



Article Writing

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Dowry

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Dowry is the activity taken place at the time of marriage when the bride's family transfers wealth to the groom's family in the form of cash or properties. Dowry system started even before the **British period**. In those days, society does not use to consider dowry as a "Money" or "Fee" that brides parents pay.

The dowry system brings up immense pressure over the heads of the bride's family.^[1] Fathers of young girls fear the day of their daughter's marriage and save money for that particular day. In the northern part of India, the dowry system is quite more prevalent, along with the **caste-ism**. The cases of infanticide are increasing. In some cases, the dowry system leads to crime against women, ranging from **emotional abuse** and injury to even deaths.^[2] Poor parents do not have any other option. Every woman goes through the ugly phase, where she is made to feel like she is a liability. The country is continuously fighting against the dowry system. Various **NGOs** have come forward and raised the issue by spreading awareness among the population

Dowry is a punishable crime, and anyone who is, by any means, tries to support or even hide the truth will have to face legal consequences. Both the parties, the giver and taker, of dowry will be punished under the **Dowry Prohibition Act, 1961**^[3] and subsequently by **Sections 304B and 498A** of the **Indian Penal Code**.

A **court judgment**^[4] clarifies the legal definition of dowry as

"Dowry" in the sense of the expression contemplated by Dowry Prohibition Act is a demand for property of valuable security

having an inextricable nexus with the marriage, i.e., it is a consideration from the side of the bride's parents or relatives to the groom or his parents and/or guardian for the agreement to wed the bride-to-be.

Although Indian laws against dowries have been in effect for decades, they have been largely criticized as being **ineffective**.^[5] The practice of dowry deaths and murders continues to take place unchecked in many parts of India, which has further added to the concerns of enforcement.^[6]

It can take up to 10 years for a case to go to court and even once in court, husbands and in-laws end up getting away with extortion or even murder because the women and their families cannot prove 'beyond reasonable doubt' that they are the victims of such crimes, as there are rarely any outside witnesses.^[7]

At last I'll conclude by saying that **Dowry system** is good unless and until it is considered as a gift given to the bride by her parents. If the groom's parents are demanding money to get married as a "Dowry" then that is completely **wrong** and **illegal**.

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