



## Study of Dowry deaths: increasing violence against women

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### Abstract

A new century has begun, yet the fact remains that Indian women have been treated unfairly for a long time due to our male-dominated culture. She has been stripped of her individuality and is treated as if she were a disposable item. Not only is she stripped of her self-respect and pride by the men outside, but she may also be subjected to abuse by the men who are supposed to be her protectors inside the confines of her own home. She may be forced to take her own life or be burned to death for many reasons, including dowry, but her agony doesn't stop there. In India, caste, class, geography, and religion are not barriers to this form of violence, which is endemic in almost every community. The dowry system is a societal practice that has taken the lives of countless women, both young and elderly, and has made their lives a living misery for many more. Unfortunately, women's education has not had a positive impact on their social view, nor has it influenced them in a way that promotes social upliftment. They are deemed peculiar by society, and questions are made about the "respectability" of the groom's family when a well-qualified and well-established male child's parents choose not to accept a marriage proposal. Dowry in India is examined in detail in this research and the reasons why dowry has been marketed and institutionalized are examined.

**Keywords:** Dowry homicides suicides domestic violence public health India, increasing violence against women

### Introduction

Women's position as subordinate and exploitable to males is still shaped by legislation and the legal system, even in contemporary, democratic nations with codified constitutions and the rule of law. Both substantive and procedural components of India's pre-independence legal system reflect this perspective. New laws and Acts have been established from time to time by the Parliament in an effort to improve the position of women in society, but there is still a large gap between legislation and execution.



It is not clear to the women themselves how much influence they have in the legislation and the court system. Even if they are aware of their rights, they have limited access to justice. Everybody has a significant problem with the dowry system, given its ever-expanding and alarming dimensions. It is difficult to separate dowry from other issues in society and analyze it as a problem in and of itself. Girl babies are seen as a burden and an economic liability by parents because they are so strongly related to the position of women in our culture. There are a slew of societal ills stemming from the practice of doling out dowry, such as corruption, hoarding and black-market trading as well as tax avoidance.

Even if progressive laws and enactments have been implemented, the dowry system has a large societal sanction and hence cannot be simply stopped or even reduced. In spite of the fact that dowry (demanding and taking) has been considered an offense, the giving and taking of dowry remains, and there is a Crores pondering rise in the mortality rate from dowry. When it comes to women's rights, dowager deaths are among the most depraved crimes. The atrocities are meticulously planned and carried out by members of the same family inside the confines of their own home. Victims who survive are either afraid of making a statement before a magistrate because they lack assistance or are persuaded or coerced not to do so by their captors. Legal and administrative actions have been taken by the Government in response to the efforts of different social groups and women's welfare organizations. The criminal code was updated to include acts of domestic violence against married women that result in their suicide as a criminal offense. However, there have been no significant changes in the rate of dowry fatalities.

### **Domestic violence in India**

Legal and legislative systems continue to influence women's status as subservient and exploitable by men, even in modern democratic states with codified constitutions and a rule of law. The pre-independence legal system in India reflects this approach in both its content and procedural aspects. A number of laws and Acts have been enacted throughout time by Parliament in an attempt to better the status of women in society, but there is still a huge gap between legislation and implementation.

When it comes to legislative and judicial decisions, the role of women remains unclear. Even though they are aware of their rights, they are unable to seek redress in a court of law because of their situation. Because of the dowry system's ever-expanding and worrying dimensions,



everyone has a serious issue with it. For example, it's impossible to isolate the issue of dowry from other social problems. By virtue of the role of women in our society, girl kids are considered as a burden and an economic liability by parents. Doling out dowry leads to a plethora of social evils, including corruption, hoarding, black-market trade, and tax evasion. Even though progressive legislation and enactments are in place, the dowry system still has a significant social impact and cannot easily be eliminated or even decreased. According to some estimates, the death rate from dowry has increased by a Crores in India despite the fact that dowry (demanding and taking) has long been deemed an infraction. Dowager deaths are among of the most heinous violations against women's rights. Atrocities are planned and carried out by members of the same family in their own house. Many survivors are either too terrified to testify in court because they don't have anybody to support them or are bullied or persuaded not to by their captors. Various social groups and women's welfare organizations pushed for the government to take legal and administrative action. Domestic abuse against married women that results in their suicide has been added to the penal code. However, the death toll from dowry has remained almost unchanged.

### **Dowry Deaths**

Bridal abuse in the Indian subcontinent is known as "bride burning" or "dowry deaths" because of the combination of custom and avarice. In the past, the term "dowry" was used to describe the presents that a lady got from her husband. dowry is currently a major topic of discussion in prenuptial talks, according to fondler father on Isil(Uchiage. refers to the health insurance that the parents of the bride must provide to the groom and his family as a condition of the marriage. The ever-increasing dowry is now a serious financial hardship for the parents of unwed daughters, formerly a show of affection. Wives are subjected to severe abuse when their husbands' demands for money or possessions aren't satisfied, and in the worst cases, dowry harassment results in the woman's suicide or murder, freeing the husband up to seek a more financially rewarding arrangement. As antecolics are wary of becoming involved in dowry killings, the husband and his family often attempt to make the murder seem to be a suicide or accident. Kerosene is often used to light the tornan.

Bridal arsonists burn their brides in the kitchen and then say she was killed by an accidental fire. This year alone, the Ahmedabad Women's Action. Group predicts that 1,000 worsen may be bumped alive by dowry in Gujarat State alone every year. According to mortality statistics



from India, this assertion is based on solid facts. Accidental burns are the leading cause of mortality for women aged 15 to 44 in both metropolitan Maharashtra and greater Bombay. One out of four people between the ages of 15 and 24 falls into this category. There has also been an increase in the number of female fatalities due to burning since 1979, which coincides with the recent corn serialization of dowry demands. Unfortunately, purposeful injuries like as herbicides and suicide are misclassified as "accidents" instead than willful deaths.

"Bride-burning," however, is just the most obvious and spectacular manifestation of a continuum of violence, according to Indian women's rights groups. Women throughout the world are subjected to an onslaught of abuse on a daily basis. Despite the fact that dowry is required to execute the marriage contract, there is no assurance that the bride will be healthy and happy after her marriage. Public media has recorded several cases of the groom or his family making a second demand for the bride's dowry after the wedding. In most cases, this is because the bride's family is being pressured by patriarchal influences to provide larger dowries than they had originally offered. Domestic violence is more likely to be reported by women whose families paid dowries of lower or lower value, those whose in-laws have voiced discontent with their dowries, and those who have faced post-marriage dowry demands. The problem goes beyond the number of fatalities. Mortality in terms of physical and mental health degradation as a result of dowry fights is considerable. Women's and children's health and well-being are directly impacted by family conflict and associated violence. It is possible to find examples of inadequate antenatal care and child immunity due to the lack of respect for the mother and family disputes. Female foeticide, low birth weight, maternal and child malnutrition, and infant mortality are all intertwined concerns that need to be addressed simultaneously. According to public health literature, little is known about how dowries affect women's well-being. An analysis of India's dowry-related fatalities and suicides is presented in this study to shed light on this troubling trend. Various demographic and socioeconomic aspects are also explored in relation to the see-throughs.

### **Review of literature**

(Sharma et al. 2005) studied "Dowry - A Deep-Rooted Cause of Violence Against Women in India" discovered and It is true that we have reached a new millennium, but in our male-dominated culture, women in India have been mistreated for decades. She loses her individuality and is treated as a commodity. Seducing males outside her home may not only



deprive her of her dignity and pride, but she may also become a victim of brutality inside her own home. She may be forced to take her own life or be burned to death for many reasons, including dowry, but her agony doesn't stop there. Such violence has no limits and may be found in practically every Indian society, regardless of caste, class, geography, or religion. A societal practice known as dowry has claimed the lives of many women, young and old, and made life a living misery for countless more. Unfortunately, women's education has not had a positive impact on their social viewpoint, nor has it influenced them in a way that promotes social upliftment.. It is common for society to cast doubt on the "respectability of the groom's family" when parents refuse to pay dowry for their well-educated, well-established male offspring. The current paper examines the dowry system in India in detail and examines the causes for its demonization, leading to its current commercialization and institutionalization.

(Anon 1992) studied “violence against women” discovered and Giving birth to a new life and the dread of male aggression connect women from all walks of life. The world's most widespread and least-recognized violation of human rights is violence against women. A major health issue, it robs women of their physical and emotional vigor while damaging their self-esteem — two things that are crucial to the achievement of many shared human advancement objectives, particularly in developing countries. Violence against women has yet to be defined in a universally accepted manner. Gender violence may be defined as any act of force or coercion that threatens the life, body, psychological integrity, or freedom of a woman in order to maintain male dominance and control over her.

(Hackett 2011) studied “Domestic Violence against Women: Statistical Analysis of Crimes across India” discovered and Research on domestic violence in India has so far been limited to studies of a few villages in a subdistrict or the poorest slums in major cities. The author was unable to locate any other national analyses of domestic violence in India, with the exception of one that sought to utilize media reports to compile national figures. In fact, numerous academics have emphasized that in India and other developing nations, domestic violence has not been thoroughly examined via small- and large-scale surveys. A large-scale statistical study of domestic violence against women in India will thus be attempted in this work by using "Crimes Against Women" data from the National Crime Records Bureau of India.

(Babu and Babu 2011) studied “Dowry deaths: a neglected public health issue in India” discovered and dowry fatalities and dowry-related suicides are linked to certain demographic and socioeconomic parameters, which are examined in this study in order to determine the toll



on India's public health. National Crime Records Bureau, Third National Family Health Survey-2005-2006, Planning Commission of India, and Census of India 2001 data are used in this article. In India, there were 8093 dowry-related fatalities and 3148 dowry-related suicides recorded in 2007. Between 1995 and 2007, the number of dowry-related fatalities increased by 74%, while the number of dowry-related suicides went up 31%. There is a correlation between dowry fatalities and certain demographic and socioeconomic characteristics. Women's health and death are disproportionately burdened, as seen by the facts. If dowry-related murders are to be accurately estimated, a nationwide injury tracking system should be established. However, several countermeasures may be devised and implemented to avoid dowry-related violence and fatalities from taking place. The study necessitates more investigation into the circumstances and causes of such violence, as well as the healthcare seeking of these victims, blockages in seeking health care, and reporting to the police of these victims.

### **Conclusion**

Criminal punishments and legislative gimmicks won't be able to wipe out a long-standing practice that has become more glitzy and justified. When it comes to social policy, the law may be ahead of public opinion, but if the gap is too great, it is highly likely that the law will be ignored, whether intentionally or unintentionally. The Dowry Prohibition Law is a devastating example of this, since it is disregarded by all segments of Indian society, regardless of caste, creed, or religion. As far as law enforcement authorities are concerned, it's just an ornamental piece of legislation that won't be implemented. They don't feel guilty and the victims don't see it as morally wrong as in other crimes. Even if they suffer and even die, most Indian women opt to remain with their husbands and in-laws since they have been socialized to be a member of their newly formed family unit. A woman is taught from an early age to put others before herself in order to make her spouse and children happy. Even though she has excellent reason to complain, these conventional barriers force her to suffer in silence. Public awareness, mass education, financial independence, and the determination to protect and fight for women's rights are necessary in India for the advancement of Indian women. Recall that 'God helps those who assist themselves,' says the Bible. Rainfall shocks have a considerable impact on crime against women, according to our research. Although dry shocks increase reported dowry deaths and domestic violence, sexual harassment is reduced. We see these data as evidence that women are more vulnerable to appropriation in the face of adverse weather conditions.



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