



“Behind Closed Doors: A Critical Analysis of Domestic Violence Through Voices and Cases in India”

¹Shiffali, ²Dr.Simranjeet Kaur Gill

¹Research Scholar, CT University, Ludhiana

²Principal School of Law, CT University, Ludhiana.

ABSTRACT

Shielded from society's gaze, countless women endure a spectrum of violence—physical, emotional, psychological, sexual, and economic—that remains hidden from public view and legal redress. This paper explores domestic violence in India as a deeply embedded structural issue rather than an isolated personal matter. Despite legal protections like the Protection of Women from Domestic Violence Act (2005), the lived experiences of women often remain trapped within the four walls of their homes, unheard and unresolved.

Through a feminist-legal lens, this study critically analyses survivor testimonies, court rulings, and media-reported cases to reveal how fear, shame, dependency, societal expectations, and institutional apathy silence victims. It examines how women are coerced into endurance by emotional manipulation, threats to their children, economic control, and social stigma, forcing them to navigate complex barriers to justice and support. The analysis interrogates the complicity of legal and law enforcement institutions that often mirror the very patriarchal structures they are tasked to dismantle.

Additionally, the paper explores how intersectional identities—such as caste, religion, class, and sexuality—compound the marginalization of certain groups of women, making their access to justice even more precarious. While some legal reforms have emerged in recent years, they often lack the infrastructural, procedural, and cultural support necessary for meaningful implementation. This study argues that true redress demands more than formal legal recognition; it requires a transformative shift in how violence is understood, addressed, and prevented at both the institutional and societal levels.

Keywords: Domestic violence, feminist legal theory, gender-based violence, structural patriarchy, survivor testimonies, intersectionality, access to justice, institutional apathy, socio-legal analysis, PWDVA 2005.

“To be silenced is the worst kind of violence — it steals a woman's voice and with it, her very existence.”

— Flavia Agnes

I. INTRODUCTION

Domestic violence is a pervasive issue across the world, with no geographical, cultural, or socioeconomic boundaries. According to WHO, domestic violence "means any behaviour within an intimate relationship that causes physical, psychological, or sexual harm to those in the relationship."¹ Similarly, UN Women also frames domestic violence as a systematic use of power and control over another person—usually by an intimate partner or other family members—through patterns of coercion, threats, and abuse.² These global definitions recognize domestic violence not as a one-time act of aggression, but as a deeply structural and repetitive pattern of abuse that targets the autonomy, dignity, and safety of the victim—most often women.

These global definitions recognize domestic violence, not as an isolated act of aggression, but rather a structural and repetitive pattern of abuse that specifically targets the autonomy, dignity, and safety of the victim—mostly women.

Importantly, domestic violence is not confined to visible bruises or broken bones; it operates at a number of levels:

- Physical abuse includes hitting, slapping, choking, or any form of bodily harm.

¹ World Health Organization. (2021). Violence against women: Key facts. retrieved from <https://www.who.int/news-room/fact-sheets/detail/violence-against-women> (Last visited on May 20, 2025).

² UN Women. (2020). Facts and figures: Ending violence against women. Retrieved from <https://www.unwomen.org/en/what-we-do/ending-violence-against-women/facts-and-figures> (Last visited on May 22, 2025).

- Emotional and psychological abuse manifests through threats, humiliation, manipulation, and isolation.
 - Economic abuse restricts access to money, education, or employment as a means of control.
 - Sexual abuse includes non-consensual acts, marital rape, and coercive intimacy.
- These layers often intersect, forming a cycle of silence and entrapment that is difficult to escape—especially within patriarchal societies like India, where gender roles and societal expectations often silence victims.

While statistical data is important to comprehend the magnitude of the problem, numbers alone cannot depict the emotional, mental, and social consequence of abuse on the survivor's life. Therefore, this paper makes an attempt to transcend mere quantitative measures by focusing on survivor narratives, cases filed in courts, and media-reported testimonies. A feminist-legal perspective has been deployed in the study to show how the justice delivery system, though legally framed to protect women, functions inadequately due to deeply entrenched gender biases, institutional apathy, and procedural shortcomings.

India has followed a dual-track legal approach to deal with domestic abuse. While the PWDVA of 2005 recognizes a wide range of abuses, including physical, emotional, sexual, verbal, and economic, and provides financial assistance, residency rights, and protection orders for survivors, Section 498A of the Indian Penal Code makes cruelty and harassment related to dowries crimes. In their totality, these laws raise domestic abuse to a human rights violation, pushing it from a personal issue to a major legal and public concern.

This research does not only aim to inform but to amplify the voices of women whose pain remains hidden in homes, behind traditions, and under legal silence.

1.1 HISTORICAL EVOLUTION OF DOMESTIC VIOLENCE IN INDIA

Domestic violence in India is not anything new; it is deeply rooted in centuries-long processes of social, religious, and legal development. The path that domestic violence has travelled from Indian traditional society through colonial rule and into post-independence reforms—shows not only a change in the nature of the abuse but also the slow, often reluctant recognition legally of women's rights. This section traces the historical development of domestic violence in India under four major themes.

i. Domestic Violence in Traditional Indian Society

The status of women in ancient Indian society was largely confined to domestic roles and thus linked with the patriarchal structures rooted through religious and social customs.³ Though some women in the early Vedic texts are represented as respected sages and scholars, this representation is not the norm for the majority. Over time, texts such as Manusmriti institutionalized the subordination of women, prescribing obedience to the father, husband, and son at different stages of life.⁴

Marriage was considered both sacrosanct and indissoluble, and women were often socialized to put up with abuse as part of their dharma. The ideal woman was one who kept silent, tolerated much, and thus set patterns that normalized violence—physical or emotional—within homes. Dowry practices, child marriage, and sati added to such vulnerabilities.

Although there were exceptions, such as instances of some autonomy for royal or educated women, there was no formal or codified protection against domestic abuse, and societal mechanisms seldom allowed them to raise their voices or leave violent relationships.

ii. Colonial Legal Developments

The British colonial era introduced major changes to the Indian legal system, particularly through codified laws and courts. Yet, domestic violence was by and large treated as a private matter and fell outside of the colonial understanding of criminal law unless it resulted in grievous harm or death.⁵

Key developments at this time included:

- The Indian Penal Code, 1860, incorporated sections such as Section 498, cruelty by husband or relatives. However, the threshold of cruelty was quite high and was seldom easy to prove.⁶

The Age of Consent Act of 1891 attempted to prevent sexual abuse of children within marriage, but was

³ Sharma, K. (2018). Patriarchy and domestic violence in India: An overview. *International Journal of Humanities and Social Science Research*, 6(1), 48–54.

⁴ Chakravarti, U. (2003). *Gendering caste: Through a feminist lens*. Kolkata: Stree.

⁵ Singha, R. (1998). *A despotism of law: Crime and justice in early colonial India*. New Delhi: Oxford University Press.

⁶ Indian Penal Code. (1860). *Act No. 45 of 1860*. Government of India.

resisted very strongly by the Indian conservatives who were of the view that this was a foreign interference in family matters.⁷

Thus, personal laws based on religion continued to regulate marriage and family life and often supported rather than challenged existing patriarchal practices. Moreover, the colonial courts generally upheld male dominance within marriage, and wives had practically no recourse against spouse violence except in cases of death or extreme bodily harm. Therefore, the legal system preserved and legitimized the existing condition of male dominance and female subordination in the household.⁸

iii. Post-Independence Legal Reforms

Although India's Constitution, adopted after the country gained independence in 1947, was quite progressive and embodied principles of equality and non-discrimination, it took several decades before domestic violence was viewed as a serious legal problem that required specific intervention.⁹

Key milestones include:

- **Dowry Prohibition Act, 1961:** This was enacted to check the growing numbers of dowry deaths and harassment, but remains poorly enforced.¹⁰

Amendments to Section 498A of the IPC in 1983: This section criminalized cruelty by the husband or his family, including physical and mental harassment.¹¹

Protection of Women from Domestic Violence Act (PWDVA), 2005: This was the first comprehensive civil law enacted in India that recognized various forms of abuse, including physical, sexual, emotional, and economic, and provided protective remedies like restraining orders and residence rights, among other support services.¹²

Despite these legal reforms, implementation remains a challenge. Domestic violence is often treated as a family matter by the law enforcement agencies; the burden of proof still lies heavily with women. In addition, marital rape is not within the purview of criminal law, reflecting continued gaps in understanding women's autonomy and bodily integrity within marriage.

iv. Social Norms, Patriarchy, and Silence

Indian society has traditionally maintained a strong patriarchal framework that considers the family to be a private sphere, inaccessible even to the law. Honor and reputation of the family, coupled with female chastity, are particularly stressed in both urban and rural contexts, often forcing women to remain silent even in the face of extreme abuse.

Cultural norms have always frowned upon divorce, especially for women, who are expected to carry family dignity. The fear of social ostracization, economic dependency, and concern for children further traps women in violent homes. Domestic violence has thus remained one of the most underreported crimes in India.¹³

Even with growing awareness, many survivors face 'secondary victimization' — by the police, the judiciary, or even their families — if they try to seek justice. The silence on domestic violence is not individual but institutional and cultural, running deep within the Indian social fabric.¹⁴ The historical evolution of domestic violence in India reveals that violence against women inside the household has been tolerated, normalized, and legally neglected for centuries. Changes in the post-independence period have ushered in a more rights-based legal ecology;

⁷ Sturman, R. (2004). Rethinking the Age of Consent: Colonial Law and Sexual Regulation in British India. *Journal of the History of Sexuality*, 13(3), 393–427. Retrieved from <https://doi.org/10.1353/sex.2004.0043> (Last visited on 06 June, 2025).

⁸ Kapur, R., & Cossman, B. (1996). *Subversive sites: Feminist engagements with law in India*. New Delhi: Sage Publications.

⁹ Kapur, R., & Cossman, B. (1996). *Subversive sites: Feminist engagements with law in India*. New Delhi: Sage Publications.

¹⁰ *The Dowry Prohibition Act, 1961* (Act No. 28 of 1961). Ministry of Law and Justice. Retrieved from <https://legislative.gov.in/sites/default/files/A1961-28.pdf> (Last visited on 08 June, 2025).

¹¹ Indian Penal Code. (1860). *Section 498A (Amended in 1983)*.

¹² Ministry of Women and Child Development. (2005). *The Protection of Women from Domestic Violence Act, 2005*.

¹³ Niaz, U. (2003). Violence against women in South Asian countries. *Archives of Women's Mental Health*, 6(3), 173–184. Retrieved from <https://doi.org/10.1007/s00737-003-0171-9> (Last visited on 10 June, 2025)

¹⁴ Sharma, K. (2018). Patriarchy and domestic violence in India: An overview. *International Journal of Humanities and Social Science Research*, 6(1), 48–54

however, patriarchal mindsets continue to thwart justice. To undertake this task, appreciation of this historical trajectory becomes important for constructing more efficient and survivor-centered legal responses to domestic violence in contemporary India.

II. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

- **The World Health Organization (2021)**¹⁵ Outlines that domestic violence is a pervasive issue, with an estimated one-third of women worldwide having experienced either physical or sexual violence, or both, mostly by an intimate partner. The quantitative nature of this report provides a necessary statistical threshold in understanding the magnitude of the problem. However, its emphasis on numbers excludes in-depth exploration of the personal accounts and psychological experiences of survivors. This study aims to expand on those findings by adding qualitative evidence based on lived experiences.
- **UN Women (2020)**¹⁶ puts on a systemic lens, where domestic violence is not just a matter of individual misbehaviour but is deep-seated in structural gender discrimination. Indeed, the report identifies entrenched patriarchal norms, societal stigma, and the failures of institutions such as the police and the judiciary that culminate in conditions that normalize gender-based violence. Such a perspective is imperative in analyzing domestic violence within the Indian legal and cultural milieu.
- **Dobash and Dobash (1979)**¹⁷ have provided one of the earliest and more influential feminist interpretations of domestic violence, conceptualizing its persistence within patriarchal institutions that maintain men's supremacy and domination and women's subordination. Their framework offers an essential theoretical basis for understanding how social structures enable and legitimize abuse within familial and intimate settings. Their scholarship forms a critical underpinning for the feminist legal analysis undertaken in this study.
- **Flavia Agnes (1992)**¹⁸ looks into the issue from an Indian feminist legal perspective, highlighting how socio-cultural prescriptions such as dowry, economic dependency, and the compulsion to safeguard family reputation often act as barriers in the way of the voices of abused women. The author points out flaws in the tardy and ineffective responses by the legal machinery, arguing that these loopholes in the system significantly aid in perpetrating domestic violence. Her insights are particularly relevant to understanding the socio-legal problems that Indian women face.
- **Radha Kumar (2001)**¹⁹ adds to this by highlighting how the traditional family dynamics and economic reliance inhibit women from reporting the abuse and seeking support. She points out the cultural pressures that force women to prioritize familial cohesion over personal safety. Her work is integral in addressing this research's focus on victim agency and socio-cultural barriers that impede access to justice.
- **Raj and Silverman (2002)** along with **Chandra (2013)**²⁰ critically assess the operational efficiency of the Protection of Women from Domestic Violence Act, 2005, and identify severe lacunae in its functional utilization. They expose how ignorance of the Act, delays in its implementation, and deep-seated victim-blaming attitudes in enforcement agencies have rendered the said Act ineffective. Their critique identifies the critical gap between legislative intent and on-ground realities, a theme further explored in this study through judicial decisions and survivor interviews.

Taken together, these scholarly articles and reports by organizations signal one recurring gap in the literature: even as domestic violence is widely measured and theorized, very few accounts of it capture the subjective experiences of survivors-especially within the Indian socio-legal milieu. This study attempts to fill this gap by highlighting women's voices, scrutinizing legal responses through case studies, and connecting formal legal provisions with real-life implementation.

¹⁵ World Health Organization. (2021, March 9). *Violence against women prevalence estimates, 2018*. Retrieved from <https://www.who.int/publications/i/item/9789240022256> (Last visited on 10 June,2025).

¹⁶ UN Women. (2020, November 25). *The shadow pandemic: Violence against women during COVID-19*. <https://www.unwomen.org/en/news/in-focus/in-focus-gender-equality-in-covid-19-response/violence-against-women-during-covid-19> (Last visited on 15 June,2025).

¹⁷ Dobash, R. E., & Dobash, R. (1979). *Violence against wives: A case against the patriarchy*. Free Press.

¹⁸ Agnes, F. (1992). Protecting women against violence? Review of a decade of legislation, 1980–89. *Economic and Political Weekly*, 27(17), WS19–WS33. <https://www.jstor.org/stable/4397807> (Last visited on 17 June,2025).

¹⁹ Kumar, R. (1993). *The history of doing: An illustrated account of movements for women's rights and feminism in India, 1800–1990*. Zubaan.

²⁰ Raj, A., & Silverman, J. G. (2002). Intimate partner violence against South Asian women in greater Boston. *Journal of the American Medical Women's Association*, 57(2), 111–114. Retrieved from <https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/12100720/> (Last visited on 20 June,2025)

LANDMARK CASES AND VOICES OF SURVIVORS

Aruna Parmod Shah v. Union of India²¹

A landmark judgment was delivered by the Delhi High Court on 14th April 2008, in a petition filed under the Protection of Women from Domestic Violence Act, 2005. Petitioner Aruna Parmod Shah questioned the naming of female relatives as respondents in complaints filed under the said Act. The trial court had earlier accepted a complaint filed against both male and female members of the husband's family, which led the petitioner to seek a declaration with regard to what interpretation should be assigned to the word "respondent" as defined under Section 2(q) of the said Act.

The Delhi High Court had held that the PWDVA proceedings can be initiated only against an adult male person, which means it excludes female relatives from its scope. This narrow interpretation was widely criticized for defeating the very purpose of the Act, meant to give comprehensive protection to women against domestic violence from all quarters within the household.

However, this judgment did not stand the test of time. In *Hiral P. Harsora v. Kusum Narottamdas Harsora* (2016), the Supreme Court of India overruled this restrictive interpretation and declared Section 2(q) unconstitutional for having restricted the word "respondent" to mean only adult male members, thus paving the way for complaints against any relative engaged in domestic abuse, male or female.

The case reflects the growth in the judiciary's understanding of gender dynamics within domestic spaces and represents a critical juncture in the expansion of legal protections under the PWDVA.

Hiral P. Harsora v. Kusum Narottamdas Harsora²²

By a landmark judgment pronounced in October 2016, the Supreme Court of India expanded the scope of interpretation of the Protection of Women from Domestic Violence Act, 2005 (PWDVA), extending the meaning of 'respondent' under the said Act. The case arose when a complaint filed by Kusum Narottamdas Harsora for domestic violence named Hiral P. Harsora, along with other family members, including female members, as respondents. The petitioners challenged the validity of the complaint on the ground that only an adult male person could be proceeded against under Section 2(q) of the PWDVA.

The core issue before the Court was whether this kind of gender-specific limitation violated constitutional guarantees. Section 2(q) of the Act, as it stood, allowed taking legal action only against adult males in a domestic relationship with the aggrieved woman. The petitioners contended that this clause was intrinsically discriminatory and ran counter to Article 14 of the Constitution, which assures equality before the law.

The Supreme Court, however, accepted the above contention and ruled that it was both arbitrary and unconstitutional to restrict the word "respondent" to a male adult. According to it, such a restriction would result in keeping abusive female relatives outside the purview of the law and thus defeat the very object of providing greater protection to women who are victims of domestic violence caused by any member of the household. The Court, therefore, struck down the words "adult male" from Section 2(q), authorizing a woman to file proceedings against any person—whether male or female—who is or has been in a domestic relationship with her.

This transformative judgment has been hailed as a landmark in gender-sensitive legal reform. It went well beyond addressing a key legislative anomaly but also supported and enriched the broader, inclusive paradigm for responding to domestic violence across diverse familial contexts.

V.D. Bhanot v. Savita Bhanot²³

The Supreme Court addressed whether the Protection of Women from Domestic Violence Act, 2005, could apply to incidents that occurred before the Act came into force. The wife had filed a complaint for past abuses, which the husband contested on the basis of non-retrospectivity. The Court held that the Act has quasi-retrospective effect in that relief could be provided even for earlier incidents, provided the domestic relationship existed. This significantly widened the ambit of legal protection accorded to survivors.

*Krishna Bhattacharjee v. Sarathi Choudhury*²⁴

The petitioner, a woman who had been granted judicial separation from her husband, filed a complaint under the Protection of Women from Domestic Violence Act, 2005. The respondent argued that since judicial separation had already been granted, there was no existing domestic relationship, and therefore, the complaint was not maintainable. However, the Supreme Court rejected this contention and held that judicial separation does not amount to the dissolution of the marriage but merely suspends certain marital obligations. The Court concluded that the domestic relationship does continue in the eyes of law, and the aggrieved wife remains entitled to seek

²¹ AIR 2008 Delhi 45; analyzed in *Indian Journal of Gender Studies*, SAGE Publications.

²² AIR 2016 SC 4774; (2016) 10 SCC 165.

²³ AIR 2012 SC 965

²⁴ AIR 2016 SC 2023.

relief under the Act. This judgment clarified that protection under the PWDVA extends even after judicial separation, thereby reinforcing the remedial nature of the law for ongoing consequences of past abuse.

Survivor Testimonies

Survivor Testimony from Swayam Kolkata (2014 Report)²⁵

Testimony of Survivors from Swayam Kolkata 2014 Report

A documented case from Swayam, a Kolkata-based feminist organization (2014), outlines the lived experience of a survivor who is referred to herein as "Rita" (name changed for confidentiality). Middle-aged, Rita faced long-term emotional and physical violence in her marital home. At Swayam, assistance was provided to Rita in filing a complaint under the Protection of Women from Domestic Violence Act, 2005. With the organization's legal assistance and psychosocial intervention, she was able to obtain a protection order, custody of children, and maintenance out of her estranged husband. This case illustrates how grassroots legal advocacy becomes an important enabling factor for survivors to get justice and regain agency amidst chronic and systemic domestic abuse.

“Burned by Dowry, Empowered by Truth: Sneha Jawale’s Testimony”²⁶

Sneha Jawale, a survivor of domestic violence from Maharashtra who was set ablaze by her husband over dowry demands, survived 80% burns, later to become vocal about the issue through the play *Nirbhaya* and with BBC India. Her publicly documented case offers critical insight into the failure of dowry laws and the transformative power of survivor-led advocacy.²⁷

III. RESEARCH GAP

While there is extensive research on domestic violence, most scholarship remains centered around statistical data and legislative responses, very often at the expense of nuanced survivors' experiences and less visible abuses, such as emotional and financial violence. One of the key gaps in existing research pertains to limited qualitative, narrative-based inquiry that highlights women's perspectives. This research aims to fill this gap by foregrounding survivor accounts and lived experiences, which reveal how social stigma, legal indifference, and institutional prejudice conspire in silencing victims. By centering real-life narratives, exposure is provided regarding the disjuncture between the theoretical promise of the law and its actual practice.

IV. RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

- To study domestic violence as a structural problem in India, rather than just a private or familial one.
- To identify social, emotional, and economic barriers that prevent women from reporting or fleeing their abusive situations.
- Analyze how the law is applied through an examination of court judgments, survivors' accounts, and media reports.
- To assess the efficacy of the Protection of Women from Domestic Violence Act, 2005, in supporting survivors. To examine how domestic violence in India functions as a structural issue rather than just a private or family problem.

V. RESEARCH HYPOTHESIS

HO1- Domestic violence in India is nurtured by structural patriarchy and societal norms normalizing control, silencing, and subordination of women within family spaces, hence making it a systemic issue rather than an individual one.

HO2- To identify social, emotional, and economic obstacles to women reporting or escaping domestic violence.

HO3- The laws relating to domestic violence in India are enacted haphazardly and, in most cases, influenced by gender prejudice and institutional apathy, creating gaps between the letter of the law and its actual implementation.

HO4- Despite the fact that the Protection of Women from Domestic Violence Act, 2005, provides a comprehensive legal framework, its effectiveness remains limited by weak enforcement, delays in procedure, and low levels of awareness among survivors and police.

²⁵ Swayam. (2014). *Survivor stories: Voices of women who broke the silence*. Kolkata: Swayam. Retrieved from <https://www.swayam.info/resources/reports-publications/> (Last visited on 25 June,2025)

²⁶ Sheridan, E. (2023, June 6). *Domestic abuse & burn survivor to BBC presenter: Sneha Jawale's story of defiance*. Retrieved from The Quint. <https://www.thequint.com/gender/domestic-abuse-burn-survivor-to-bbc-presenter-sneha-jawale> (Last visited on 30 June,2025)

VI. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This research is predominantly doctrinal in nature, focusing on a critical analysis of constitutional provisions, statutory frameworks like the Protection of Women from Domestic Violence Act, 2005, and Section 498A of the Indian Penal Code, supported by relevant judicial precedents and reports of the Law Commission. The study systematically examines how domestic violence is conceptualized, interpreted, and addressed within the Indian legal system. Complementing the doctrinal base, limited non-doctrinal elements are woven in through qualitative reviews of survivor accounts, media-reported cases, and secondary data from credible sources like the National Crime Records Bureau and UN Women. This mixed-method approach helps achieve an overall understanding of not only the legal framework but also the real-life experiences faced by survivors, hence bridging the theoretical and practical dimensions of the problem. The research is descriptive, analytical, and exploratory in nature and aimed at reviewing the efficacy of existing legal mechanisms and suggesting constructive reforms to help improve the institutional responses to domestic violence in India.

VII. SCHEMES OF TENTATIVE CHAPTERIZATION

The scheme of tentative chapterisation of the thesis, which is divided into seven chapters, is as under: -

Chapter I. Introduction and Research Framework

The introductory chapter presents the topic of domestic violence in India. It defines the social and legal importance of the issue. The background, rationale, research gap, and relevance of the study are highlighted. The objectives of the research, hypotheses, and methodology have also been presented, thereby laying the premise for doctrinal and qualitative analysis.

Chapter II. Historical and Conceptual Understanding of Domestic Violence

This chapter outlines the evolution of domestic violence in India through history, tracing how patriarchal social structures and sets of cultural norms shaped gender relations in that country. It discusses how domestic violence has been seen as a private family matter and analyzes its transformation into a recognized human rights and legal issue in modern India.

Chapter III: Legal Framework Governing Domestic Violence in India

This chapter doctrinally analyzes the primary legal instruments dealing with domestic violence, such as the Protection of Women from Domestic Violence Act, 2005; Section 498A of the IPC; and constitutional provisions on gender equality and dignity. It also examines related reports of the Law Commission, judicial interpretations, and international commitments like CEDAW to determine exactly how these laws work both on paper and in practice.

Chapter IV. Judicial Trends and Case Law Analysis

The analysis in this chapter focuses on landmark court judgments and legal precedents that have defined the contours of domestic violence jurisprudence in India. This looks at how the Supreme Court and different High Courts have interpreted the rights of women, pointing to inconsistencies and progressive interpretations while indicating existing gaps in enforcement.

Chapter V. Findings, Suggestions, and Conclusion

Major findings derived from doctrinal and qualitative analyses are presented in this final chapter. It outlines how domestic violence operates at the structural and systemic levels rather than being a private dispute. The policy recommendations include legal reform, better institutional responses, and the promotion of mechanisms for gender-sensitive justice.

BIBLIOGRAPHY / REFERENCES

Books & Monographs

- Agnes, F. (1992). *Law and gender inequality: The politics of women's rights in India*. Oxford University Press
- Agnes, F. (2007). *Protection of women from domestic violence act, 2005: A commentary*. Universal Law Publishing.
- Chandra, S. (2013). *Domestic violence law in India: A handbook*. LexisNexis.
- Dobash, R. E., & Dobash, R. P. (1979). *Violence against wives: A case against patriarchy*. Free Press.
- Kumar, R. (1993). *The history of doing: An illustrated account of movements for women's rights and feminism in India 1800–1990*. Kali for Women.
- Raj, A., & Silverman, J. G. (2002). *Domestic violence and legal reform in India*. Sage Publications.

Legislation & Legal Texts

- Constitution of India. 1950. Articles 14, 15, 21. Government of India.
- Criminal Law (Amendment) Act. (2013). Government of India.
- Dowry Prohibition Act, 1961. Government of India.
- Indian Penal Code, 1860. Section 498A. Government of India.

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

Landmark Cases

Aruna Parmod Shah v. Union of India, Delhi High Court, 2008.
Hiral P. Harsora v. Kusum Narottamdas Harsora, Supreme Court of India, 2016.
Krishna Bhattacharjee v. Sarathi Choudhury, Supreme Court of India.
V.D. Bhanot v. Savita Bhanot, Supreme Court of India, 2016.
Smt. Shama Bai v. State of Uttar Pradesh, Allahabad High Court, 1958.

Reports & Institutional Sources

National Crime Records Bureau. (2021). *Crime in India 2021: Statistics on domestic violence*. Ministry of Home Affairs, Government of India.
UN Women. 2020. *Global database on violence against women*. United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women.
World Health Organization. 2021. *Global and regional estimates of violence against women: Prevalence and health effects of intimate partner violence and non-partner sexual violence*. WHO.
Law Commission of India. (2000). Report No. 172: *Review of domestic violence and family law provisions*. Government of India.

Law Commission of India. (2009). Report No. 228: Need for reforms in domestic violence law and protection measures. Government of India.

BIBLIOGRAPHY / REFERENCES

Books & Monographs

Agnes, F. (1992). *Law and gender inequality: The politics of women's rights in India*. Oxford University Press.
Agnes, F. (2007). *Protection of women from domestic violence act, 2005: A commentary*. Universal Law Publishing.
Chandra, S. (2013). *Domestic violence law in India: A handbook*. LexisNexis.
Dobash, R. E., & Dobash, R. P. (1979). *Violence against wives: A case against patriarchy*. Free Press.
Kumar, R. (1993). *The history of doing: An illustrated account of movements for women's rights and feminism in India 1800–1990*. Kali for Women.
Raj, A., & Silverman, J. G. (2002). *Domestic violence and legal reform in India*. Sage Publications.

Legislation & Legal Texts

Constitution of India. (1950). Articles 14, 15, 21. Government of India.
Criminal Law (Amendment) Act. (2013). Government of India.
Dowry Prohibition Act, 1961. Government of India.
Indian Penal Code, 1860. Section 498A. Government of India.
Protection of Women from Domestic Violence Act, 2005. Government of India.

Landmark Cases

Aruna Parmod Shah v. Union of India, Delhi High Court, 2008.
Hiral P. Harsora v. Kusum Narottamdas Harsora, Supreme Court of India, 2016.
Krishna Bhattacharjee v. Sarathi Choudhury, Supreme Court of India.
V.D. Bhanot v. Savita Bhanot, Supreme Court of India, 2016.
Smt. Shama Bai v. State of Uttar Pradesh, Allahabad High Court, 1958.

Reports & Institutional Sources

National Crime Records Bureau. (2021). *Crime in India 2021: Statistics on domestic violence*. Ministry of Home Affairs, Government of India.
UN Women. (2020). *Global database on violence against women*. United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women.
World Health Organization. (2021). *Global and regional estimates of violence against women: Prevalence and health effects of intimate partner violence and non-partner sexual violence*. WHO.
Law Commission of India. (2000). Report No. 172: *Review of domestic violence and family law provisions*. Government of India.
Law Commission of India. (2009). Report No. 228: *Need for reforms in domestic violence law and protection measures*. Government of India.