

ABSTRACT

**HONOUR KILLINGS: A CRITICAL ANALYSIS OF THE EXISTING
LAWS IN INDIA AND THEIR LACUNAE**

***PANYA MATHUR**

“All that exists is just and unjust and equally justified in both” –Nietzsche

A spate of murders and dishonourable crimes in the name of ‘honour’ whether of a family or caste or community have been reported in the recent past and are continuing to be reported. These crimes are often popularly known as “honour killings” as they are committed with a view to protect the honour of the community as a whole. These actions also violate certain fundamental rights mentioned in the Constitution of India, including the right to life, and liberty, which includes the right to bodily integrity, and the right to choose whom to associate with. However, no laws, which punish crimes in the name of Honour expressly, exist in India. Moreover, there are also no laws, which punish the illegal and often barbaric actions of the Khap or community panchayats or other caste or religious associations either. This research paper aims to draw a parallel between the evil of honour killings, which is prevalent in our society since time immemorial, and the personal laws of the various religions in our country while elaborating more on Hinduism, Islam and Christianity. The research paper elaborates on the very nature of honour killings and traces it back to its origin while also discusses the various aspects of the practice. The research paper then lists the various statutes and acts that not only aim to prevent the practice of honour killings, but also prevent the same, along with a critical analysis of the judgements by the Supreme Court of India that laid down certain important guidelines and raise important issues in this regard. The research paper concludes by providing possible solutions and recommendations to eliminate this social evil and also to improve the efficiency of these personal laws.