

# UNDERSTANDING CASTE AND CASTE BASED ABUSE





*Coaction Hub would like to thank and acknowledge Vandana Aparanti's time and insights in this briefing. Vandana Aparanti is a Dalit feminist from an oppressed caste.*



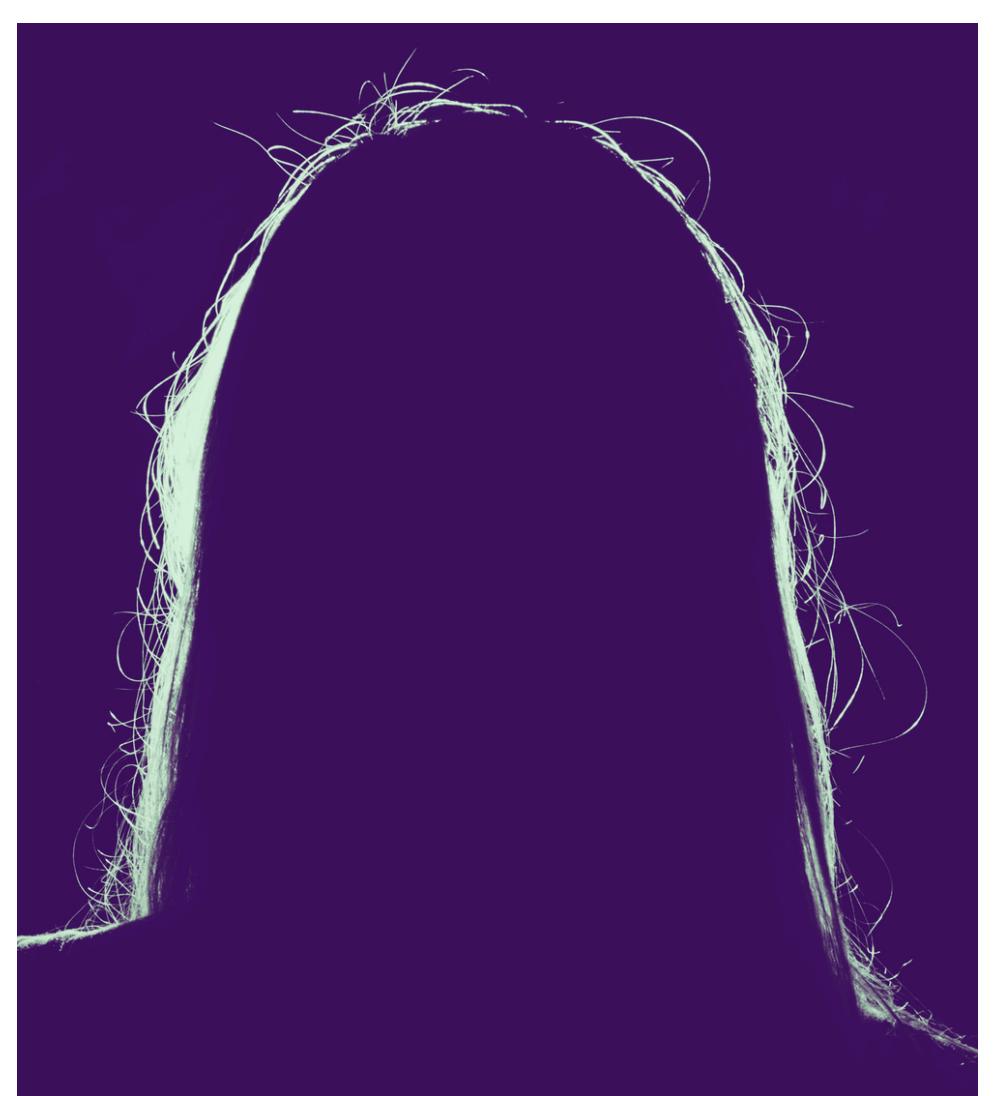
## Understanding Caste and Caste-based Abuse

### Rationale of this Briefing:

There is a significant gap in literature and resources addressing caste from a feminist lens and its impact on women in the UK. The aim of this briefing is to raise awareness about caste and its manifestations within the South Asian diaspora, discuss Dalit\* feminism and its similarities to Black feminism, and focus on caste-based abuse as a harmful practice affecting communities in the UK. By doing so, this briefing seeks to increase knowledge and understanding of how caste-based abuse impacts women, while also ensuring that practitioners gain a better awareness of this issue, enabling them to provide appropriate support and make informed referrals for interventions.

Through her deeply personal narrative, Jasvinder Sanghera, founder of the national charity Karma Nirvana, reveals in her book *Shame* how cultural norms around 'honour' and the rigid hierarchies of caste intertwine to perpetuate control, shame, and rejection. While some in the VAWG sector may already be familiar with her work, it specifically highlights the often-overlooked issue of caste and its role in perpetuating harmful practices.

Jasvinder Sanghera recounts the traumatic experience of seeking connection with her family after fleeing abuse and a forced marriage as she was blamed for defiling the family name by running off with a chamar.\*\* She reflects on the layers of shaming and caste-based discrimination within the context of family abuse because her boyfriend was from so called "lower" caste. Her story brings to light the intersection of cultural norms, caste prejudice, and 'honour'-based violence, multiple challenges survivors face.



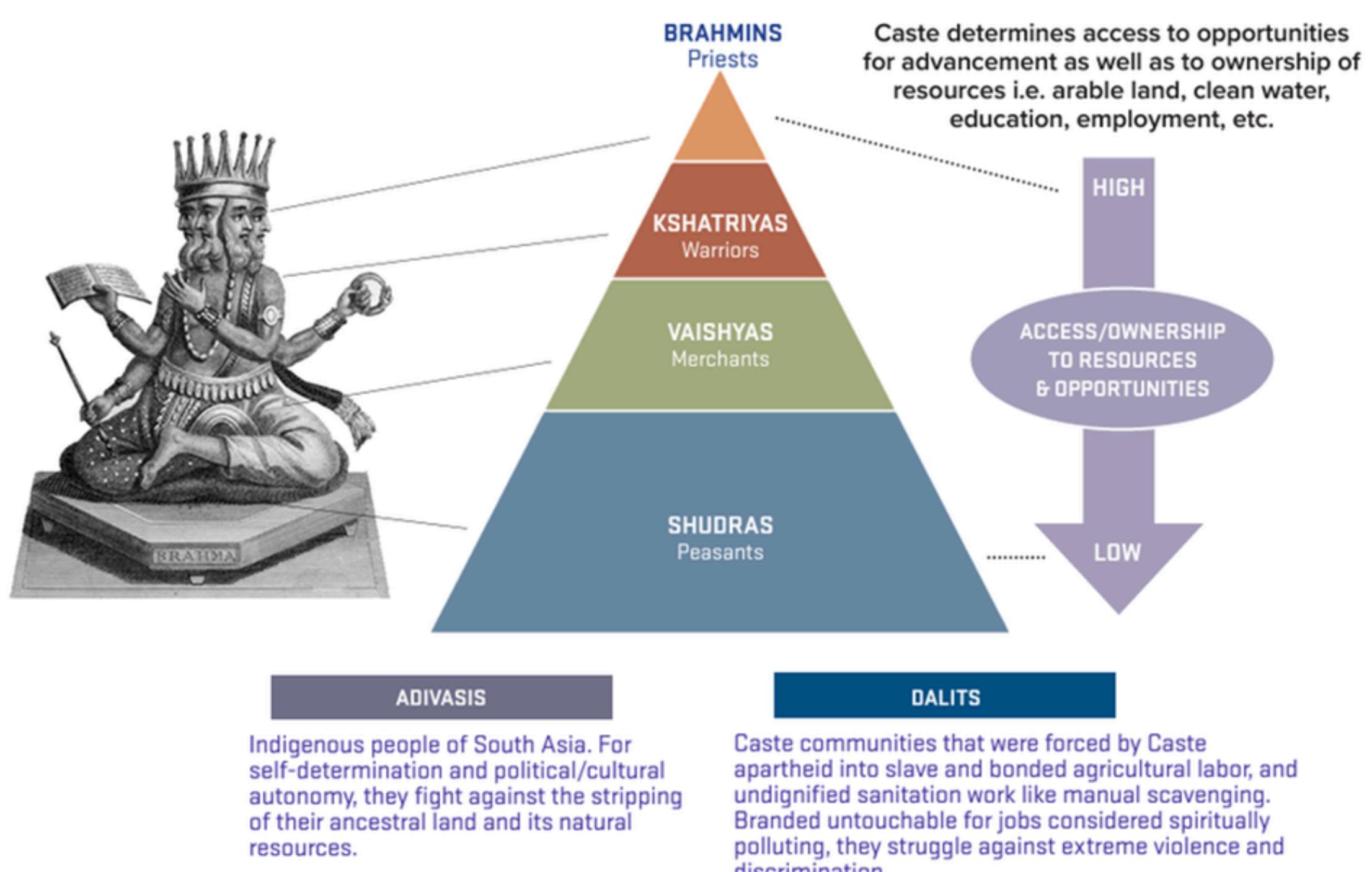
\*Dalit (formally known as Untouchables and this word is rejected) refers to historically marginalised communities in India, considered outside and below the traditional caste system, and subjected to systemic discrimination and exclusion. Dalit feminism is a movement that aims to achieve justice and equality, addressing the intersecting oppressions of gender and caste.

\*\*In India and within the Indian Subcontinent diaspora, the term "chamar" has historically been used in derogatory contexts. Chamars are a Dalit group (formerly termed "untouchables"). Chamars have been traditionally associated with occupations such as leatherwork and animal carcass disposal. Due to this association, the term has been used to reinforce caste-based discrimination and social stigmatisation.

## Understanding Caste and its Manifestation:

Although the caste system is associated with India, it also exists in other contexts, such as among the Igbo in Nigeria, where the Osu are marginalised.\* The caste system in India divides Hindus into four main categories: Brahmins (Priests and Scholars), Kshatriyas (Warriors and Rulers), Vaishyas (Traders and Agriculturists), and Shudras (Labourers and farm workers). At its core, it perpetuates systemic inequality and reinforces power dynamics.

Marginalised groups, including Shudras, who occupy the lowest tier within the caste system, and Dalits, who are entirely excluded from it and often referred to as the 'oppressed,' face systemic oppression. Dalits, in particular, endure extreme social exclusion, economic deprivation, and abuse due to their position outside the caste hierarchy. This 2,000-year-old social hierarchy, determined by birth, continues to influence many aspects of life, categorising Hindu communities at birth, dictating social status, permissible occupations, and marriage prospects for individuals across Indian society. While India's caste system was officially abolished in 1950, caste-based discrimination persists in various forms. For Dalits, in particular, the legacy of this system manifests as ongoing abuse and oppression.



Source: Visualization of the Caste pyramid and socioreligious hierarchy, sourced from Equality Labs (2018). [1]

\*The caste system in Nigeria is different from the Indian system but has some parallels in certain ethnic groups. Among the Igbo, there is a caste-like distinction, such as the Osu (outcasts) who are traditionally marginalized. Among the Yoruba and Hausa, societal structures are more hierarchical, often based on lineage, roles, or status, but not as rigidly stratified as a caste system.

[1] [Visualization of the Caste pyramid and socioreligious hierarchy,...](#) | Download Scientific Diagram

Historians and anthropologists note that before British colonial rule, caste distinctions were not as rigid or formally defined across all of Indian society.[2]

Caste can often be used as a tool to serve the interests of the ruling elite, reinforcing the impact of Brahman supremacy.\* Caste is not just a Hindu problem, within the Indian subcontinent caste based abuse is also prevalent within the Sikh communities and also manifests differently in Muslim and Christian communities.[3]

### **The Issue of Caste and the South Asian Diaspora:**

Caste plays a crucial role in perpetuating systemic exploitation across the global diaspora. This form of oppression disproportionately impacts communities from oppressed castes, perpetuating inequalities across cultural, social, and economic contexts that are rooted in caste-based discrimination.

### **The US Context:**

The issue of caste discrimination gained significant attention in 2020 when California regulators sued the tech giant Cisco Systems, accusing the company of discriminating against a worker based on his caste. The case was a landmark moment in recognising caste-based discrimination in the U.S., particularly in the context of South Asian American communities. The lawsuit, filed by the California Department of Fair Employment and Housing (DFEH), involved a Dalit engineer who alleged that he faced caste-based harassment and discrimination from the senior team.

On 21st February 2023, Seattle became the first U.S. jurisdiction to add caste to its list of categories protected against discrimination.

### **The UK Context:**

The issue of caste discrimination has been a topic of legal and political debate for many years. In the 2010s, there was a growing call to address caste-based discrimination within UK law. In April 2023, after Caste Watch UK filed a police complaint, a man was sentenced to 18 weeks in custody for posting a casteist and offensive message on TikTok.[4]

[2] Viewpoint: How the British Reshaped India's Caste System, available at: [Viewpoint: How the British reshaped India's caste system - BBC News](#)

\* Brahman supremacy refers to the belief in the inherent superiority of the Brahmin caste, which has historically held the highest position in the Hindu social hierarchy, justifying their social, political, and economic privileges while marginalizing lower castes.

[3] Patel, Shaista Abdul Aziz. It is time to talk about caste in Pakistan and Pakistani, available at: [It is time to talk about caste in Pakistan and Pakistani diaspora | Opinions | Al Jazeera](#)

[4] Press release by Caste Watch UK, regarding the trial of Mr Amrik Singh Bajwa (4th April) - GLOBAL AMBEDKARITES

The perpetrator was charged under the Communications Act 2003 following a Thames Valley Police investigation. His post, shared on July 19, 2022, targeted Dalit communities with obscenities, threats of rape and sexual abuse, and glorified such acts as a matter of pride.

The Equality Act 2010 protects individuals from discrimination based on characteristics like race, sex, disability, and religion. While caste isn't explicitly mentioned, cases in the UK have highlighted its presence in certain workplaces. One of the most significant cases was *Chandhok v. Tirkey* (2009), where the court ruled that caste discrimination in the workplace<sup>[5]</sup> could be addressed under the Act's provisions on race. After a public consultation in 2018, the UK Government decided not to introduce specific legislation on caste, relying instead on existing case law to handle caste discrimination within the framework of race discrimination.

### **Dalit Feminism:**

Mainstream Indian feminist movements have historically focused on issues affecting women from dominant caste, overlooking the struggles faced by Dalit women. Dalit feminism critiques this erasure by highlighting how caste, along with gender, profoundly shapes Dalit women's experiences of oppression. Dalit women have always been resisting, been part of social justice and anti-caste movement.

In the 1990s, Dalit women challenged the mainstream feminist movement for its exclusive focus on issues faced by upper-caste and middle-class women, highlighting the overlooked intersection of caste and gender, a radical shift in feminism, where the question of caste became central to feminist discourse and activism.<sup>[6]</sup>

► *Local newspapers in India often include caste identifiers in matrimonial columns, reinforcing structural inequalities that impact women's hierarchical status, this practice reflects deeply entrenched patriarchal and casteist norms.*

Dalit feminism has emerged as a powerful response to both the dominance of mainstream Indian feminism and the patriarchal control within Dalit communities. It seeks to address the unique struggles of Dalit women, who face oppression based on both caste and gender.

[5] <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-34330986>

[6] [\(PDF\) Understanding Dalit Feminism](#)

Dalit feminism critiques the mainstream feminist movement for often overlooking caste apartheid and caste-based discrimination, it also challenges Dalit men for perpetuating patriarchal structures within their own communities. By centring the experiences and struggles of Dalit women, Dalit feminism aims to achieve equality and justice, recognising that caste and gender are intertwined systems of oppression that must be addressed collectively.[7]

Just as Black feminists challenge the exclusion of race from feminist discourse, Dalit feminists critique the neglect of caste as a central axis of oppression.[8] Dalit feminist leaders have consistently championed a vision of global solidarity, building connections across borders to address caste, gender, and class oppression. This legacy of forging international collaborations reflects a commitment to Dalit internationalism, a movement rooted in collective liberation and the dismantling of intersecting systems of oppression. They raise awareness around Brahmanical patriarchy, a hierarchical structure that places Brahmins—those belonging to the ‘highest caste’ at the top, while simultaneously subjugating women, especially those from lower castes, through rigid gender roles and control over women’s bodies, sexuality, and social mobility. By drawing on shared experiences of marginalisation and resistance, Dalit feminists have advanced a powerful framework for global justice that centres the voices of those historically excluded from dominant narratives.

### **Dalit Women and VAWG:**

In India, Dalit women and girls face intersecting forms of discrimination based on gender, caste, and class, making them uniquely vulnerable to violence. Sexual violence, including rape and gang rape, is systematically used as a tool of oppression by men from dominant castes to reinforce structural inequalities and maintain gendered and caste-based hierarchies.

Dalit women make up over 16% of India's total population[9] but face a distinct triple burden of gender bias, caste discrimination and economic deprivation rooted in the caste system. They are disproportionately targeted for caste-based sexual violence, often with impunity, while also facing social exclusion even within feminist spaces, their economic oppression is tied to caste-based labour, keeping them in cycles of poverty and exploitation.

Alarmingly, nearly ten Dalit women and girls are subjected to rape every day across the country.[10] Dominant caste partners use coercion, emotional, and physical abuse and weaponising faith and caste identity to maintain power and control.

[7] <https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/10.1177/0974354520130202>

[8] Ibid

[9] <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-asia-india-54418513>

[10] <https://www.overcomingviolence.org/en/resources/campaigns/women-against-violence/now-we-are-fearless/dalit-fact-sheet.html>

Dalit women are disproportionately targeted for sexual violence, often as a means of punishing Dalit communities that challenge caste-based discrimination and social hierarchies.[11]

Drawing inspiration from the Black Lives Matter movement in the United States, the hashtag #DalitLivesMatter came to prominence in India in response to caste-based violence, abuse, and discrimination. Each day Dalit women are constantly fighting and resisting.

### **Caste Based Abuse within the UK VAWG Context:**

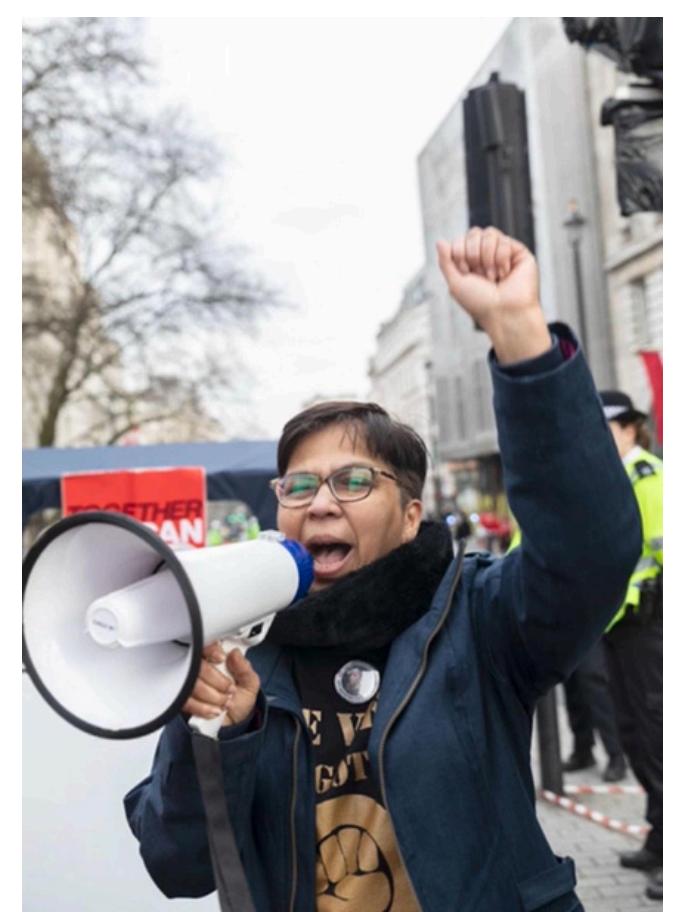
An article published in The Guardian[12], Asian Caste Discrimination Rife In UK, found that in a survey, 79% of participants believe the police would not understand caste-related hate crimes. Since this is a barrier, we know it can discourage women from reporting abuse.

Women from oppressed castes may face bullying by their colleagues limiting their economic independence and perpetuating their vulnerability. Fear of being "outed" at work about their caste can prevent survivors from disclosing abuse or seeking support.

A survey by Sikh Women's Aid in 2024 identified cases of women experiencing domestic abuse linked to caste-based discrimination in the UK[13]

According to Vandana Aparanti, an intersectional feminist from oppressed caste who has extensively worked in the VAWG sector says,

*"In the UK, caste-based divisions persist within faith institutions. Here some temples, shrines and Gurdwaras are affiliated with specific castes. These caste affiliated institutions do not accept members or trustees from other caste groups. For example, there are separate gurdwaras for Jats, Tarkhan, Valmikis and Ravidasis\*, reflecting deep-rooted caste hierarchies within South Asian diaspora communities. Also, there are quite a few exceptions due to anti-caste resistance. Such caste-based segregation within places of worship isolates and limits support networks, exacerbate social exclusion. It creates additional barriers for Dalit women and women from marginalised castes."*



[11] [EN-Haryana\\_Report-ENG-PDF-1.pdf](#)

[12] [Asian caste discrimination rife in UK, says report | Communities | The Guardian](#)

[13] [Gender Power and Abuse by Sikh Womens Aid 2024\\_compressed.pdf](#)

\*These terms refer to caste groups within the Indian social hierarchy, each with distinct socio-economic positions and historical roles. Jats are a dominant agrarian caste with significant social and political influence. Tarkhans, traditionally carpenters and artisans, hold a relatively higher status within the caste hierarchy. In contrast, Valmikis and Ravidasis are Dalit communities facing systemic caste-based oppression. Valmikis have historically been relegated to sanitation work, including manual scavenging, while Ravidasis, followers of the anti-caste spiritual leader Guru Ravidas, have faced discrimination within both Hindu and Sikh communities.

## **Caste based abuse and interconnectedness with other forms of abuse:**

The concept of izzat (honour) is closely linked to the preservation of caste boundaries and the social status of the family. Therefore, preserving caste boundaries is tied to notions of status, purity, and authority. In cases where women and girls from dominant caste communities are in relationships/fall in love with men from "lower" castes, such inter-caste relationships are viewed as a direct violation of these deeply entrenched norms. The woman's parents and the broader community are likely to view this act as shameful, as it is seen as a downfall of the family's reputation. If a woman defies these expectations, families may respond with coercion, such as arranging a forced marriage to someone of the "appropriate" caste. Inter-caste relationships, particularly when one partner belongs to a "lower"/ oppressed caste, can lead to discrimination or rejection by the "upper"/ dominant caste partner or their family, causing emotional strain. These challenges are even greater when one partner is Dalit, as they may be viewed as taboo by non-Dalit families. Dalits are often viewed as "unclean" or "impure", and some non-Dalit communities hold the harmful belief that their presence or association can bring "spiritual pollution".[14]

The concept of izzat (honour) and casteist patriarchy can also influence how children born of inter-caste marriages, particularly those involving "lower caste" women, are perceived within upper-caste families. In the context of a relationship between a "lower caste" woman and a man from a dominant caste, the children of such families could be perceived as a threat to the purity and social status of the upper-caste family. There are often caste specific slurs used, and surnames pointed out to show the "lower caste" family background.

Caste can also intertwined with modern slavery for example the case of Chandhok v. Tirkey (2009). Permila Tirkey, an impoverished woman from a 'low' caste in India, was trafficked to the UK and was subjected to abuse, coercive control, domestic servitude and discrimination due to her caste. She was awarded compensation in what was UK's first caste discrimination case.[15]

## **Barriers Faced by Women Experiencing Caste-Based Abuse:**

Women from oppressed castes face unique vulnerabilities, as caste discrimination compounds the effects of VAWG, leading to heightened risks of physical, sexual, and emotional abuse.

- Intergenerational trauma: Women facing caste-based abuse often endure intergenerational trauma, where the effects of discrimination and violence are passed down through families, deeply influencing their mental and emotional well-being. This trauma can create barriers to seeking help, as women may internalize the stigma or fear repercussions from their communities, further isolating them.

[14] [Caste in the United States Report2018.pdf](#)

[15] [How is caste discrimination different from racism? | The Runnymede Trust](#)

- Isolation and Control: Women in abusive relationships face isolation from support networks. Caste abuse deepens this isolation, with “lower” caste women being ostracized, making it harder to seek help.
- Economic Dependency: Economic control is common in domestic abuse, and caste discrimination can worsen this, restraining their autonomy and limiting their skills and job opportunities for women from marginalised castes, thus trapping them in abusive relationships.
- Cultural and Social Stigma: Caste-based stigma can increase societal pressure on women to stay in abusive marriages, as defying caste norms can lead to social exclusion and shame.
- Physical and Psychological Abuse: Women may face physical violence and caste-based slurs. Caste-based slurs used by abusive partners or in-laws serve to threaten a woman's social standing, often linked to her relationships or actions, such as inter-caste relationships. These slurs reinforce her “place” in the social hierarchy impacting her self-esteem and compound the psychological harm.
- Fear of Repercussions: Victims from lower castes may fear retaliation from both their abuser and their community, preventing them from seeking help or leaving the relationship.
- Barriers to Health: Castewatch UK have highlighted how an older woman seeking medical care shared that her healthcare provider, upon learning of her caste, deemed her “unclean” and refused to physically touch her.<sup>[16]</sup> Caste discrimination in services like healthcare can leave women without the support they need, as their experiences may be not be understood, as the issue can remain unexplored, minimised or ignored.
- Dowry Pressure and Control: Dowry demands are often used as a form of control, and in cases of caste abuse, the perceived inadequacy of the dowry can lead to escalating violence and coercion.
- Casteism in Food Practices as a Tool for Control and Abuse: In inter-caste households, where a woman is from an oppressed caste and the partner is Brahmin, casteism often seeps into food culture. Food practices can be weaponised to reinforce caste hierarchies, with women from oppressed castes being forced to adhere to dominant caste norms, such as Brahmin vegetarianism.\* These dietary practices, rooted in caste-based hierarchies, uphold vegetarianism as a symbol of purity and dominance, intersecting with patriarchal control and reinforcing power dynamics within the context of VAWG. This is specific to Dalit women where they can be coerced to conform to dominant caste practices, such as Brahmin vegetarianism.

[16] [How is caste discrimination different from racism? | The Runnymede Trust](#)

\* Brahmin vegetarianism, this refers to the dietary practices rooted in caste-based hierarchies, where strict vegetarianism is upheld as a symbol of purity and dominance, often intersecting with patriarchal control

Therefore, sometimes even minor acts, like forgetting to prepare food in specific ways can trigger casteist abuse and violence, exposing how caste and patriarchy work together to dehumanise Dalit women.[17]

## **Support for Women at Risk of Caste-Based Abuse:**

By and for agencies\* like AWRC help and support women at risk of various harmful practices, including caste- based abuse. Whilst by and for agencies such as AWRC have expertise in supporting women at risk of harmful practices, including caste-based abuse, the majority of agencies in the VAWG sector fail to identify these forms of abuse. In addition, the tools used by the sector, such as standard risk assessments, will make identification difficult without cultural competence, specialist training, or an understanding of intersectional risk factors, as these assessments lack questions that effectively recognize and address these experiences.

The case study below, shared by a colleague at AWRC, highlights how caste-based discrimination can place women and girls at risk of forced marriage and 'honour'-based abuse. All identifying details have been changed to ensure confidentiality.

### **Case Study**

*Priya, a young woman at college, faced ongoing coercive control from her parents. The abuse started when they found out that she was in a relationship with a boy from an oppressed/so called "lower caste", which they considered a violation of family honour. As a result, she was subjected to coercive control in the form of constant surveillance. including being forced to show herself on the video while commuting to and from college to prove she was alone. At home Priya was also forbidden from using her phone and they threatened her boyfriend. Her parents arranged a marriage with someone in an attempt to restore their honour and control her. Feeling isolated and controlled, Priya wanted to leave home to escape the ongoing emotional and psychological abuse linked to honour and caste-based oppression.*

*Following a referral by her teacher to AWRC, her case worker offered Priya a safe space to discuss the ongoing coercive control. Priya was also able to talk about issues of caste and how her caste identity was weaponised against her.*

[17] [The Subtle Brutal Flavours of Casteism In My Family Kitchen - BehanBox](#)

\*By and For Agencies are organisations that are rooted in the community they serve, specifically led by and for Black and minoritised women in the context of ending violence against women and girls (VAWG). These agencies ensure that their services reflect the lived experiences and specific needs of the communities they represent.

*By recognising the issues and caste dynamics at play, her case worker was able to provide more comprehensive support, addressing her needs and conducting a nuanced risk assessment that went beyond traditional frameworks. This approach meant that an understanding of how casteism intersects with domestic abuse, allowed the caseworker to advocate for culturally specific interventions, ensure her safety within the community, and exploring her housing options, offering her support along with making appropriate referrals to support her effectively.*

## **Gaps:**

Aside from a few by and for organisations like AWRC, Southall Black Sisters and Sikh Women's Aid, the VAWG sector has largely neglected the issue of caste, which may be primarily due to a lack of understanding of the complex dynamics of harmful practices, including caste-based abuse, and its recognition as a form of gender-based violence. This gap can lead to caste-based abuse being unexplored and therefore not being adequately addressed within a mainstream support framework. There is a pressing need to confront this silence rooted in privilege and address caste-based oppression within the framework of violence against women and girls.

Caste identity can be deeply personal, sensitive, and connected to systemic oppression and historical trauma. Many women may not feel safe or comfortable discussing their caste identity due to fear of judgment, exclusion, or stigmatisation within their communities. This silence can further marginalize survivors and hinder their ability to access the support they need.

To address caste-related abuse effectively, we must make deliberate and intentional efforts to:

- Actively work to raise awareness of caste and its implications within the framework of domestic abuse and harmful practices. This includes campaign efforts advocating for caste equity and the recognition of caste-based abuse as a significant issue.
- Create and share resources that address caste-based issues from a VAWG lens. This can encourage women facing caste-based abuse and discrimination to reach out for support for by and for agencies.
- Uplift the voices of feminists who have written about caste-based oppression, leveraging their work to raise awareness and challenge dominant caste supremacy. To improve and ensure a more intersectional approach within the VAWG sector, we have included relevant information in the annexe of this paper.
- Encourage the VAWG sector to collaborate with by and fors who have expertise on these issues to increase awareness and equip practitioners with culture competence around this issue.

- Where safe, encourage survivor-led advocacy, where women who have experienced caste-based abuse can share their stories and help shape policies and services that are more responsive to their needs. It is equally important to recognize that it is not their responsibility to educate others, and we need to educate ourselves and create spaces that prioritise their experiences.
- Actively listening to and centring voices of Dalit victim-survivors to ensure their experiences are acknowledged and valued in addressing this injustice.
- Build collaborative alliances with feminists and community leaders, particularly those from minoritised communities and faiths.

## Conclusion

Caste hierarchies and caste discrimination persist and despite activism and efforts in India to abolish it, it has become a global issue, transported and entrenched within diasporic communities.

Caste based abuse is a harmful practice that intersects with other forms of oppression, including forced marriage and honour-based abuse, creating unique and compounded barriers for women. Its invisibilised nature makes it difficult for survivors to disclose their experiences, especially when services lack awareness of caste dynamics and impact on victims.

Caste based hierarchies and patriarchal norms combine to reinforce the social exclusion and oppression of Dalit women in daily life. What may seem like ordinary activities, such as how food is served or how spaces are shared, can carry deeper symbolic meanings that emphasize their perceived "inferiority." These practices serve to perpetuate their marginalization, creating an environment where they are constantly reminded of their lower social status. It is also important to recognize that women from privileged castes can also face isolation and discrimination from their own families if they marry someone from an oppressed caste. This makes us understand how casteism creates additional vulnerabilities for women across different caste groups.

Cultural norms related to honour, family, and caste can deter women from seeking help, as they fear ostracism. Understanding these specific barriers through the framework of intersectionality can help us understand how power and marginality operate across different communities.

Structural inequalities, such as the lack of caste awareness in UK laws and services, can exacerbate marginalization and limit access to support for victim-survivors. Recognising the relatively small number of such organisations in the UK, we have listed some key groups in the annex to provide a starting point for those unfamiliar with their work. To address these issues and recognise caste based abuse as a harmful practice, it is crucial to collaborate with grassroots Dalit and feminist organisations, as well as by and for agencies specializing in caste-based abuse.

By centring their voices, sharing best practices, and raising awareness through resource sharing and campaigns, we can better support women at risk of caste-based abuse and ensure we are able to understand caste-based abuse and provide appropriate support to victims and survivors.

Coaction Project's Knowledge Hub offers a collection of valuable resources and articles on harmful practices, including honour-based abuse, forced marriage, caste based abuse, dowry abuse, female genital mutilation, caste-based abuse, and spiritual abuse ([Harmful Practices Resources | AWRC | Women's services Brent | Welfare advice Brent | Women's services Brent](#)).

To support good practice in statutory and non-statutory agencies and encourage referrals to specialist agencies please see HPSP's factsheet on various forms of harmful practices including dowry abuse. [HPSP – Standing Together](#)



## ANNEX

### Organisations:

- Sikh Women's Aid (SWA): A by and for, Sikh Women's Aid is a community-based organisation set up by women from the Sikh community from across the West Midlands. They work with women from Sikh and Punjabi communities and their focuses on domestic, sexual, and spiritual abuse within the Sikh and Punjabi communities, including caste-based abuse. Website: [sikhwomensaid.org.uk](http://sikhwomensaid.org.uk)
- Asian Women's Resource Centre (AWRC): A London based by and for supporting Black and minoritised women, with an understanding of harmful practices including caste based abuse and its intersection with other harmful practices. Website: [asianwomencentre.org.uk](http://asianwomencentre.org.uk)
- Anti Caste Discrimination Alliance (ACDA): The ACDA is a cross-cultural and cross-faith alliance committed to eradicating caste-based discrimination in the UK. The organisation works through advocacy, awareness-raising, and policy engagement, led by a dedicated team of volunteers. Website: [Home | ANTI CASTE DISCRIMINATION ALLIANCE](#)

### Activists:

- Vandana : Vandana likes to describe herself as an intersectional feminist from the oppressed caste, Vandana likes to describe herself as an anti-caste activist, intersectional feminist from the oppressed caste, she works in the VAWG Sector. She is an expert in the field of oppressed caste women's rights and also co-founder and the Chair of STOP gender based caste oppression, one of the only women's organisation raising awareness about caste discrimination in India and the UK. Vandana has been into active campaigning to bring caste legislation into British law. You can hear her perspectives on caste in her podcast with FiLiA here: <https://www.filial.org.uk/latest-news/2019/10/3/filia-meets-vandana-aparanti>

### Books on Caste and Gender:

B.R. Ambedkar- An Indian social reformer, jurist, and the chief architect of India's Constitution. He fought against caste discrimination and championed the rights of Dalits and marginalized communities.

- Key Work: *Annihilation of Caste* (1936)

Thenmozhi Soundararajan – A Dalit rights activist, artist, and writer based in the US, she writes and highlights around issues of caste apartheid and gendered violence against Dalit women.

- Key Work: *The Trauma of Caste: A Dalit Feminist Meditation on Survivorship, Healing, and Abolition* (2022)

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