

HONOUR KILLING: ITS CHALLENGES, GLOBAL CONCERNS AND SOLUTIONS

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Abstract

Even after so many years of independence in the newly liberalized India, which is proud of her democracy, most marriages tend to be arranged by families, either through a marriage broker, a newspaper classified advertisement, the long-established oral tradition: word of mouth. But where it does not work, marriage can be forced to save honour and women can be murdered for rejecting a forced marriage and marrying a partner of their own choice (Inter-caste), who is not acceptable by the family of the girl or boy. Honour killings are the illegal decrees by caste/community, Panchayats to annul or prohibit marriages, and even murder of couples, have finally drawn the attention of the State, killing in the name of honour amounts to utter rejection.

This paper proposed some possible solutions to tackle the emerging global concern on honour killing. The post-modern human rights approach which does not shy away from treading into the untouched cultural and traditional arena of family has brought this topic to the concern of the international agencies. The analysis of the problem across cultural barriers have proposed solutions to eradicate this evil form society, has been discussed in depth.

Keywords: Honor Killing, Global Concern, Panchayat, Solutions.

Honour killing is the “unlawful killing of a woman for her actual or perceived morally or mentally unclean and impure behavior” (Hassan et.al, 1995). Honor killings are murders by families on family members who are said to have brought shame on the honor and name of family (Sheri & Bob Strit of 2005). These are acts in which “a male member of the family kills a female relative for tarnishing the family image” (Free Dictionary by Farlex 2007). The term is also defined as the purposeful pre planned murder, generally of a woman, by or at the command of members of her family stimulated by a perception that she has brought shame on the family (Oxford Dictionary of Law Enforcement, 2007). “Honor killings can also be described as extra-judicial punishment of a female relative for assumed sexual and marriage offences. These offences, which are considered as a misdeed or insult, include sexual faithlessness, marrying without the will of parents or having a relationship that the family considers to be inappropriate and rebelling against the tribal and social matrimonial customs. These acts of killing women are justified on the basis that the offence has brought dishonor and shame to family or tribe” (Amnesty International; 1999).

Another report says that “The regime of honor is unforgiving: women on whom suspicion has fallen are not