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**Domestic violence & Crime against women: A curse for civilized society in  
the context of Bihar & Government's initiative for women's safety**

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**ABSTRACT**

Domestic violence is violence or some form of abuse including mental, physical and sexual abuse in a domestic setting, such as in marriage or cohabitation also commonly known as intimate partner violence. There is a right to equality in the Indian Constitution. That is, women also have the same rights and privileges as men. But in a male-dominated society, the problem of domestic [4]violence against [6]women is taking a monstrous form. Domestic violence stops the development of women's lives. They are discriminated against from home to outside. After marriage, women are harassed by in-laws in their in-laws' house. Domestic violence is prevalent even today. It is no less than a curse for a civilized society. In a report recently released by Union Health Minister Dr. Mansukh Mandaviya related to the National Family Health Survey-5, Bihar ranks second after Karnataka (48%) in cases of domestic violence against women, while Lakshadweep has the lowest domestic violence (2.1%). Violence against women is a multi-dimensional issue[7] which has social, private, public and gender aspects. If one aspect is dealt with, the other aspect starts appearing. Domestic violence is a complex and disgusting form of violence against women. After marriage, [1]women are mentally and physically tortured by their husbands and in-laws. When both the parties are counselled, it is revealed that the incidents include wife not cooking food on time, husband and wife talking on phone for long hours, husband coming late from office, not obeying in-laws, etc. It is difficult to determine how widespread the incidents[7] of domestic violence are. It is a crime that is often hidden, under-reported, and sometimes even denied. Accepting the incident of domestic violence in personal relationships is [9]often linked to the breakdown of relationships. By accepting the reality of domestic violence at the level of society, it is believed that the poor condition of women in

established social structures like marriage and family will also have to be accepted. Despite all this, the number of domestic violence [2] cases reported is shocking. In India, one incident of domestic violence is reported every five minutes. In this research paper, the decrease in domestic violence against women after the prohibition of liquor in Bihar, the condition of women in Bihar and how domestic violence & Crime against women is a curse for women & Government's initiative for women's safety have been studied [50]. The objective of this research paper is to focus on the current situation in the case of domestic violence against women, the schemes and efforts being run by the government for the safety and respect of women, etc. And this is the subject and objective of this research paper. According to the report of the Gender Resource Centre, 99% women are happy after the liquor [8] ban. They also strongly support a liquor ban. Violence against not only women but also girls and children has also reduced unexpectedly. After liquor ban, only 6% of women complained of financial loss. The reality is that before prohibition, this figure was 70%. 35% women said that before the liquor ban, their children sometimes had to face verbal violence, whereas after liquor ban, only 5% women [14] came forward who complained of verbal violence. The data for this study were sourced from the National Crime Records Bureau (NCRB) of India, a government organization operating under the Ministry of Home Affairs. It serves as the nodal agency responsible for collecting, managing, and analyzing crime data at the national level. It publishes the facts and figures of different crimes at the national and state levels.

Keywords : Domestic violence, development of women's lives, Violence against women, harassed by in-laws ,Women empowerment, Crime against women's, women's safety.

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## 1. Introduction

Marriage of women is a major problem in society. Domestic violence often occurs as a result of dowry demands. Dowry payments are another manifestation of the patriarchal structure in India. There are strong links between domestic violence and dowry, a cultural practice deeply rooted in many Indian communities,[2] which is money, goods or property that a woman/woman's family brings into a marriage and now comes under the ownership of the husband. It continues to this day, although banned by law since 1961, and the amount of dowry has increased dramatically in recent years. If we talk about[2] Bihar in terms of domestic violence, then this state is at the forefront in terms of killing of girls in the womb, low female literacy rate, marriage of women at an early age, death during pregnancy, [9]responsibility of raising more children and crime against women. Physical, emotional and sexual forms of domestic violence often result in serious health problems. Physical health consequences include: injury (ranging from lacerations to fractures and injury to internal organs), unintended pregnancy, gynecological problems, STDs including HIV, miscarriage, pelvic inflammatory disease, chronic pelvic pain, headaches, permanent disability, asthma, irritable bowel [1]syndrome, self-injurious behaviors (smoking, unsafe sex) Mental health effects may include depression, fear, anxiety, low self-esteem, sexual dysfunction, eating disorders, obsessive-compulsive disorder or post-traumatic stress disorder. Lethal effects may include suicide, homicide,[4] maternal mortality or HIV/AIDS. It is a common occurrence throughout the world but in India and also Bihar , it is prevalent here as the common issues of dowry, male dominance and living in joint family set ups are the norm here. Therefore, these factors play an additional role in making the women, victims of domestic violence. Not only do the women suffer violence from the husband but also from the family members of the husband specially when the issue is of dowry whether lack of it or an unsatisfactory amount.

### 1.1 What is domestic violence?

Domestic violence is violence that is perpetrated by a member of the victim's family. This includes partners and[11] ex-partners, close family members, other relatives and family friends. The term 'domestic violence' is used when[10] there is a close relationship between the perpetrator and the victim. There is usually a power differential between them. The victim is dependent on the perpetrator. Domestic violence can take the form of physical, sexual or psychological abuse. Domestic violence is abuse by one partner against another in an intimate relationship such as dating, marriage, cohabitation or a familial relationship.

- Domestic violence is also known as domestic abuse, spousal abuse, battering, family violence, dating abuse and intimate partner violence (IPV).
- Domestic violence can be physical, emotional, verbal, economic and sexual abuse.
- Domestic violence can be subtle, coercive or violent. As politician Renuka Choudary says, in India, 70% of women are victims of domestic violence.<sup>[45]</sup>

The National Family Health Survey (NFHS) conducted in 2016 uncovered a concerning aspect: a substantial 86% of Indian women who experienced domestic violence chose not to disclose their ordeal, refraining from sharing it with friends or family members. This silence is intricately tied to the victims' internalization[13] of social norms, leading them to believe that they are inadequate as wives and, consequently, deserving of the inflicted punishment. The pervasive acceptance of domestic violence among women is further highlighted by survey findings indicating that 45% of Indian women rationalize their husbands' abusive actions. The complexity of this issue is illuminated by the National Family Health Survey of 2019–21, pointing out the alarming acceptance [16]of spousal abuse in the southern states of Tamil Nadu, Karnataka, Andhra Pradesh, and Telangana. In these states, a striking 80% of wives express agreement that their husbands are justified in resorting to physical violence, a notably higher percentage compared to other regions in India. Equally disconcerting is the acknowledgment by 38% of Indian men admitting to engaging in physical abuse against their partners.<sup>[50]</sup> In response to the widespread prevalence of domestic violence, the Indian government has implemented legislative measures, notably the Protection of Women from Domestic Violence Act of 2005. While these efforts signify a commitment to addressing the issue, the data underscores the complex interplay of societal attitudes and norms that contribute to the persistence of domestic violence, emphasizing the need for comprehensive strategies to challenge and dismantle deeply ingrained beliefs and behaviors.<sup>[43]</sup> Young girls face a heightened susceptibility to coerced early marriages, confronting a dual vulnerability owing to their status as both children and females. The plight of child brides is exacerbated by their limited comprehension of the significance and obligations associated with marriage. The factors contributing to such early unions encompass the prevailing perception that girls represent a burden on their parents, coupled with the apprehension that they might compromise their chastity prior to marriage. This multifaceted issue underscores the urgent need for comprehensive interventions and awareness programs to address the root causes and consequences of child marriages, recognizing the unique challenges faced by young girls caught in this distressing phenomenon.<sup>[51]</sup><sup>[unreliable source?]</sup> Acid throwing, also known as an acid attack or vitriolage, stands as a brutal form of violent assault disproportionately affecting women in India. This heinous act involves the intentional hurling of acid or corrosive substances onto an individual's body "with the intention to disfigure, maim, torture, or kill."<sup>[53]</sup> Typically directed at the face, acid attacks cause severe burns, damaging the skin and often exposing or dissolving bone.<sup>[54]</sup><sup>[55]</sup> The aftermath of such attacks is marked by enduring physical scars, potential blindness, and the onset of various social, psychological, and economic challenges. Recognizing the gravity of this issue, the Indian legislature has taken steps to regulate the sale of acid.<sup>[56]</sup> However, despite these measures, women in India face a heightened risk of falling victim to acid attacks, constituting at least 72% of reported cases. Disturbingly, the country has witnessed a rising trend in acid attacks over the past decade.<sup>[57]</sup>

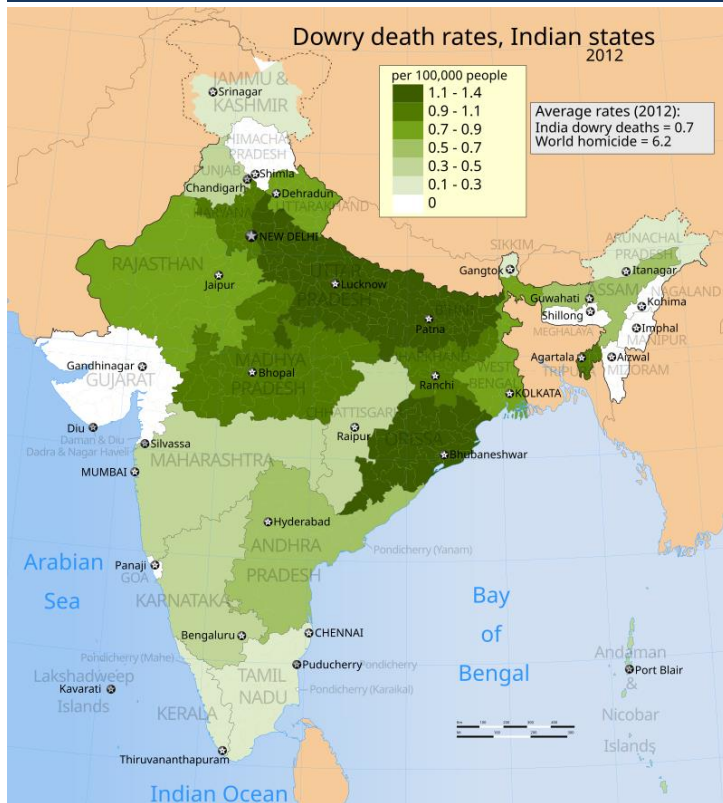


Figure-1. A map of the reported dowry deaths in India, per 100,000 people (2012) 2012 India dowry death rate per 100000 people distribution map for its States and Union Territories.svg Sources- From Wikimedia Commons, the free media repository [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Violence\\_against\\_women\\_in\\_India](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Violence_against_women_in_India).



Figure-2- Crimes against women under the Indian Penal Code 2022, Sources- National Crime Record Bureau.

Year	Imported girls from foreign countries	Violations of the Immoral Traffic Act
2008	67	2,659
2009	48	2,474
2010	36	2,499
2011	80	2,435
2012	59	2,563
2013	31	2,579
2014	13	2,070
2015	6	2,424

Table- 1- Imported girls from foreign in India violations of the Immoral Traffic Act number of victims year 2008 to 2015. Sources-[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Violence\\_against\\_women\\_in\\_India](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Violence_against_women_in_India)

Year	Reported cruelty by a husband or relative
2008	81,344
2009	89,546
2010	94,041
2011	99,135
2012	106,527
2013	118,866
2014	122,877
2015	113,403

Table-2- Reported cruelty by a husband or relative in India data of 2008 to 2015. Source-[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Violence\\_against\\_women\\_in\\_India](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Violence_against_women_in_India)

## 2. Types of Domestic Violence

The following are forms of domestic violence:

1. Child abuse;
2. Elder abuse;
3. Honour-based violence such as honour killings, female genital mutilation ('female circumcision') and forced marriage. All forms of abuse by an intimate partner or former intimate partner, [8]including psychological abuse and stalking. Domestic violence can happen to anyone, regardless of their race, age, sexual orientation, religion, sex, or gender identity. Domestic violence affects people from all socio-economic backgrounds and education levels. Domestic violence occurs in both opposite-sex and same-sex relationships and can also occur with intimate partners who are married, living together, dating, or share a child.
4. Domestic violence affects not only those who are abused, but also has a significant impact on family members, friends, colleagues, other witnesses, and the community at large. Children, [20]who grow up witnessing domestic violence, are severely affected by this crime. Experiencing repeated violence at home not only causes many social and physical problems in children, but also makes them learn that violence is a normal way of life - hence, increasing their risk of becoming victims and abusers of society's next generation.

## 3. Many things come to the fore regarding the status of women in Bihar:

The literacy rate of women in Bihar is 51.50%, which is lower than the national average.

Many schemes are being run for women in Bihar, such as Mukhyamantri Balika Cycle Yojana, Mukhyamantri Balika Poshak Yojana, Mukhyamantri Akshar Aanchal Yojana, and Mukhyamantri Kanya Utthan Yojana. Women in Bihar have [21]got 35% reservation in all government jobs. The Bihar government has launched 'Social Security Scheme' for financial assistance to women. Under this scheme, women of Bihar will be given a help of Rs 4,000 every month. There is 50% reservation for women in Panchayati Raj institutions and urban bodies in Bihar. The participation of women in Bihar has improved the quality of development work in panchayats. The voter turnout of women is increasing in Bihar. The employability of women in Bihar is higher in urban areas. About 90% of women in Bihar do daily wage work in agriculture and related sectors.

#### 4.Reporting in Bihar

The system for reporting domestic violence in Bihar is shaped by the Protection of Women Against Domestic Violence Act (PWDVA) of 2005 (Dubochet, 2012; Jhamb, 2011). Under the PWDVA, Bihar is expected to protect women from domestic violence by providing immediate shelter services and protection orders ("Analysis," 2016). 35 of Bihar's 38 districts have a helpline where individuals can report domestic violence (Krishnan 2017). Despite these resources for reporting, [26]86 percent of women claimed they were not aware of these institutions, and of the women who were aware, 80 percent said they would not know how to report domestic violence to a helpline (Krishnan, 2017). These findings reflect the gap between the systems in place for reporting domestic violence and the likelihood of victims reporting it. Although the PWDVA was created as a system to increase rates of reporting DV, outcomes have not improved much due to inconsistent and biased implementation (Govindarajan, 2016). Even when women do use this system, court visits can be delayed for years (Govindarajan, 2016). Due to these limitations of official systems of reporting in Bihar, it is also important to consider reporting to informal systems, such as social support. These methods of reporting can have a positive impact for women in terms of enhancing their coping strategies and increasing their overall safety. Additionally, [27]increasing the number of people who know about violence increases society's overall awareness of the prevalence of DV and subsequently perceptions of DV as problematic. Allowing for more open discussions on the topic of DV can have a positive impact on a woman's willingness to report (Palak and Ball, 2010).

#### 5.Social Norms Theory and Domestic Violence Reporting

Social norms theory provides a framework for understanding the problem of domestic violence reporting (Berkowitz & Perkins, 1986). The theory posits that individual behavior is driven by perceptions of the thinking and behavior of other members of social groups, regardless of the accuracy of those perceptions (Berkowitz, 2005; Paluck & Ball, 2010). These inaccurate perceptions, called "pluralistic ignorance" (Miller & McFarland, 1991; Toch & Klofas, 1984), have a great influence on individual behavior (Berkowitz, 2005). Norms theory works on the premise that actions are based [28] on attitudes, so behaviors only change when underlying beliefs are restructured (Paluck & Ball, 2010). Although norms theory was created in a Western context, interventions based on the framework have been implemented and evaluated around the world (Heise, 2011). Thus, norm theory can be used as a lens to understand India's cultural values regarding domestic violence and reporting. Evidence from studies conducted in low- and middle-income countries suggests that both the level of acceptance of wife battering and the level of husband's control over female behavior are predictive of a country's domestic violence rate (Uthman, Locko, & Moradi, 2009; Rani, Bonu, & Diop-Sidibe, 2004; Guoping et al., 2010). In terms of reporting, perceptions of being alone in one's experience may increase feelings of isolation and prevent women [30] from sharing, even with a friend (Felson & Pere, 2005). Given the high prevalence of domestic violence in Bihar, norm theory suggests that many women may not realize the true rates of domestic violence. Thus, a confluence of (1) social norms about attitudes toward domestic violence and (2) pluralistic ignorance, whereby women feel alone in their experiences of violence, may account for low reporting rates.

#### 6. Methods.

The sample was derived from the results of the India 2015-2016 National Family Health Survey (NFHS-4) from the Demographic and Health Survey (DHS) program, a nationally-representative household survey that provides data for a wide range of indicators in the areas of population, health, and nutrition (IIPS and ICF, 2017). A two-stage sampling design was used. First, cluster sampling was used to select villages (rural) or census enumeration blocks (urban). Second, random selection was used to select individual households among them (IIPS and ICF, 2017). Of the 572,000 respondents included in the total sample, approximately 46,000 women and 6,000 men lived in Bihar (IIPS and ICF, 2017). The sample for this study included only married women who received the DV module and then

experienced any type of violence (emotional, less severe physical, severe physical and/or sexual violence) (N = 1053). The sample was limited based on the dataset not including DV experiences outside of marriage (possibly due to traditional cultural norms surrounding intimate relationships in India).

### **6.1. Study Design and Data Collection**

The current study uses secondary data obtained from the original DHS survey, which was administered via questionnaires through personal interviews from March 16 to August 8, 2015. Information was collected in 19 languages (including Hindi, Bengali and Punjabi) using Computer Assisted Personal Interviewing (CAPI) (IIPS & ICF, 2017). To ensure confidentiality and anonymity, an informed consent statement was read aloud prior to each interview, and any information collected was de-identified upon completion of data processing (IIPS & ICF, 2017).

### **6.2. Importance of men in a male-dominated country**

Men have always made women feel inferior to them by maintaining their masculinity. Sometimes he plays with her honor and sometimes he raises his hand on her. Even after changing times, men still do not like to give equal status to women, their mentality is still the same as before. It is unfortunate that for a long time in Bihar, the talks and schemes of women empowerment were limited [31]to cities only. But now gradually the village women are also being made aware due to government schemes and government initiatives. Very positive results are being seen. On one hand, women living in big cities and metro cities are educated, financially independent, new-thinking, women working in high positions, while on the other hand, there are women living within the four walls of the village, enduring all the tortures.

### **6.3. Political parties play women card to win elections**

Governments do not hesitate to play the women card during elections. If we talk about the last four elections in Bihar, the participation of women voters is continuously increasing. Women's voting has increased by about 17 percent in the four assembly elections held in the last two decades. For the last two elections, women have consistently outnumbered men in voting percentage. The number of women [33]voters is continuously increasing and now the victory or defeat of many political parties depends on women voters. In such a situation, it becomes very important to work in favor of the women of the state and to get votes from them, first focus should be on their development. However, there is no doubt that the government has done many important things for the empowerment and upliftment of women in Bihar, such as ban on dowry system and female foeticide, right to equal education and has also issued schemes to provide employment to women. . Apart[34] from this, on the request of most of the women, the government also took strict steps for alcohol prohibition. Prohibition was a difficult step taken by the government to appease women voters. Because after the announcement of alcohol prohibition in 2016, there was a huge reduction in the income source of the state. According to official figures, this loss is approximately Rs 5,500 crore per year. Apart from this, the government gave 50 percent reservation to women in Panchayat elections and 35 percent in government jobs.

### **6.4 Child marriage is a bad practice in which is fatal for girls**

The evil practice of child marriage is still prevalent in Bihar. In fact, even today, in many places in Bihar, girls are [38]married in their childhood or even before they turn 18. Even today, many such cases are seen in Bihar where families get their daughters married before the age of 18 years. They stop their daughters' education midway.

### **6.5. Challenges in girl students' education**

In today's time, the question of women's status, development and their empowerment is a very important issue. After seventy five years of independence, the condition of women is not that satisfactory in comparison to the way in which the fields of education, health, industrialization and employment are increasing in our country. Although the educational status of women in our country

has improved for some time, despite this the literacy rate is still much lower than that of men. In Bihar too, like many other backward states, girls' education was not given importance. But now there has [39] been a lot of change in the thinking of parents in Bihar. Girls were made to do household work by snatching books from their hands with the thought that they only have to take care of the house. However, with the changing times, there are some families who want to educate their girls [40] and they also send them to school for this purpose. But many times they have to face many problems due to the schools being far away from villages and towns. And keeping in mind their safety, parents have to stop their child's education even if they do not want to. Apart from this, even in the [44] few government schools present in villages and towns, bathroom facilities are not available for girls and the school administration has to instruct them to go out, which can prove to be very dangerous for their safety.

#### **6.6. Family pressure is the biggest obstacle in the way of career**

Family pressure is the biggest obstacle in the career of girls. Almost 90% of the girls of Bihar have family problems. When they pass 12th class, the marriage order is issued. Girls are not asked about their future or dreams, what they want to do next, and what they want to become. The pain of most of the girl [46] students is that the biggest problem of Bihar is the mentality of the people. People think that a girl will only do household chores, she should stay at home, there is no point in studying or doing a job after [47] marriage. Although this thinking is changing with the changing times, there is a need for a more comprehensive change.

#### **6.7 Unemployment rate of women**

Almost 75 percent women of Bihar are still unemployed. Their life is spent only within the four walls of the house. The government has also given reservation for women, but even then, sometimes due to government negligence and sometimes due to family pressure, they do not get employment opportunities. The government seems to be making every possible effort from its side, but not the slightest change is seen in the mentality of the family members. Even today, people of Bihar consider it wrong for [48] girls to work. To end unemployment in Bihar, the government started many schemes but despite all the efforts of the Bihar government, employment is not available to the women of Bihar. Due to family pressure, most girls' dreams remain unfulfilled. The pressure of marriage starts coming on them after completing their intermediate studies. Apart from this, some girls are not even given time to complete their education. This problem occurs with most of the women of Bihar. They start feeling constant pressure of marriage from home.

#### **6.8. Dowry is very common**

The practice of dowry is very common in Bihar. Here dowry is demanded without any restriction and if dowry is not received the marriage is broken. Despite the government's awareness efforts, increasing level of education and increasing participation of girls in employment, the evil practice of dowry has not been eliminated. In Bihar, a large section of the society still treats women cruelly in the name of [34] dowry. No matter how educated or working a girl is, she still has to fulfill the condition of dowry for marriage. However, the government has made many strict laws to ban dowry, under which there is a provision for immediate arrest of the accused. But despite strict law and order, the evil practice of dowry is still prevalent in Bihar. Even in today's times, even educated [36] people openly demand dowry. Greedy people openly demand dowry without understanding the problem of the other person, due to which most of the poor families have to sell their houses and farms for the marriage of their daughters and this is also a big reason due to which cases of female feticide are increasing in the state. Can be seen.

#### **6.9 Incidence of violence against women after the prohibition policy**

Violence against women seen through the number of recorded crimes against women has declined marginally in Bihar state and more significantly in Patna city (the state's capital) after the alcohol ban. To avoid year-on-year fluctuations, we compared the average of reported crimes for three



years after the prohibition with that of three years preceding it (excluding 2016, as the ban was implemented halfway through the year). Excluding cases of kidnapping and abduction, which are mostly filed by women's families when they elope, crimes against women have clearly declined both in terms of rate and incidence.

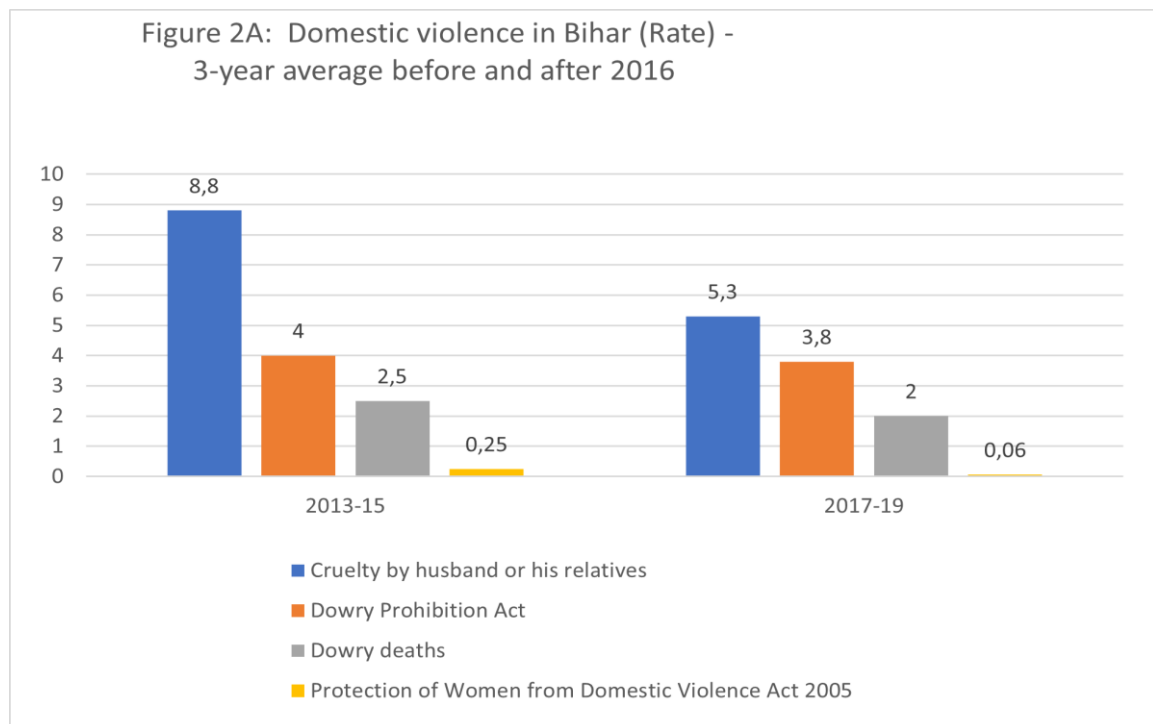


Figure- 5-(2A)Domestic Violence in Bihar Rate 3years average before & after 2016. (Source- SVRI Blog)

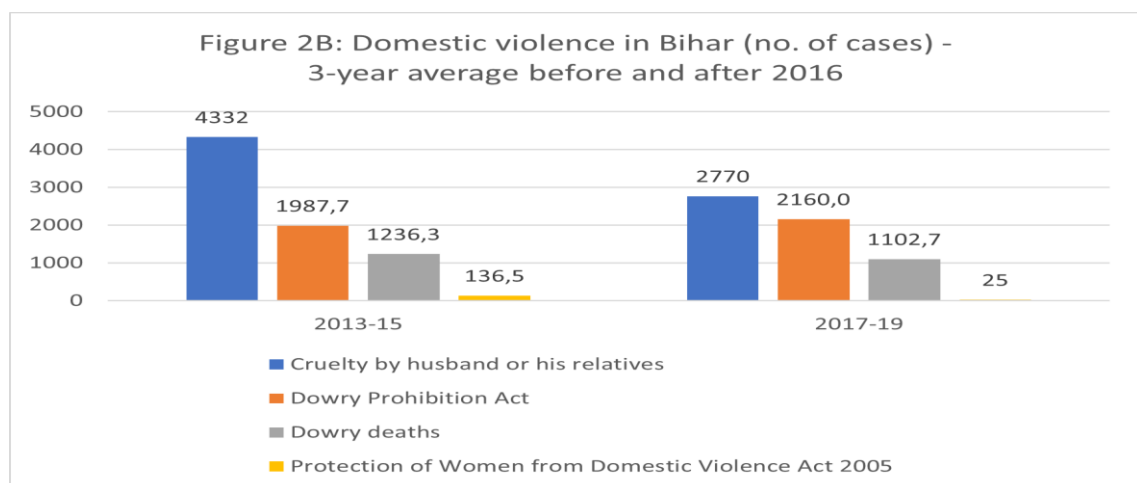


Figure- 6- (2B)-Domestic Violence in Bihar Rate 3years average before & after 2016.(Source- SVRI Blog)

Overall, crimes under domestic violence have witnessed a decline, reflected in combined cases under Indian Penal Code sections 498A (cruelty by husband and/or his relatives), 304B (dowry death), the Dowry Prohibition Act, and the Protection of Women from Domestic Violence Act, 2005 (Figures 2A and 2B).

### 7. Highest number of cases of female feticide in Bihar

Highest number of cases of female feticide are registered in Uttar Pradesh and Bihar. People here consider girls a burden. Latest figures prove that the incidents of girls being killed in the womb or as soon as they are born have increased significantly. They believe that the cost of dowry is often huge in

the marriage of girls. After raising and educating them all their life, the expense of their marriage and dowry often breaks the father's back.

### 7.1. Giving importance to women's respect:

To give importance to women's respect, the government had started Mukhyamantri Nari Shakti Yojana. The objective of this scheme was to empower women economically, socially and culturally and give them a distinct identity in the society. Apart from this, the government had started Mukhyamantri Kanya Vivah Yojana, Kanya Utthan Yojana and Kanya Suraksha Yojana to eradicate crimes like female feticide and child marriage in the state and to encourage girl birth. Strong share in government jobs: In the year 2016, the government had set reservation of up to 35 percent for women in all government jobs. Apart from this, a provision of up to 50 percent reservation for women was [45]also made in the education department. The only intention of the government through this reservation is that through reservation, women should get employment on posts like SDM, BDO, CO and Police Station. Due to reservation, the total number of teachers employed today is 3 lakh 51 thousand, out of which about 2 lakh teacher posts are women. According to an official report, 25.33 percent women are working in Bihar Police. The total strength of the police force in Bihar is around 92,000, out of which only 23,245 are women. Reformist steps in the field of education: To promote girls' education in Bihar, the government started many schemes like Mukhyamantri Balika Cycle Yojana and Mukhyamantri Balika posak yojna.

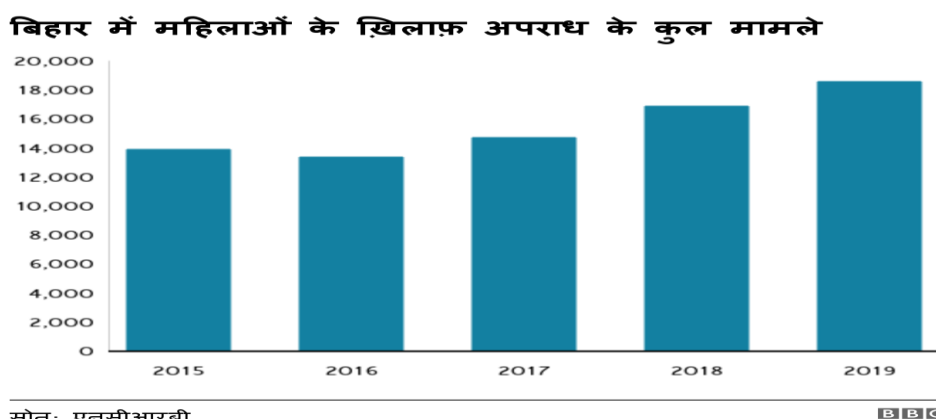


Figure- 7- Total crime cases against women in Bihar 2015 to 2019 Source BBC News

### 7.3 Safety and Security of Women and Girls

'Police' and 'Public Order' are State subjects under the Seventh Schedule to the Constitution of India. State Governments are thus responsible for safety and security of the citizens including women and girls. However, safety and security of women and children in the country is utmost priority for the Government. The Ministry of Women and Child Development has been administering various special[50] laws relating to women such as the Protection of Women from Domestic Violence Act, 2005; Dowry Prohibition Act, 1961; Indecent Representation of Women (Prohibition) Act, 1986; the Sexual Harassment of Women at Workplace (Prevention, Prohibition and Redressal) Act, 2013 and the Prohibition of Child Marriage Act, 2006. The said Ministry is also administering the Juvenile Justice (care and protection of children) Act, 2015, the Commissions for Protection of Child Rights Act, 2005 and the Protection of Children from Sexual Offences Act, 2012. The Criminal Law (Amendments), Act 2013 was enacted for effective legal deterrence against sexual offences. Further, the Criminal Law (Amendment) Act, 2018 was enacted to prescribe even more stringent penal provisions including death penalty for rape of a girl below the age of 12 years. The[50] Act also inter-alia mandates completion of investigation and trials within 2 months each. The Government has also taken a number of initiatives for safety of women and girls, which are given below:

The Government has set up Nirbhaya Fund for projects for safety and security of women, for which Ministry of Women and Child Development is the nodal authority for appraising/recommending the proposals / schemes to be funded under Nirbhaya Fund.

- a. In order to facilitate States/UTs, MHA has launched an online analytic tool for police on 19<sup>th</sup> February 2019 called "Investigation Tracking System for Sexual Offences" to monitor and track time-bound investigation in sexual assault cases in accordance with Criminal Law (Amendment) Act 2018.
- b. MHA has launched the "National Database on Sexual Offenders" (NDSO) on 20<sup>th</sup> September 2018 to facilitate investigation and tracking of sexual offenders across the country by law enforcement agencies. NDSO has data of over 5 lakh sexual offenders.
- c. Emergency Response Support System, which provides a single emergency number (112) based computer aided dispatch of field resources to the location of distress has been operationalized in 20 States/ UTs in 2018-19.
- d. MHA has launched a cyber-crime portal on 20<sup>th</sup> September 2018 for citizens to report obscene content. Further, Cyber Crime Forensic Labs have been set up in several States, and training of over 3,664 personnel, including 410 Public Prosecutors and Judicial Officers in identifying, detecting and resolving cyber-crimes against women and children has been imparted.
- f. Using technology to aid smart policing and safety management, Safe City Projects have been sanctioned in phase I in 8 cities (Ahmedabad, Bengaluru, Chennai, Delhi, Hyderabad, Kolkata, Lucknow and Mumbai).
- g. In order to improve investigation, MHA has taken steps to strengthen DNA analysis units in Central and State Forensic Science Laboratories. This includes setting up of a State-of-the-Art DNA Analysis Unit in Central Forensic Science Laboratory, Chandigarh. MHA has also sanctioned setting-up and upgrading of DNA Analysis units in State Forensic Science Laboratories in 13 States/ UTs.
- h. MHA has notified guidelines for the collection of forensic evidence in sexual assault cases and the standard composition in a sexual assault evidence collection kit. To facilitate adequate capacity in manpower training and skill-building programs for Investigation Officers, Prosecution Officers and Medical Officers has commenced. 2,575 Officers have already been trained by Bureau of Police Research and Development (BPR&D) and Lok Narayan Jayaprakash Narayan National Institute of Criminology and forensic Science in the collection, handling and transportation of forensic evidence. BPR&D has distributed 3,120 Sexual Assault Evidence Collection Kits to States/ UTs as an orientation kit as part of training.
- i. In order to coordinate various initiatives for women safety, MHA has set up a Women Safety Division.
- j. Ministry of Women and Child Development has also introduced the scheme of One Stop Centres to provide integrated support and assistance to women affected by violence and a Scheme for Universalisation of Women Helpline to provide 24 hours emergency and non-emergency response to women affected by violence. Apart from above, the Ministry of Women and Child Development in collaboration with the Ministry of Home Affairs has envisaged engagement of Mahila Police Volunteers in States/UTs who will act as a link between police and community and facilitate women in distress.
- k. Further, Government of India conducts awareness generation programmes and publicity campaigns on various laws relating to women and their rights through workshops, cultural programmes, seminars, training programmes, advertisements in print and electronic media etc.

1. MHA has issued advisories to all State Governments/UTs, advising them to ensure thorough investigation, conducting of medical examination of rape victims without delay and for increasing gender sensitivity in Police. These advisories are available at [www.mha.gov.in](http://www.mha.gov.in).

## 8. Results

A multivariate logistic regression was run to assess what factors are associated with whether married women in Bihar reported their experience of domestic violence to anyone. Factors in the regression analysis included socio-demographic characteristics of both the husband and wife, variables related to the experience of violence, and variables related to social norms (see Appendix). Controlling for all other variables, the wife's level of education is the only socio-demographic variable significantly associated with whether she reported her domestic violence experience to anyone ( $\beta = .75$ ,  $p = .01$ ). Women who had some level of education were twice as likely to report domestic violence experiences as women who had no education ( $\text{ExpB} = 2.12$ ). The respondent's wealth index is marginally significant ( $\beta = -.63$ ,  $p = .06$ ). Of the violence experience variables, and holding all other variables constant, whether or not women experienced emotional violence was significantly associated with reporting ( $\beta = -.84$ ,  $p = .001$ ). Women who experienced emotional violence were 58 percent less likely to report DV than women who did not experience emotional violence ( $\text{ExpB} = .43$ ). It is important to note that this variable does not represent women who exclusively experienced emotional violence. This finding indicates that women who experienced emotional violence alone or in combination with physical violence were less likely to report DV than women who experienced physical or sexual violence without emotional violence.

Additionally, holding all other variables constant, whether or not the husband drinks alcohol was significantly associated with reporting ( $\beta = -.53$ ,  $p = .03$ ). Women were 41 percent less likely to report their DV experiences if their husbands drank alcohol ( $\text{ExpB} = .59$ ).

Finally, controlling for all other variables, lasting effects of violence were significantly associated with reporting ( $\beta = .30$ ,  $p = .03$ ). Women who showed lasting physical effects of violence (bruises, burns, scars, etc.) were 34 percent more likely to report than women who showed no lasting physical effects of violence ( $\text{ExpB} = 1.34$ ).

When controlling for all other variables, neither attitudes toward DV can be justified ( $\beta = .002$ ,  $p = .97$ ) nor the Women's Empowerment Scale ( $\beta = .03$ ,  $p = .65$ ) were significantly associated with whether women reported DV.

## 9. Challenges and recommendations

The use of secondary data presents a significant challenge for the current study. Fearing survey fatigue, DHS limits the number of questions in each module, so the DV measure for this study is limited. A broader range of questions would be necessary to get a full picture of the factors contributing to the low rate of reporting in Bihar. Data on how and to whom domestic violence was reported would further contribute to knowledge of reporting and stigma. Notably, the variable of reporting DV only provides information on whether or not a woman reported her abuse, not to whom it was reported. The lack of information on who DV was reported to limits our knowledge on the use of formal versus informal systems of reporting. Future research should use a refined definition of reporting to better understand women's motivations when choosing whether or not to report in both informal and formal systems. Another notable challenge is that examining the discrepancy between DV prevalence and reporting of DV relies on self-reported data. This raises some conceptual challenges. Women who indicated they had experienced some form of domestic violence reported that violence to the surveyor, which then raised the question of whether they told anyone else about the DV they experienced (the question about reporting). The fact that data collection inherently relies on self-report when trying to measure reporting adds a layer of response bias that must be taken into account. To address this challenge, future studies should consider working with community-based groups to conduct surveys. These local groups

may be able to collect more reliable data on sensitive topics such as DV, as they are “insiders” whom community members will trust more than external surveyors. Finally, the number of women who report experiencing violence is higher than those admitted in the survey, so there are many challenges to interpreting the accuracy of the data. This challenge emphasizes the need for data on how women report their experience of domestic violence (what they share and what they do not, how honestly they describe the frequency and severity of their experiences, and what happens when they do report). Considerable attention should be given to designing culturally sensitive survey instruments to more effectively measure domestic violence and reporting in Bihar. Only with a more robust understanding of the factors contributing to underreporting can interventions be developed to address this problem.

### Suggestions & Concluding Remarks

Swami Vivekananda has said that there can be no welfare of the world without improvement in the condition of women. Because it is difficult for a bird to fly with one wing. For the progress of the country, we have to empower the women of India. Empowering women in a society is essentially a process of uplifting the economic, social and political status of women and the underprivileged. It involves building a society wherein women can breathe without the fear of oppression, exploitation, apprehension, discrimination, and a general feeling of ill-treatment that symbolises a woman in a traditional male-dominated society like the one in India. With the implementation of gender quotas since India's 73rd and 74th Constitutional Amendment Acts, the percentage of women in political activities at the local level has risen from 4-5% to about 35-40%. Reserving one-third of seats for women in the elected bodies of rural local governments in India has unleashed a silent revolution. For the first time, rural women began to participate in local governance to improve their status and acquire a decisive say in matters crucial to their livelihoods.

### Conclusion

After the liquor ban, cases of domestic violence against women have decreased in Bihar. But even after this, a large number of cases of domestic violence against women are being registered in Bihar. The biggest reason behind this is the concept of a male-dominated society. But as women are becoming self-reliant and are becoming aware of their rights, this situation is changing. Now women are not behind in registering complaints of domestic violence. But the inequality that continues with women in the economic development of India and the progress of Bihar is affecting the pace of development. Under the rule of law, there are many laws to protect women from harassment and their rights, the effect of which is visible today.

Metro Domestic Violence Fatality Review Committee. Project Safeguard, Denver. The Bihar government has taken several initiatives for the safety of women, some of which are: Safe travel facility Bihar Police has started 'Safe Travel Facility' for the safety of women. Under this facility, if women feel unsafe while travelling, they can seek help from the police by calling 112. This facility is operated from the Nirbhaya Fund of the Central Government. Social Security Scheme Under this scheme, the Bihar government gives Rs 4,000 every month to those women whose husband has died or are divorced. Apart from this, children who do not have parents are also given Rs 4,000 every month. Girl upliftment scheme Under this scheme, Rs 5,000 is given to the parents when a daughter is born. Apart from this, when the girl turns 18, the government sends a total of Rs 25,000 to her bank account.

### Abbreviations

- NCRB National Crime Records Bureau
- HIV Human immunodeficiency virus
- IPV intimate partner violence (
- NFHS National Family Health Survey
- PWDVA Protection of Women Against Domestic Violence Act
- MHA Ministry of Home Affairs

- BPR&D Bureau of Police Research and Development
- DV Domestic Violence

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