

Domestic Violence Among Women in India: Extent, Impact, and Interventions

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ABSTRACT

Domestic violence is a significant problem in India, affecting many women both physically and psychologically. Rooted in social, cultural, and economic factors, domestic violence manifests itself in various forms of abuse, including physical, emotional, verbal, economic, and sexual abuse. Social stigma attached to domestic violence creates a culture of silence and shame, making it difficult for women to seek help or report abuse. The Indian government has taken some steps to address domestic violence, including passing the Protection of Women from Domestic Violence Act in 2005, but implementation has been inconsistent. NGOs and civil society groups have also been working to raise awareness and provide support to women. Education and awareness-raising campaigns are crucial to changing cultural norms that perpetuate violence against women. Past studies have highlighted the extent and impact of domestic violence on women's physical and mental health and underscore the urgent need for effective interventions that address the root causes of domestic violence and provide support to women who experience abuse.

Keywords: Domestic Violence, Women, India, Physical Abuse, Psychological Abuse, Social Stigma, Cultural Factors, Economic Factors, Protection Of Women From Domestic Violence Act, Ngos, Civil Society, Education, Awareness-Raising, Mental Health, Physical Health, Interventions, Root Causes

Domestic violence is a widespread problem in India that affects many women, both physically and psychologically. According to the National Crime Records Bureau (NCRB), there were 498,000 cases of crimes against women reported in India in 2019, with 30% of these cases being related to domestic violence. This problem affects women of all ages, social classes, and religions, and it is a serious violation of their human rights.

The root causes of domestic violence in India are complex and multifaceted, including social, cultural, and economic factors. Some of the contributing factors include gender inequality, patriarchal attitudes, dowry system, and poverty. In many cases, women are seen as inferior to men and are expected to be subservient to their husbands and other male family members. This mentality leads to a sense of entitlement and control over women, which can manifest itself in various forms of abuse.

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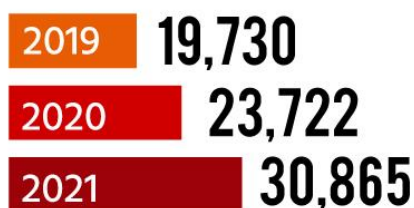
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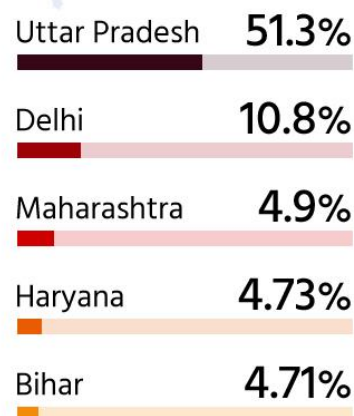
Domestic Violence Complaints in India

The number of total complaints rose by over **30%** in 2021

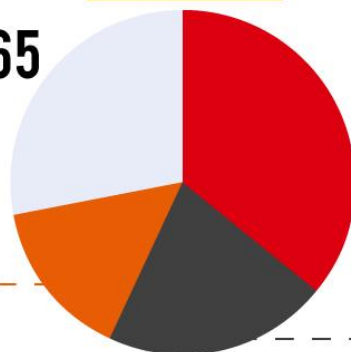
Number of complaints



State-wise percentage of complaints



Domestic violence **21.6%**



Right to live with dignity **30%**

Dowry Harassment **15%**

Nature of top crimes

Source: <https://iasscore.in>

Physical violence is the most visible form of domestic violence, but it is not the only one. Emotional abuse, verbal abuse, economic abuse, and sexual abuse are also common forms of violence that women experience in their homes. Emotional abuse includes constant belittling, insults, and humiliation, while verbal abuse involves yelling, threatening, and intimidation. Economic abuse involves controlling a woman's finances, limiting her access to money, and preventing her from working outside the home. Sexual abuse includes forced sex, unwanted sexual contact, and other forms of sexual coercion.

REVIEW OF PAST STUDIES

Certainly, there have been several past studies on domestic violence among women in India that provide insight into the extent and impact of this problem.

One study conducted by the National Family Health Survey (NFHS) in 2015-2016 found that more than a third of married women in India had experienced spousal violence at some point in their lives. The study also found that women who experienced domestic violence were

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more likely to have poor physical and mental health outcomes, as well as lower levels of education and economic independence.

Another study published in the *Lancet Global Health* in 2018 analyzed data from 12 countries, including India, and found that women who experienced domestic violence were at a significantly higher risk of depression, anxiety, and suicide attempts. The study also found that women who experienced domestic violence were less likely to seek healthcare services, which can exacerbate their health problems.

A study published in the *International Journal of Mental Health Systems* in 2019 examined the impact of domestic violence on the mental health of women in rural India. The study found that women who experienced domestic violence had higher levels of anxiety, depression, and post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) than women who did not experience domestic violence. The study also found that social support and economic independence were protective factors that could help mitigate the negative impact of domestic violence on women's mental health.

Overall, these studies highlight the pervasive and detrimental impact of domestic violence on women in India. They also demonstrate the urgent need for effective interventions that address the root causes of domestic violence and provide support to women who experience abuse.

BIGGEST CHALLENGES

One of the biggest challenges in addressing domestic violence in India is the social stigma attached to it. Women who experience domestic violence are often blamed for their own abuse and are told to tolerate it for the sake of their families or marriages. This mindset creates a culture of silence and shame, making it difficult for women to seek help or report the abuse. Many women also fear retaliation from their abusers or believe that the police and legal system will not support them.

The Indian government has taken some steps to address domestic violence, including passing the Protection of Women from Domestic Violence Act in 2005. This law provides women with legal protection from domestic violence, including restraining orders, monetary relief, and shelter. However, the implementation of this law has been inconsistent, and many women still face barriers in accessing legal remedies.

Non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and civil society groups have also been working to raise awareness about domestic violence and provide support to women who experience abuse. These organizations provide counseling, legal aid, and shelter to women, as well as work to change societal attitudes towards domestic violence.

Education and awareness-raising campaigns are also essential to address domestic violence in India. These campaigns should be targeted at both women and men, and they should focus on changing cultural norms that perpetuate violence against women. Education on gender equality, human rights, and non-violent conflict resolution can also help prevent domestic violence from occurring in the first place.

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, domestic violence is a serious problem in India that affects many women, both physically and psychologically. The root causes of domestic violence are complex and

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multifaceted, including social, cultural, and economic factors. Addressing domestic violence requires a comprehensive approach that involves legal protections, support services, education, and awareness-raising campaigns. By working together, we can create a society where women are free from violence and can live with dignity and respect.

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Conflict of Interest

The author declared no conflict of interest.

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