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## SERIAL KILLERS: A DETAILED STUDY

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### INTRODUCTION

The crime of murder has been known in our society since the beginning of the 1760s. Historians who have done extensive research on the subject of murder have found evidence of murders taking place in ancient Rome and progressing through the centuries.

Serial killing is something we have often heard about it in different movies or in criminal shows or books which are based on true criminal stories. Serial killing is witnessed by people of USA most of the times. The people of USA have now witnessed 3000 and more cases of serial killings till date & still counting.

Serial killers is defined as a person or an individual who basically murders 3 or more people in a period of over month with cooling down time between murders.

One of the first known examples in modern times of what could be described as a serial killer was Jack the Ripper, who killed and maimed five prostitutes in the East End of London in 1888 (Wilson, 1990). The term serial killer became commonly used in American society in the 1980s when law enforcement officials began classifying different types of murder.

### **The FBI: The Federal Bureau of investigation**

FBI in its report have discovered that most of these serial killers are involved in sexual contact with the victims. The FBI have also stated that the main reason behind serial killing is anger, thrill, seeking financial gain and attention seeking and all these gives them a lot of pleasure. Most of the time these killers follow or tend to follow a particular pattern to murder their victims. The targeted victims have something in common in them such as appearance, gender, race, etc.

The crime statistics and exports In the field of serial murder killers predict that still 30% to

50% serial killers are still active across the world because multiple homicides frequently occur in a manner that does not really indicate that part of a pattern.

Research has shown that there is an increase in the number of murders that have occurred in the second half of 20<sup>th</sup> century. The field of psychology and law continues to research for a pattern of behaviour that can help mental health in identifying characteristics of these serial murderers through interviews and evaluation.

## **PURPOSE OF THE STUDY**

The main purpose of the study is to provide a review and critical analysis of the research and literature which is related to the known patterns of behaviour of serial murderers and to examine aspects of the criminal mind related to serial killers can share the findings with a professor in the field of forensic psychology.

## **TYPES OF SERIAL KILLERS:**

### **1] ORGANISED SERIAL KILLERS:**

These are the first born children in the family and have experienced inconsistency in parental discipline. These types of serial killers are highly intelligent and have an IQ level more than a normal person. They tend to change their jobs and towns very often.

### **2] DISORGANISED SERIAL KILLERS:**

These serial killers are the youngest children of the family and have experienced harsh parental discipline, and are average in terms of intelligence. They are socially and sexually incompetent and highly emotional and prefer to be alone and stay near crime scenes after committing a crime to gain satisfaction.

### **3] SPREE CRIME**

This type of killer kills again and again and murder is associated with other crimes especially when we talk about robberies. Spree murder is a single event with 2 or more locations and has no emotional cooling-off period between murders.

#### **4] PSYCHOPATHIC SEXUAL SADIST**

These types of serial killers feel pleasure from sexual torture and murder someone after or before involving them with sexually. An example of such kind of serial killer is Ted Bundy.

#### **5] CANNIBALISM**

Cannibalism means consuming human flesh. These kinds of serial killer kill humans and consume the flesh of these dead people or eat their body organs.

#### **6] PSYCHOTICS**

These killer have delusions that drive them to commit crime and they believe that they are defending themselves from someone who wants to harm them or they believe that they are chosen by divine being to save the world from their victims.

#### **7] ORGANISED CRIMES:**

These killers are made up professionals for killing and also known as hitman. they often kill for money but also they enjoy the power and control over victims.

#### **8] CULT**

Cult is a label that is used to describe certain religious groups who kill people because they do not follow the religion in a systematic way.

#### **9] MASS KILLERS**

This type of killer is defined as an event in which a person kills more victims at one time & one place.

#### **ATTRIBUTES OF SERIAL KILLERS**

- Most of the time serial killers are male.
- They are intelligent and have high IQ level.

- The work life is very poor and they often work as unskilled individuals.
- According to a survey it's been observed these killers have gone through mental trauma as a child commonly.
- Commonly they have been abused as a child psychologically, physically or sexually and are abused often by a family member.
- They also have high rates in attempting suicides.
- They're always into those activities which are very negative or saddest or tormenting small creatures.

## **PHASES OF SERIAL KILLERS**

### **1] AURA PHASE**

In the aura phase, a person begins to distance himself from social relationships. It is starting to drift away from reality to some extent. Sometimes this situation is not noticed by family and friends and last for an unpredictable time. Fantastic thoughts begin to gain weight. In most cases, these thoughts manifest as violent sexual thoughts or other violent fantasies. Again, in a person, the use of substances in this process can intensify the use of alcohol.

### **2] TROLLING PHASE**

This stage usually involves the process of forming an idea of the potential victims. Usually, serial killers go through the process of finding victims where they know or feel comfortable to deal with.

However, there is also a tendency to determine where they commit the crime, perhaps dealing with the body.

This search can take days or even months to find the right candidate. The killer may use certain patterns to track the victim in his search.

### 3] FLIRTING PHASE

In the flirting phase, the killer focuses & tries to gaining the trust of his victim. Typically, this stage is used by more daring, planned and socially developed killers.

The killer tries to socialise with the victim. Once trust is gained, the killer takes the victim to a quiet and pre-planned area and takes action.

### 4] CAPTURING PHASE

As the name suggests, this is the stage where the killer fully reveals his true intentions. Again, the methods used in the capture phase can be chosen to make the assassin enjoy the action more.

### 5] MURDERING PHASE

At this point, the killer is actually performing the ritual in his own way. Sometimes it can be accompanied by prolonged torture and necrophilia, while sometimes it leads to sudden death. Torture before killing and postmortem intercourse is a common ritual, especially among sadistic killers.

Organised killers often accept extended periods of torture and death. A murderer may enjoy the pre-torture and post-mortem intercourse more than the murder itself. Also, in this process, the killer may use various methods of torture such as electricity. Once the torture ritual is complete, the killer finally kills his victim

### 6] TOTEM PHASE

After the murder and other actions in this phase, the killer experiences a huge decline. Somehow he wakes up from his fantasy. In fact, these ups and downs are believed to be the key driving force for the killer to create the ritual. At this point, it is common to receive souvenirs from the victim. Memories such as clothing, a body part, photos, videos or jewellery are commonly used.

The purpose of the souvenir is to get rid of the experienced fall by repeatedly remembering the moment of the murder and the ritual.

## 7] DEPRESSION PHASE

In this final stage, the killer tends to decide on his next murder. Because the killer is having a major emotional breakdown. This collapse can last for days, weeks, even months.

Sometimes the killer compares the way he committed the crime to murders in TV movies and feels discontent.

The depression phase is so intense that the killer sometimes does not even feel the strength to commit suicide. But after a while, the killer returns to the fantasy world and begins another cycle of murder.

This move always leads the killer to become more violent and professional. Killer feels the need to improve his rituals.

The process continues until they are caught or commit suicide. Serial killing is a type of addiction.

## **WHAT MAKES A PERSON SERIAL KILLER??**

Unlike normal people, serial killers are quite charming. They appear to be one of us, but they are not. Not only do they have a motive to kill someone, but they are also manipulative and aggressive. But what are the reasons behind this? How does a man turn into a serial killer? Now let's look at the causes of serial killers.

The study found that every serial killer has in common problems with emotional development and above average intelligence.

**Pregnancy:** Doctors say that a baby in the womb hears everything the mother hears and experiences few of the emotions that the other experiences. If a woman is so stressed, depressed or any other emotion, then the baby experiences the same. It can be reflected not only in the growth of the child in the womb, but also affects its mental growth, which can lead to many mental disorders.

**Childhood:** Most serial killers experienced childhood bullying and loneliness. It is said that they commonly had dyslexia which makes them less focused in their studies. They also experienced abnormal weight, height, etc. due to which they were bullied and ignored by their

peers. There are also serial killers who have experienced sexual abuse, and harassment that leads them to any mental disorders.

**Parenting:** Parents of serial killers also ignored, bullied, yelled at, etc. Their parents tend to be alcoholics who drink and force their children to engage in the same activity. Some parents are workaholics who do not properly monitor and pay attention to their child, even when they try to contact him. At worst, few parents abused their children physically, mentally and sexually.

**Chromosomes:** Recent studies have shown that a person's chromosomal abnormality can cause them to become serial killers. For example, if someone is born with an extra X or Y chromosome, this can lead to an abnormality.

**Fantasy:** We humans have our own fantasy but we know our reality but serial killers tend to live in their own fantasy every second. Their emotions are designed by their fantasies. They are controlled by their imagination. They just follow their imagination and do whatever their imagination tells them to do.

**Sadist:** Few people are addicted to hearing pain, sadness, screaming, etc. Their emotions are mixed. They would like to see blood. There are serial killers who have a habit of having intercourse with the dead body of the person they killed. This is an extreme level of sadism.

**Mission:** These serial killers are not psychotic. They would have missions that are mostly immoral and illegal. Their guilt and their own pressure to complete the required task leads them to do aggressive things.<sup>1</sup>

**Lust:** Sexual satisfaction is the main goal of these killers. Serial killers who kill for lust want to have complete control and dominance over their victims. So to ensure that they have control over their victim, they kill them.

## **FAMOUS SERIAL KILLERS CASES IN INDIA**

### **1] AUTO SHANKAR CASE**

A man named Shanker used to drive an autorickshaw & was involved in transporting illegal

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<sup>1</sup> C Amirdha varshini, 'serial killers in India (15 July 2020) [www.legalservice.com](http://www.legalservice.com) accessed on 16 nov,2022.

liquors around the states.

Shankar's name was added to the list of serial killers in the year 1980s & within 6 year he was arrested in Chennai in 1988. and during interrogation, he revealed that he was inspired by cinema and by different kinds of true crime-based books and he got influenced by them a lot. he killed 9 teenage girls along with many politicians and somehow escaped but again, he was arrested in madras and was hanged till death.

## 2] DEVENDRA SHARMA CASE

Devendra Sharma was an Ayurvedic medical who killed around 30 to 40 people. The reason behind the killing was that he used to steal cars and he used to kill the drivers of those particular cars. He continued stealing cars & killing drivers for a very long time later on he was arrested & was hanged till death.

## 3] SURENDRA KOHLI VS STATE OF UP

A businessman named Mohinder Singh and his helper Surendra Kohli was arrested in a village known as Nithari. Police discovered skulls in the backyard of Mohinder Singh's house. Before discovering the skulls many complaints of missing children were filed. These skulls were of those missing children.

They were blamed for Rape, cannibalism & organ trafficking. The main accused in the nithari killing i.e Surendra Kohli was awarded the death penalty by a special CBI court in Ghaziabad.

Mohinder Singh was charged with additional 4 Murders & trial is still going on for the same.

## **FIRST WOMEN SERIAL KILLER**

The Registrar General v. Mallika (2012)

Aa serial killer named Cyanide Mallika was convicted by the Karnataka High Court. This serial killer befriended the temple-visiting women to later entice them to go with her to an empty place where she served these women some poisonous food. She then stole all the valuable jewellery from these dead bodies. During the investigation, the police found all the jewellery originally belonging to the deceased with this serial killer. The court awarded life imprisonment to Cyanide Mallika in this case.



## **JUVENILE KILLER**

### **AMARDEEP: THE YOUNGEST SERIAL KILLER:**

Amardeep was the youngest serial killer of India. He was only 8 years old when he committed all the Murders & he was arrested from Begusarai. he killed 6-year-old girl cousin, his own 8-month-old sister and also 6-month-old khushbu who was the neighbour's daughter.

Amardeep's family knew about his murders but they didn't inform the police but later when he killed khusbhu, her parents complained about it to the police after asking the reason behind the killing, Amardeep just gave a smile & didn't say anything about it. He was later sent to juvenile home.

## **FAMOUS SERIAL KILLER IN USA**

### **1] TED BUNDY**

Ted Bundy was an American rapist, serial killer, and kidnapper. He became famous for attacking and killing girls and young women in the 1970s. He confessed to killing 30 people shortly before he was executed. There are several circumstances in Buddy's case that indicate the presence of mental disorders.

After killing the young women in a remote location, he would often revisit the scene for several hours. During these visits, he performed sexual acts on decomposing dead bodies. He would repeatedly perform these heinous sexual acts on dead bodies until they were completely decomposed or eaten by wild animals.

### **2] JEFFREY DAHMER**

A serial killer who preyed on his victims. One of the most famous serial killers of all time is Jeffrey Dahmer. No one dares to forget how he lures his victims from public places to his apartment. Dahmer would put them in chains, drug them and strangle the life out of them. Right after that he ate some parts of their bodies and the remains were left in his apartment. Dahmer did this in the 1970s to 1990s in the Milwaukee area.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>2</sup> Serial killers globally, "(14 Nov,2022) [www.ivyoanda.com](http://www.ivyoanda.com) accessed 16 nov,2022.

On July 22, 1991, he was arrested because one of his victims got away with a possible murder. Finally, in February 1992, Dahmer was sentenced to a total of 15 life sentences. This was after he confessed to all 17 murders. He did not live to see all those years in prison, as he died in 1994 from beatings in prison.

### **The insanity defence**

Section 84 of the Indian Penal Code, 1860 deals with the general defence of unsoundness of mind to protect the accused from prosecution for any offence. It was included in the code to protect individuals on grounds of legal insanity. The criminal code's insanity clause was taken from the McNaughten rules, which were set out in the landmark common law case of *R v M'Naghten* (1843). This case enumerates certain rules which are considered in deciding the case of insanity clause in India. These rules include:

- An individual is presumed to be sane to have sufficient reason to be responsible for a crime until proven otherwise.
- The person who commits the act must be suffering from a "disease of the mind".
- If the person is aware of the nature of the crime, then he knows the illegal nature of the crime

These are some of the principles that need to be met in order to prove the legal insanity of an individual in a court of law to avail the general defence of insanity in India.

### **Indian Criminal Jurisprudence**

In India, the position of the concept of serial killing is based on the western ideas about the same, as they believe that serial killers exist only in other countries. The Indian Penal Code of 1860 has no exclusive provision for serial killers, but is limited to the offence of murder.

### **Criminal provisions on murder**

The crime of murder, the highest form of crime in India, under Section 300 of the Code section

302 of the Code stipulates the punishment for the crime of murder.<sup>3</sup>

## **RESEARCH QUESTION**

1. How Has Modern Technology and Criminology Made It More Difficult for Serial Killers to Remain at Large?

There is one huge difference between today and, say, 20 years ago. Cameras are Everywhere. In stores, outside stores, in cars, on the street, at ATMs, in people's homes, outside their homes, plus almost all of us carry one with us with our cell phones. It's much harder to catch someone and know that no one saw or noticed it. Find someone on the Internet? You left a mark. Our world is extremely interconnected now, it's much harder to pull off the kind of massive serial killer that people like Dahmer or Bundy did.

We tend to catch people before they get into a lot of kills. We still have a lot of serial killers; they just have a much harder time now than they did 20 years ago.

- 2] Can Modern Therapies Available for Sociopathic and Psychopathic Disorder Set Serial Killers to Rights?

Dr Blackwood explains that psychopaths do not fear the pain of punishment and are not bothered by social stigma. Psychopaths are oblivious to society's expectations and reject the condemnation of their criminal behaviour. According to Blackwood and others, callous and cold psychopaths simply do not respond to punishment the way normal people do. As a result, adult psychopaths in prison are much more difficult to reform or rehabilitate than other criminals with milder or no antisocial personality disorders.

- 3] How Does a Serial Killer Differ From a Maniac?

What differentiates them is the timing and number of murders. Serial killers commit murders over a long period of time and often in different locations, while mass murderers kill in a single location and time frame.

- 4] Is It Possible to Diagnose a Would-Be Serial Killer?

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<sup>3</sup> Yash Singhal, serial killer: a comprehensive study (August 20,2020) [www.blogileader.com](http://www.blogileader.com) accessed 16 Nov, 2022.

Contrary to popular belief, psychopaths are not considered mentally ill. According to the APA, psychopathy is a personality disorder exhibited by people who use a combination of charm, manipulation, intimidation, and sometimes violence to control others to satisfy their own selfish desires. It is estimated that approximately 1 percent of the adult male population in the US are psychopaths.

### **Conclusion**

Serial killers differ from one-off criminals in many ways. Deeper analysis and investigation by the police and other relevant authorities is needed to find connections or links between multiple murders based on the pattern of killings or evidence found at the crime scene.

The FBI has identified different types of serial killers. There is a different criminal jurisprudence for each country when it comes to serial killers, with a common consensus on the inclusion of psychopathy within the scope of insanity and thus the legal protection of those who suffer from it. There have been several serial killers in the past, and perhaps an equal number of them would be roaming the world.