Impact of the Implementation of the Anti-domestic Violence Law of the People's Republic of China on Domestic Violence Behavior by Married Couples in Urban Areas

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Abstract: This research aimed to explore the influence of the Anti-domestic Violence Law of the People's Republic of China since it officially took effect in 2016. Using data from the Supreme People's Court's official publications and the Peking University Legal Database (PKU Law), we compared the number of domestic violence-related cases in the five years before and after implementing the People's Republic of China's implementation of Anti-domestic Violence Law. We also obtained and evaluated yearly data changes on warnings and protection orders since the Anti-domestic Violence Law permits public security authorities and judicial authorities to issue warning letters and personal safety protection orders. At the same time, we distributed 350 questionnaires to residents to assess their awareness of the Anti-domestic Violence Law. Regression analysis reveals that the knowledge and awareness of the Anti-domestic Violence Law could affect the frequency of domestic violence behaviour. We can infer from our research that the overall condition of domestic violence has improved significantly in the five years following the enactment of China's Anti-domestic Violence Law. While there are still a large number of victims who have difficulty getting rid of domestic violence thoroughly, means that the law's popularization and enforcement still have a long way to go.

Keywords: Anti-domestic Violence Law, China, Protection Orders, Domestic Violence Cases, Legal Cognition, Frequency of Domestic Violence.

1. Introduction

Domestic violence (hereinafter referred to as "DV") has long been a global issue, especially the difficulty for the victims to get rid of it. According to the ACWF (All-China Women's Federation), DV affects 29 per cent of Chinese families, with 90 per cent of these incidents involving the husband's domestic violence against wife. Since the pandemic last year, the DV cases in many countries have been increasing sharply because of the lockdown policy. It appears that DV is still a big problem in society. As new DV cases pop up regularly, there are constantly unknown perpetrators challenging the bottom line of the law and the public.

The Anti-domestic Violence Law of the People's Republic of China (hereinafter referred to as "DV law") was adopted by the Standing Committee of the Twelfth National People's Congress of China Eighteenth Session on December 27, 2015. It officially took effect on March 1, 2016. The DV law has been in effect for five years, the impact of the law's implementation and the obstacles and challenges have been exposed so far.

The DV law stipulates that victims can apply for a personal safety protection order to the people's court when they suffer from domestic violence or face actual danger. The police can issue a warning letter when dealing with minor domestic violence cases. Although these regulations cannot immediately keep domestic violence victims away, they still have a deterrent effect. It is the first time that China has used legal means to protect domestic violence victims' legitimate rights and interests.

Based on the relevant content of the DV law, this research analyzed and studied the DV behaviour of married couples in urban areas. We hypothesized that enacting the DV law reduces the frequency of DV cases. The degree of the awareness of DV law negatively correlates with the frequency of DV.

The fundamental research can be separated into two sections. First, we logged into the PKU Law legal database to collect the number of related DV cases each year from 2011 to 2020. Then we collected

the number of the recorded personal safety protection orders and warnings. Finally, we compared the corresponding data in the Supreme People's Court's official reports, and we discovered that the situation with DV seemed to have improved year after year. For example, the number of DV cases reported each year has declined year after year. At the same time, we distributed about 350 questionnaires online and offline and finally recovered 311 valid questionnaires. The questionnaire primarily examines the popularity of the DV law, specifically urban couples' perceptions of DV behaviour and the DV law, to determine whether their perceptions of the law will affect the frequency of DV. We were pleased to find that more than half of the residents we surveyed are aware of the DV law, and the higher the level of their awareness and understanding, the less frequently DV occurs, which is consistent with our hypothesis.

Throughout the research process, we also found that although the DV law has popularized, some victims may still choose to be tolerant, even if they seek help, the police and the courts usually focus on mediation. DV is still seen as a private problem, the information may not be disclosed to us in many cases, quite a few people were unwilling to participate in our survey or provide us with accurate data. DV legislation and enforcement in China still has a long way to go, but it is worthwhile to continue on this path.

2. Background & Literature Review

2.1. Domestic Violence

DV has been characterized as a persistent pattern of control and intimidation that develops in an intimate relationship since the 1980s. This is maintained through an abuser's employment of a variety of vehicles for personal dominance, of which physical abuse is merely one. It is a pattern, an interaction, not a single occurrence. Domestic abuse is intended to restrict both the victim's internal and exterior freedom. A victim's response to an adult abusive attachment, such as persistent PTSD, develops swiftly (Herman, 1993).

The phrase "Domestic Violence" in China was first used expressly by the Chinese government in paragraph 11 of the China Women's Development Program (1995-2000). Following that, the Supreme People's Court's 2001 legal interpretation underlined that Perpetrators of DV cause particular bodily and emotional injury to family members by beating, binding, mutilating, and forcefully restricting personal freedom. According to the DV law, DV refers to physical and mental transgressions among family members such as beating, tying, mutilating, limiting personal freedom, and regular abuse and intimidating conduct.

DV is typically continuous and cyclical. The abuser continues to be violent and then apologizes, the victim continues to tolerate and eventually forgive. In addition to being emotionally tough to detach, physical distance is also challenging to separate. The victim and the abuser normally cohabit, the fact that they are all living under the same roof makes it simpler for the violent behaviour to reoccur.

DV is essentially a problem of power and control, and the abuser is generally in a powerful position in the family. Dr Stephanie Brandt MD (2020) stated that the interpersonal pattern of power and control, known as DV, is a common, albeit frequently ignored, aspect in therapeutic practice. Most DV participants have long assumed DV is a private problem and would not choose to report it to the judiciary or other social institutions, or it's easy for them to drop the lawsuit. Franklin (2011) once examined why women quit lawsuits and proposed enhancing victim support and protection.

DV is a deliberate decision rather than a simply emotional outburst. According to control theory, assume there is no cost for the abuser's aggressive behavior in the home, the penalty is minor, and violence may even provide advantages, such as the capacity to express anger, establish authority, and reinforce control, all of which would be a positive stimulus for the abuser. Their violent behaviour would only become more excessive (Dong, 2015). That's why as a practical matter, it is necessary to enhance the punishment for DV, increase the decision-making cost, and develop the anti-domestic violence mechanism. The corresponding laws and norms must be prioritized.

2.2. The Role of Deterrent & Punishment

According to deterrence (penology) theory, the threat of punishment deters people from committing crimes and reduces the likelihood and quantity of offending in society. Before committing a crime, criminals must carefully weigh their gains and losses between the benefits of crime and the misery of punishment. Risk perception and decision making research has far-reaching social ramifications. It is

generally focused with how individuals perceive the consequences of certain actions and how these beliefs influence their involvement in related activities (Apel, 2013).

Perceptual studies of deterrence conducted before the 1980s discovered that perceived certainty of punishment adversely connected with engagement in unlawful activity. Grasmick and Bryjak (1980) found that perceived harshness had a deterrent impact at a reasonably high degree of perceived certainty. Therefore, knowing the legislative profile of where crimes were committed is critical for understanding how legislation affects violent outcomes.

DV law is under the purview of the legal sector, which includes DV legislation as well as legal practice in family, criminal, and international courts (Fischel-Wolovick, 2018). Between the 1980s and the 2000s, police participation approaches in DV shifted from conflict resolution (avoidance of arrest as much as possible) to allowing warrant-less arrests in DV offenses. Before the 1980s, American law enforcement officials also believed that DV was an internal family matter that should not be interfered with too much. It wasn't until 1984 that the Tracey Thurman case (Xu, Bai, 2017) in Connecticut and the DV experiment in Minnesota at the same period had a direct impact on DV legislation in the States.

Professor Sherman (1984) at Cambridge University and the Minneapolis Police selected more than 300 DV cases and conducted a six-month follow-up investigation within a year. The police deal with DV in three ways: sending away the abuser, resolving disputes, and making arrests. Among three strategies used by police to minimize DV, arrest was the most successful. The early Sherman and Berk finding resulted in the frequent implementation of pro-arrest and obligatory arrest regulations. Whereas Sherman and Berk (1984) and other researchers focused on a sample that exclusively consisted of formerly violent families in specific locations who entered the criminal justice system in their widely renowned studies on the impact of arrest on subsequent violence (Pate, Hamilton, 1992). By arresting abusers, police may not be protecting victims. Sherman contends that the efficacy of arrest is heavily influenced by offenders' perceptions of the cost of imprisonment (Sherman et al., 1992). Tolman and Weisz (1995) used official police and court data and observed that arrested persons with no history of abuse are more likely to stop receiving further abuse.

The United Nations General Assembly declared November 25 to be "International Day for the Elimination of Violence Against Women" in 1999. Niemi-Kiesilainen (2001) completed a study on the deterrent effect of arrest in DV, discovered that arrest could deter DV and decrease repeat violence, and arrest likely encourages victims to call the police and report subsequent violence. Professor Laura Dugan (2003) noted that laws can deter would-be criminals from causing harm to family and partners, and that most regulations really reduce the occurrence of family or intimate violence by examining DV legislation using data from the National Crime Victimization Survey. There are also cases where domestic abusers are not arrested because of gender prejudice (Shay, 2013).

Previous studies are sufficient to prove that punishment has a deterrent effect on abusers of DV. Perpetrators can perceive the costs of their violent behaviour through policy formulation and implementation, effectively and directly cutting off the source of violence.

2.3. Domestic Violence Legislation in China and Associated Studies

Before 1995, there was no notion of DV in Chinese law, and there was no particular regulation on DV (Chen, 2014). China issued the Program for the Development of Chinese Women (1995-2000) in 1995, declared a firm halt to DV. DV was expressly forbidden in the law for the first time in the Supreme People's Court on the Application of the People's Republic of China Marriage Law (I) of the interpretations of the provisions (2001). As modified in 2001, Marriage Law was the first fundamental law to prohibit DV and establish associated penalties. Various DV legal restrictions were later dispersed throughout other laws and regulations, and DV research has also begun to reveal a diverse pattern.

Following the year 2000, there were several large-scale quantitative DV survey in China (Wang, 2008), listed below in Table 1.

Similarly, several disciplines including law, sociology, psychology, started researching DV during those years. DV measuring instruments regularly used include the DV Perception Scale, the Conflict Strategy Scale, and the Abuse Evaluation Scale (Wu, Zhang, Ge, 2006).

According to a 2010 poll conducted by the ACWF (All-China Women's Federation) and the National Statistical Bureau, 24.7% had been victims of domestic abuse. 5.5% of them claim that their partners have been physically abused.

Table 1: Several large-scale quantitative investigations of DV in China.

Theme	Year	Sample Size
Women's exposure to and perceptions of violence by their spouses	2000-2001	3543 people
Mothers of infants abused by spouses (before and after pregnancy)	2001-2002	15069
Women who get abortions face abuse from their husbands or partners	2001-2002	1215
Husbands of rural women of reproductive age commit violence	2002/2004	1130/3052 people
Domestic violence, parental violence, and child abuse	2003	9451 families
Husbands' violence towards wives (before and after pregnancy)	2004	2835 people
Women who undergo abortions suffer abuse from their husbands	2004	898 people
Married women of childbearing age abused by their husbands	2004-2005	3998 people

The National People's Congress Standing Committee authorized the incorporation of the DV law into the legislative work agenda in 2012. The official DV Law was enacted by the Eighteenth Meeting of the Standing Committee of the Twelfth National People's Congress of the People's Republic of China in December 2015, and went into effect on March 1, 2016. The DV law covers several mechanisms for dealing with DV, including mandatory reporting, aid (provision of assistance and shelters), warnings, and personal safety protection orders. These mechanisms have been implemented to varying degrees.

After implementing the DV law, Jianyuan Zhang (2018) has selected 300 divorce cases involving DV in 2016 to conduct empirical research and found that difficulty in producing evidence is only one of the many factors that make DV challenging to be recognized by the court. The existence of a series of structural factors that contributes to DV is Determined to have a significant impact. Feng (2017) utilized a questionaire to discover that women were vulnerable and did not dare to seek support from the community or judicial organs after DV, which caused males to be more violent. Likewise, Yi Guo (2020) argued that this invisible collusion immediately contributes to the offenders' more cruel behavior, and that it is more difficult for victims to take action to protect their rights.

The law also entrusts the police with the task of rescuing victims of DV. Because of the unique nature of its jurisdiction, the police are unquestionably a necessary force for a public authority to intervene in DV. Aside from the DV law, related measures have been made in the Police Law of the People's Republic of China. The police are a critical force in intervening in domestic abuse, and their value cannot be overstated. As the front-line position of public power in DV, police officers are also responsible with defusing DV situations by protecting the victim, keeping the peace, and enforcing the law (Dodge, 2011).

Although China's DV law is widely regarded as a significant milestone, some scholars argue that the Chinese DV Law falls far short of international norms in numerous fundamental areas set by Asian and other nations (Alwis, Klugman, 2015). In particular, the relatively narrow definition of DV in terms of extent, as well as the victims' restricted protection and aid. Furthermore, the present DV legislation does not appear to offer adequate backing for police officers' proclivity to take more direct and serious action against DV (Lin, Kai, Ivan Y. Sun, Wu, Yuning & Xue, Jia, 2020).

2.4. Insufficiency of Previous Researches

Even though numerous global studies have demonstrated that the establishment and modifications of DV policies may effectively deter DV from domestic abusers, there has been relatively little research in this field in China. Literature on DV legislation, judicial procedures, and the police system are inadequate and incomplete. No comprehensive research system was established. Even after the DV law was implemented, most studies still focus on the reasons for DV, or case studies and current status analysis. The majority of them are qualitative research, highly theoretical and generalized. There has been little empirical research focused on the DV law, and there's no standard scale to measure the perception of this law.

Also, there is far too little empirical research on the link between deterrence theory and DV in China, pure case studies or legal analyses may be short of comprehensiveness and scientificity. Questionnaire surveys also usually included interviews or the collection of personal information, which brought us back to the issue of how DV occurs. A combination of qualitative and quantitative methodologies might be applied. Previous research still stressed random sampling in the sampling technique. However, due to the concealment of domestic abuse, it may be viable to use non-random sample methods such as snowball sampling.Most researchers have emphasized the difficulties of data collecting in the survey process due to the specificity of DV. Still, few scholars have provided improved alternatives in this respect to

increasing data quality.

3. Hypotheses, Data and Methods

3.1. Research Hypotheses

In general, this study explored the impact of the DV law from two perspectives. We searched legal websites and databases for relevant data, and we investigated particular residents' awareness of DV legislation at the same time.

As a result, our first research hypothesis is that the DV law enforcement could reduce the frequency/number of DV cases, which includes there might be positive correlation between the number of years that the DV law in effect and the number of protection orders/warnings each year. Our second research hypothesis is that the more one's understanding of the DV law, the lower the likelihood/frequency of DV occurring to themselves.

3.2. Data Collection

Our data source is composed of two parts. The first is secondary data, which collected from the legal database and official court department online reports. We conduct comparative analysis using these data to see trends and changes. Simultaneously, the data gathered through the questionnaire survey naturally comprised the first-hand data for this research. These data were processed to descriptive statistical analysis, chi-square analysis, and logistic regression analysis.
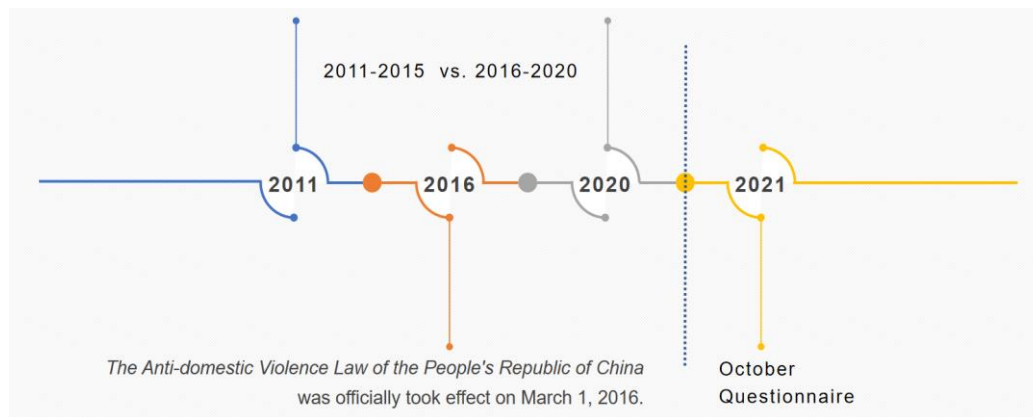

Figure 1: Timeline Overview

In order to investigate the implementation effect of DV law and the specific application of warning and protection order in DV cases, we have comprehensively collected relevant judgment documents. Considering the formal implementation of DV law on March 1, 2016, the starting and ending time of the judgment documents we selected is from 2011 to 2020, that is, during the five years before and after the implementation of DV law. The selection of time was to reflect the latest judicial situation and avoid the impact of the Covid-19 epidemic, and taking one year as the cycle helps us collect sufficient samples. As for the time about the questionnaire is issued, it can only be the current situation, October 2021.

The data in the official report of the Supreme Court is usually nationwide, and in the database, we can also count the number of cases nationwide. But if we want to conduct further statistics on case information, we narrowed it down to Jiangsu, Nanjing City. The scope of the questionnaire survey is more limited, only in one city.

Through further screening and comparison, we counted and recorded the number of judgments. It is worth mentioning that on December 2, 2021, the 27th meeting of the Standing Committee of the 13th National People's Congress of Jiangsu Province voted and adopted the regulations of Jiangsu Province on combating DV, which would be implemented from March 1, 2022. It could be seen that Jiangsu Province is not only the third largest province in the number of DV cases in China, but also its attention to DV and the implementation of DV law are at a related high level.

Take Nanjing as the example, a total number of 852 DV cases judgment documents were collected, eliminated the judgment documents that do not give any analysis and elaboration on DV, 848 valuable

judgment documents from cases of DV between married couples were finally obtained. We distributed a total of 350 questionnaires in this city.

Since we could not find a standard scale on the DV law that investigated the relation between legal cognition and behavior in previous studies, so we designed the questionnaire ourselves. The data of this study were distributed anonymously online and offline in the selected city of Nanjing by using our self-made questionnaire. In this questionnaire survey, all our participants participated voluntarily. A total of 311 effective questionnaires were recovered. Our participants were exclusively married couples residing in urban areas.

3.3. Measurement

3.3.1. Secondary data

We searched for the second instance judgment documents of the intermediate court with the keyword "domestic violence" in PKU Law, a professional legal database covering all types of legal information comprehensively, is one of the most comprehensive legal retrieval systems in China.

The independent variable in secondary data analyses is the year, for clarity, is the number of years of the DV law officially took effect.

The dependent variables are the number of related DV cases (with judicial judgments) and the number of personal safety protection orders.

Each of these variables was measured in this way, log in to the "PKU Law", select "Judicial Cases" to search, select the "full text search", enter the keyword "Domestic Violence", filter the "conjugal relations" or filter the judgment of "marriage and family", count and record the number of judgments per year, make final statistics and comparisons between different years.

As some information are not completely publicly available, in the term of "whether to approved protection order", "whether to divorce as the result", we also use the data published by the Supreme Court to improve the authenticity and reliability of our study.

3.3.2. First-hand data

The primary dependent variable was constructed from all married couples who live in Nanjing urban areas to indicate whether any of these urban residents was victimized by their husbands/wives, and what's the frequency of DV. This frequency directly reported by participants by filling in the corresponding questions in the questionnaire. The questions designed as follows (The questionnaire is in the appendix at the end of this paper):

Have you ever experienced DV? -- Yes/No

The type of DV -- Abuse/Ignore/Restrict contact/Sexual abuse/Economic control/Others

How to deal with DV -- Report to the Police or Appeal Court/not

Frequency of DV -- Frequently/Seldom

The independent variable of first-hand data is the degree of awareness of the DV law. The dimension of legal cognition is the individual's understanding of the DV law, several questions related to the content of the DV law were designed initially. The participants were asked to choose "Yes" or "No" on the questionnaire to judge their understanding of the DV Law, more "Yes", higher the level of legal cognition.The questions designed as follows (The questionnaire is in the appendix at the end of this paper):

Awareness of DV -- Family affair/ illegal or criminal act/ Can't explain

Do you know China's DV law? -- Yes/ No

Whether know about the mandatory reporting mechanism? -- Yes/ No

Whether know about the provision of assistance and shelters mechanism? -- Yes/ No

Whether know about the warning mechanism? -- Yes/ No

Whether know about the personal safety protection order mechanism? -- Yes/ No
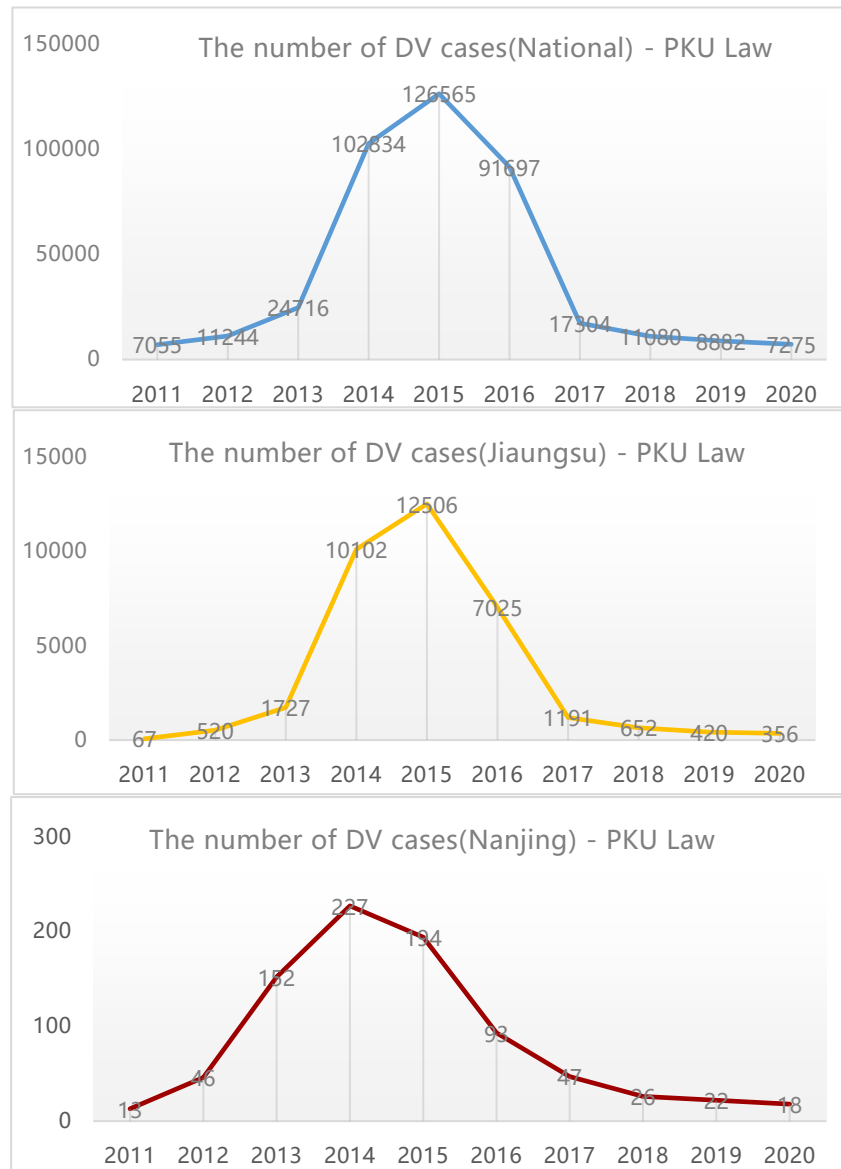
4. Results

4.1. The Number of DV Cases

Figure 2: the Number of DV Cases

There were 272,414 related cases during the five years before the implementation of DV law, 136,238 cases during the five years after the implementation of DV law nationwide. We could see that both the national and provincial broken line charts show the same trend characteristics, that is, from 2011 to 2015, the number of relevant cases shows an upward trend year by year, and since 2016, that is, the year that the DV law was implemented, the number of relevant cases shows a obvious downward trend in the following five years. The turning point of Nanjing is 2015, but the overall trend is the same as the former.

In 2016 and 2017, the number of related cases per year decreased sharply. In the whole nation, compared with 2015, there were 34,868 fewer cases in 2016, with the proportion of decline is 27.5%, and compared with 2016, there were 74,393 fewer cases in 2017, with the proportion of decline is 81.1%. In Jiangsu, compared with 2015, there were 5,481 fewer cases in 2016, and compared with 2016, there were 5,834 fewer cases in 2017.
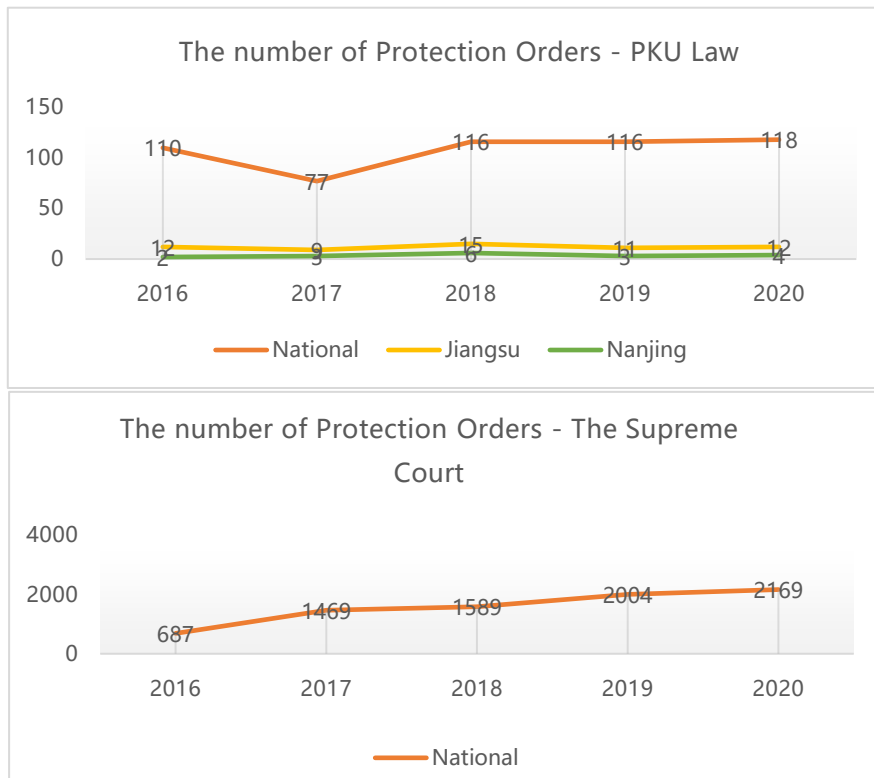
4.2. The Number of Protection Orders

Figure 3: The Number of Protection Orders

The chart above shows the personal safety protection orders data we collected from the PKU Law and the official reports of Supreme Court, from 2011 to 2020. Protection orders involves personal privacy, it is limited for us to extract data only from public judgment documents. Therefore, we combined with the official data published by the Supreme Court. For the avoidance of ambiguity, such data before 2016 have not been released. It seems that the court did not publish all the records, even though we have used the most comprehensive legal database in the country, the cases we can see are only very small part.

4.3. Other Result

In addition, we also collected the number of warnings recorded by the court, as well as the judgment results of the Supreme Law report on the case of applying for divorce due to DV, we can see the results in the charts below.
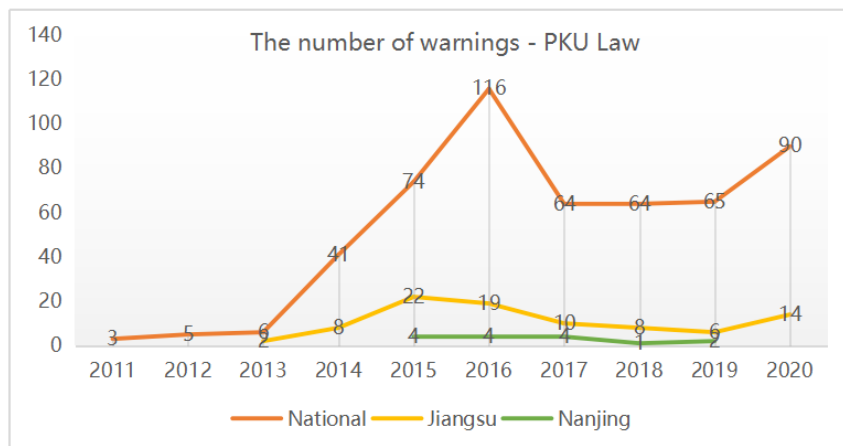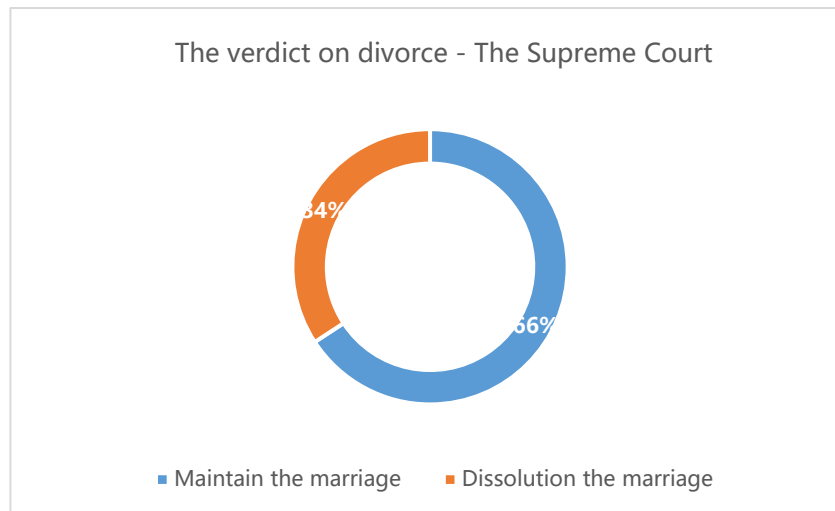

Figure 4: The Number of Warnings

Figure 5: The Verdict of Divorce

From 2011 to 2015, nation widely, there were 129 related cases with warnings, and a total of 399 related cases with the approval of protection orders from 2016 to 2020, with the Before / after ratio is 0.3:1. Within Jiangsu Province, the before / after ratio is 0.6:1 (32 : 57). As for Nanjing city, the before / after ratio is 0.4:1 (4 : 11). In order to further measured the promotion of the warning measure from the top down (from the national level to the county / municipal level), before the year 2013, warnings had never been used in relevant cases in Jiangsu Province, and before the year 2015, warnings had never been used in relevant cases in Nanjing City.

There are just too few records about warnings, maybe because it is issued by the police, usually the court does not keep records. We have also asked the staff of the public security organs, we found that the police usually do not keep records of warnings and, usually, they would not choose to issue a warning letter. Similarly, the court's attitude is also biased towards mediation. Although the proficiency of protection orders issued every year is basically increasing, most judgments in cases of divorce due to DV are to maintain the marriage relationship.

4.4. Chi-Square Analysis

Items	Categories	Frequency(%) frequently	Frequency(%) seldom	Total	X^2	p
Understanding of the DV law	yes	23(31.51)	136(57.14)	159(51.13)		
	no	50(68.49)	102(42.86)	152(48.87)	14.693	0.000**
Total		73	238	311		
Understanding of the Mandatory Reporting Mechanism	yes	13(17.81)	102(42.86)	115(36.98)		
	no	60(82.19)	136(57.14)	196(63.02)	15.041	0.000**
Total		73	238	311		
Understanding of the Warning Mechanism	yes	12(16.44)	108(45.38)	120(38.59)		
	no	61(83.56)	130(54.62)	191(61.41)	19.744	0.000**
Total		73	238	311		
Understanding of the Aid Mechanism (provision of assistance and shelters)	yes	11(15.07)	66(27.73)	77(24.76)		
	no	62(84.93)	172(72.27)	234(75.24)	4.808	0.028*
Total		73	238	311		
Understanding of the Personal Safety Protection Order Mechanism	yes	16(21.92)	129(54.20)	145(46.62)		
	no	57(78.08)	109(45.80)	166(53.38)	23.397	0.000**
Total		73	238	311		

* $p<0.05$ ** $p<0.01$

The chi-square test is used to study the awareness of the frequency of DV on the DV law, the awareness of the mandatory reporting mechanism in the DV law, the awareness of the warning mechanism in the DV law, the awareness of the aid system in the DV law. From the above table, we can see that the awareness of the protection order mechanism in different DV frequency samples on the DV law, the awareness of the mandatory reporting mechanism in the DV law, the awareness of the warning mechanism in the DV law and the awareness of the aid mechanism in the DV law, There are 5 items of personal safety protection order mechanism in the DV law, showing significant ($P < 0.05$).

The frequency of DV showed a significant level of 0.01 for the awareness of the DV law (chi = 14.693, P = 0.000 < 0.01). Through the percentage comparison difference, it can be seen that 57.14% of the group who occasionally suffered DV chose "know", which was significantly higher than 31.51% of the group who often suffered DV. The group who often suffered DV chose "don't know" The proportion was 68.49%, which was significantly higher than 42.86% of the groups who suffered occasional DV.

The recognition of the frequency of DV to the mandatory reporting mechanism in the DV law shows a significant level of 0.01 (chi = 15.041, P = 0.000 < 0.01). Through the percentage comparison difference, it can be seen that the proportion of groups who occasionally suffer from DV who choose to "know" is 42.86%, which is significantly higher than the proportion of groups who often suffer from DV who choose to "don't know" The proportion was 82.19%, which was significantly higher than 57.14% of the group who suffered occasional DV.

The awareness of the frequency of DV to the warning system in the DV law shows a significant level of 0.01 (chi = 19.744, P = 0.000 < 0.01). Through the percentage comparison difference, it can be seen that the proportion of the group who occasionally suffers from DV who chooses to "know" is 45.38%, which is significantly higher than the proportion of the group who often suffers from DV who chooses to "don't know" The proportion was 83.56%, which was significantly higher than that of the group who suffered occasional DV, 54.62%.

The frequency of DV showed a significant level of 0.05 for the awareness of the aid system in the DV law (chi = 4.808, P = 0.028 < 0.05). Through the percentage comparison difference, it can be seen that 27.73% of the groups who occasionally suffer from DV choose to "know", which is significantly higher than 15.07% of the groups who often suffer from DV. The groups who often suffer from DV do not know.

The awareness of the protection order mechanism has a significant impact on the frequency of DV. The level of 0.01 was significant (chi = 23.397, P = 0.000 < 0.01). Through the percentage comparison difference, 54.20% of the group who occasionally suffered DV chose "know", which was significantly higher than 21.92% of the group who often suffered DV. 78.08% of the group who often suffered DV chose "don't know", which was significantly higher than 45.80% of the group who occasionally suffered DV.

It could be inferred that samples with varying degrees of DV law cognition experience with varying DV frequencies, and this is reflected in disparities in the awareness of the personal safety protection order mechanism.

4.5. Logistic Regression

Parameter Estimates							OR 95% CI
Items	Coefficient	Std. Error	z value	Wald χ²	p	OR	
Awareness of the DV law	0.625	0.310	2.017	4.068	0.044	1.869	1.018 -3.431
Awareness of the Mandatory Reporting Mechanism	0.454	0.386	1.178	1.387	0.239	1.575	0.739 -3.355
Awareness of the Warning Mechanism	0.909	0.424	2.144	4.595	0.032	2.482	1.081 -5.700
Awareness of the Aid Mechanism (provision of assistance and shelters)	-0.003	0.444	-0.006	0.000	0.995	0.997	0.418 -2.381
Awareness of the Personal Safety Protection Order Mechanism	0.772	0.361	2.139	4.574	0.032	2.164	1.067 -4.392
Constant	-5.742	0.968	-5.929	35.158	0.000	0.003	0.000 -0.021

Dependent Variable: the frequency of domestic violence

McFadden R Square: 0.118   Cox & Snell R Square: 0.121   Nagelkerke R Square: 0.182

Taking the frequency of DV as the dependent variable for binary logistic regression analysis, the model formula is: ln (P / L-P) = - 5.742 + 0.625 * awareness of the DV law + 0.454 * awareness of the mandatory reporting mechanism in the DV law + 0.909 * awareness of the warning mechanism in the DV law -0.003*

The awareness of aid system in DV law + 0.772 * awareness of protection order mechanism in DV law (where p represents the probability that the frequency of DV is frequent and 1-p represents the probability that the frequency of DV is occasional). Finally, the specific analysis reveals that the

regression coefficient value of the awareness of the DV law is 0.625, with a significance level of 0.05 (z = 2.017, P = 0.044 0.05), implying that when the awareness of the DV law changes by one unit (do not know and know), the change range of the frequency of DV (frequently and infrequently) is 1.869 times.

The awareness of the warning mechanism regression coefficient is 0.909, has a significant level of 0.05 (z = 2.144, P = 0.032 0.05), indicating that awareness of the warning system has a negative influence on the frequency of DV. And the odds ratio (or) is 2.482, which implies that when knowledge of the warning mechanism changes by one unit (do not know and know), the frequency of DV (frequently sometimes) changes by 2.482 times.

The regression coefficient for the recognition of the protection order mechanism is 0.772, with a significant level of 0.05 (z = 2.139, P = 0.032 0.05), indicating that the recognition of the personal safety protection order mechanism has a significant negative impact on the frequency of DV. And the odds ratio (or) is 2.164, which means that when the awareness of the protection order mechanism changes by one unit (do not know and know), the change in the frequency of DV (often and occasionally) is 2.164 times.

5. Discussion and Conclusion

Five years is a fair time range for law implementation, but it is hard to alter anything in five years for a deeply ingrained cultural problem. The social and cultural construction of anti-domestic violence cannot be completed in a short period of time. For example, our research found that some local residents still have misconceptions about DV, a significant number of participants do not fully comprehend the DV law, and the attitude of "DV is a private affair" has not totally changed. Overall, we are under-educated on DV as a social problem and the seriousness of its consequences.

It is certain that the DV law is widely considered as a significant advance, not only because it specifies the definition and form of DV at the legal level, but also because it offers specific preventative measures and legal processing mechanisms of DV, prioritize the preservation of the victims' personal safety from the legislative level. This research explored the influence of the DV law since it officially took effect in 2016, and we can infer from our study that the overall condition of DV has improved significantly in the five years following the enactment of China's DV law. On the other hand, it seems that there are still many victims that have difficulty getting rid of DV thoroughly, which means that the law's popularization and enforcement still have a long way to go.

We conducted in-depth discussions on this research based on the entire research process, such as what significance and broader implications our study would have, what limitations and concerns should be considered, and put out some constructive proposals.

5.1. The Significance of Our Research

In this research, we have explored the influence of China's DV law from multiple perspectives built on the concept of data integration. We also studied the effect of law cognition on behaviour to a certain extent, unveiled the complex relationships between the formulation of the DV law, the law implement and enforcement, people's understanding of the law and the effeteness of law implementation in DV.

It was shown that China's DV law played an essential role in guiding courts and police to pay more attention to DV cases and urging them to take practical measures to protect victims' legitimate rights in such cases. The DV Law has its effectiveness. Its implementation not only reduced the frequency of DV behaviour (especially after 2015) but also had a positive impact on the courts' more actively granting of personal safety protection orders, which met our hypothesis.

Throughout the research process, we found the social environment still tends to use mediation rather than litigation to solve DV problems. For example, the data shows that in divorce litigation cases due to DV, more than half of the participants result in the judgment of maintaining the marriage relationship. Although the number of DV cases seems to be decreasing year by year and the number of warning letters and protection orders shows an increasing trend, the data we collected might still be regarded as a drop in the ocean of the real victims of DV, let alone the numbers we have collected are much smaller than those disclosed in the official report. From a broader perspective, when the law has come to the enforcement level, the public security organs often choose to mediate the disputes instead of issuing the more deterrent warning, even if they issued, they would not keep the records. The courts are the same, and they are more willing to mediate than grant the protection orders.

In another part of our research, since we could not find a standard scale on the DV law that

investigated the relation between legal cognition and behaviour in previous studies, we designed the questionnaire ourselves, which has pioneering importance in this field. To prove the antagonistic relation between the individual's understanding degree of DV law and the frequency of DV, we analyzed it according to the logistic regression analysis based on the benefit-risk balance social control theory. Be consistent with previous studies, and in line with our hypothesis, our results indicate that the cognition of the DV law impacts the frequency of DV. In other words, our survey showed that when individuals know the DV legislation, it can lower the likelihood and frequency of DV on them, and our participants usually believe the law is the most effective tool for dealing with DV.

5.2. Limitations

First of all, the cases in the legal database are not comprehensive. The data in the legal database may not fully represent all of it in the country. Although we already chose to use the most extensive legal database, PKU Law, according to the Supreme Court's report, we were surprised to find the data we see in the database only accounts for a small portion of the actual data. Official reports are usually mainly summaries and overviews, with no more detailed data disclosure. The exact number is far more common than cases presented in court. This again demonstrates that there are many DV cases and victims that we could not see.

Secondly, our questionnaire was entirely self-made. It might be a little imprecise due to the lack of a standard scale to which it can be referred. The survey questionnaires samples may not fully represent the nationwide condition. We chose a city to distribute the questionnaire because of the time and space restrictions, and the survey participants were exclusively married couples residing in urban areas. Even though we have tried our best to consider almost everything, the data we collected has its natural limitation that may not fully reflect the whole situation.

Furthermore, even if we have found from multiple angles that the implementation of the DV law has indeed effectively reduced the incidence of DV, is there any other factor in this causal relationship? Theoretically, the implementation of the DV law should first increase the number of people reporting DV, so as the percentage of DV cases initiated. Besides the aforementioned public security and judicial organs that still pay attention to mediating DV cases rather than issuing the more deterrent warning letter or protection orders. Many people still regard DV as family privacy. Maybe some factors have been overlooked. Taking the data of 2020 as an example, we speculate it might be affected by the COVID-19. Although the number of related cases continued to decline, possibly due to the impact of the pandemic, not as many people can go to the court or police station to report DV cases promptly, resulting in a decrease in the number of related instances we can see it from the database. On the other hand, patients who have already entered the legal process before 2020 do not issue protection orders. To some extent, this may impact the number of protection orders continuing to climb when the number of DV cases declines in 2020.

5.3. Suggestions

The worst issue of DV is that it is continuous, and any method which could directly eliminate violence should be prioritized. The effectiveness of the DV law has been demonstrated in this article, while at the same time, our study has revealed some more profound societal challenges.

The legislature shall amend the DV law in combination with its implementation. In China's judicial practice, the most popularized promotion of legal knowledge occurs during the first year of the law's enactment and the first year of its modification. The DV law in China has not been modified since its implementation, and neither the strength nor the degree of law popularization is sufficient. DV can be reduced more effectively if the DV law can be updated regularly.

Public security and judicial organs should exert their due deterrence in future legislation and law enforcement instead of always mediating. Stricter restrictions on the bar of mediation can be made. The phenomenon of DV involves social and structural factors and cannot only be solved by criminal justice. Trying to reduce DV by enforcing the law alone is challenging to long-term impact. Only combining other resources and criminal justice interventions in every step of preventing DV could better solve the problem, such as combining criminal justice intervention measures with essential means such as social assistance, administrative remedy and civil remedies.

It would be an effective way to reduce the frequency of DV by carrying out continuous law popularization activities, strengthening and implementing the deterrent effect of the DV law through the

acts of the judicial system, and forming a multilevel, three-dimensional social control mechanism and social support system in the whole society.

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