

# Honour Killings - A Mechanism for Sustaining the Caste System

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## Abstract

This paper argues that the Honour killings as the prevailing mechanism for the sustaining the caste system in India — specifically the system of endogamy, as theorized by Dr. B.R. Ambedkar. Drawing on Ambedkar's seminal 1916 work on castes in India their Mechanism Genesis and Development, global comparative analysis of marriage practices, empirical patterns of killings in the name of Honour in India, and key international literature on the subject, this paper contends that what is commonly called 'Honour Killing' is more accurately termed as 'Murder of Daughters/Sons by parents and family members for not Maintaining the Caste System under the illusion of Honour.'

The paper calls upon the younger generation i.e. GEN Z take a lead role – understanding the deep rooted inhuman evil customs which are being implemented from centuries in the Indian society such as SATI, CHILD-MARRIAGES, WOMAN WIDOWHOOD and now HONOUR KILLINGS in this era of 5G for not maintaining the Caste System i.e. is the system of Graded In-Equality.

The younger Generation by enlightening themselves, their parents and society where-by join the Nation-wide movements to break the barriers of caste and build common culture through self-choice marriages in selecting their life partners emphasizing mutual respect continuous dialogue and understanding in choosing life partners and cultivate scientific temper through rational, evidence-based thinking and inducing Moral Values by leading RIGHTEOUS LIFE and there-by transforming India i.e. THE BHARAT a better place to live in — rather than still living in 6632 different caste groups as primitive tribes.

## 1.0 Introduction: Ambedkar's Foundation

Dr. B.R. Ambedkar read his foundational paper before the Anthropological Seminar of Dr. Goldenweizer during his stay at Columbia University, presenting in detail the definition of caste and its genesis and mechanism under the title 'Castes in India: Their Genesis, Mechanism and Development.

Dr. B.R. Ambedkar defines that the **superposition of endogamy on exogamy means the creation of caste**. Further, he states that Endogamy is the essence of caste and presented his paper in the year 1916, which is published in the Dr. Ambedkar's Writing and Teachings Volume-1.

Key Words: Honour Killings, Mechanism, Sustaining, Caste System, Genesis, Development, Marriage, Practices, endogamy, exogamy.

## 1.1 The Ambedkar Prophecy:

"As long as caste in India does exist, Hindus will hardly intermarry or have any social intercourse with outsiders: and if Hindus migrate to other regions on earth, Indian caste would become a world problem."

— **Dr. B.R. Ambedkar**

This paper presents evidence that Ambedkar's foresight has proven true that: Indian caste has indeed become a world problem now as the Hindus migrate to other regions on earth. Evidence lies in the fact that the elected representatives have enacted LAWS against CASTE DISCRIMINATION across many states of the USA, CANADA and other countries. However, the core problems remain - CASTE DISCRIMINATION LAWS are not strictly enforced in India.

## **1.2 Scientific Temper and Social Practices in Contemporary India.**

### **1.2 Context:**

As the Constitution of India enters in the 76<sup>th</sup> year, it is imperative to foster scientific temper through rational and evidence-based thinking. The growing number of countries enacting progressive laws stands as clear evidence of this global shift towards equality and Justice.

### **1.3 Prevailing Social Reality**

However, in Indian society, marriages continue to be widely accepted by parents and the community primarily when they happen within the same caste often arranged by families. This reflects the continuing influence of caste-based social norms.

### **1.4 Extent of Caste Divisions**

India continues to have a large number of caste and sub-caste groups which are around 6632, reflecting deep-rooted social stratification.

1. Other Backward Class (BC) are around 3735 caste groups.
2. Scheduled Castes (SC) are around 1703 caste groups.
3. Scheduled Tribes (ST) are around 801 caste groups.

Key Words: Inter marry, Social, Intercourse, Migrate, Discrimination, Scientific Temper, Prevailing, Caste Divisions, OBC, SC, ST.

Even the upper caste Shudras have traditional sub-divisions and often vary by region, lineage, and local customs. There are many such caste groups in upper Shudras who are out of OBC list in 26 other states and 8 union Territories of India. The some of the Upper Shudras caste groups of Telangana and Andhra Pradesh.

### **Reddys castes are around 8 -15 caste groups and major castes:**

Panta, Motati, Kapu, Desuri, Padakanti, Gundla, Bhumanchi

### **Khamma Castes:**

Gampa,goda, illuvellani, vaduga, Bangaru,pedda kammas.

### **Velama castes:**

Pedda Velama, koppulla velama, polinate velama, kapu velama

### **Kapu Castes:**

Telaga, Balija, Ontari, Turupu Kapu etc.

Even the Brahmins are not exceptional in dividing in Certain sub-castes groups as saraswat, Niyogi, chitpavan,Nambudiri, Iyer

### **Vaishyas:**

Aggrawal, Maheswhari, oswal, khandelwal, banai, lohana, bhatia, marwari, porwal, Gujarati vaishya etc  
In all the above castes groups most of their marriages are confined to their sub-Castes only.

**In other countries, we also find different groups in a religion, but in no country, we find six thousand six hundred different caste groups in the same religion marrying within their caste groups and feel pride, which is also very peculiar.**

This paper intends to present the mechanism being enforced for not maintaining the system of endogamy

i.e. the system of graded inequality through their preaching as the customs and culture of the religion.

### 1.5 Bahujans and Constitutional Rights

The constitutional rights enjoyed today by the Bahujans i.e. is **Shudras and Ati-Shudras the present day BC (OBC), SC, ST and other Religious Minorities excluding Brahmins, Kshatriyas and Vaishyas** — are the outcome of the struggle for 108 years by our multivasi reformers, right from Buddha, Samrat Ashoka, Shivaji and the Modern Indian Reformers (1842- 1950) from Jyothiba Phule and Savatri Bai Phule, Sahu Maharaj, sant kabir, Narayan Guru, Dr. Ambedkar, Brisa Munda and others. Because of these constitutional rights, a new class has emerged through education and employment by enjoying the fruits of our reformers' struggle.

Key Words: Shudras, Traditional, Peculiar, Bahujans, Constitutional Rights, Buddha, Sivaji, Jyothiba Phula, Shahu, Education, Employment.

The Indian Society, marriages are widely accepted by parents and the community primarily when take place within in their caste's groups (Specific Sub-Castes) which are arranged by their parents to choose their life partners and the marriages beyond their sub-Castes within the same Caste are also not acceptable to parents. The killings in the name of caste Honour are mostly in the self-choice marriages (termed as Love marriages) when the marriages are in between Upper castes Shudras vs Shudras, Shudras vs Ati-Shudras i.e. the present-day OC, OBC, SC, MBBC, MBSC & ST's. This is very peculiar instance that Shudras and Ati-Shudras who are the Victims of the System of Graded Inequality are also killing their children by enforcing inhuman practices for the sustaining the Caste System i.e. system of Endogamy. This is a very grave concern as the victims of the System of Graded Inequality appear to be acting contrary to the ideals of our reformers by enjoying the fruits of the outcome of struggle for 108 years where-by benefitting the creators of the system of Graded Inequality.

### 2.0 Redefining 'Honour Killings'

Coming to the author's theory: the term 'Honour Killing' is itself opposed, it is killing in the name of Honour which is a crime as per law whereby parents kill their own children for the sake of 'honour' of the caste It may be more accurately coined as:

"Murder of the daughters/sons for not maintaining the Caste by the illusion of Honour."

### 3.0 The Core Argument of this Paper:

"Earlier Sati, child marriages, Woman Widowhood and now Honour Killings in India is the mechanism for sustaining the Caste System by violence i.e. the system of Endogamy against law."

This preservation of the caste system is by means of violence whereby parents, brothers, sisters and other family members kill their own children by themselves.

### 3.1 How These Murders Are Committed:

Parents and family members are killing their own kin and kith openly through various methods of crime. In some cases they are engaging through suparis to execute their plans for murder and coming openly in front of media claiming that they killed their daughters/sons as they married beyond their caste who are lower in their hierarchy of the castes — thereby 'losing their honour' — and binding before the police as they have done 'great honour to the country' which is again a peculiar phenomenon within the same religion in India.

Key Words: Victims of Caste, Graded In-Equality, Crime, Core, Argument, violence, family members, losing Honour, peculiar, religion.

## 4.0 Global Marriage Context

### 4.1 Definition of Marriage:

Marriage is a socially, culturally, and often legally recognized union between two individuals that establishes rights and obligations between them, their children, and their families.

In countries outside India, marriages are generally less arranged and more based on individual choice, though cultural and religious influences still shape marriage practices.

### 4.2 Marriage Practices around the World Western Countries, USA, UK, Canada, Australia):

1. Predominantly love marriages — individuals choose their partners
2. Family involvement is usually limited to emotional support and celebration
3. Online dating, social circles, workplaces, and schools are common meeting grounds
4. Arranged marriages are rare and mostly occur within immigrant communities

### 4.3 Middle East (Saudi Arabia, UAE, Jordan):

1. Arranged marriages are common, but shifting towards greater consent
2. Families or matchmakers introduce suitable partners
3. Cousin marriages are still practiced in some Gulf nations
4. Traditional values remain strong, but youth increasingly seek more autonomy

### 4.4 East Asia (Japan, China, South Korea):

1. Historically had arranged marriages
2. Modern trend: Love marriages dominate especially in urban areas
3. Parental approval is still significant, especially in rural areas Africa
4. Mix of arranged marriages and self-choice marriages

### 4.5 Latin America:

Mostly love marriages

Key Words: Global, Context, Socially, Culturally, Legal, Predominantly, Individual Choice, Arranged Marriages, Love Marriages.

### 4.6 Global Trends and Drawbacks

The present scenario:

Individual autonomy is growing globally; arranged marriages are decreasing worldwide except in a few conservative or traditional regions. Technology has transformed individual choice to choose their life partner rather than arranged marriages. Urbanization and education are major forces behind the rise in self-choice marriages.

However, there are certain drawbacks of Self-Choice/Love Marriages in the global scenario: lack of family support or acceptance, higher divorce rates (USA: 40–50%, Sweden: 47%), weak family bonds, and lack of social support in crises.

### 4.7 Marriage practices in India.

- A. Predominantly arranged marriages — Parents or Elders or through Matrimonial Websites (Specific Caste) choose their partners within the same caste.
- B. Family involvement is more in selecting the partner by Horoscope Matching, Family Back Ground, Job, and Income within their caste only.
- C. Self-Choice Marriages against the wishes of the parents beyond their caste within religion and some beyond religion, will mostly lead to Killings in the name of Honour.
- D. Love-Cum-Arranged marriages, which are very rear, and mostly in elite film Industry only.
- E. Normally, self-Choice Marriages beyond their castes have more resistance than acceptance from the

family and society.

### 5.0 Patterns of Honour Killings in India

These Honour Killings are mostly when the marriages are arranged against the wishes of both parents beyond their castes and sub castes. The higher the status of castes against the lower the status of caste hierarchy between Vaishyas, Shudras and Ati-Shudras excluding Brahmins. The present-day Shudras are OC (Reddy, Kamma, Velama, Kapu etc others who are out of OBC caste list), OBC, MBC and Ati-Shudras are SC, MBSC, ST etc. The following is the pattern:

Key Words: Global, Individual Autonomy, Technology, Transformation, Traditional, Conservative, Self-Choice, Hierarchy, Pattern.

#	Pattern
1	SC/OBC Boy marries OC Girl (Reddy, Kamma, Velama, Kapu and other castes who are out of OBC caste list) — and Vice-Versa
2	OBC/SC Boy marries Vaisya Girl — and Vice-Versa
3	OBC/SC/ST Boy marries MBC/Most Backward SC Girl — and Vice-Versa
4	OBC Boy marries Most BC/SC/ST Girl — and Vice-Versa
5	SC Boy marries MBSC/ST Girl — and Vice-Versa

### 5.1 Key Finding: Brahmin Exception:

Here it is pertinent to mention that Honour Killings are rarely reported when a Brahmin Girl/Boy marries OC/OBC/SC/ST who stands to be from the 'creamy layer' — i.e., who are highly educated and are in good positions in their respective castes (OC/OBC/SC/ST etc.) But that doesn't mean that Brahmins does not follow endogamy. Brahmins still maintain endogamy strictly. But only in the cases of self-choice of their daughter and sons they accept and assimilate son-in-law and Daughter-in-law into their family fold so that their son/daughter or Son-In-Law/ Daughter-In-Law must strictly follow their age-old orthodox beliefs.

In his paper Dr. B.R. Ambedkar has pointed out that the Brahmins who were so particular in maintaining Endogamy or maintained closed-door system, was a fashion in Hindu Society, which was imitated by the non-Brahmins castes.

But now unfortunately the non- Brahmins castes i.e. the so-called OC's, Other Backward Castes (OBC), Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes are not imitating the Brahmins in self-choice intermarriages within the Hindu caste-fold but are in fore-front in maintaining the caste system by killing their children for the sake of honour by violence against law.

Key Words: Key Findings, Exception, Creamy Layer, Assimilate, Closed Door System, Brahmins, Non-Brahmins Caste, OC, OBC, SC, ST.

### 5.2 Brahmin Strategy Shift:

From this it can be understood that the Brahmins have changed their strategy as they inter marry as against their theory of endogamy. Nevertheless, through their religious preaching in all social and religions and spiritual gatherings, in media and specially in social media they support and justify their age-old inhuman customs and practices and there-by teach the non-Brahmin castes to maintain the Caste System by hook or cook i.e., the system of Graded Inequality.

### 5.3 The Message of Terror:

The message given by the parents by killing their own children is that **no one dare to think of marrying beyond their Castes, Sub- Castes and strictly** follow the culture of arranged marriages by their parents — within their Castes and Sub-Castes - which is again a very peculiar.

However, arranged marriages beyond their castes happen here and there in the elite groups especially in sophisticated Film and Business Industry.

But it surprises to see in the certain Second marriages i.e. after divorce from the first marriage, in the matrimonial advertisements that for second marriage caste no bar.

### 5.4 India is not a Nation yet it is only a Society fragmented across 6632 different caste groups —

This phenomenon is nothing but People in India are of opinion that the only noble way is by marrying within their castes and sub-castes and feel there is no necessity of reforming this system by living in myth in 6,632 different caste groups — Six Thousand six Hundred and Thirty two different groups — as primitive tribes in this 5G Generation where the whole universe is treated as a village with transformation of Technology and urbanization of education.

"India i.e. the Bharat is not a country yet — it is only a Society Fragmented across 6632 different castes groups living separately without mutual intercourse within the Hindu fold whereby living in primitive Tribes in this era of 5G."

## 6.0 Literature Review

Many authors worldwide have written books, journals and papers on Honour Killings. The following are some key works:

Key Words: Strategy Shift, Religious Preaching's, Spiritual Gatherings, Media, Social Media, Nation, Message of Terror, Fragmented, Primitive.

### 6.1 Key Works on Honour Killings:

1. Women in the Crossfire: Understanding and Ending Honour Killings — Robert Paul Churchill (Oxford University Press, 2018)
2. A Family Conspiracy: Honor Killing — Phyllis Chesler (New English Review Press, 2018)
3. Honour Killing: Stories of Men Who Killed — Ayse Onal (initially Turkish, English translation 2008)
4. Murder in the Name of Honor — Rana Husseini (2009)

### 6.2 Featured Work: Murder in the Name of Honor — Rana Husseini (2009)

From the books, the most widely acclaimed and best-selling book on honour killings is 'Murder in the Name of Honor' by Rana Husseini, published in 2009, wherein the author primarily focuses on Jordan but touches on global patterns. The author is a Jordanian Journalist and human rights activist known for exposing honour killings in the Middle East. Her ground-breaking reporting in the Jordan Times helped bring these crimes into public discourse and influenced legal reforms.

### 6.3 Overview of the Book:

'Murder in the Name of Honor' is a powerful blend of:

1. Personal interviews with survivors, families and perpetrators
2. Investigative journalism of real honour killings cases
3. Analysis of social, legal, and religious structures that sustain the practice
4. A call to action to end these crimes worldwide

### 6.4 Root Cause Analysis:

- Patriarchal Culture and Family Honour

- The family's reputation is tied to a woman's behaviour, especially her sexuality and obedience
- Men feel duty-bound to restore 'honour' if a woman is perceived to have disobeyed cultural expectations
- **Legal Loopholes and Light Punishments**
- In many Arab countries (especially Jordan before reforms), honour killings received reduced sentences
- Perpetrators were often brothers or fathers who received leniency under laws claiming 'crime of passion'
- **Key Words** Family Conspiracy, Murder, Human Rights, journalism, Patriarchal, Reputation, Behavior, sexuality, obedience, Loophole's.
- **Lack of Education and Women's Autonomy**
- Deep-rooted traditions and lack of awareness feed the belief that women must be controlled
- Women often had no say in marriage, education, or relationships
- **Religious Misinterpretations:**
- Though no major religion explicitly condones honour killings, cultural practices are falsely justified using religious reasoning
- The book debunks such claims with examples from Islamic texts and scholars

#### 6.5 Preventive Strategies Suggested:

- **Legal Reforms**
- Abolish laws that allow lenient sentences for 'honour-based' crimes
- Enact strict, gender-neutral punishment for all murders, regardless of motive
- **Education and Awareness**
- Public awareness campaigns to change mindsets, especially in schools and rural communities
- Promote women's rights, equality, and legal literacy
- **Protective Shelters**
- Establish safe houses and legal aid for women at risk of honour-related violence
- Empower police and judiciary to act preventively when threats are reported
- **Media and Social Change**
- Use journalism and storytelling to expose injustice and challenge silence
- Involve men and religious leaders in reshaping social norms

#### 6.6 Conclusion of the Book by Rana Husseini:

The author ends with a strong moral and political stance:

"No family, tribe, or nation can claim honour when it rests on the blood of its daughters."

Honour killings are not about religion — they are about control, patriarchy, and power. Change is possible through courageous journalism, grassroots activism, and global solidarity. She believes that breaking silence is the first step to end honour crimes worldwide.

Key Words Education, Autonomy, Traditions, Marriage, Awareness, journalism, Challenge, courageous, activism, Crime.

#### 6.7 Honour Killings in Western Countries

In western countries (like the US, UK, Canada and across Europe), most marriages are indeed love-based — or what may be called 'live marriages' — meaning individuals freely choose their partners, often after cohabiting or dating. However, honour killings — though rare — do occur, especially within certain immigrant communities, including those where cultural norms strongly oppose love marriages, even within the same religion.

#### 6.8 Conclusion of the this Paper: The Vision for Bharat

This paper is a small but sincere effort to educate the younger Generation about these inhuman customs and practices and to illuminate a path toward ending them.

**GEN Z to understand the deep-rooted inhuman customs which are being practiced from centuries in Indian society such as SATI, CHILDMARRIAGES, WOMAN WIDOWHOOD and now HONOUR**

**KILLINGS in this era of 5G** for not maintaining the Caste System

I.e. is the system of Graded In-Equality. So that younger generation shall take A LEAD ROLE to enlighten themselves by developing scientific temper through rational, evidence-based thinking against superstitions and educate society and join nationwide movements to eradicate the evil customs and practices which are being practiced nationwide for the **change of the system of inequality** and break the barriers of the caste rather than joining misguided local and regional groups in name of religion.

**The only hope that GEN Z will lead the movements against the SUPERSTITIOUS INHUMAN EVIL PRACTICES and BREAK**

**THE BARRIERS OF THE CASTE** — and build common culture through self-choice of selecting the life partners through inter-dine and inter- marry by mutual understanding and maintaining equality, fraternity among different caste groups by developing scientific temper through rational, evidence-based thinking where-by inducing Moral Values and leading RIGHTEOUS LIFE and transforming India i.e. THE BHARAT a better place to live in — rather than still living in 6632 different caste groups as primitive tribes.

**"No family, tribe, or nation can claim honour when it rests on the blood of its daughters."**

**"Endogamy is the essence of caste. Killings in the name of Honour is the mechanism of endogamy. Break the caste — choose freely."**

**The Relationship between husband and wife should be one of closest friends.**

**Dr.B.R.Ambedkar**

**Lastly, I remind you the last words of the Buddha--**

**"Be your own Guide: Take refuge in reason: Do not listen to the advice of others: Do not succumb to others: Be truthful: Take refuge in truth: if you keep this message of Buddha in mind, I am sure your decision will not be wrong"**

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