

HUMAN TRAFFICKING IN INDIA: A COMPARATIVE ASSESSMENT OF REGULATORY FRAMEWORK

by

Ragini Singh¹,

&

Prof. Basavaraj M. Kubakaddi²

ABSTRACT

Human trafficking remains one of the most persistent and complex forms of transnational crime, driven by social, economic, and institutional vulnerabilities. This paper examines the nature and extent of human trafficking in India through an analysis of reported cases, rescue data, and the legal response based on government sources. It seeks to assess how population size, governance structures, and enforcement mechanisms shape the reporting and control of trafficking. Using secondary data from 2018 to 2022, the study evaluates India's legal framework and policy response, with particular attention to prevention, rescue, rehabilitation, and prosecution and also it calculates the rate of trafficking cases per million population to provide a normalized assessment of the problem in India and USA. The findings indicate that reported figures do not fully reflect the actual scale of trafficking, as under-reporting, weak coordination, and implementation gaps continue to affect enforcement outcomes.

Keywords: Human trafficking, India, United States, comparative analysis, rehabilitation, victim protection, data reporting.

1.Introduction

Human trafficking is one of the most tenacious and dire crimes. As it has a wide range of socio-economic and legal implications for society, it draws global attention. This is often described

¹ Department of law, Research Scholar, Central University of Karnataka, ORCID iD: 0009-0001-6067-4547

² Department of Law, Dean School of legal studies, Central University of Karnataka, mail: basavarajk@cuk.ac.in ORCID iD:0000-0001-9076-2452

as modern-day slavery, which involves unlawful recruitment, transportation, and harboring through illicit means like coercion, fraud, deception, or abuse of power (Agarwal, 2026). The main objective of this crime is to obtain profit, which may be in the form of forced labor, sexual exploitation, organ trade, or domestic servitude. According to definition of United Nations Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children (2000), “The recruitment, transportation, transfer, harboring or receipt of persons, by means of the threat or use of force or other forms of coercion, of abduction, of fraud, of deception, of the abuse of power or of a position of vulnerability or of the giving or receiving of payments or benefits to achieve the consent of a person having control over another person, for exploitation” (*Palermo Protocol*, 2000). Global Report on Trafficking in Persons 2022, published by the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, reveals threatening statistics that show that human trafficking is a global and gendered nature crime (Vishwakarma & Singh, 2025). The report shows that in 2020, sexual exploitation and forced labour were detected in almost equal measure, at approximately 38.7% and 38.8% of identified victims respectively, while women and girls together accounted for around 60% of victims detected worldwide, a share that has been declining over recent reporting cycles (UNODC, 2022). India is more vulnerable to this crime because of its socio-economic inequalities and its geographical location with a porous border, which makes it both a source and a destination for this crime. Poverty and financial vulnerability are key social determinants of human trafficking. Post-trafficking, many survivors face considerable financial insecurity – a dearth of employment opportunities, family financial pressures, responsibility for family debts, lack of savings, financial anxiety, insufficient social safety nets, and economic marginalization – deepening their vulnerability to experiencing further violence and exploitation has described life after human trafficking as “life on the margins,” with many survivors having access only to low-wage and exploitative workplaces (Cordisco Tsai, 2025). Internal trafficking often flows from impoverished rural areas to sophisticated urban areas, while international trafficking mainly occurs with Nepal and Bangladesh.

The scale of this vulnerability is illustrated by the Global Slavery Index 2023, which estimated that approximately eleven million people were living in conditions of modern slavery in India on any given day in 2021, a prevalence of eight victims per thousand of the population (Walk Free, ‘Modern Slavery in India’ (Global Slavery Index, 2023) <<https://www.walkfree.org/global-slavery-index/country-studies/india/>> accessed 13 August 2026). The Index attributes this vulnerability to conflict, climate change, gender discrimination,

and the marginalisation of lower castes and religious minorities, factors that closely mirror the socio-economic determinants discussed above. These figures place India among the countries with the largest absolute number of persons in modern slavery worldwide.

Although India has enacted different laws like the Immoral Trafficking Prevention Act, 1956, section 143 of the Bhartiya Nyaya Sanhita (Parliament of India, 2023). The problem is persistent due to weak enforcement, limited victim rehabilitation, and a lack of inter-agency cooperation. This institutional weakness is not merely anecdotal: a 2022 review found that although the Ministry of Home Affairs claimed Anti-Human Trafficking Units had been established in nearly all districts, several states had constituted such units only on paper, without dedicated staff, vehicles, or budgets to make them operational (Hindustan Times, 'The Limitations of the New Trafficking Bill' (9 January 2022) <<https://www.pressreader.com/india/hindustan-times-east-up/20220109/281805697281040>> accessed 13 August 2026). Such gaps between the formal existence of enforcement machinery and its actual functioning help explain why legislative reform alone has not translated into improved outcomes for victims. Structural issues such as poverty, gender violence, and illiteracy aggravate the crisis (Islam & Saikia, 2025).

This study aims to investigate the effectiveness of India's anti-trafficking laws and judicial mechanisms in securing convictions and protecting victims, highlight systemic shortcomings, and suggest practical, policy-oriented reforms for a comprehensive, victim-focused legal regime. Having established the gravity and global scope of human trafficking, it is essential to examine how this crime manifests within India. Understanding the specific modes, methods, and targeted victims provides a foundation to assess the effectiveness of existing legal and policy measures.

1.2 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The study was primarily conducted using secondary data collected from various sources of national and international significance. To make inferences and conclusions, descriptive, analytical, informational, and evaluative methods have been used.

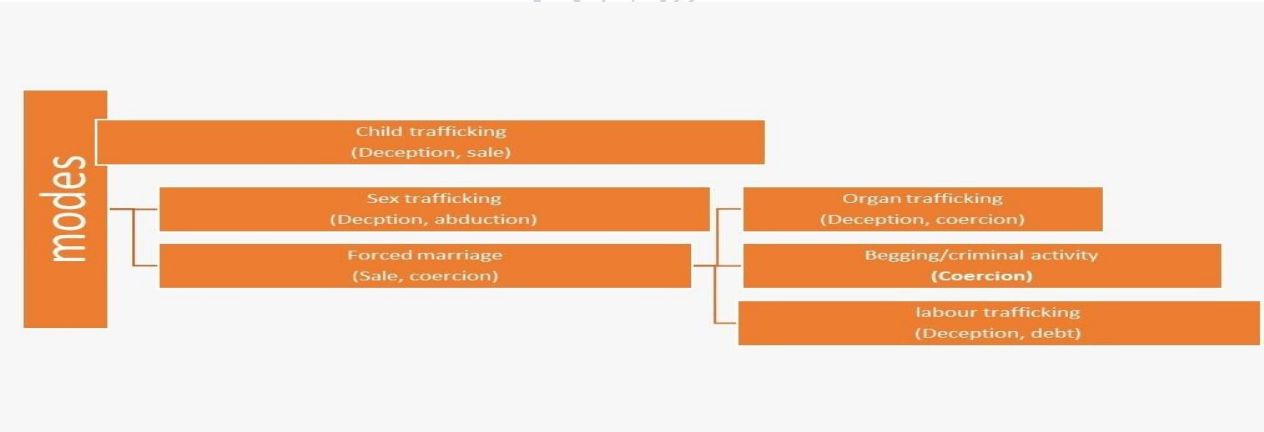
Sources of Data: The data was completely from secondary sources which includes various High Court and Supreme Court judgements United Nations Documents Human Rights Treaties, Global Report on Trafficking in Persons, NCRB Data on Human Trafficking National Crime Records Bureau's annual publication "Crime in India (years)", Ministry of Home Affairs

1.3 Modes and Methods of Human Trafficking in India

Human trafficking in India is a multifaceted issue driven by socio-economic, cultural practices, and an organized crime network. There are various modes through which human trafficking is carried out, some are as follows in the chart:

In addition to the traditional modes depicted below, traffickers increasingly rely on social media platforms and online advertisements to identify and lure potential victims, frequently through fraudulent job or matrimonial offers. A 2024 study examining trafficking cases in Goa found that online advertisements and social media interactions were making the recruitment of victims considerably easier for traffickers, complicating detection by law enforcement (Priyanka Sahoo Chadha, ‘Social Media, Online Ads Making Sex Trafficking Easier, Report That Studied Cases in Goa Suggests’ The Indian Express (25 October 2024) <<https://indianexpress.com/article/india/social-media-online-ads-making-sex-trafficking-easier-report-that-studied-cases-in-go-suggests-9637457/>> accessed 13 August 2026). This digital dimension of recruitment represents an evolving challenge that existing enforcement frameworks, designed largely around physical modes of trafficking, are yet to fully address.

Figure :1 Modes and Methods of human trafficking



2. HUMAN TRAFFICKING IN INDIA

“Whoever, for exploitation, recruits, transports, harbors, transfers, or receives, a person or persons, by using threats, or using force, or any other form of coercion, or by abduction, or by practicing fraud, or deception, or by abuse of power, or by inducement, including the giving or receiving of payments or benefits, in order to achieve the consent of any person having control over the person recruited, transported, harbored, transferred or received, commits the offence of trafficking. The expression “exploitation” shall include any act of physical exploitation or

any form of sexual exploitation, slavery or practices similar to slavery, servitude. The consent of the victim is immaterial in determination of the offence of trafficking” (Parliament of India, 2023). If we see the numbers then, more than half of the victims work 12 or more hours a day in brick kilns, textile mills, farms, or stone quarries as a result of being coerced or bonded into this type of work. Many of them were duped into accepting positions with promises of significant advancements only to be stuck paying off debts with sky-high interest rates, caught in a cycle from which they can in no way break free. Their lives, and frequently the entire family's existence, are defined by cruel working and living conditions that are managed by employers who treat them like commodities. Intergenerational bonded labor, in which the obligations of deceased workers are passed on to their children, siblings, or parents, affects some families. Corroborating this pattern, the Global Slavery Index country study on India records that forced labour in brick kilns, textile mills, and domestic work, together with sexual exploitation, remains among the most commonly reported forms of modern slavery in the country, and notes that vulnerability is heightened by conflict, climate stress, and the marginalisation of lower castes and religious minorities (Walk Free, ‘Modern Slavery in India’ (Global Slavery Index, 2023) <<https://www.walkfree.org/global-slavery-index/country-studies/india/>> accessed 13 August 2026). This reinforces the observation that bonded labour in India is not an isolated occurrence but a structurally embedded practice affecting entire households across generations. (Parker, 2022). According to the ‘Report on Trafficking in Women and Children India’ by Sen and Nair, the overall major trends are. The major purpose of trafficking is Commercial sexual exploitation is

- A. There is a repeated preference for younger children and inclusion of men (Lahiri & Kar, 2007).
- B. Becoming extremely lucrative business, sometimes exceedingly doing better than arms and drug trafficking.
- C. There is a strong nexus between traffickers and public officials, with the participation of corporate, sex and tourism industry (Joffres et al., 2008).
- D. Deception and false promises are the core mode to traffic majority of women and children (Joffres et al., 2008).

While the patterns of trafficking show who and how individuals are exploited, understanding the underlying causes is equally crucial. Structural and personal factors, including poverty, gender discrimination, lack of education, and systemic vulnerabilities, create conditions that

allow traffickers to operate with impunity. Analyzing these factors helps identify why trafficking persists despite existing legal provisions (James & Ranganathan, 2021). After examining the modes and methods of human trafficking now it's crucial to understand the underlying factors which is compelling to become a victims of this crime

2.1 REASON OF HUMAN TRAFFICKING

Trafficking appears to be influenced by a variety of variables, from structural to personal. It has been stated that traffickers start out in areas where there are favorable conditions for exploitation. Trafficking appears to be influenced by a variety of variables, from structural to personal (Okech, Morreau, & Benso, 2011). It has been stated that traffickers start out in areas where there are favorable conditions for exploitation.

Personal Circumstances and structural factors

People with poor levels of literacy, awareness, and information appear to be more susceptible to trafficking from a personal perspective. Low earnings and economic hardship are other risk factors. For traffickers, women and children with impairments are easy prey (Talib & Khan, 2025). Gender discrimination, a major driver of susceptibility to trafficking, is another significant social component young women are considered as unwanted and a "burden" on their families in many places. Parents envision greater immediate rewards from investing in boys since they may take care of and console their parents in their old age, as daughters leave after marriage to join their in-law's households (Batra & Reio, 2016).

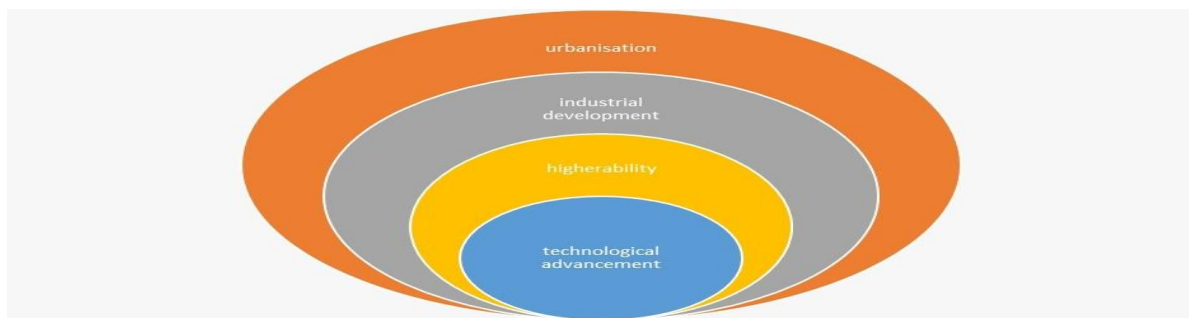
Perpetuating factors

Government is lacking of political will to put policies into proper implementation and to provide adequate services for victims, along with this there is weak enforcement, ineffective penalties, low chances of prosecution, the relatively low risks involved, corruption, and complacency, all contribute to the continuation of trafficking (Shepherd et al., 2022). It has also been said that the number of people fighting human trafficking is minuscule. Due to the fact that everyone in the trafficking camp is united, it is harder to combat. The families who benefit are also averse to speaking up (Khan, 2014). There are certain contributing factors for trade in human beings, the factors of Human trafficking can be divided into two categories: push and pull factors (Parker, 2022).

Figure 2. Push Factor



Figure 3. Pull factor



3. CRIME RELATED TO HUMAN TRAFFICKING

The crime of human trafficking consists of three core elements: the act, the means, the purpose. Physical and sexual abuse, blackmail, emotional manipulation, and the removal of official documents are used by traffickers to control their victims. Exploitation can take place in a victim's home country, during migration, or in a foreign country ("Understanding Human Trafficking," 2025).

This includes;

- A. Importation of girls from foreign country (Sec. 141 BNS)
- B. Procurement of minor girls (Sec. 96 BNS)
- C. Buying of minors for prostitution (Sec. 99 BNS) (previously known as buying of girls for prostitution)
- D. Selling of minors for prostitution (Sec. 98 BNS)
- E. Human trafficking (Sec. 143 & 144 BNS)

Given the various vulnerabilities and social conditions that contribute to human trafficking, the Indian legal system has developed multiple mechanisms to combat these crimes. Reviewing

constitutional provisions, statutory laws, and specialized acts provides insight into the tools available for prevention, prosecution, and victim protection(Nair, n.d.).

4. LEGAL FRAMEWORK FOR HUMAN TRAFFICKING IN INDIA

4.1 CONSTITUTIONAL PROVISIONS.

While the Constitution does not explicitly mention human trafficking, it contains several provisions that protect the rights and dignity of individuals, which are relevant in combating human trafficking. The Constitution of India recognizes the fundamental rights of its citizens and provides for their protection through various articles. Few key provisions that relate to human trafficking are

Right to Equality - This article guarantees equality before the law and prohibits discrimination on grounds of religion, race, caste, sex, or place of birth. It establishes the principle of equality, which is fundamental in combating human trafficking, as victims are often marginalized and vulnerable groups(*Article 14 in Constitution of India, 1950*).

Right to Life and Personal Liberty - Article 21 ensures the right to life and personal liberty to all individuals. This provision encompasses the protection of individuals from human trafficking, as trafficking violates the basic rights and dignity of victims. Courts in India have interpreted Article 21 broadly to include the right to live with dignity(*Article 21 in Constitution of India, 1950*).

Prohibition of Traffic in Human Beings and Forced Labor - Article 23 expressly prohibits human trafficking and forced labor. It states that trafficking in human beings, including beggars (forced labor), and other forms of forced labor are prohibited and punishable by law(*Article 23 in Constitution of India, 1950*).

Prohibition of forced labor and human trafficking is very essential because golden triangle that is article 21,14 and 19 are interconnected and if there is no any specific article prohibiting this then also this act is unconstitutional as if any person is getting confined its violation of article 19(1)(d) which ensure the right to move freely throughout the territory of India and also forcing individuals to any work is also contradict to article 19(1)(g) which ensure right to freedom choose one's own profession and trade.

Certain Principles Directive Principles of State Policy, which are guidelines for the government to frame laws and policies. It specifically mentions that the state should direct its policy towards securing the health and strength of workers, men, women, and children,

and that children should be given opportunities to develop healthily(*Article 39 in Constitution of India, 1950*).

4.2 THE BHARTIYA NYAYA SANHITA, 2023

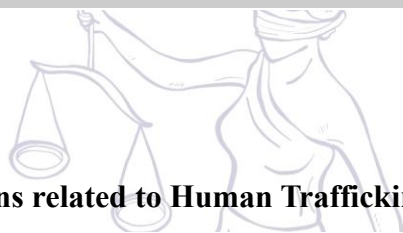
Bhartiya Nyaya Sanhita 2023 has some provisions that exclusively deal with the offence of human trafficking in India while some are general in nature(*Bhartiya Nyaya Sanhita, 2023*). So, these provisions can be categorized as general and special provisions.

4.2.1 GENERAL PROVISIONS

Table 1. General provisions related to Human Trafficking in in BNS

SECTION	OFFENCES	PUNISHMENT
127(7)	Any person who wrongfully confines any other person to extort from them or to constrain them to engage in illegal acts	shall be punished with imprisonment of up to 3 years and a fine.
135	Whoever uses assault or criminal force to wrongfully confine a person,	shall be imprisoned for a term of up to one year or with a fine of up to rupees one thousand.
137(2)	Whoever kidnaps a person from India or from lawful guardianship	shall be punished with imprisonment of up to seven years and will also be liable to be fined.
140(3)	Whoever kidnaps or abducts with the intent secretly and wrongfully to confine a person,	shall be punished with imprisonment of up to 7 years along with a fine.
351(2) 351(3)	The punishment for criminal intimidation	Imprisonment may extend up to two years, or with a fine, or both.

143	According to this section, the crime of trafficking is committed by anyone who: " Recruits, transports, harbors, transfers, or receives a person or persons for exploitation by: first, using threats, or second, using force, or third, by abduction, or fourth, by engaging in fraud or deception, or fifth, by abusing their position of authority, or sixth, by inducement, including the giving or receiving of payments	imprisonment ranging from seven to ten years in addition to a fine; However, if more than one person was trafficked, the penalty is ten years with the possibility of a life sentence
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4.2.1 Special Provisions

Table 2. Special Provisions related to Human Trafficking in BNS

Sections	Offence	Punishment
75	Any man committing the following acts: 1. Physical contact and advances involving unwelcome and explicit sexual overtures; or 2. a demand or request for sexual favors, 3. showing pornography against the will of a 4. woman or making sexually colored remarks.	Sub clause 1,2 punished with rigorous imprisonment for upto 3 years with fine or both For clause 4 shall be punishable with rigorous imprisonment which may extend to one year or with fine or with both
87	Whoever kidnaps, abducts, or induces a woman to compel her marriage shall be punished with imprisonment of up to ten years, along with a fine.	Shall be punishable with imprisonment which may extend to ten years and also shall be liable to a fine
96	Whoever, by any means whatsoever, induces any child to go from any place or to do any act with the intent that such child may be or knowing that it is likely that such child will be	Shall be punishable with imprisonment which may extend to ten years, and shall also be liable to a fine.

	forced or seduced to illicit intercourse with another person.	
98	Whoever sells, lets to hire, or otherwise disposed of any child with intent that such child shall at any age be employed or used for prostitution or illicit intercourse with any person or any or for any unlawful and immoral purpose, or knowing it to be likely that such child will at any age be employed or used for any such purpose,	Shall be punishable with imprisonment either for a term which may extend to ten years, and shall also be liable for a fine.
141	Whoever imports into India from any country outside India any girl under the age of twenty-one years or any boy under the age of eighteen years.	Shall be punishable with imprisonment which may extend to ten years, and shall also be liable to a fine.
145	Whoever habitually imports, exports, removes, buys, sells, traffics, or deals in slaves.	Shall be punished with imprisonment for life, or with imprisonment of either description for a term not exceeding ten years, and shall also be liable to fine

4.3 IMMORAL TRAFFICKING (PREVENTION) ACT, 1956

To ratify the international convention for the Suppression of Immoral Traffic in Persons and the Exploitation of Other Persons' Prostitution, India passed the Suppression of Immoral Traffic in Women and Girls Act (SITA) in 1956. Later on in 1986, lawmakers made additional changes to the original statute with the passage of the Immoral Traffic Prevention Act, 1986 (PITA)(The Immoral Traffic (Prevention) Act, 1956).

Table 3. Provisions to Human Trafficking in ITPA

Section	Offences	Punishment
3	Keeping a brothel or allowing premises to be used as a brothel	First conviction: rigorous imprisonment 1–3 years and fine up to ₹2,000; subsequent: 2–5 years fine up to ₹2,000

4	Living on the earnings of prostitution of another person	Up to 2 years or fine up to ₹1,000, or both; if earnings related to a child: 7–10 years
5	Procuring, inducing, or taking a person for the sake of prostitution	RI not less than 1 year and not than 2 years with a fine of up to 2000 rupees
6	Detaining a person in premises where prostitution is carried on	Shall be punishable with imprisonment for a term of 7 -10 years and a fine
7	Prostitution in or near public places	Up to 3 months or a fine of up to ₹200, or both; subsequent: up to 6 months or fine up to ₹200, or both
8	Seducing or soliciting for prostitution	First conviction: up to 6 months or fine up to ₹500, or both; subsequent: up to 1 year or fine up to ₹500, or both

4.4 *The Scheduled Castes and the Scheduled Tribes (Prevention of Atrocities) Act, 1989*

The Indian Constitution forbids untouchability and all related practices in Article 17. The Scheduled Caste and Scheduled Tribe Act (1989) and the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes (Prevention of Atrocities) Rules (1995) were passed by Parliament to address the ongoing grievances and injustices against the Scheduled Castes and the Scheduled Tribes and to stop the cruel treatment they endure (*The Scheduled Castes And The Scheduled Tribes | Welfare of SC/ST/OBC*, 1989).

Table 4. Provisions related to Human Trafficking in SC/ST Act

Section	Description of offences	Punishment
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3 (h)	Makes a member of SC or a ST do beggar or other forms of forced labor other than any compulsory service for public purposes imposed by the government.	Shall be punished by imprisonment not less than six months, which may extend to five years, and with a fine
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4.5 Juvenile Justice (Care and Protection) Act, 2015

Special Juvenile Police Units (SJPU) (Section 63):

The Act mandates the establishment of SJPUs in each district to handle cases related to children in conflict with the law and children in need of care and protection. These units play a role in investigating cases of trafficking, identifying trafficked children, and coordinating with other relevant authorities to ensure their protection and rehabilitation. Apart from this unit there are various provisions which deals with trafficking of children (*Juvenile Justice (Care and Protection of Children) Act, 2015*).

Table 5. Provisions related to Human Trafficking in JJ Act

Section	Description	Related to Human Trafficking	Punishment
75	Punishment for cruelty to a child, including trafficking and exploitation	trafficking, sale, and exploitation	Imprisonment up to 3 years and a fine
76	Employment of a child for begging	trafficked children are forced to beg	Imprisonment up to 5 years and a fine
78	Using a child for vending, peddling, carrying, supplying, or smuggling intoxicating substances	Addresses trafficking for drug-related activities	Imprisonment up to 7 years and a fine
79	Exploitation of a child employee	Covers trafficking for child labor	Imprisonment up to 5 years and a fine

81	Sale and procurement of children for any purpose	Directly penalizes the trafficking and sale of children	Imprisonment up to 5 years and a fine
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Although India has a comprehensive set of laws addressing human trafficking, their impact is largely shaped by judicial interpretation and enforcement. The Following Landmark judgments illustrate how courts have expanded the scope of constitutional rights to safeguard victims and hold traffickers accountable to traffickers, by highlighting the critical role of judicial oversight against trafficking

5. LANDMARK JUDGMENTS AGAINST HUMAN TRAFFICKING IN INDIA

While discussing the application of Article 23 of the Indian Constitution, the Honorable Supreme Court of India provided a definition of forced labor in this judgement, stating: "The word force must therefore be construed to include not only physical or legal force but also force arising from the compulsion of economic circumstances which leaves no choice of alternatives to a person in need and compels him to provide labor or service even though the remuneration received for it is less than the minimum wage (People'S Union For Democratic Rights ... vs Union Of India & Others, 1982)." Again in another decision, where an NGO Bandhua Mukti Morcha, filed a PIL mentioning that the plight of workers in stone quarries is found in exploitative living conditions and subjected to bonded labor. According to the Court's detailed explanation of Article 23, "Wherever it is shown that a person is working for less than minimum wage, the presumption has to be that he is a bonded laborer. "This case not only abolished bonded labor but also expanded the interpretation of fundamental rights, emphasizing human dignity and equality (*Bandhua Mukti Morcha vs Union Of India & Others*, 1984). A PIL was filed by an advocate highlighting the problem of child trafficking and prostitution, seeking State intervention to eradicate the practice and rehabilitate victims. The Supreme Court held that such exploitation violates Articles 21 and 23. It directed the Centre and States to set up rehabilitation homes, provide education and vocational training, and strictly enforce the Immoral Traffic (Prevention) Act, 1956. The Court emphasized that the State must both punish offenders and rehabilitate victims (*Vishal Jeet vs Union Of India And Ors*, 1990).

A PIL on child labor in hazardous industries (Sivakasi match factories) questioned the State's duty to protect children under the Constitution. The Supreme Court held that child

labor in hazardous work violates Articles 21 and 24, directing employers to pay ₹20,000 compensation per child and the State to contribute ₹5,000 per child for a welfare fund. It also ordered rehabilitation through education, nutrition, and family support, with inspectors ensuring strict enforcement (*M.C. Mehta vs State Of Tamil Nadu And Others*, 1996). A PIL was filed by Gaurav Jain, a journalist, seeking directions for the rehabilitation of sex workers and their children. The petition highlighted that children of prostitutes were stigmatized, denied education, and pushed into the same exploitative cycle of prostitution, thus violating their fundamental rights under Articles 14, 21, and 39(f) (*Gaurav Jain vs Union Of India & Ors*, 1997).

The Supreme Court held that the State has a duty to ensure the care, protection, and rehabilitation of the children of sex workers. It directed the government to:

- Establish homes, orphanages, and educational institutions for such children.
- Provide vocational training, counseling, and opportunities to integrate them into mainstream society.
- Frame rehabilitation schemes for sex workers to prevent intergenerational exploitation

This case was a PIL filed by NGO Prerna. Concerns raised about the treatment and rehabilitation of children rescued from brothels in Maharashtra.

The Bombay High Court issued seven binding guidelines to ensure such children are treated as victims, not offenders, and are provided protection, education, and rehabilitation under State responsibility (*Prerna Prakash Kaypalwad vs The State Of Maharashtra And Others*, 2018).

The NGO Bachpan Bachao Andolan filed a PIL highlighting large-scale child trafficking and exploitation for forced labor, begging, and prostitution, seeking strict enforcement of child protection laws. The Supreme Court held that trafficking and exploitation of children violate Articles 21, 23, and 24. It directed the Central and State Governments to:

- Strengthen law enforcement against trafficking networks.
- Ensure rescued children are placed in protective/rehabilitation homes.
- Provide education, counseling, and rehabilitation schemes to reintegrate victims into society.

While judicial intervention ensures legal accountability, effective implementation also requires proactive government initiatives. Schemes and programs aimed at prevention, rescue, rehabilitation, and reintegration translate legal mandates into practical support for trafficking victims, addressing both immediate needs and long-term protection (*Bachpan*

Bachao & Ors. vs Union of India & Others, 2010).

6. Government measures and schemes

These are the initiatives taken by the government to curb human trafficking in India:

I. **Project on “strengthening the law enforcement response in India against trafficking in persons through training and capacity building.”**

A two-year training initiative for the Law Enforcement Community has been launched by the Government of India through the Ministry of Home Affairs, in collaboration with the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime. Human trafficking enforcement officers are present in the four states of Maharashtra, Goa, West Bengal, and Andhra Pradesh. The project will be steered, governed, and monitored by a Project Steering Committee. The project aims to increase law enforcement officers' (police & prosecutors) awareness of the issue of human trafficking through several training programs. It also aims to increase their capacity to investigate the crime and bring cases against those responsible more effectively (SSSIS, 2025).

II. **Anti-Trafficking Cell**

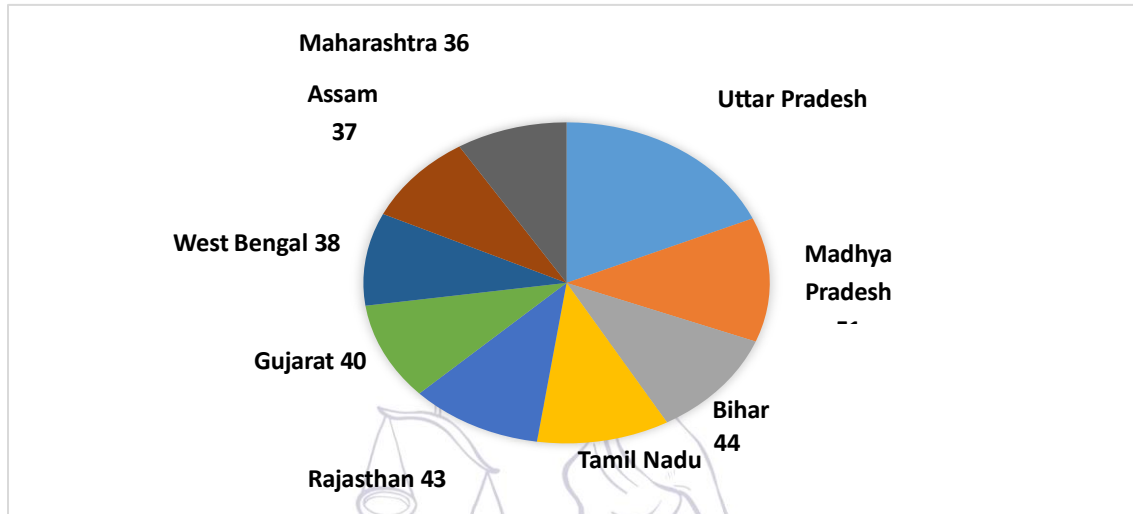
The Ministry of Home Affairs has established a Nodal Cell to handle issues about human trafficking. Since "Police" is a State subject, State Governments are primarily in charge of reporting, looking into, and preventing human trafficking. However, the Indian government has taken several actions to tackle the problem of human trafficking. The Home Ministry periodically issues advisories to the States and UTs with advice on how to effectively combat the issue of trafficking (Ministry of Home Affairs | Government of India, 2024).

III. **Anti-Human Trafficking Units (AHTUs)** AHTUs are specialized and integrated task forces established by the government to prevent rescue, and prosecute cases of human trafficking (Mha.Gov.in/Sites/Default/Files/Scheme-AHTU-SS-271011., n.d.).

More recently, in March 2024 the Ministry of Home Affairs directed all States and Union Territories to establish a dedicated Anti-Human Trafficking Bureau at the state police headquarters to strengthen coordination between district-level Anti-Human Trafficking Units and their counterparts in other states, following recommendations of a Parliamentary Standing Committee on child labour (US Department of State, ‘2024 Trafficking in Persons Report: India’ (2024) <<https://www.state.gov/reports/2024-trafficking-in-persons-report/india/>> accessed 13 August 2026). This measure was intended to address long-standing complaints that

AHTUs, though nominally present in most districts, often functioned without adequate staffing, training, or inter-state liaison.

Figure.4. Total No. of Anti-Human Trafficking Units in States and UTs during 2020



Source: Ministry of Home Affairs(*AHTUs Established in the Country*, 2022)

III) Advisory/Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) to State Governments on Human Trafficking (Ministry of Home Affairs, 2009)

The Government of India has periodically issued comprehensive and consolidated advisories to all States and UTs outlining various steps to improve effectiveness in combating the crime of human trafficking and increase the responsiveness of the law enforcement apparatus.

IV. National Commission for Protection of Child Rights (NCPCR) Initiative

NCPCR conducts sensitization workshops in trafficking-prone areas, organizes consultations (including post-COVID-19 measures). It also publishes studies such as the “National Analysis of Child Marriage and Teenage Pregnancy,” strengthening efforts against child trafficking and child marriage.

Key initiatives taken by NCPCR

- GHAR (GO Home and Re-Unite) Portal is an initiative designed to digitally monitor and track the repatriation and restoration of children in need of care and protection and

- Samvardhan to map vulnerable children.

“NCPCR has recently launched a Pan-India Rescue and Rehabilitation Campaign. The campaign aims to identify, rescue, and rehabilitate children involved in labor, trafficking, or other forms of exploitation across the country. The Chairperson, NCPCR has requested all the Chief Secretaries of the States to actively participate in the campaign.”

V)NHRC (National Human Rights Commission) and SHRC (State Human Rights Commission)

The National Human Rights Commission of India (NHRC) is a statutory body established under the provisions of the Human Rights Act, 1993. It is responsible for the protection and promotion of “rights relating to life, liberty, equality and dignity of the individual ensured by the Constitution or embodied in the International Covenants” (Sen, nd).

NHRC has been working relentlessly on the issue of trafficking and has formulated a Plan of Action to prevent and combat trafficking in women and children. This Plan of Action took the form of an Integrated Plan of Action after incorporating recommendations that emerged from several regional workshops on the issue. The Integrated Plan adopted a four-fold approach, namely prevention, rescue, rehabilitation, and repatriation/reintegration. Besides providing a list of recommendations, the National Consultation spelt out specific actions required to deal with the issue (Prasad, 2024).

7. Schemes related to Human Trafficking by the Ministry of Women and Child Development

7.1 Ujjwala Scheme

It is a Comprehensive Scheme for Trafficking Prevention and Rescue, Rehabilitation, Re-Integration, and Repatriation of Trafficking Victims for Commercial Sexual Exploitation. The Schemes give the victims a place to live, food to eat, clothing to wear, counselling, medical treatment, legal aid, and other forms of support, as well as job training and other means of generating revenue. The Short Stay Homes and Swadhar Homes, designed for women in challenging situations, also provide shelter to victims of trafficking that is how it is helping the beneficiaries by making a change in their life(*Press Information Bureau Government of India Ministry of Women and Child Development, 2019*).

7.2 Swadhar Greh

For women who are the victims of challenging situations and require institutional support for rehabilitation so that they can live their lives with dignity, the Swadhar Greh Scheme is being implemented as a Centrally Sponsored Scheme(*SWADHAR GREH 2015*, n.d.).

Editorial note: since 1 April 2022, the Ujjwala Scheme and the Swadhar Greh Scheme described above have been administratively merged, along with the Working Women Hostel scheme, into the ‘Shakti Sadan’ component of the Samarthya sub-scheme under the umbrella Mission Shakti programme; they no longer operate as separate schemes (Ministry of Women and Child Development, ‘Mission Shakti’ <<https://missionshakti.wcd.gov.in/>> accessed 13 August 2026; IBEF, ‘Mission Shakti Scheme, Objectives and Key Benefits’ <<https://www.ibef.org/government-schemes/mission-shakti>> accessed 13 August 2026). As of 31 December 2024, 404 functional Shakti Sadans were reported nationally under this merged scheme.

7.3 Child Line

For millions of kids across India, the phone number “CHILDLINE 1098” represents hope (Ministry of Women and Child Development, Government of India, 2015 - 2016). For kids who require aid and support, there is a free emergency phone line that is available around-the-clock, every day of the year. In addition to attending to children's urgent needs, we also connect them with appropriate services for their long-term care and rehabilitation. Three million kids around the country have been reached by us so far with care and protection offers.

7.4“Samarthya”

The Ministry of Women and Child Development also administer the sub-scheme “Samarthya” under Mission Shakti, which includes the component of Shakti Sadan. This component provides relief and rehabilitation to women in difficult circumstances and to victims of trafficking (Ministry of Women and Child Development, 2022).

7.5 Child Protection Services (CPS) Scheme – Mission Vatsalya

The Ministry of Women and Child Development implement the CPS Scheme to provide institutional and non-institutional care, rehabilitation, and capacity-building support for children in difficult circumstances. In 2022, grants worth ₹567.86 crores were released to States/UTs for child protection and welfare services(Government of India, 2022).

7.6 NALSA

This scheme, formulated by the government NALSA (Victims of trafficking and Commercial Sexual Exploitation) Scheme, 2015, has the main aim to provide legal services to address the concerns of victims of trafficking including woman of all age groups and at every stage: i.e. Prevention and rehabilitation (Department of Justice, 2018). The core of this scheme is to provide economic and social pathways for these marginalized groups, enabling them to be socially included and thus access all social protection available to ordinary citizens.

The success of these schemes depends on law enforcement agencies to operationalize them effectively.

8. Role and Function of Law Enforcement Agencies

9.1 Police station: as Primary protector of victim's right in human trafficking The police system plays the most accessible role between the Citizens and the criminal justice system. For a victim of human trafficking this act as the starting point towards justice and recovery (The Law Institute, 2025). When any trafficking victim or any aggrieved citizen approaches the station then many liabilities fall upon the police officers –

- **Registration of complaints:** FIR registration is the beginning of any action taken by police against the traffickers.
- **Immediate victim protection:** police have to make sure that victims are physically safe and protected from potential threats.
- **Sensitive interviewing:** police have to interview the victim regarding the matters keeping in mind the mental status of the victim.
- **Coordination with support services:** making available links to victim and medical care legal aid shelter etc.

8.2 Who can file an FIR in trafficking cases

- **Victims:** A Victim who has been trafficked can file a FIR
- **Family members:** family members or relatives of the victim trafficked can file an FIR
- **NGO's and Social workers:** NGO's and social workers who work for the benefit of society or are concerned can also file a FIR

- **Suo moto action:** Suo moto action can also be taken by the authority(The Law Institute, 2025).

8.2.1. Steps to be followed to overcome the hindrance in FIR registration

If a local police officer hesitates to register an FIR, then the complainant can directly approach the senior officer, the Human Rights Commission, or to magistrate under section 156(3) CrPC now 175 BNSS(Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita, 2023a).

Any refusal to the registration of FIR is constitute a punishable offence under Section 166A of IPC now 199 of BNS(Bhartiya Nyaya Sanhita, 2023).

8.2.2 Authorities and Procedure for Rescue Operation

Rescue operation is a very important and crucial part that requires adherence to the legal procedures so that legitimacy can be ensured to protect the victim's rights

Authorities to initiate a rescue operation

Police Officers: Under the ITPA Act, special police officers are appointed who can conduct raids under Section 15 without a warrant(The Immoral Traffic (Prevention) Act, 1956).

Magistrate: The ITPA Act has provisions that empower a magistrate to issue an order for a search and rescue operation under Section 16(The Immoral Traffic (Prevention) Act, 1956).

Child welfare committees: If the cases are related to a minor, then CWC can issue order for rescue operation under the JJ act.

National / State commission: The National Committee for Women can also request authorities to issue order for a rescue operation.

Execution of rescue operation

Gender sensitivity: Under section 15(6A) ITPA, it is mandatory to include a female officer when rescuing the woman and children(The Immoral Traffic (Prevention) Act, 1956).

Witnesses: to ensure transparency, there should be an independent witness accompanying to the team.

Evidence collection: there should be a proper seizure and documentation of all the

evidence, followed by the section 100 CrPC procedure now 103 (Bharatiya Nagrik Suraksha Sanhita, 2023).

Victim identification: The victim should be separated very carefully from the perpetrator.

Media management: victim identity should be protected from the media and all.

8.2.3 post-rescue operation

There are several critical steps to be followed after the rescuing the victim

Medical examination Statement recording

Statement recording

Shelter placement

Production before the committee

Continuance of investigation

8.3 Challenges in Law Enforcement

Invisible nature of victim

Victims are from diverse demographics they don't come under any single fit profile like different age, genders, nationalities and socioeconomic backgrounds which make it very difficult to recognize any pattern even by professionals (Q & Esq, 2014).

Distinguishing victims from other situations

It is very difficult to distinguish the trafficked victims and individual suffering from another vulnerable situation. For example, some people might seem to be a sex worker working of their own will, not coercion or an undocumented migrant worker working in a poor condition voluntarily (Choo & Rebovich, 2014).

The complication of Stockholm syndrome

This is another level of difficulty wherein victim themselves develops emotional attachment with traffickers as a survivor mechanism. This trauma bond can lead to various

difficulties as in they may defend their trafficker during questioning, may return to the trafficking situation after being removed, may refuse assistance and deny the victimization, etc.(Julich, 2013).

9.3.1 Gaps in professional training

Inconsistent protocols: various approaches across agencies confuse and are less effective in victim identification

Less coordination in different sectors: sectors like health care, social services, law enforcement, and other sectors are not in proper coordination as they lack proper information sharing.

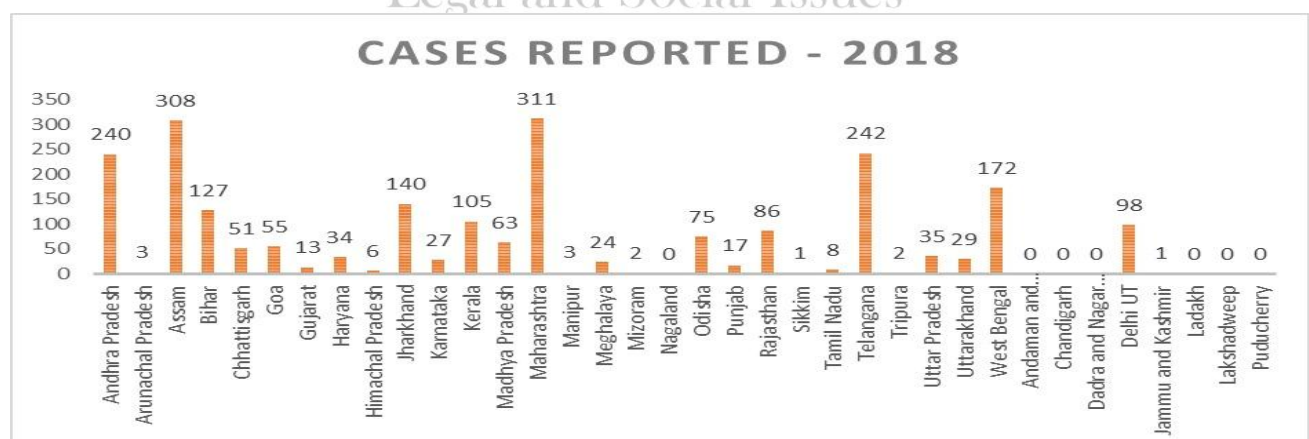
Inadequate trauma-informed approach: A professional may misinterpret the behavior of the victim without understanding the trauma response

Outdated view of Trafficking stereotype: the common notion that only young women can be the victims of trafficking who are kidnapped from the street and forced to sex work is a stereotype that should be changed, as victims may be anyone, whether a child man for child labor or slavery, etc(Okech et al., 2012).

To assess the effectiveness of legal provisions, government schemes, and law enforcement efforts, it is essential to analyze available data. Examining trends in reported cases, convictions, and acquittals within India, as well as comparing them with international data such as the United States, provides a more nuanced understanding of the prevalence, reporting efficiency, and systemic gaps in addressing human trafficking.

9. Analysis of Official data

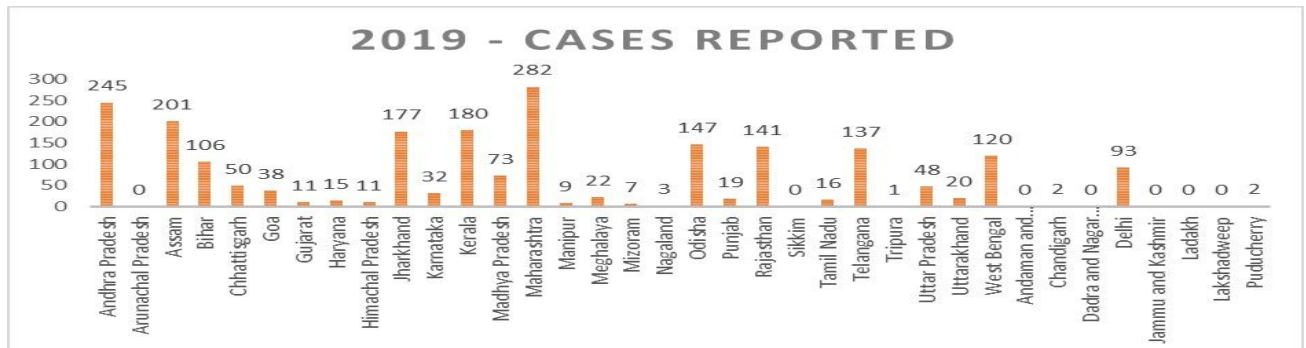
Figure 5: Number of cases reported in each state in the year 2018



Source: NCRB (*Open Government Data (OGD) Platform India*, 2022)

In 2018, Maharashtra (311), Assam (308), Tamil Nadu (242), and Andhra Pradesh (240) reported the highest human trafficking cases, indicating stronger reporting or higher vulnerability, while several Union Territories showed zero cases, reflecting probable under-reporting rather than absence of trafficking

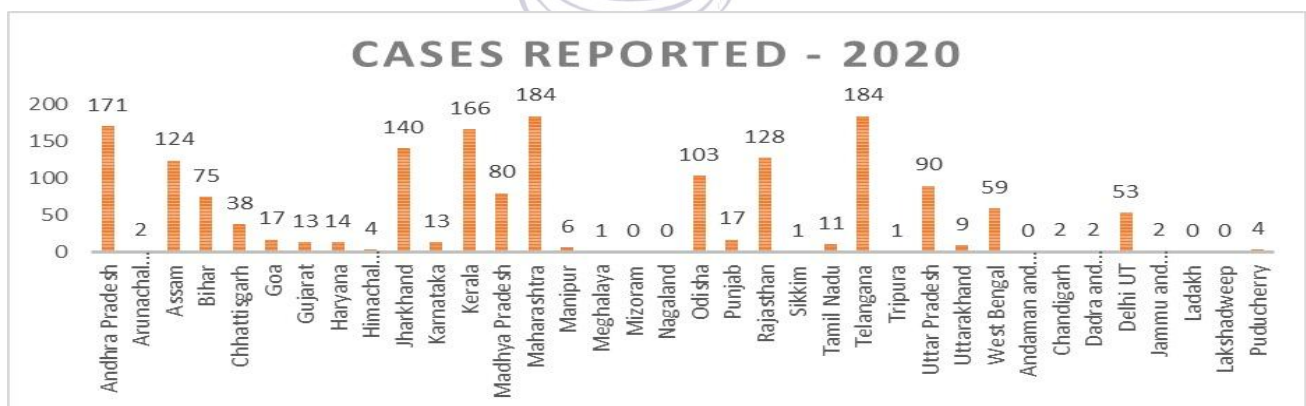
Figure 6. Number of cases reported in each state in the year 2019



Source: NCRB((Open Government Data (OGD) Platform India, 2019)

In 2019, Maharashtra (282), Andhra Pradesh (245), Assam (201), and Karnataka (180) reported the highest human trafficking cases, showing a consistent pattern with 2018. While states like Arunachal Pradesh and several Union Territories again reported zero or minimal cases, this continued disparity suggests persistent under-reporting and regional enforcement gaps rather than an actual decline in trafficking incident

Figure 7. Number of cases reported in each state in the year 2020

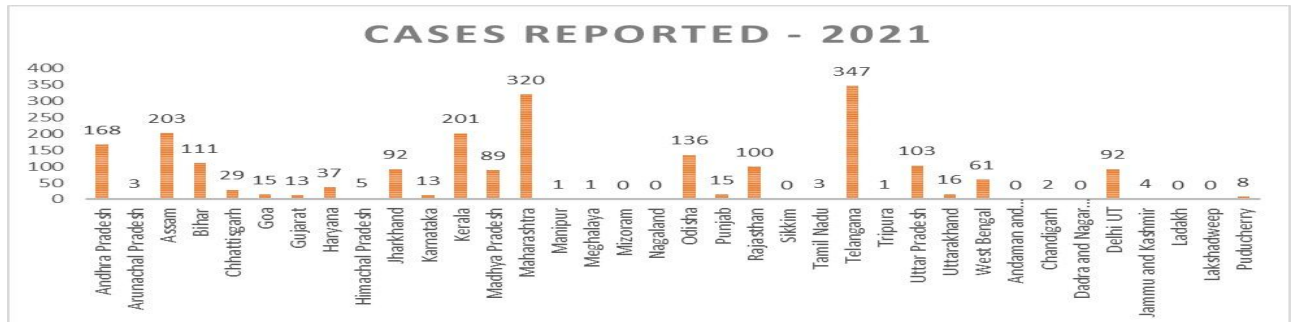


Source: NCRB((Open Government Data (OGD) Platform India, 2020)

The graph shows that Madhya Pradesh and Tamil Nadu reported the highest number of human trafficking cases (184 each), followed closely by Andhra Pradesh (171) and Himachal Pradesh (140), indicating concentrated reporting in specific states.

In contrast, several northeastern and union territories such as Mizoram, Nagaland, and Ladakh reported negligible or zero cases, suggesting possible underreporting or weak detection mechanisms.

Figure 8. Number of cases reported in each state in the year 2021

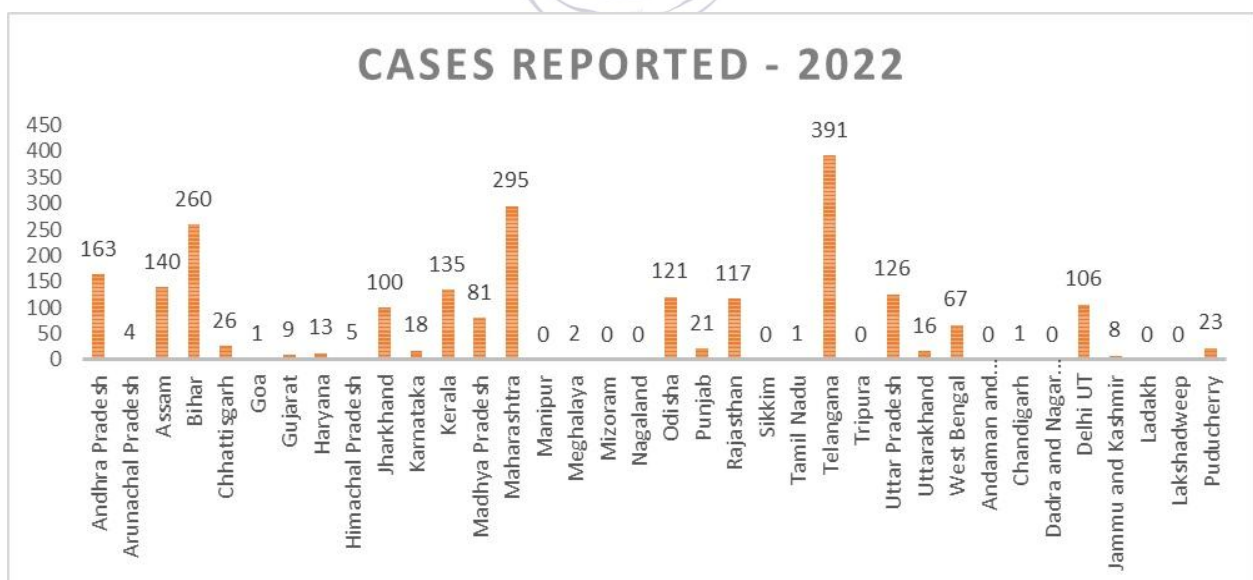


Source: NCRB(Open Government Data (OGD) Platform India, 2021)

The above Figure 4. shows a sharp rise in human trafficking cases in Telangana (347) and Maharashtra (320), marking them as major hotspots that year.

Compared to 2020, several states, such as Assam (203), Odisha (136), and Andhra Pradesh (168), also saw notable increases, indicating a broader escalation of trafficking activities across multiple regions.

Figure 9. Number of cases reported in each state in the year 2022



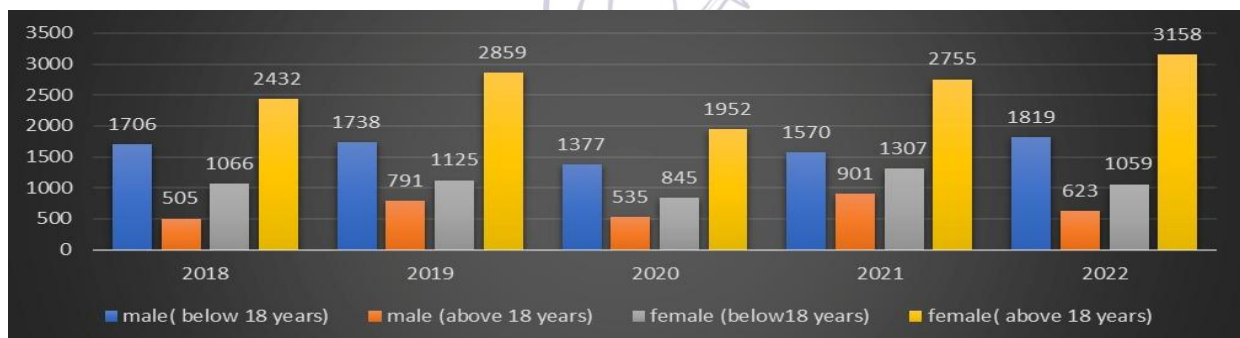
Source: NCRB (Open Government Data (OGD) Platform India, 2022)

The above Figure 5. reveals that Telangana (391) and Maharashtra (295) recorded the highest human trafficking cases, continuing their upward trend from 2021.

Assam (260) and Andhra Pradesh (163) also showed significant numbers, while many northeastern and union territories reported minimal cases, suggesting regional disparities and possible gaps in reporting mechanisms.

The reliability of these official figures has itself been questioned by researchers. One analysis of NCRB data pointed out that the recorded number of trafficking cases fell from 8,132 in 2016 to 2,189 in 2021, yet cautioned that this decline excluded large categories of related offences such as kidnapping for slavery, child marriage, and bonded labour, and that if even a fraction of missing or married-off children were counted as trafficked, the true figure could be many times higher than the official count (Tribune News Service, 'Professor Alleges Discrepancies in NCRB's Data on Trafficking' The Tribune (2022) <<https://www.tribuneindia.com/news/patiala/professor-alleges-discrepancies-in-ncrb-data-on-trafficking-458719>> accessed 13 August 2026). This critique lends empirical support to the paper's own observation that reported figures understate the actual scale of trafficking in India.

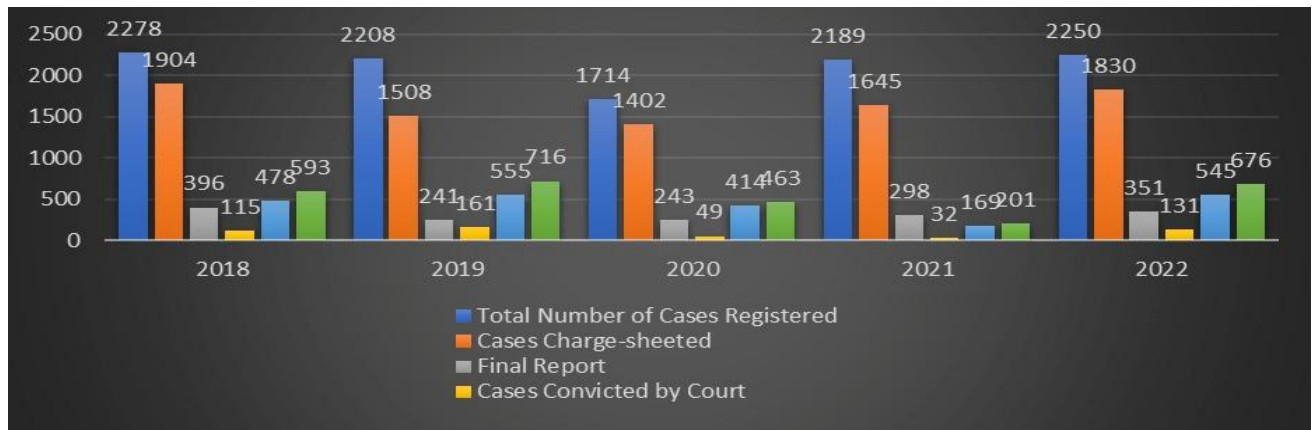
Figure 10. Age and Gender Distribution of Trafficking Victims (2018-2022)



Source: (Open Government Data (OGD) Platform India, 2022)

The above Figure 6. shows that adult females are consistently the most trafficked group from 2018–2022, with a steady increase each year. Male victims below 18 years follow, indicating persistent gender and age-based vulnerability in trafficking pattern.

Figure 11.No. of Cases registered, charge sheeted, final report, convicted



Source: Government of the Ministry of Women and Child Development(Sabha, 2025)

The above Figure 7. shows that while the total number of registered and charge-sheeted trafficking cases remains consistently high from 2018–2022, conviction rates are extremely low each year. This highlights a significant gap between prosecution and successful conviction it indicating that there are inefficiencies in the investigation and trial processes. The extent of this gap is illustrated by Telangana, one of the states most frequently identified as a trafficking hotspot in the preceding figures, where a 2025 report on NCRB data for 2023 found that although the state achieved a charge-sheeting rate close to one hundred per cent, only nine of the 1,058 persons arrested were eventually convicted, a conviction rate of roughly 3.7 per cent (Hyderabad Mail, ‘Telangana Ranks 2nd in Human Trafficking Cases Nationwide in 2023: NCRB’ (1 October 2025) <<https://hyderabadmail.com/telangana-human-trafficking-ncrb-2023-report/>> accessed 13 August 2026). Such state-level data suggest that the bottleneck lies less in initial registration and investigation than in the quality of evidence gathering and the pace of trial, an issue that legislative reform alone cannot resolve.

10.Comparative analysis of human trafficking

Human trafficking is a complex transnational crime to understand the pattern requires more than just analyzing the national data. India, having a large population with diverse socio-economic conditions, records more numbers of cases of human trafficking in absolute terms it may not capture the true extent of the crime when compared with other jurisdictions having vastly different population sizes. To address this, we need to calculate The incidence of trafficking in proportion to the population.

$$\text{Number of cases in India per million population} = \frac{\text{total cases registered in a year}}{\text{total population in that year}} \times 10^6$$

10.1 India

Table 6. Human trafficking cases per million in India [Source: calculation based on population and case data from the OGD] (Government of India , n.d.)

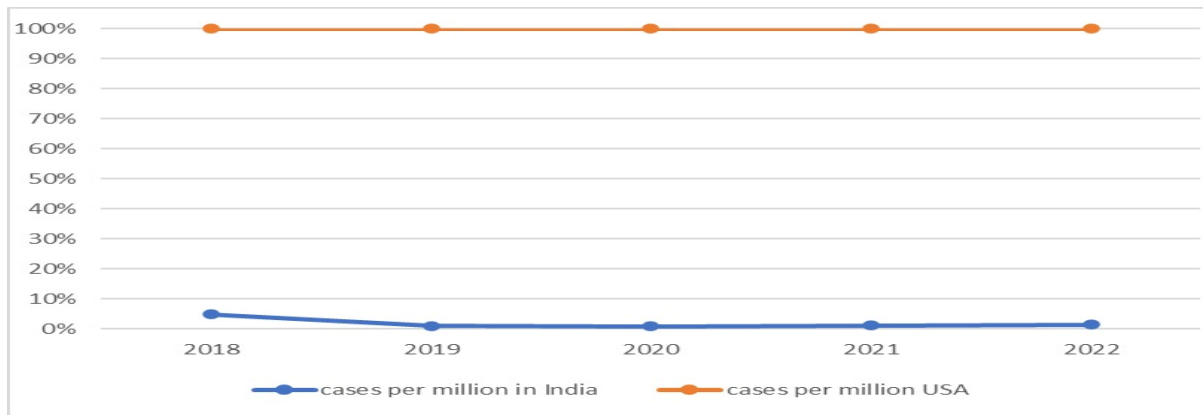
Years	Cases	Population in billion	Cases per million
2018	2278	1352.64	≈1.66
2019	2208	1,389.03	≈ 1.60
2020	1714	1,402.62	≈ 1.23
2021	2189	1,414.20	≈1.55
2022	2250	1,425.42	≈1.59

10.2 USA

Table 7. Human trafficking cases per million in the USA [Source: calculation based on population and case data from the National human trafficking Hotline] (US Government , n.d.)

years	Cases registered	Population in millions	Cases per million
2018	10700	326,126497	≈32.82
2019	49,327	326,126497	≈151.26
2020	51,361	339,436159	≈151.29
2021	47,160	339,436159	≈138.94
2022	37,200	333,271411	≈111.61

Figure 12. Trajectory showing reported cases per million in India and USA



The comparative data reveal a significant disparity in the cases of human trafficking between India and the US in terms of reported cases per million. Although India's population is much higher, cases per million remain constantly below 2. However, in the US, the population is low, but cases per million are significantly higher compared to India. Ranging from 32 to 151 cases per million in the same years. These figures indicate that either the reporting mechanism and data collection method in India is weaker or lack of awareness among victims. In contrast US higher rate may not necessarily indicate the high prevalence of human trafficking; it may be that the robust reporting system and data collection method, and strong institutional framework.

This disparity is also reflected in independent assessments of governmental response. The United States Department of State's annual Trafficking in Persons Report has for several years placed India in Tier 2, denoting a government that does not yet fully meet the minimum standards for the elimination of trafficking but is making significant efforts to do so (US Department of State, '2024 Trafficking in Persons Report: India' (2024) <<https://www.state.gov/reports/2024-trafficking-in-persons-report/india/>> accessed 13 August 2026). While tier rankings are not a measure of the prevalence of trafficking itself, they provide an external benchmark of institutional capacity that complements the per capita comparison undertaken in this study.

10.3 US Legal Framework

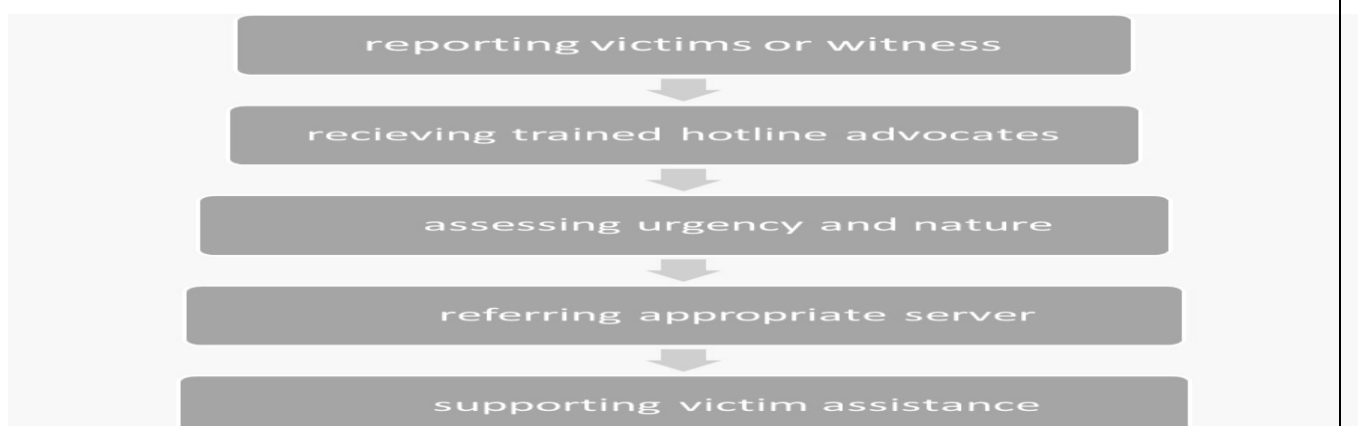
TVPA (2000) in the US is a very comprehensive and victim-centered legal framework to deal with human trafficking. This act is based upon the internationally recognized 3Ps approach – prevention, protection, prosecution. This forms a foundation for the strategies against trafficking in persons (Okech et al., 2012). Under TVPA, traffickers are criminalized at both the federal and state levels to make sure that victims are treated as survivors, not offenders. The implementation of act is coordinated among key federal agencies which includes department

of justice (DOJ), department of home land security (DHS), Department of health and human services (DHHS) altogether these bodies oversee the task of victim identification criminal investigation, prosecution of human traffickers and the facilitation of rehabilitation and immigration relieve measures such as t visa for non-citizen victims who cooperates with law enforcement agencies(*Human Trafficking | Department of Justice Components*, 2015). On the same side US maintains a robust and centralized data collection system. The national human trafficking hotline (NHTH), which was administered by Polaris from 2007 until December 2025, when operational responsibility for the Hotline transferred to Compass Connections following a competitive award by the US Department of Health and Human Services (Administration for Children and Families, ‘FAQ: National Human Trafficking Hotline Transition’ (2025) <<https://acf.gov/otip/faq/national-human-trafficking-hotline-transition>> accessed 13 August 2026), operates 24 hours a day hotline that connects callers to law enforcement agencies, social service organizations emergency support systems(United States Senate Committee on the Judiciary, 2025). The information collected contributes directly to the TIP report published annually by the U.S. Department of State, which checks both domestic and global anti-trafficking efforts. Through the coordination of the interagency US government ensures transparency, consistency, and accountability in data collection.

Working of the National Human Trafficking Hotline

This online Referral Directory is made up of anti-trafficking organizations and programs that offer emergency, transitional, or long-term services to victims and survivors of human trafficking as well as those that provide resources and opportunities in the anti-trafficking field (the Administration for Children and Families (ACF) of the United States (U.S.) Department of Health and Human Services (HHS), n.d.).

Figure 13. Working of the National Human Trafficking Hotline



11. Conclusion

Human trafficking is becoming increasingly common, particularly among women and children internationally due to global coordination among traffickers and those involved in the practice. While we have existing legal frameworks, including the Immoral Traffic (Prevention) Act, 1956, the Juvenile Justice (Care and Protection) Act, 2015, and various government schemes such as Ujjwala, Swadhar Greh, and Childline, have foundation, implementation gaps, weak inter-agency coordination, and inadequate victim rehabilitation continue to undermine their effectiveness.

While doing comparative analysis with the United States, it has been revealed that India's lower per capita reporting does not necessarily is an indication of a lower prevalence of trafficking, but it reflects an under-reporting of cases, lack of awareness, and weaker institutional mechanisms. The U.S. experience demonstrates that centralized data collection, robust law enforcement coordination, and victim-centered policies significantly improve both reporting and protection outcomes.

12. Suggestions:

1. **Enhanced Law Enforcement and Coordination:** There is a need to build capacity for police, social workers, and the judiciary so that they can adopt trauma-informed practices and identify victims across different contexts.
2. **Centralized Data Collection System:** There is a need for the establishment of a national database to track trafficking cases, enabling evidence-based policy interventions.
3. **Awareness campaign:** There is a need to conduct nationwide campaigns to educate vulnerable populations about trafficking risks and reporting mechanisms.
4. **Victim Rehabilitation and Reintegration:** There is a need for expansion of shelters, vocational training programs, and psychosocial support to ensure long-term rehabilitation and prevent re-trafficking.
5. **Legal Reforms and Accountability:** Strengthen enforcement of existing laws, revise sentencing guidelines where necessary, and enhance judicial oversight to ensure deterrence.
6. **Enhancement and passing the current Provisions in the Bill: Trafficking in**

Persons (Prevention, Care and Rehabilitation) Bill, 2021

- The current bill criminalizes their recruitment, transportation, harboring, and exploitation of persons. Provides for the prevention, care, rehabilitation, and repatriation of victims.
- Mandates the establishment of Rehabilitation Committees at the state and district levels.
- Introduces penalties for trafficking and related offences. A minimum of seven years, which can go up to an imprisonment of 10 years and a fine of Rs 5 lakh in most cases of child trafficking.
- In case of the trafficking of more than one child, the penalty is now life imprisonment.
- Emphasizes victim protection, including privacy and rehabilitation.

It extends to all citizens inside as well as outside India,

Victim's definition extends beyond the protection of women and children as victims to now include transgender individuals, as well as any person who may be a victim of trafficking. It also does away with the provision that a victim necessarily needs to be transported from one place to another to be defined as a victim (The Trafficking In Persons (Prevention, Care And Rehabilitation) Bill, 2021).

Despite these welcome features, the Bill has remained stalled since its predecessor was first tabled in 2016, having lapsed once already in 2019 after passage by the Lok Sabha, and it continues to face criticism from civil society groups for conflating trafficking with voluntary labour migration and for relying heavily on custodial punishment rather than on victim compensation (IDR, 'Why India Needs to Rethink Its New Trafficking Bill' (15 January 2026) <<https://idronline.org/article/rights/why-india-needs-to-rethink-its-new-trafficking-bill/>> accessed 13 August 2026). Renewed parliamentary attention to these concerns would be necessary before the Bill can function as the comprehensive, victim-centred law it is intended to be.

Suggestions for Enhancements in the Current Bill:

Comprehensive Victim-Centered Rehabilitation: There should be a proper

specification of minimum standards for shelter, healthcare, counseling, education, and skill development programs for the victims, which ensures long-term reintegration into society and employment opportunities.

Stronger Inter-Agency Coordination:

There should be Mandatory formal coordination between police, social services, health departments, and NGOs with defined, clear roles and responsibilities to avoid duplication and delays.

Accountability for Officials and Intermediaries:

There should be provisions that explicitly penalize public servants, law enforcement, or other intermediaries who engage in trafficking and include whistleblower protections for those reporting officials' involvement.

Encouraging Inter-state and Intra-state Cooperation

State governments should strengthen intrastate and interstate cooperation, investigations, prosecutions, and convictions for all kinds of human trafficking. By encouraging this cooperation, there will be an integration of different states, which will stop all kinds of interstate and intra-state human trafficking cases. This will also help to rescue the victims of human trafficking in India.

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