006	183	136	58	30	224
2007	162	113	48	38	199
2008	142	94	55	35	184
2009	129	93	44	22	159
2010	122	90	38	32	160
2011	91	63	30	25	118
2012	71	50	22	26	98
2013	69	44	28	13	85
2014	56	37	20	13	70
2015	60	41	24	10	75
2016	45	35	10	7	52
2017	40	31	9	9	49
2018	15	9	4	6	19

Source: Acid Survivors Foundation India (Statistics).

States With Highest Acid Attacks



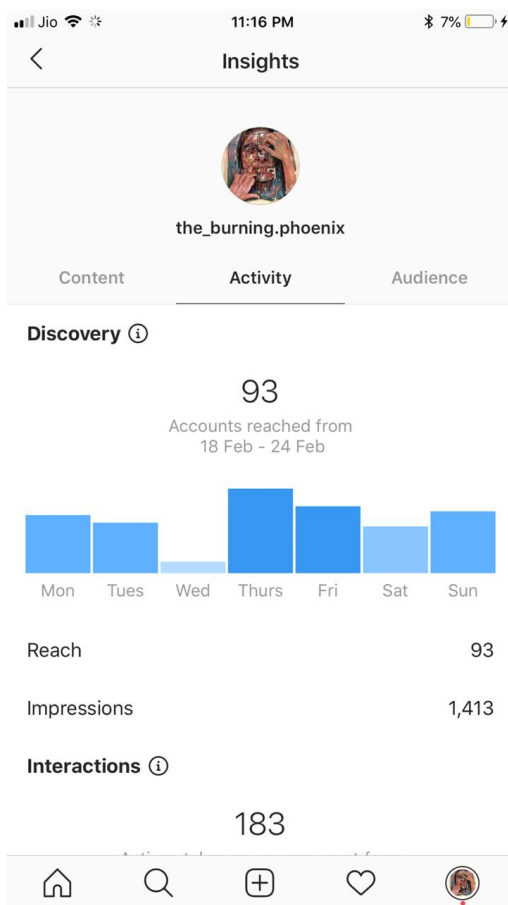
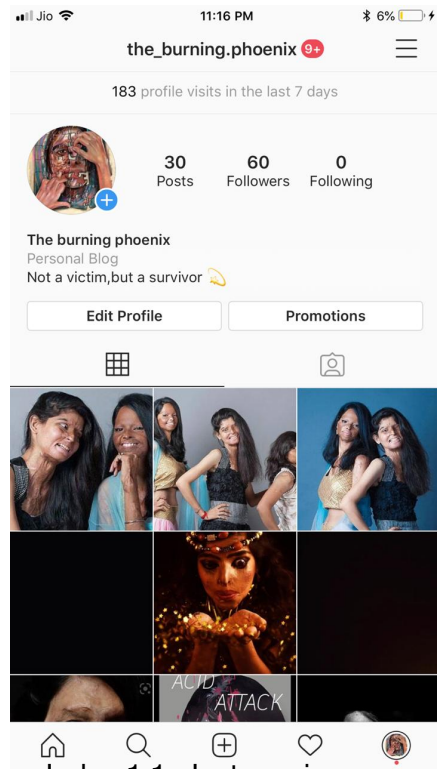
Source: Archive of Indiaspend 2015 (Statistics).

The above numerical understandings demonstrate the event of occurrences from 1999 to 2018. This interpretation includes all the states of India including Union Territories of India. As per the data, Maximum number of acid attacks in India all occurred in the year of 2002 which 496, out of which 236 are women which is the highest ever in the span of 19 years. Over the years a change can be seen as the number of acid attack victims decrease with the least being in 2018. Thoroughly as per the figures, Over 3,777 people were attacked including men, women and children from 1998-2018. Amongst the 3,777 victims, women amount to 1,945. The offence extent varies each year, yet the 2011 and in the time of 2012 no distinction by any stretch of the imagination. Among every one of the states, Uttar Pradesh stands most surprising crime event amongst all the three states with 55 cases in 2015 incidents. Besides the condition of West Bengal has announced 39 violations by and large in that year, taking after that Delhi as a Union territory stood third most noteworthy acid assault crimes. Strangely among all the Union territories, Delhi alone has high crime rate. While Arunachal Pradesh, Mizoram, Andaman Nicobar, Daman and Diu, D&N Haveli, Lakshadweep are never seen any acid assault incidents.

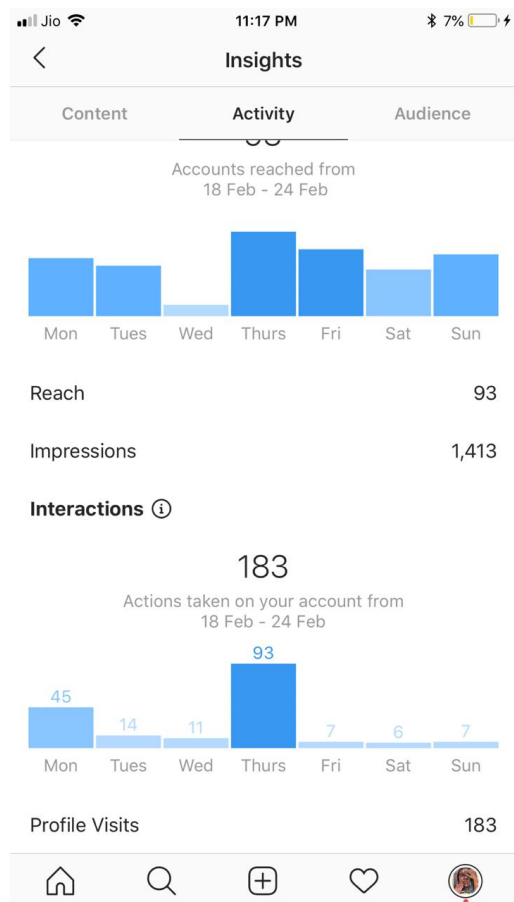
Social Media Campaigning

Instagram

- Insta handle :
@the_burning.phoenix
- No. Of posts : 30
- No. Of followers : 62
- This platform is widely used by the youth



Index 1.2: Insights of discovery



Index 1.3: Insights of Interactions

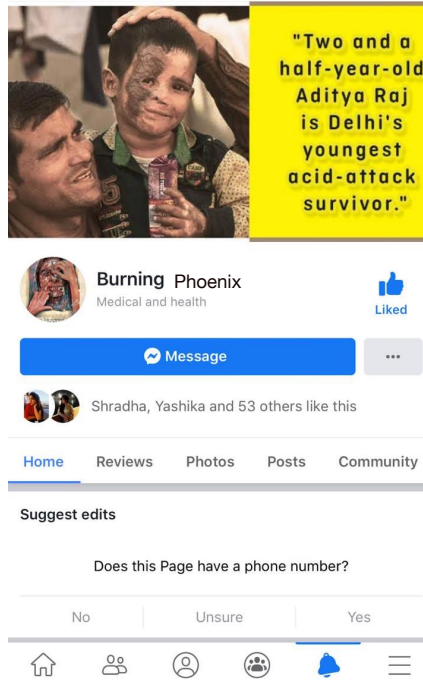
Youtube

It includes a poem written by avantika vital in Hindi and Urdu called 'Hausla'
 It's a poetic narrative on the rising of the acid attack victims. It is heartfelt.

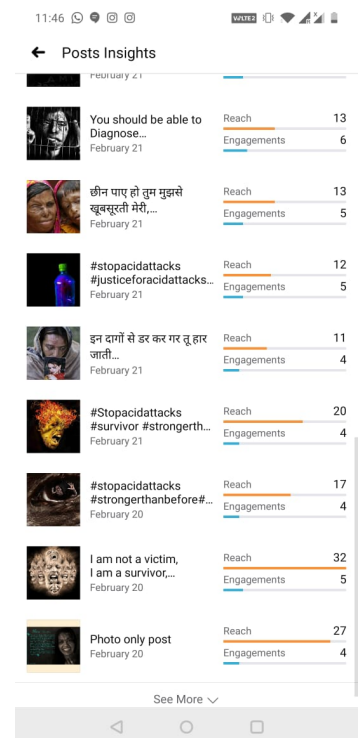
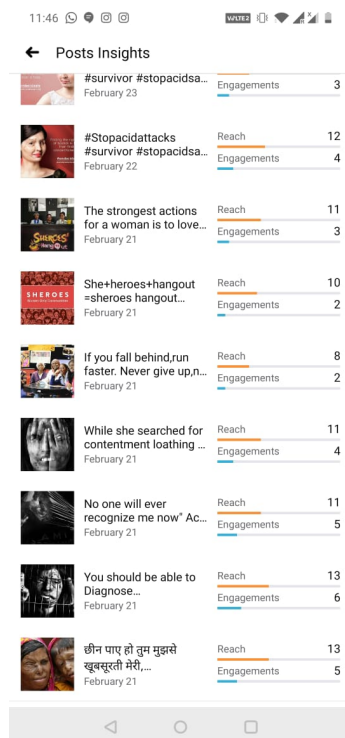
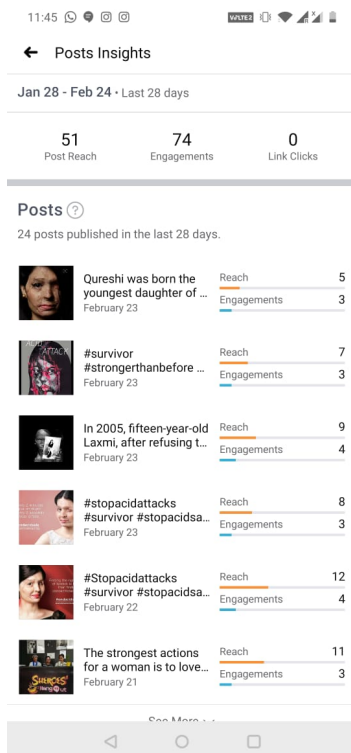
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mtZ_HhMiDvE&t=40s

Facebook

- Fb page name: Burning Phoenix
- No. Of follows and likes : 55
- No. Of posts : 24



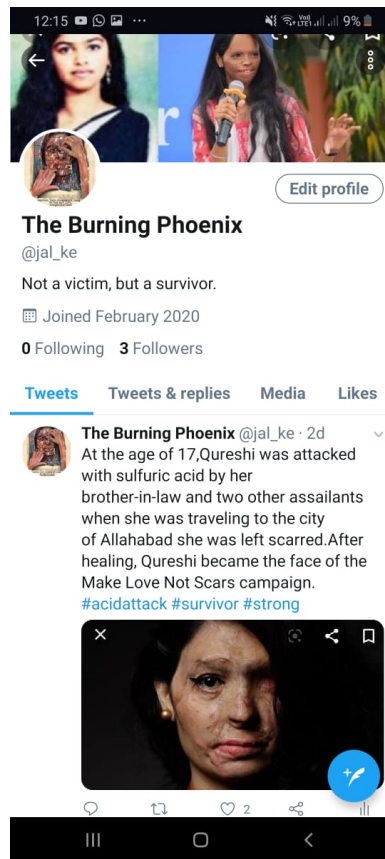
Index 2: Facebook main page



Index 2.1: Post insights

Twitter

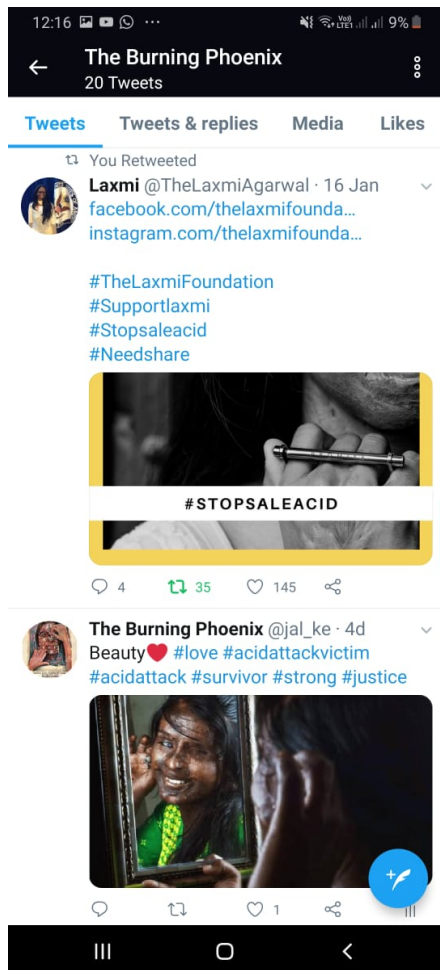
- Twitter handle : jal_ke
- No. Of followers: 3
- No. Of posts : 20



Index 3: Twitter main page



Index 3.1: Tweets to stop acid attack



Index 3.2:Retweets of celebrities and activists



Findings and Suggestions

The findings of the study,

1. The size of the Corrosive assaults occurrences is in unsafe condition to direct the wrongdoings. Still, it is expanding subsequently we require a decent approach with inflexible punishment with no hesitancy.
2. The crime incidents in Northern states are less in numbers, might be because of the male chauvinistic attitudes and low literacy rate. In the other parts of India the amount of attacks are less.
3. In terms of the social media campaign, according to **index 1.2** the social media page 'the_burning.phoenix' made its reach to 93 accounts with 1,413 impressions. In **Index 1.3** there are about 183 reaches within one week.
4. As people love music and art, the method of a poetic video helped reach the masses.
5. In terms of **Index 2.1**, the posts have reached 51 accounts and has made 74 engagements in a span of 28 days from 28th jan to 24th feb.
6. In terms of the twitter indexes, the twitter account isn't a very popular means of social media which I gathered. Hence, we weren't successful in spreading awareness amongst the youth as much as we could with the other forms of social media platforms available.

Conclusion

The Vitriolage are intense offences, the reported incidents and the size of the offence demonstrate that the crime occurrences are expanding each year; still, there are some sure potential outcomes of Dark figures of crime. The greater part of the rural areas are going unreported because of different reasons, maybe the crime incidents are less. The strict control on the drug dealers and the chemical suppliers might help to combat these issues. And the strategy of highest punishments would impact population to not do such offences. There is need of good Victim survey's at the governmental level as well.

It was found that In the past 19 years from 1998-2018 there have been 3,777 victims of acid attack. The numbers are decreasing every year as laws are changing and people are becoming more aware about the issue of vitriol attack and the pain caused to the victim. From the data, it clearly indicates that Uttar Pradesh has the highest number of acid attacks each year with Delhi, the capital of India coming in the 3rd place.

The social media campaign also indicated that people are aware about the issue but, its extent is not too far and wide. The awareness can be increased amongst people regarding the laws, the damage and the aftermath of the attack.

References

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- Animosity towards Acid Attacks - Critical Study on Acid Victimization- International Journal of Trend in Scientific Research and Development (IJTSRD)
- Acid Attack and Women in India: A Critical Analysis - Chinmaya Kumar Mohapatra and Hiranmaya Nanda
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- Data Archive- Indiaspend