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## **EMOTIONAL NEGLECT AND SILENT TREATMENT AS MENTAL CRUELTY UNDER MATRIMONIAL LAWS**

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### **Abstract**

*Mental cruelty, mental brutality or mental violence in Marital law or divorce law has grown a lot and in numbers, from being linked to physical violence to a wider understanding of psychological harm. This research paper looks at how the courts have come to understand mental mistreatment over time, focusing on emotional neglect, quiet treatment, and psychological abuse in marriage. The Hindu Marriage Act of 1955 says that cruelty is a reason for divorce, but it doesn't say what cruelty means, so it's up to the courts to decide what it means. In times, India's Supreme Court has widened the definition of mental abuse to include actions that cause longlasting emotional pain, shame, or a loss of trust in a marriage.*

*The research paper looks at how the law works in the UK and the US and compares them. It shows how policies are changing toward "no-fault" divorce while still recognising the importance of psychological harm in divorce cases. It also looks at the gender and sociopsychological aspects of emotional neglect, focusing on how it affects partners, kids, and the security of the family.*

*Even though the law is getting clearer, divorce action is still unclear because of different judges' interpretations and the lack of clear legal standards. The paper argues for better law standards, organised court rules, and more care for mental health issues. In the end, the study shows how important it is to find a balance between marital privacy and legal safety. This way, we can make sure that long-term emotional neglect and psychological abuse are seen as major breaches of marital duties without making small problems in a marriage ignored rather addressed.*

**Keywords:** *Mental Cruelty; Emotional Neglect; Psychological Abuse; Matrimonial Law; Hindu Marriage Act, 1955; Judicial Interpretation; Silent Treatment; Gender Dimensions; Family Dynamics; Legal Reform.*

## 1. Introduction

Marriage is a social and religious custom in India, but it is also a legal one. The Hindu Marriage Act of 1955 is the most important statute that governs it. Hatred is one of the most major reasons why people get divorced. People used to largely think of cruelty as physical maltreatment. But courts have broadened its definition to encompass mental injury as society and the law have evolved.<sup>2</sup>

Mental cruelty is when one spouse does anything that causes the other spouse a lot of emotional grief, suffering, or psychological injury.<sup>3 4</sup> In contemporary relationships, emotional neglect and the silent treatment have surfaced as insidious but significant kinds of non-physical abuse that may impact mental health and marital stability.<sup>5 6</sup> The increasing acknowledgement of emotional abuse under the Protection of Women from Domestic Violence Act, 2005, signifies a larger comprehension of non-physical cruelty within family law.<sup>10</sup>

### 1.1 Background of the Study

The idea of mental cruelty has mostly changed because of how courts have interpreted it, as marriage laws don't explicitly spell out what it means. Courts have said that repeated humiliation, coldness, emotional detachment, and extended periods of separation may be cruel, depending on the circumstances of each instance.<sup>3 4 11</sup> Recent legal tendencies suggest that prolonged apathy in marriage may be deemed mental cruelty. As people become more aware of mental health issues, the legal system needs to deal with non-physical forms of marital abuse in a fair and consistent way.<sup>6</sup>

### 1.2 Statement of the Problem

Notwithstanding this progress, ambiguity persists over whether emotional neglect and the silent treatment alone are enough to define mental cruelty. The lack of explicit legal requirements sometimes leads to contradictory court rulings and challenges in substantiating psychological injury in marital conflicts.

### 1.3 Research Objectives

1. To explain the meaning of mental cruelty under Indian matrimonial laws.
2. To examine whether emotional neglect can be treated as mental cruelty under the law.
3. To analyze whether repeated silent treatment amounts to psychological abuse in marriage.

4. To study how courts have decided cases involving emotional neglect and silent treatment.
5. To identify the type of evidence required to prove mental cruelty in such cases.
6. To compare how selected foreign countries deal with emotional and psychological cruelty in marriage.
7. To suggest improvements or guidelines for better legal recognition of emotional and psychological cruelty.

#### **1.4 Research Questions**

##### **1. What does “mental cruelty” mean under Indian matrimonial laws?**

2. Can emotional neglect be considered mental cruelty by courts?
3. Does repeated silent treatment amount to psychological abuse in marriage?
4. How have Indian courts handled such cases?
5. What kind of evidence is needed to prove mental cruelty based on emotional neglect or silent treatment?
6. How do other countries treat emotional and psychological cruelty compared to India?
7. What changes are needed to better address emotional and psychological cruelty in modern marriages?

#### **1.5 Significance of the Study**

This research is essential because it shows that emotional neglect and the silent treatment are two subtle but devastating kinds of mental cruelty in marriage. Even though it's easy to see physical abuse, psychological pain frequently goes unseen even if it has a big effect. This study elucidates the judicial interpretation and treatment of non-physical injury via an analysis of law provisions and court rulings. It adds to scholarly debate, helps lawyers, and helps make clearer rules to make sure that fairness, protection, and justice are upheld in marriage conflicts including emotional and psychological abuse.

#### **1.6 Scope and Limitations**

The research examines emotional neglect and the silent treatment as manifestations of mental cruelty under Indian marriage legislation. It looks at statutes, case law, and certain foreign countries for comparison. The study is doctrinal and relies on secondary sources. It does not include empirical research, interviews, or psychological case studies.

## 2. Conceptual and Legal Framework

### 2.1 Concept of Marriage and Cruelty in Matrimonial Law

In India, marriage is both a social institution and a legal relationship defined by statute law, namely the Hindu Marriage Act of 1955. In marriage law, cruelty is a significant basis for divorce and judicial separation.<sup>1</sup> People used to think of cruelty mostly as physical violence that hurt someone. But over time, courts broadened its definition to encompass actions that hurt a spouse's mental peace and dignity.<sup>2</sup> <sup>4</sup> This greater perspective shows that marriage is about emotional support and respect for each other, and that it may end because of mental hurt instead of physical harm.<sup>7</sup>

### 2.2 Mental Cruelty: Meaning and Judicial Evolution

Mental cruelty is behaviour that causes profound emotional distress, embarrassment, or mental suffering.<sup>1</sup> <sup>4</sup> Because marriage laws don't clearly define cruelty, judges have had to figure out what it means over time.<sup>2</sup> Courts have stressed that each case's facts and circumstances must be taken into account when deciding whether someone was cruel.<sup>4</sup> False accusations, constant apathy, humiliation, and extended periods of separation have all been seen as mental cruelty over time.<sup>5</sup> <sup>11</sup> Judicial rulings indicate that prolonged disregard of marital duties may constitute cruelty, contingent upon its effects.<sup>12</sup> This change shows that judges are becoming more aware of how important emotional health is in marriage.<sup>6</sup>

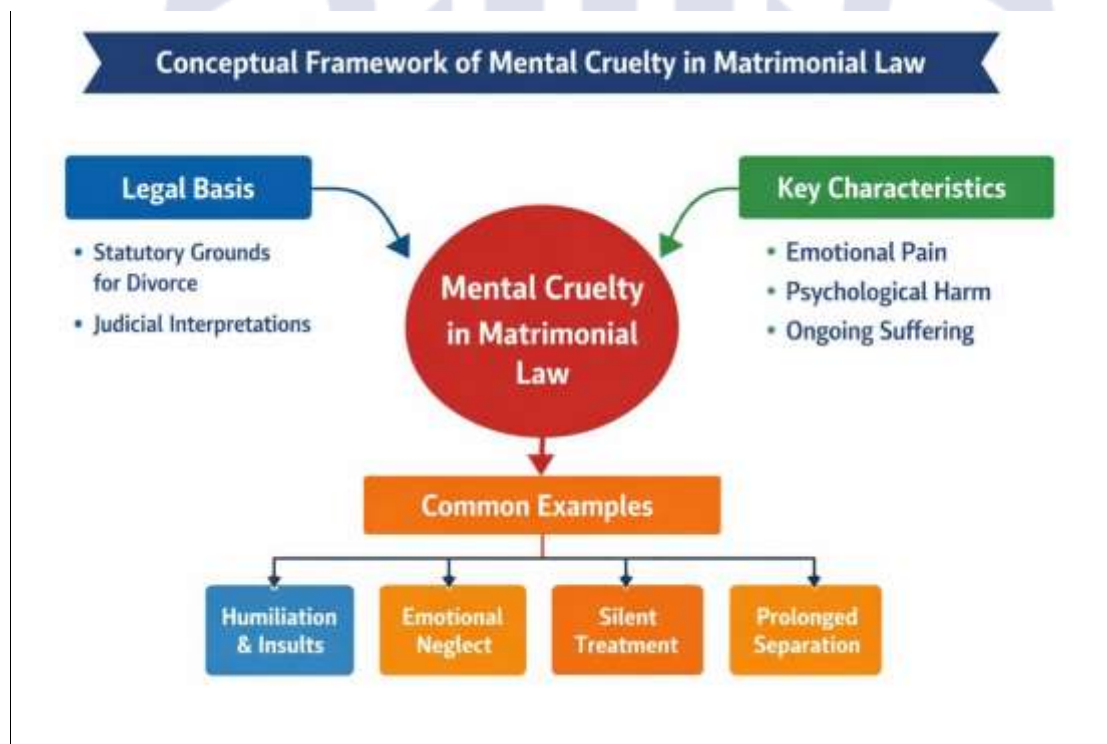
### 2.3 Emotional Neglect and Silent Treatment as Psychological Harm

Emotional neglect and the silent treatment are two subtle ways that psychological trauma may make people feel alone, rejected, and upset.<sup>5</sup> A constant reluctance to talk or a sudden lack of love may go beyond regular marital conflict and become mental cruelty.<sup>8</sup> The Protection of Women from Domestic Violence Act, 2005, which recognises emotional abuse, also helps to broaden the definition of non-physical injury in family law.<sup>10</sup>

**Table 2.1: Distinction between Physical Cruelty and Mental Cruelty**

Basis of Distinction	Physical Cruelty	Mental Cruelty
Nature of Conduct	Bodily harm or physical violence <sup>3</sup>	Emotional or psychological harm <sup>1 4</sup>
Visibility	Visible and medically verifiable <sup>3</sup>	Invisible; inferred from conduct <sup>2</sup>
Proof Required	Medical records, direct evidence <sup>3</sup>	Circumstantial evidence, patterns of behavior <sup>4</sup>
Judicial Development	Traditionally recognized ground <sup>1</sup>	Expanded through judicial interpretation <sup>2 6</sup>
Illustrative Examples	Assault, injury <sup>3</sup>	Humiliation, indifference, prolonged separation <sup>11 12</sup>

**Figure 2.1: Conceptual Framework of Mental Cruelty in Matrimonial Law**



### 3. Mental Cruelty under Indian Matrimonial Laws

#### 3.1 Statutory Provisions under Major Matrimonial Laws

Mental cruelty is acknowledged as a valid reason for divorce in certain marriage laws in India. Section 13(1)(ia) of the Hindu Marriage Act, 1955 says that cruelty is a reason for divorce, however the Act does not explain what that means. In the same way, Section 27 of the Special Marriage Act, 1954 lists cruelty as a reason for getting a divorce. The Indian Divorce Act of 1869 also says that Christians may get a divorce because of cruelty.

Because there is no legal definition of cruelty, courts have been permitted to construe it widely, including not just physical assault but also mental and emotional pain. Because of this, judicial interpretation has been very important in deciding what the statutes mean by "cruelty." Scholarly discourse and legal analysis further support this expansive view.<sup>136</sup>

#### 3.2 Judicial Interpretation and Evolving Standards

Indian courts, especially the Supreme Court of India, have made the definition of mental cruelty far broader. The courts have made it clear that cruelty doesn't have to be physical. Actions that inflict significant mental suffering, embarrassment, frustration, or ongoing emotional distress may also be considered cruel. The facts and circumstances of each case are used to make a decision.<sup>24</sup>

Over time, the law has changed to encompass things like false criminal allegations, public humiliation, neglect, indifference, lengthy periods of separation, and emotional detachment as potential types of mental cruelty. Courts have also said that being apart for a long time might be harsh in certain cases.<sup>11</sup> The court asserts that the regular wear and tear of marital life does not amount to cruelty; the behaviour must be serious and significant.<sup>4 8</sup>

#### 3.3 Evidentiary Requirements and Burden of Proof

In divorce cases, the person who files for divorce has to prove that the other person was unkind. Because mental cruelty is sometimes hard to see and feel, courts use circumstantial evidence including patterns of behaviour, letters, internet communication, witness testimony, and even medical or psychiatric studies. The standard of evidence is based on the balance of probability, not proof beyond a reasonable doubt.<sup>2 6</sup>

Judicial discretion is a key factor in deciding whether the behaviour in question is bad enough to be considered mental cruelty. Current legal discourse and jurisprudence persist in the evolution of evidence standards in response to evolving societal dynamics.<sup>12</sup>

**Table 3.1: Comparative Provisions on Cruelty under HMA, SMA and Indian Divorce Act**

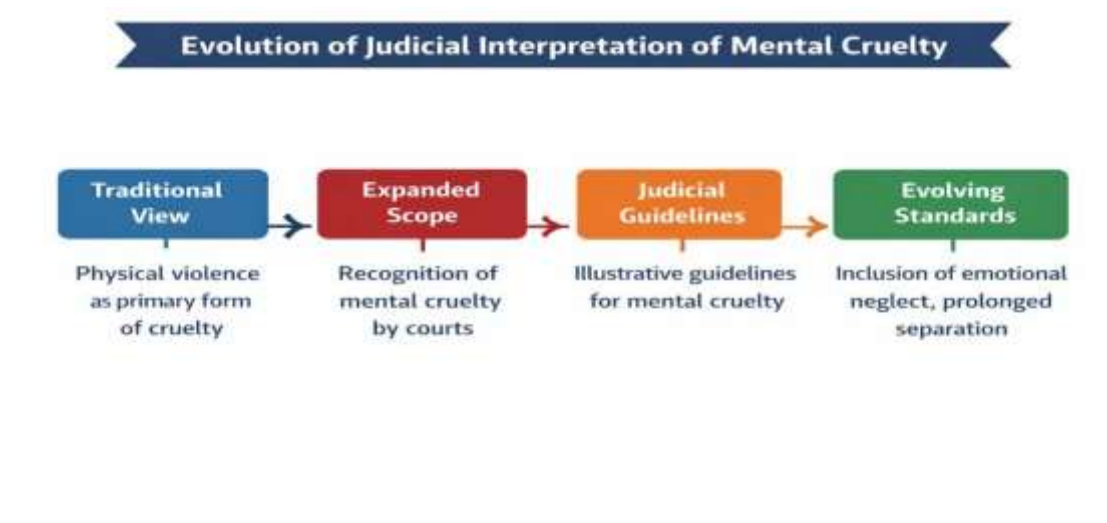
Statute	Relevant Section	Recognition of Cruelty	Definition Provided	Nature of Interpretation
Hindu	Sec.	Yes	Not defined	Developed through

Statute	Relevant Section	Recognition of Cruelty	Definition Provided	Nature of Interpretation
Marriage Act, 1955	13(1)(ia)			judicial interpretation
Special Marriage Act, 1954	27A(d) Sec. 10	Yes	Not defined	Interpreted by courts
Indian Divorce Act, 1869		Yes	Not precisely defined	Judicially expanded

**Table 3.2: Leading Supreme Court and High Court Decisions on Mental Cruelty**

Case	Court	Principle Laid Down
<i>V. Bhagat v. D. Srinivas</i> (1994)	Supreme Court of India	Mental cruelty includes conduct causing deep mental agony and frustration.
<i>Samar Ghosh v. Jaya Ghosh</i> (2007)	Supreme Court of India	Provided illustrative guidelines on what constitutes mental cruelty.
<i>Naveen Kohli v. Naveen Kohli</i> (2006)	Supreme Court of India	Unretrievable breakdown and sustained hostility may amount to cruelty.
Recent HC Decisions	Various Courts	Prolonged separation and persistent indifference may constitute mental cruelty.

**Figure 3.1: Evolution of Judicial Interpretation of Mental Cruelty**



## **4. Emotional Neglect and Silent Treatment as Mental Cruelty**

### **4.1 Patterns of Emotional Withdrawal and Indifference**

Emotional neglect is when someone is consistently indifferent, doesn't show love, refuses to talk, and doesn't do their marital duties. It may not leave visible signs as physical abuse does, but it may still have a big effect on a spouse's mental health.

Courts are more and more recognising that emotional distance, denial of intimacy, humiliation, and ignoring a partner's emotional needs may be forms of mental cruelty.<sup>12</sup>

The Supreme Court of India's judicial rulings stress that marriage is founded on friendship, respect, and emotional support. So, cruelty may be when someone is constantly ignoring or neglecting their partner, which weakens the relationship's basis.<sup>34</sup>

### **4.2 Silent Treatment: Legal Characterization and Constructive Desertion**

The "silent treatment" is not talking to each other on purpose, being emotionally distant for a long time, and avoiding each other on purpose in the marriage. If that goes on for a long period, it might be psychological harassment. When this kind of behaviour produces embarrassment, worry, or serious emotional suffering, courts have seen it as a type of mental cruelty.<sup>2</sup>

In certain situations, lengthy periods of silence and reluctance to live together in a meaningful way may also be considered constructive desertion, even if the people involved reside under the same roof. Not talking to each other or being emotionally involved might show that someone wants to go out of their marriage.<sup>16</sup>

### 4.3 Psychological and Long-Term Impact

Being emotionally neglected or given the silent treatment may cause anxiety, sadness, low self-esteem, and emotional trauma. Courts understand that cruelty doesn't have to include violent actions; long-term psychological anguish is enough. The law recognises that ongoing emotional distress may render the injured spouse incapable of sustaining the marital partnership.<sup>48</sup>

The changing way the courts handle things shows a better awareness of mental health and human dignity in marriage law.<sup>12</sup>

### 4.4 Case Law Analysis

Indian courts have slowly started to see emotional neglect and lengthy periods of separation as elements of cruelty. For example, several High Court decisions have said that being apart for a long time without getting back together is a sign of mental cruelty.<sup>11</sup> In the same way, ignoring the spouse and their family duties has been seen as harsh behaviour in certain circumstances.<sup>12</sup>

The courts are still looking at silent treatment and emotional withdrawal on a case-by-case basis. They make sure that only serious and long-lasting behaviour counts as mental cruelty, whereas normal marital arguments do not.<sup>24</sup>

**Table 4.1: Indicators of Emotional Neglect Recognized by Courts**

S. No.	Indicator	Judicial Consideration
1	Persistent refusal to communicate	May amount to mental cruelty if prolonged and intentional
2	Lack of emotional support	Considered cruelty when it causes serious mental suffering

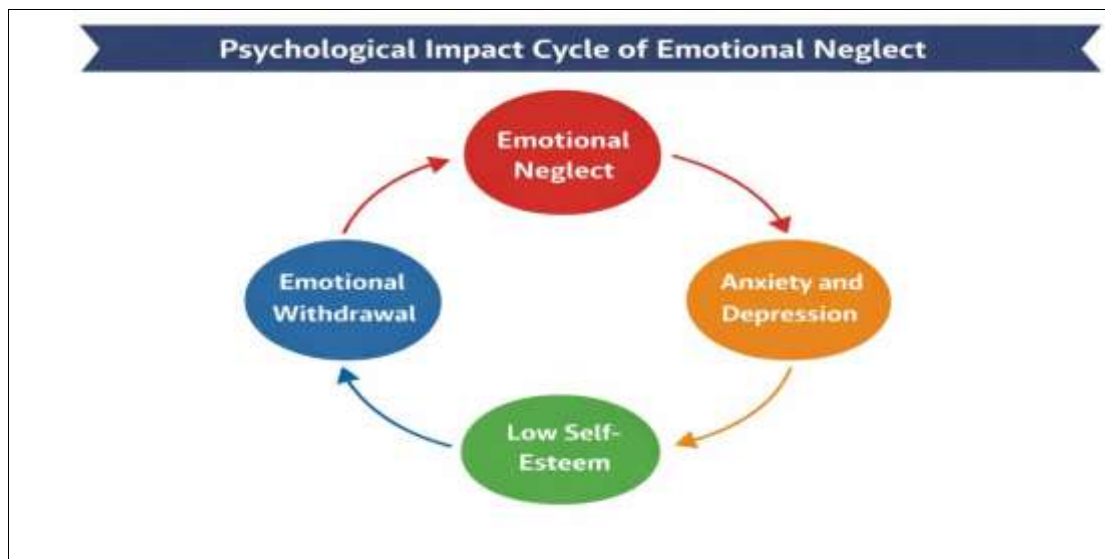
S. No.	Indicator	Judicial Consideration
3	Public humiliation or indifference	Treated as grave conduct affecting dignity
4	Denial of companionship	Viewed as destruction of marital foundation

5	Long-term emotional withdrawal	May indicate constructive desertion
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**Table 4.2: Judicial Treatment of Silent Treatment in Matrimonial Cases**

S. No.	Nature of Conduct	Court's Approach
1	Continuous silence without justification	Evaluated as psychological harassment
2	Refusal to cohabit emotionally	May amount to constructive desertion
3	Long years of separation	Considered mental cruelty in certain cases
4	Indifference toward family	Recognized as cruelty in specific circumstances
5	Ordinary marital disagreements	Not treated as cruelty unless grave and weighty

**Figure 4.1: Psychological Impact Cycle of Emotional Neglect**



## 5. Comparative Legal Perspectives

### 5.1 Position in the United Kingdom

The Divorce, Dissolution, and Separation Act 2020 made significant changes to the legislation around divorce in the UK. The Act set up a framework for no-fault divorce, which means that people don't have to establish that their spouse was at fault, such as being unkind or acting unreasonably. Before this change, the Matrimonial Causes Act 1973 said that "unreasonable behaviour" was a typical basis for divorce. This behaviour often included things that were mentally or emotionally abusive.

Under the old rules, the test may be met if the petitioner couldn't fairly be expected to live with the respondent and the respondent was constantly neglecting, humiliating, or emotionally abusing the petitioner. Even though the current legislation doesn't need evidence of culpability, judges and academics nonetheless talk about psychological injury as a fundamental problem in marriage.<sup>1</sup>

### 5.2 Position in the United States

In the U.S., divorce laws differ from state to state, although most jurisdictions accept both fault-based and no-fault reasons for divorce. In certain places, "mental cruelty," "emotional abuse," or "cruel and inhuman treatment" are all acceptable reasons for divorce. Courts have seen ongoing humiliation, verbal abuse, and intentional emotional neglect as enough to constitute cruelty, contingent upon the behaviour making married life unbearable.<sup>2</sup>

At the same time, the widespread use of no-fault divorce, which started with California's change in 1970, has made it less important to prove cruelty. Still, psychological abuse is still important when it comes to things like alimony, child custody, and protection orders.<sup>3</sup>

### 5.3 Comparative Analysis with Indian Jurisprudence

The Hindu Marriage Act of 1955 and the Special Marriage Act of 1954 still allow for divorce in India if one spouse is harsh. Indian law still needs evidence of cruelty when it is used as a reason, unlike the UK's no-fault system. The Supreme Court of India has said that mental cruelty includes things like emotional neglect, false accusations, extended periods of separation, and ongoing humiliation.<sup>4 5</sup>

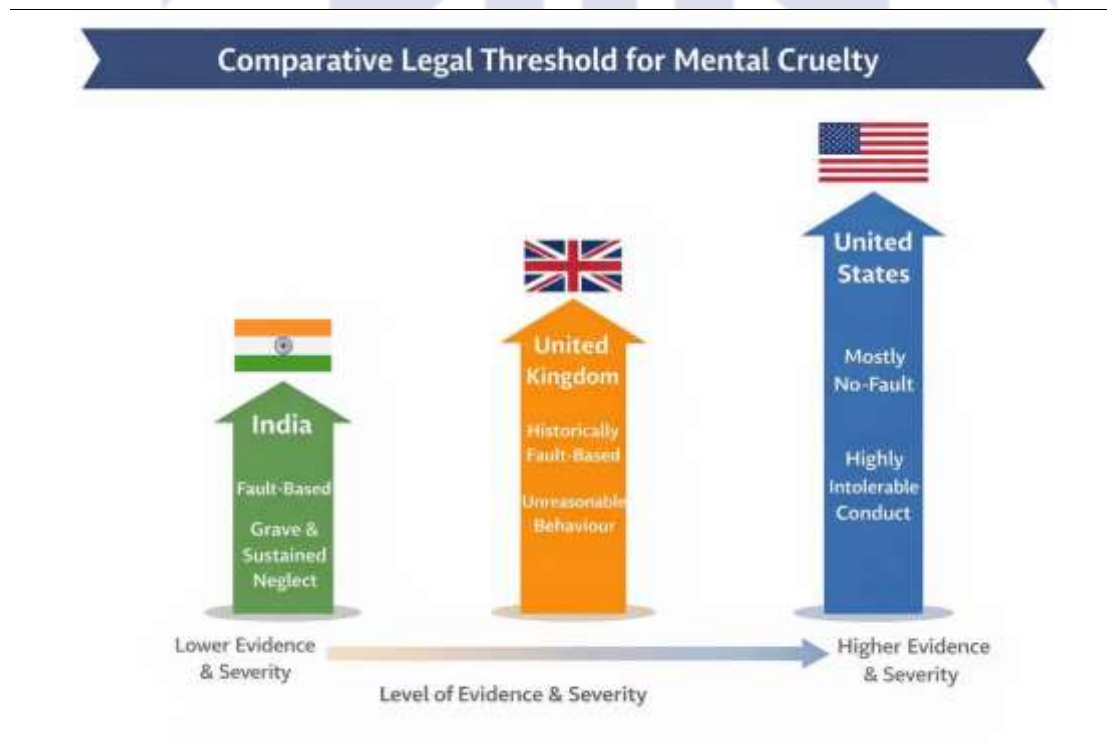
The UK and the US have both evolved toward no-fault regimes, but Indian law still relies significantly on judges to define and broaden the idea of mental cruelty. But, like courts in the West, Indian courts are starting to see psychic trauma and emotional abuse as major breaches of marriage duties.<sup>6</sup>

**Table 5.1: Comparative Approach to Psychological Cruelty (India, UK, USA)**

Aspect	India	United Kingdom	United States
Legal Framework	Fault-based ground under HMA & SMA	No-fault divorce under 2020 Act	Mostly no-fault, with fault options in some states
Recognition of Mental Cruelty interpretation	Explicitly recognized	Previously judicially interpreted as "unreasonable behaviour"	Recognized in fault-based states as mental cruelty
Need to Prove Cruelty	Yes, when pleaded as ground	No, post-2020 reforms	Generally no (in no-fault states)
Role of Psychological	Considered grave if serious and sustained	Historically relevant in fault petitions	Relevant for divorce, alimony, custody

Aspect	India	United Kingdom	United States
Harm			
Judicial Discretion	High; case-by-case analysis	Limited under no-fault regime	Varies by state

**Figure 5.1: Comparative Legal Threshold for Mental Cruelty**



## 6. Socio-Psychological and Gender Dimensions

### 6.1 Impact on Spouses

Emotional neglect and mental cruelty have a profound impact on the psychological health of marriages. Being constantly ignored, humiliated, or cut off from others may lead to anxiety, despair, a lack of confidence, and emotional instability. Courts have recognised that prolonged psychological distress may render married existence unbearable and warrant the breakup of marriage.<sup>12</sup>

The Supreme Court of India has said that cruelty must be looked at in light of how it affects the spouse who is hurt. Mental cruelty isn't only obvious actions; it also encompasses behaviour that makes a marriage seem less safe and breaks down trust between partners.<sup>34</sup>

### 6.2 Gender Perspectives

Mental cruelty and emotional neglect often exhibit gender-specific characteristics. Women have historically been more likely to be emotionally and mentally abused since they rely on males for money and are under societal pressure. The Protection of Women from Domestic Violence Act, 2005 makes it clear that emotional and verbal abuse are also kinds of domestic violence, which makes the law more protective.<sup>5</sup> However, courts have made it clear that cruelty is not limited to one gender under the Hindu Marriage Act, 1955. This means that any spouse may ask for help because of mental cruelty. Judicial interpretation demonstrates a developing comprehension that psychological injury may be imposed on both husbands and spouses.<sup>6</sup>

### 6.3 Children and Family Dynamics

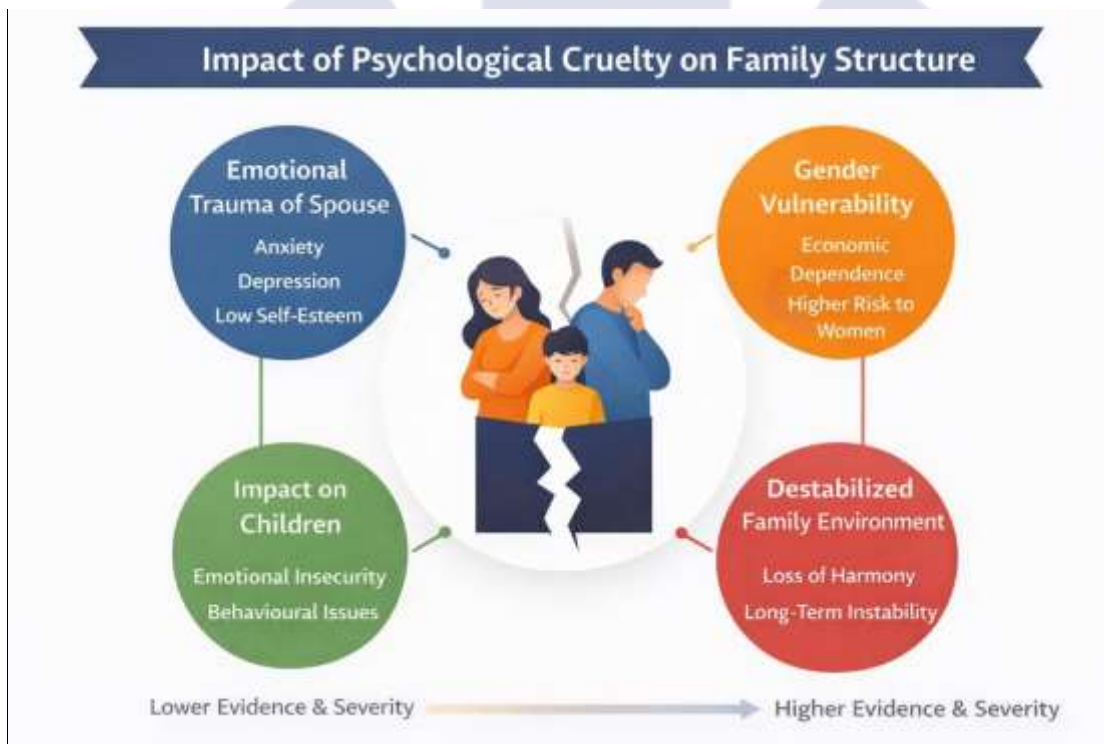
Emotional neglect in a marriage may also hurt kids and the family as a whole. A hostile or emotionally distant environment may hinder a child's emotional development, resulting in insecurity, behavioural problems, and academic challenges. Long-lasting problems in a marriage may make the family less stable and make everyone feel less secure at home.<sup>1</sup>

Courts are paying more and more attention to how cruel behaviour affects society as a whole, particularly when it comes to custody and guardianship issues. The acknowledgement of mental cruelty transcends individual anguish, influencing the family unit in its whole.<sup>3</sup>

**Table 6.1: Socio-Psychological Consequences of Emotional Neglect**

S. No.	Area Affected	Consequences Recognized
1	Mental Health of Spouse	Anxiety, depression, emotional trauma
2	Self-Perception	Low self-esteem, loss of confidence
3	Marital Relationship	Breakdown of trust and companionship
4	Gender Implications	Greater vulnerability due to social and economic factors
5	Children	Emotional insecurity, behavioural issues
6	Family Stability	Disruption of harmony and long-term instability

**Figure 6.1: Impact of Psychological Cruelty on Family Structure**



## 7. Critical Analysis and Need for Reform

### 7.1 Judicial Inconsistencies

The Hindu Marriage Act of 1955 recognises mental cruelty, but since there is no legal definition, judges have different ideas about what it means. Different courts may look at the

same facts in different ways, depending on how they define "grave and weighty" behaviour. In a number of judgements, the Supreme Court of India has set forth examples of rules, however these are not all of them. Because of this, lesser courts can use different criteria to decide whether emotional neglect, silence, or lengthy periods of isolation are cruel. Such differences may cause confusion for anyone involved in a lawsuit and make it harder to anticipate how a divorce case will turn out.

### **7.2 Need for Clearer Legal Guidelines**

As our knowledge of psychological injury changes, there is a greater need for unambiguous laws against mental cruelty. Judicial flexibility facilitates adaptability to societal conditions; nonetheless, excessive discretion may lead to subjective decisionmaking.

Legal academics propose that Parliament may consider defining mental cruelty in broad but organised terms, including instances such as prolonged emotional neglect, unfounded accusations, and intentional humiliation. This would make things more standard while still allowing judges to use their own judgement to deal with special cases.

Also, clearer criteria for evidence may assist courts properly judge psychological injury, particularly when direct proof is hard to find.

### **7.3 Balancing Marital Privacy and Legal Protection**

Traditionally, marriage is seen as a private relationship, and judges are careful not to become involved in normal marital disputes. But when behaviour causes substantial mental pain, the law must step in.

The difficulty is finding the right balance between keeping your marriage private and protecting yourself from emotional abuse. If you expand the idea of cruelty too far, it may lose its meaning. If you don't recognise it enough, it may deny justice to those who are really hurt. So, the courts try to stay in the middle by only recognising significant and long-lasting behaviour as mental cruelty.

Reform efforts must prioritise the protection of dignity and mental health while preventing the abuse of marital laws.

**Table 7.1: Identified Gaps in Judicial Reasoning**

S. No.	Identified Gap	Impact on Litigation	Matrimonial
1	Absence of statutory definition of mental cruelty	Leads to varied judicial interpretations	
2	Inconsistent application of “grave and weighty” test	Creates uncertainty and unpredictability	
3	Lack of uniform evidentiary standards	Difficulty in proving	
4	Over-reliance on judicial discretion	psychological harm	
5	Limited guidance on emotional neglect and silent treatment	Risk of subjective decisionmaking	subjective
		Inconsistent recognition across cases	

**Figure 7.1: Proposed Model for Determining Emotional Cruelty**



## **8. Suggestions and Recommendations**

### **1. Statutory Clarification**

Include a case of mental cruelty under the Hindu Marriage Act of 1955 to bring everything into uniformity and reduce the number of various legal interpretations.

### **2. Structured Judicial Guidelines**

Create consistent measures to differentiate between mild marital strife and severe mental distress.

### **3. Clear Evidentiary Standards**

Valid supporting evidence in situations of emotional neglect includes expert psychiatric testimony, therapy records, and persistent patterns of action.

### **4. Judicial Sensitization**

Judges should participate in ongoing education programs that include topics such as emotional abuse, mental health, and the social and psychological aspects of cruelty.

### **5. Strengthening Mediation Mechanisms**

Improve pre-litigation therapy and mediation in family courts to help people settle their differences before they have to go to court for divorce.

### **6. Balancing Privacy and Protection**

Make sure that the law only gets involved when someone is in substantial and longterm mental pain, protecting privacy in marriage but also protecting dignity.

### **7. Integration with Domestic Violence Framework**

Encourage the combined use of marriage remedies and safeguards under the Protection of Women from Domestic Violence Act, 2005 to fully help those who are emotionally abused.

### **8. Gender-Sensitive Implementation**

Keep the legal structure gender-neutral, but be aware of how gender might affect how it is put into practice.

## **9. Conclusion**

The idea of mental cruelty in marital law shows how the law is changing to recognise psychological injury in marriage. Although historically linked to physical violence, cruelty also includes emotional neglect, humiliation, the silent treatment, and prolonged indifference when these behaviours inflict significant mental anguish.

The Hindu Marriage Act of 1955 still allows for divorce based on cruelty, but since there is

no clear definition of the phrase, judges have had to look at each case individually. This judicial extension has fortified safeguards for aggrieved spouses, although it has also resulted in sporadic irregularities in implementation.

In contrast to those countries that have implemented no-fault divorce systems, Indian law still depends on court evaluation of cruelty. The difficulty is in finding a balance between protecting people's dignity and respecting their privacy in marriage.

In the end, clearer legal rules, uniform standards, and judges who are sensitive to emotional neglect and psychological abuse are all necessary to make sure that these issues are dealt with properly, without making normal marital problems seem less important.

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