

Domestic Violence Law in India: A Critical Evaluation of the Protection of Women from Domestic Violence Act, 2005 in Light of NCRB 2024–25 Statistic

Dr. Vidya Shaktawat¹, Faculty of Law, Madhav University, Pindwara, Sirohi.
Dr Neelu Shaktawat², Faculty of Humanities and Social sciences, Madhav University, Pindwara, Sirohi.

Abstract Domestic violence remains one of the most widespread violations of women's human rights in India, transcending socio-economic, cultural, and geographical boundaries. The introduction of the Protection of Women from Domestic Violence Act, 2005 signified a major shift in Indian legal jurisprudence, moving from a solely punitive criminal law approach to a comprehensive civil protection framework that prioritizes victim safety, dignity, and rehabilitation. This legislation acknowledges domestic violence in various forms, including physical, emotional, sexual, verbal, and economic abuse, thus broadening the legal interpretation of violence within intimate and familial relationships. This research article critically analyses the effectiveness, implementation, and socio-legal impact of the Act, considering recent statistical trends released by the National Crime Records Bureau (NCRB) for the years 2024–25. The NCRB data indicates that cruelty by husbands or relatives remains the most significant category of crimes against women, underscoring the ongoing disparity between legislative protection and actual circumstances. While the rise in reporting suggests an increase in legal awareness and empowerment among women, systemic issues such as under-reporting, procedural delays, insufficient institutional support, and a lack of Protection Officers continue to hinder the Act's effectiveness.

The study employs a doctrinal and analytical research methodology, integrating statutory analysis, judicial interpretation, policy evaluation, and empirical crime statistics. It posits that the Domestic Violence Act serves as a progressive rights-based tool that aligns with constitutional guarantees of equality, dignity, and personal liberty. Nevertheless, achieving sustainable success necessitates enhanced institutional coordination, gender-sensitive law enforcement, digital complaint mechanisms, and initiatives aimed at socio-economic empowerment. The paper concludes that domestic violence in India is not merely a legal issue but a structural social problem requiring integrated responses involving law, governance, welfare policies, and societal transformation. Strengthening implementation mechanisms alongside awareness and support systems remains essential to achieving substantive gender justice and ensuring meaningful protection for women within domestic spaces.

Keywords: Domestic Violence, Women's Rights, PWDVA 2005, NCRB Report, Gender Justice, Protection Orders, India.

1. Introduction

Domestic violence constitutes one of the most enduring and intricate issues facing modern societies globally. In spite of considerable legal reforms, social advancements, and an increasing awareness of human rights, violence within domestic settings continues to impact millions of women, often concealed by cultural traditions, financial dependency, and institutional silence. In India, domestic

violence has traditionally been regarded as a private family issue rather than a public legal matter. The shift from social invisibility to legal acknowledgment signifies a crucial milestone in the evolution of gender justice jurisprudence.

The introduction of the Protection of Women from Domestic Violence Act, 2005 (PWDVA) marks a pivotal moment in the legal history of India. Before this law was enacted, the remedies accessible to women were predominantly fragmented and punitive. Criminal provisions, such as the cruelty by husband under Section 498A of the Indian Penal Code, addressed only particular types of violence and necessitated evidence of severe cruelty, often deterring victims from pursuing legal recourse. These provisions were devoid of preventive measures, emergency relief options, and rehabilitative support systems essential for the effective protection of victims. Nevertheless, domestic violence transcends mere physical assault. It includes emotional manipulation, verbal degradation, sexual coercion, economic deprivation, psychological intimidation, and social isolation. Women often endure these forms of abuse within intimate relationships where dependency and power disparities hinder their ability to resist. Acknowledging this reality, the 2005 Act established a rights-based civil protection framework, shifting the emphasis from punishing the offender to safeguarding, dignifying, and empowering the victim.

The enactment of civil remedies under the Act has significantly transformed the legal approach to domestic violence. Rather than compelling women to immediately pursue criminal charges, the law permits victims to seek protection orders, residence rights, financial support, custody arrangements, and compensation for emotional or physical injuries from a Magistrate. Notably, the legislation affirms a woman's entitlement to live in the shared household regardless of ownership or title, thus addressing a prevalent vulnerability among survivors—homelessness following the reporting of abuse.

Another progressive aspect of the Act is its expansive interpretation of domestic relationships. The law provides protection not only to women who are legally married but also to those in relationships akin to marriage, as well as mothers, sisters, daughters, widows, and other female individuals residing within a domestic environment. This comprehensive definition embodies the constitutional commitment to equality and dignity as enshrined in Articles 14, 15, and 21 of the Constitution of India.

Despite this progressive framework, domestic violence remains alarmingly widespread. Data released by the National Crime Records Bureau (NCRB) consistently categorizes cruelty by husbands or relatives as the predominant type of crime against women in India. The NCRB reports for 2024–25 indicate not only a continuous rise in reported cases but also reveal deeper structural issues that contribute to domestic violence, such as patriarchal social norms, economic disparities, lack of awareness, and institutional constraints. These statistics underscore a paradox: while India has robust legislative protections, violence within domestic settings persists at alarming rates. The ongoing issue of domestic violence must be contextualized within India's socio-cultural landscape. Traditional family structures often emphasize preservation of marriage over individual autonomy, leading many women to tolerate abuse due to societal pressure, fear of social stigma, or concern for children's welfare. Economic dependence further restricts the ability of women to escape abusive situations is a significant concern. Women in rural areas, in particular, encounter obstacles such as a lack of legal knowledge, restricted access to judicial systems, and insufficient institutional support frameworks. The Domestic Violence Act seeks to tackle these issues through a comprehensive institutional framework that includes Protection Officers, Service Providers, shelters, medical services, legal assistance, and judicial oversight. The integration of social welfare organizations with the judicial system illustrates an interdisciplinary strategy that merges law, social work, and public administration. Nevertheless, the

practical application of this Act has faced difficulties, including inadequate appointments of Protection Officers, poor inter-agency coordination, procedural delays, and a lack of awareness at the grassroots level.

The significance of the Act has further evolved in the current digital era. New forms of domestic violence increasingly encompass technological control, monitoring of communication devices, financial surveillance via digital platforms, and online harassment within intimate relationships. Although the law was established before the advent of widespread digitalization, courts have dynamically interpreted its provisions to encompass psychological and economic abuse that occurs through electronic means. This progressive interpretation highlights the Act's capacity to adapt to shifting social contexts from a constitutional standpoint, domestic violence is now recognized not merely as a personal dispute but as a breach of fundamental rights. The right to live with dignity, bodily integrity, and personal freedom imposes a duty on the State to safeguard individuals from violence, even in private settings. As a result, the Domestic Violence Act represents the State's acknowledgment that true equality cannot be achieved without ensuring safety within the home.

Moreover, the Act aligns India with its international human rights obligations, particularly concerning global treaties that address discrimination and violence against women. International discourse increasingly recognizes domestic violence as both a development issue and a human rights concern affecting public health, economic productivity, and social stability. India's legislative response through the PWDVA demonstrates an effort to harmonize domestic law with global gender justice standards. The increasing number of reported incidents, as indicated by NCRB statistics, can also be viewed as a reflection of heightened awareness and empowerment rather than simply an escalation of violence. Today, women are more inclined to seek assistance from legal institutions, police authorities, and support organizations. However, the rise in reporting exerts additional pressure on the justice delivery system, highlighting the necessity for expedited adjudication, trained personnel, and victim-friendly procedures. In recent years, discussions surrounding policy have focused on a victim-centric and restorative justice approach. Legal scholars and practitioners advocate for the integration of domestic violence remedies with welfare initiatives such as financial assistance programs, employment training, psychological counselling, and community-based support systems. This integration acknowledges that legal protection alone cannot disrupt cycles of abuse unless it is accompanied by socio-economic empowerment.

This research study places the Domestic Violence Act within this broader socio-legal framework, exploring not only statutory provisions but also their practical effectiveness through empirical data and policy evaluation. By analysing NCRB 2024–25 trends in conjunction with judicial developments and implementation challenges, the study aims to assess whether the law has achieved its intended goals of protection, prevention, and empowerment. Ultimately, the matter of domestic violence raises essential questions regarding justice, equality, and the role of law in transforming social relations. The effectiveness of the Domestic Violence Act relies not solely on legislative text but also on societal acceptance, institutional commitment, and ongoing reform. Therefore, understanding the law through contemporary data and lived experiences is crucial for enhancing gender justice and ensuring that the promise of legal protection translates into genuine safety and dignity for women throughout India.

2. Historical Background of Domestic Violence Law in India

The evolution of domestic violence legislation in India has been gradual, emerging from various provisions found in both criminal law and personal law statutes prior to the establishment of the

Protection of Women from Domestic Violence Act, 2005 (PWDVA). Before 2005, the legal framework that addressed domestic abuse was predominantly punitive and reactive. The existing laws mainly concentrated on penalizing offenders after acts of violence had taken place, rather than focusing on the prevention of abuse or offering immediate protection and rehabilitation for victims. Consequently, women experiencing violence in domestic settings frequently found themselves without accessible civil remedies that could guarantee their safety, rights to residence, and economic stability.

A pivotal advancement in tackling domestic cruelty was the introduction of Section 498A of the Indian Penal Code in 1860, which was enacted in 1983. This provision made cruelty by a husband or his relatives a criminal offense, encompassing harassment related to dowry demands and actions that could lead a woman to suicide or inflict severe physical or mental harm. Although Section 498A marked a significant legal reform at the time and recognized domestic cruelty as a serious crime, it was hindered by several structural shortcomings. The requirement for initiating criminal prosecution often deterred victims, who feared social stigma, familial pressure, and protracted legal proceedings. Furthermore, it did not offer immediate shelter, protection of residence, or financial assistance to the affected woman. The law also inadequately acknowledged psychological abuse, emotional distress, or economic deprivation as distinct forms of violence, thus limiting its efficacy as a protective measure.

In a similar vein, the Dowry Prohibition Act of 1961 was enacted with the intention of eradicating dowry-related harassment and violence against married women. While the legislation sought to address the deeply rooted social custom of dowry, its enforcement remained feeble due to widespread societal acceptance and the under-reporting of offenses. Legal action typically occurred only after significant harm had been inflicted. Another legal remedy available before 2005 was Section 125 of the **Code of Criminal Procedure, 1973**, which allowed women to claim maintenance from husbands who neglected or refused to support them. Although this provision offered financial assistance, it failed to tackle domestic violence directly or guarantee protection from ongoing abuse. Maintenance proceedings were concentrated solely on economic survival, neglecting safety, dignity, or rehabilitation. Consequently, Indian law has historically regarded domestic violence mainly as a criminal offense rather than a breach of fundamental human rights. The lack of civil protection orders, residence rights, counselling support, and institutional assistance underscored a considerable legislative void. Driven by international human rights commitments, especially the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW), India enacted the Protection of Women from Domestic Violence Act, 2005. This Act represented a significant transformation by acknowledging domestic violence as a human rights issue and introducing civil remedies aimed at providing immediate protection, securing residence, offering economic relief, and restoring dignity for women in domestic relationships.

3. Key Features of the Protection of Women from Domestic Violence Act, 2005

The Protection of Women from Domestic Violence Act, 2005 signifies a pivotal change in Indian gender justice jurisprudence by establishing a comprehensive and victim-centered legal framework designed to prevent domestic abuse and ensure the protection, dignity, and rehabilitation of women in domestic settings. In contrast to previous fragmented legal remedies, the Act employs a holistic approach that integrates civil relief, institutional support, and constitutional safeguards. One of the most significant features of the Act is its comprehensive and inclusive definition of domestic violence as specified in Section 3. The legislation recognizes domestic violence not merely as physical assault but as a complex form of abuse that encompasses physical violence, sexual abuse, verbal and emotional abuse, economic deprivation, and dowry-related harassment.

The Act acknowledges that violence can manifest through psychological intimidation, humiliation, restriction of financial resources, or deprivation of essential needs, thus recognizing mental trauma and economic control as actionable forms of violence. This broadened definition represents a crucial doctrinal advancement in Indian law by shifting focus from visible physical harm to the acknowledgment of invisible psychological suffering. The Supreme Court in *V.D. Bhanot v. Savita Bhanot* clarified that the Act is applicable retrospectively in cases where domestic violence commenced before 2005 but persisted thereafter, thereby providing wider protection to victims. Another vital aspect of the legislation is the civil nature of the remedies introduced under the Act. Historically, complaints of domestic violence were primarily handled through criminal prosecution, which often deterred victims due to concerns about social stigma and protracted legal processes. The Act diverges from this punitive model by emphasizing the immediate safety and welfare of the aggrieved woman. It empowers courts to issue protection orders that prevent the respondent from committing further acts of violence, residence orders that secure housing rights, monetary relief to cover expenses and losses, custody orders for children, and compensation orders for mental or physical injury. These remedies focus on restoration and protection rather than solely on punishment. In *Kunapareddy v. Kunapareddy Swarna Kumari*, the Supreme Court confirmed that proceedings under the Act are primarily civil in nature, even though procedural enforcement adheres to criminal law mechanisms, thereby underscoring the importance of civil remedies in addressing domestic violence.

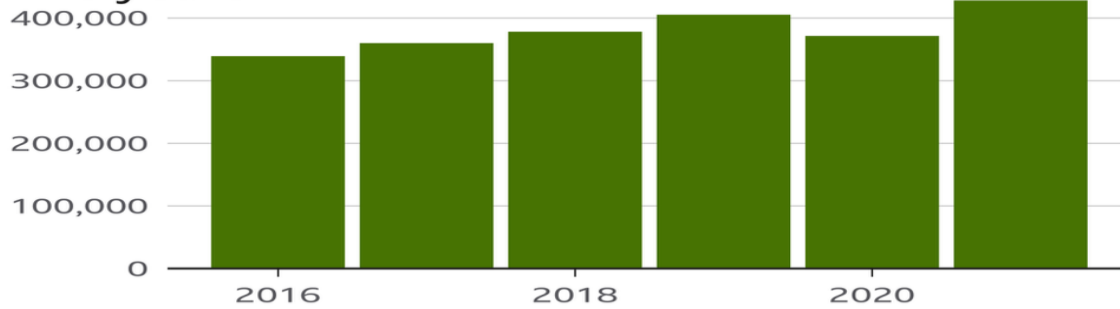
A groundbreaking provision established by the Act is the entitlement to reside in the shared household. Traditionally, numerous women were compelled to vacate their matrimonial residences upon reporting instances of abuse, rendering them susceptible to homelessness and financial instability. The Act acknowledges a woman's right to inhabit the shared household regardless of ownership or proprietary claims. This provision guarantees that housing security cannot be denied solely based on the property being owned by the husband or in-laws. The Supreme Court's pivotal ruling in *Satish Chander Ahuja v. Sneha Ahuja* significantly broadened this protection by overturning previous restrictive interpretations and affirming that residence rights are a fundamental aspect of women's dignity and legal protection. Equally significant is the institutional framework established under the Act, which embodies a cohesive and multidisciplinary strategy for tackling domestic violence. The legislation introduced Protection Officers tasked with aiding victims and ensuring the enforcement of court orders, recognized Service Providers that offer counselling and legal assistance, mandated the provision of shelter homes and medical services, and empowered Magistrates to conduct expedited proceedings to deliver immediate relief. This framework transcends mere courtroom adjudication by integrating social welfare institutions into the justice delivery system. Judicial interpretation further reinforced this institutional framework in *Hiral P. Harsora v. Kusum Narottamdas Harsora*, where the Supreme Court invalidated the limitation that restricted respondents to adult male individuals, thereby broadening accountability to all offenders within a domestic relationship and enhancing the protective reach of the Act. Taken together, these features demonstrate that the Protection of Women from Domestic Violence Act, 2005 is not merely a statutory reform but a transformative legal instrument aimed at ensuring substantive equality, personal security, and human dignity for women within domestic spaces.

4. NCRB 2024–25 Data Analysis: Domestic Violence Trends

Data published by the **National Crime Records Bureau** highlights significant realities. Incidents of Crimes Against Women (NCRB Data 2016–2021)

The following figure represents incidents of crimes against women in India based on National Crime Records Bureau (NCRB) statistics between 2016 and 2021.

Incidents of crimes against women highest in 6 years



Source: National Crime Records Bureau (2016-2021)

BBC

Source: National Crime Records Bureau (2016–2021), Government of India.

5. Largest Crime Category and Reporting Trends

Cruelty inflicted by husbands or relatives remains the predominant category of crimes against women in India, representing approximately 29–31 percent of all registered cases. Recent statistical data shows that nearly 4.48 lakh incidents of crimes against women have been documented, with a crime rate of 66.4 per 100,000 women. Nonetheless, there exists a significant disparity between the actual occurrences and the reported cases. The NFHS-5 survey indicates that around 29.3 percent of married women have faced spousal violence, underscoring considerable under-reporting attributed to social stigma, economic dependency, and familial pressure. Consequently, the increase in reported cases illustrates a dual reality: the ongoing prevalence of gender-based violence alongside heightened legal awareness and a growing willingness among women to seek legal recourse for protection and justice.

6. Socio-Legal Impact of the Protection of Women from Domestic Violence Act

The Protection of Women from Domestic Violence Act (PWDVA) has initiated substantial socio-legal changes by reclassifying domestic violence as a violation of human rights rather than merely a private family issue. The Act has enabled quicker access to judicial remedies, broadened the availability of legal aid and counselling services, and introduced economic relief mechanisms designed to assist survivors. The rise in awareness and reporting of domestic violence cases illustrates the Act's effectiveness in empowering women and integrating domestic abuse into the realm of public law regulation. However, enduring structural challenges persist. Under-reporting continues due to fears of social stigma, pressures for reconciliation, and financial dependence on abusers. Implementation shortcomings are apparent, as numerous states lack sufficient Protection Officers, and enforcement remains inadequate despite the issuance of protection orders. Institutional insensitivity also continues, as police mediation practices can sometimes compromise survivor autonomy and deter independent action.

7. Judicial Interpretation and Expansion of Rights

The Indian judiciary has significantly contributed to enhancing the effectiveness of domestic violence laws. In the case of *Indra Sarma v. V.K.V. Sarma*, the Supreme Court acknowledged relationships that are 'in the nature of marriage,' thus broadening legal protection to encompass relationships beyond formally recognized marriages. Likewise, in *Krishna Bhattacharjee v. Sarathi Choudhury*, the Court recognized economic abuse and the denial of stridhan as ongoing offenses, thereby expanding the definition of domestic violence to include financial exploitation. More recently, in *Prabha Tyagi v. Kamlesh Devi*, it was affirmed that a woman retains the right to file a domestic violence complaint even after separating from her partner. Through these rulings, the judiciary has effectively implemented constitutional protections under Articles 14 and 21, thereby reinforcing principles of equality, dignity, and personal freedom.

8. Comparative Perspective

On a global scale, domestic violence laws prioritize emergency protection orders, victim safety planning, and proactive intervention by the state. India's legal framework is in alignment with international human rights standards, including commitments under the UN CEDAW Convention and broader gender justice frameworks. Similar strategies can be seen in the United Kingdom's Domestic Abuse Act and the United States' Violence Against Women Act, both of which emphasize the protection of survivors and the accountability of institutions. The PWDVA combines civil protection measures with welfare support systems, illustrating adherence to international best practices in combating gender-based violence.

9. Critical Assessment

The PWDVA has numerous strengths, such as its comprehensive definition of violence that includes physical, emotional, economic, and verbal abuse, along with its provision for immediate civil remedies and gender-sensitive judicial interpretation. Another commendable aspect is the institutional coordination among courts, protection officers, and service providers. Nevertheless, significant weaknesses remain. Awareness of legal remedies in rural areas is still limited, judicial processes frequently experience delays, psychological rehabilitation services are inadequate, and the monitoring mechanisms for protection orders are weak. As a result, a considerable gap persists between legislative intent and practical execution.

10. Emerging Challenges (2024–2025 Context)

Current discussions emphasize the changing nature of domestic abuse influenced by technological and social developments. Digital domestic violence, which encompasses phone surveillance, financial monitoring, and cyber harassment, has surfaced as a pressing issue. The ongoing debate surrounding marital rape increasingly intersects with domestic violence law, as courts assess marital sexual violence through the perspectives of dignity and bodily autonomy. Additionally, there is a growing acknowledgment of the necessity to incorporate mental health support within justice delivery systems via trauma-informed methodologies. Technological innovations such as online FIR registration, electronic protection orders, and virtual court hearings are progressively transforming access to justice frameworks.

11. Recommendations

Strengthening the effectiveness of domestic violence legislation necessitates thorough institutional reform. The nationwide appointment of full-time Protection Officers is crucial for ensuring effective implementation. The establishment of fast-track domestic violence courts can minimize procedural delays and bolster survivor confidence in the legal system. An integrated response mechanism that includes police authorities, the judiciary, social workers, and counselling professionals should be institutionalized. It is essential to provide mandatory gender-sensitivity training for law enforcement agencies to combat institutional bias. Digital complaint portals and mobile safety applications can enhance accessibility, while monitoring dashboards based on NCRB data may aid policymakers in assessing enforcement outcomes. Lastly, the expansion of economic rehabilitation programs is vital to foster long-term independence and security for survivors of domestic violence.

12. Conclusion The enactment of the Protection of Women from Domestic Violence Act, 2005 represents a significant milestone in India's pursuit of gender justice and the protection of human rights. By acknowledging domestic violence as a violation of dignity, equality, and personal liberty, this legislation has shifted the traditional view of familial violence from a "private matter" to a legitimate issue of constitutional governance and social justice. The Act has introduced a progressive, rights-

based framework that emphasizes protection, prevention, and rehabilitation, rather than relying exclusively on punitive criminal measures. Its comprehensive definition of domestic violence—encompassing physical, emotional, sexual, verbal, and economic abuse—has broadened the legal recognition of women's lived experiences and addressed forms of harm that have long been overlooked by formal legal systems. Despite this strong legislative foundation, recent statistical patterns highlighted in reports of the **National Crime Records Bureau (NCRB)** for 2024–25 reveal a deeply troubling paradox: while India possesses one of the most advanced legal frameworks addressing domestic violence, incidents of cruelty by husband or relatives continue to constitute the largest category of crimes against women. This contradiction reflects the complex relationship between law and society. Legal reform, although essential, cannot by itself dismantle entrenched social norms, gender hierarchies, and economic inequalities that sustain domestic violence.

Domestic violence in India is fundamentally rooted in patriarchal social structures that normalize male dominance and female subordination within familial relationships. Cultural expectations often prioritize preservation of marriage and family honor over individual safety and autonomy. Women frequently face pressure from relatives, community institutions, and even enforcement agencies to reconcile rather than seek protection. Economic dependency further reinforces vulnerability, as many women lack independent financial resources necessary to exit abusive relationships. Consequently, the persistence of domestic violence must be understood not merely as a failure of law but as a manifestation of broader socio-economic and cultural dynamics.

The Domestic Violence Act sought to address these realities through innovative mechanisms such as protection orders, residence rights, monetary relief, and institutional support networks involving Protection Officers, shelter homes, medical services, and legal aid providers. These mechanisms reflect a holistic understanding that survivors require immediate safety as well as long-term stability. However, implementation challenges continue to undermine the full realization of these objectives. Many states struggle with inadequate appointment and training of Protection Officers, insufficient coordination between police authorities and social welfare agencies, and delays in judicial proceedings. As a result, victims often encounter procedural barriers that weaken confidence in the justice delivery system.

Data from the NCRB in recent years suggests that an increase in reporting does not merely indicate a rise in violence; rather, it may reflect a greater awareness and willingness among women to assert their rights. The growth of education, media engagement, civil society activism, and initiatives aimed at legal literacy have encouraged more survivors to seek help from courts and support organizations. This trend signifies a positive shift towards empowerment. Nevertheless, the increase in reporting rates also highlights institutional deficiencies, emphasizing the urgent need for improved administrative capabilities and victim-centered legal processes. Another significant aspect that has surfaced in contemporary discussions is the changing nature of domestic violence in the digital era. Abuse now increasingly includes technological surveillance, financial control, harassment through social media, and psychological manipulation via digital platforms. Although the Act was enacted before the widespread advent of digitalization, judicial interpretations have allowed its provisions to evolve and address these emerging forms of harm. This adaptability demonstrates the legislation's resilience while also highlighting the necessity for policy updates, technological progress, and specialized training for law enforcement officials.

The effectiveness of domestic violence legislation must also be evaluated within the broader framework of constitutional principles. The right to live with dignity, as enshrined in Article 21 of the

Constitution, imposes an obligation on the State to protect individuals even in private spaces that have historically been shielded from public oversight. Therefore, domestic violence is not solely a criminal or civil offense but also a constitutional violation that affects equality, freedom, and human development. Addressing such violations requires coordinated efforts across multiple sectors, including education, healthcare, social welfare, employment, and community governance. Equally important is institutional accountability. Police officers, judicial authorities, healthcare professionals, and social workers must adopt gender-sensitive approaches grounded in empathy and human rights principles. Regular training, monitoring mechanisms, and performance evaluation systems are essential to ensure effective implementation. Fast-track courts, digital complaint platforms, and online monitoring of protection orders could significantly enhance accessibility and efficiency, particularly for women in rural and marginalized communities. Social transformation remains the most challenging yet essential dimension of reform. Laws can regulate behaviour, but lasting change requires shifts in attitudes, education systems, and cultural narratives surrounding gender roles. Public awareness campaigns, school-based gender education, engagement with community leaders, and media representation promoting equality can gradually dismantle norms that tolerate violence. Men and boys must also be included as active participants in gender justice initiatives, emphasizing shared responsibility in creating violence-free households.

The Domestic Violence Act has undoubtedly reshaped India's legal landscape by acknowledging that safety within the home is a fundamental human right. However, the persistence of domestic violence demonstrates that legislative progress must be accompanied by sustained political will, institutional reform, and societal engagement. The future success of the Act depends less on creating new laws and more on strengthening implementation, improving coordination among stakeholders, and fostering a culture that rejects violence in all forms. In conclusion, the central lesson emerging from the NCRB 2024–25 data is clear: a strong law alone cannot eliminate deeply embedded social injustice. The Protection of Women from Domestic Violence Act, 2005 provides a powerful legal foundation, but its transformative potential can be realized only through collective commitment to gender equality, economic empowerment, and social accountability. When law, institutions, and society work together, the promise of dignity, security, and justice for women within domestic spaces can move from aspiration to reality.

References

National Crime Records Bureau. *Crime in India Reports (2023–2025)*.

Ministry of Women and Child Development, Government of India.

Protection of Women from Domestic Violence Act, 2005.

NFHS-5 Report (2019–21).

SPRF India Report on Crimes Against Women.

PIB Government Releases on Women Safety.

Bhanot, V. D. v. Savita Bhanot, (2012) 3 SCC 183 (India).

Harsora, H. P. v. Kusum Narottamdas Harsora, (2016) 10 SCC 165 (India).

Kunapareddy v. Swarna Kumari, (2016) 11 SCC 774 (India).

Satish Chander Ahuja v. Sneha Ahuja, (2020) 11 SCC 415 (India).

Indra Sarma v. V.K.V. Sarma, (2013) 15 SCC 755 (India).

Krishna Bhattacharjee v. Sarathi Choudhury, (2015) 2 SCC 705 (India).

Prabha Tyagi v. Kamlesh Devi, (2022) SCC Online SC 607.

National Crime Records Bureau. (2024). *Crime in India Report*. Ministry of Home Affairs, Government of India.

Government of India. (2005). *Protection of Women from Domestic Violence Act, 2005*.

National Family Health Survey-5 (2019–21). Ministry of Health and Family Welfare.

United Nations. (1979). *Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW)*.

Vision IAS Social Issues Analysis on PWDVA.

NCRB Statistical Data Portal.

Copyright & License:

© Authors retain the copyright of this article. This work is published under the Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 International License (CC BY 4.0), permitting unrestricted use, distribution, and reproduction in any medium, provided the original work is properly cited.