

# Chapter 19

## Honour Killing Among Women in India: A Scoping Review

**Divya Raghunath Iyengar**

 <https://orcid.org/0009-0009-0498-352X>

*O.P. Jindal Global University, India*

**Soumya T. Varghese**

 <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-7124-6898>

*O.P. Jindal Global University, India*

### **ABSTRACT**

*Honor killing is a form of homicide where an individual becomes a victim if s/he engages in any act, unacceptable to the norms of the society. As per the data reported by National Crime Records Bureau (NCRB), crime rate with respect to honor killing has seen a rise in the last few years. Women are more likely to become victims because they are assumed to bear the weight of protecting the family honor and any deviance from the family's protocol is considered to affect the prestige of the family. Recent research has also found individuals belonging to LGBTQ community to also be a victim of honor killing. Given this backdrop, the current research reviews the literature regarding honor killing with the objective of understanding why women are more prone to be victims of honor killing. Further it aims to trace the role of technology, social and cultural aspects of honor killing. Research will aid in contributing to literature by identifying gaps in policy and human rights interventions to facilitate better implementation and advocacy regarding honor killing and help reduce crime in India.*

DOI: 10.4018/979-8-3693-7240-1.ch019

Copyright © 2025, IGI Global. Copying or distributing in print or electronic forms without written permission of IGI Global is prohibited.

## INTRODUCTION

The shocking evidence regarding the victimization and perpetration of honor killing speaks volume about the disproportionate way it affects the women community across several countries spread across the globe. As per the recent statistics reported by NCRB (National Crime Records Bureau), honor killings in India were reported to be 25 in number, consecutively in the years, 2019 and 2020. In 2021, the number of honor killing deaths surged to around 33 in 2021. These statistics are mere figures that are officially reported owing to the reality that the cases might be more than those that are officially reported figures (Sripad, 2023). News reports also suggest that around 251 cases of honor killing were recorded in 2015 (Al Jazeera, 2016). Honor killing, also known as shame killing, is a form of homicide where often, women are the victims and are murdered under the name of protecting honor (Maryada) of the family. If the woman refuses an arranged marriage, the members decide to kill her to protect the honor of the family as she is assumed to endanger the honor of the family (Chesler & Bloom, 2012, pp. 43-52). Women in Pakistan are killed when they are found to elope with men, engage in adultery or even share their photographs or videos of themselves online (Mehsud et. al., 2023). Reports also suggest that one-fifth of the honor killings or 1000 of the averagely 5000 killings in the world are seen to take place in Pakistan, like that of India (Janjua, 2022). Victims of honor killing are seen to be adolescent girls aged between 14 years and 60% of the victims falling in the age range of 20-25 years. Additionally, boys in the age group of 20-25 years, with 20% of them falling in the age bracket of 17-19 years are victims of honor killing, especially in the state of Haryana, India where Jats constitute majority of the population (Dublish & Khan, 2021). Findings also suggest that Muslims and other migrants from South Asia or Middle East become victims of honor killing due to associated factors such as culture, shame, honor and religion (Shier & Shor, 2016). Not only do women get victimized against the crime, but there are other cases where sometimes, even LGBTQ community or homosexual couples may become victims of honor killing, when they reveal their sexual identity to their family members (Bhadra, 2019; Pathak & Rai, 2019). Perpetrators justify the crime by stating that it was carried out to restore the dignity of the family as women are considered to be the primary bearers of honor in the family while immoral character, inter-caste or inter-religious involvement pollute the honor upheld by the family (Chesler & Bloom, 2012, pp. 43-52). Perpetrators of crime who have a criminal mindset are found to have a positive perspective towards honor killing, refuting the myth that such killers are not ordinary and that these honor killings are justified under the purview of culture, traditions, rage, social pressure, etc. (Rahim, 2017). Additionally, since there is a dearth of laws, police officers bracket the cases of honor killing under the broad category of 'murder' and do not investigate them

20 more pages are available in the full version of this document, which may be purchased using the "Add to Cart" button on the publisher's webpage: [www.igi-global.com/chapter/honour-killing-among-women-in-india/358306](http://www.igi-global.com/chapter/honour-killing-among-women-in-india/358306)

## Related Content

---

### Understanding the Relationship Between Cybercrime and Human Behavior Through Criminological Theories and Social Networking Sites

Anne-Marie Mohammed, Vladlena Benson and George Saridakis (2020).

*Encyclopedia of Criminal Activities and the Deep Web* (pp. 979-989).

[www.irma-international.org/chapter/understanding-the-relationship-between-cybercrime-and-human-behavior-through-criminological-theories-and-social-networking-sites/248098](http://www.irma-international.org/chapter/understanding-the-relationship-between-cybercrime-and-human-behavior-through-criminological-theories-and-social-networking-sites/248098)

### Tech-Based Enterprise Control and Audit for Financial Crimes: The Case of State-Owned Global Financial Predators (SOGFP)

Antoine Trad, Marie Goretti Nakitende and Tayo Oke (2021). *Handbook of Research on Theory and Practice of Financial Crimes* (pp. 525-565).

[www.irma-international.org/chapter/tech-based-enterprise-control-and-audit-for-financial-crimes/275478](http://www.irma-international.org/chapter/tech-based-enterprise-control-and-audit-for-financial-crimes/275478)

### Sexual Abuse Among Adolescents: Its Consequences and Therapeutic Interventions

Ankita Kakati and Sangeeta Goswami (2018). *Social, Psychological, and Forensic Perspectives on Sexual Abuse* (pp. 116-126).

[www.irma-international.org/chapter/sexual-abuse-among-adolescents/197823](http://www.irma-international.org/chapter/sexual-abuse-among-adolescents/197823)

### The Emerging Threats of Web Scrapping to Web Applications Security and Their Defense Mechanism

Rizwan Ur Rahman, Danish Wadhwa, Aakash Bali and Deepak Singh Tomar (2020). *Encyclopedia of Criminal Activities and the Deep Web* (pp. 788-809).

[www.irma-international.org/chapter/the-emerging-threats-of-web-scrapping-to-web-applications-security-and-their-defense-mechanism/248084](http://www.irma-international.org/chapter/the-emerging-threats-of-web-scrapping-to-web-applications-security-and-their-defense-mechanism/248084)

### Reframing Human Trafficking to Enhance Multidisciplinary Collaboration: A Technology-Focused Application

Wendy Stickle, Nicholas C. McLoota and Alexander J. Perez (2022). *Paths to the Prevention and Detection of Human Trafficking* (pp. 286-310).

[www.irma-international.org/chapter/reframing-human-trafficking-to-enhance-multidisciplinary-collaboration/304622](http://www.irma-international.org/chapter/reframing-human-trafficking-to-enhance-multidisciplinary-collaboration/304622)