
RECOGNITION OF LIVE-IN RELATIONSHIP UNDER UCC: A LEGAL ANALYSIS

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ABSTRACT

This paper examines the legal status of live-in relationships in India in the context of the Uniform Civil Code (UCC). With the increasing number of such relationships, the absence of a clear and uniform legal framework has created several challenges. The study analyses important judicial decisions and existing laws to understand how live-in relationships are currently recognized.

The research highlights several key issues, such as the fact that we lack a clear understanding of what these relationships entail, and it's challenging to provide evidence of their existence. Additionally, concerns about privacy are a major worry, and there's a lack of clarity on what happens to a person's assets after they pass away. Furthermore, different courts are interpreting the laws in varying ways, which is causing confusion. The study also discusses how recent developments, like the changes happening in Uttarakhand with the Uniform Civil Code (UCC), aim to address these problems, but may ultimately lead to more legal complexities. For instance, the UCC's implementation could raise questions about the distribution of assets, inheritance, and other related matters, potentially creating more legal disputes. Overall, the study sheds light on the need for clearer guidelines and regulations to govern these relationships and ensure that the rights of all parties involved are protected.

This paper highlights three major hidden problems in the recognition of live-in relationships under the UCC. First, the automatic grant of rights after a certain period may create a “surprise marriage” situation, where partners receive marital-like obligations without clear consent. Second, the requirement of proof, including documents such as Aadhaar details and objections raised by third parties, may interfere with an individual’s privacy. Third, the absence of an opt-out option may raise concerns under Article 21 of the Constitution, which protects personal liberty and individual choice.

Keywords: Live-in Relationships, Uniform Civil Code, Legal Recognition, Cohabitation, Privacy Rights, Inheritance Issues, Judicial Interpretation, Legal Framework

INTRODUCTION

Imagine a couple who have been together for ten years, sharing their lives, supporting each other through thick and thin. They have built a life together, presented themselves as partners to the world, and yet, when one of them passes away suddenly, the surviving partner might be left with nothing. No inheritance, no legal rights, no protection all because they didn't have a marriage certificate. The law doesn't recognize their relationship, and as a result, the deceased partner's family may end up inheriting everything, even if they've had no contact with them for years. This lack of legal clarity and protection leaves many people vulnerable and uncertain about their future. The Uttarakhand Uniform Civil Code Act, 2024, is a landmark law that's changing the game for live-in relationships in India. For the first time, the law is recognizing and protecting the rights of couples who choose to live together without getting married. Under Section 378 of the Act, couples in live-in relationships are required to register their partnership with the authorities.

In recent years, live-in relationships have become more common in India, especially among young people in urban areas. However, despite this growing trend, there is still no clear and uniform law governing such relationships. For example, in situations involving property rights, maintenance, or protection from abuse, live-in partners often face confusion due to the absence of clear legal rules. This shows a major gap in the current legal framework. This paper examines the legal framework relating to the recognition of live-in relationships under the proposed Uniform Civil Code. It highlights certain hidden issues, such as the possibility of marital-like obligations being imposed without clear consent, privacy concerns arising from proof requirements, and the absence of an option to opt out of legal recognition. The paper also suggests possible reforms by referring to international models such as France's PACS system.

RESEARCH PROBLEMS

The following research questions highlight the key legal issues and challenges in recognizing live-in relationships under the Uniform Civil Code.

1. If there is no clear time period for recognizing live-in relationships, how can the law prevent misuse, such as people entering short-term relationships only to avoid responsibilities or legal obligations?

2. To claim legal rights, a partner may need to prove the existence of a live-in relationship. But if the other partner denies it, can courts ask for private digital evidence like chats or location data without violating the right to privacy under Article 21? And what happens if such evidence reveals other legal issues?
3. If a live-in partner is given inheritance rights under the UCC, will this override a will that excludes them? Also, in cases where a person has both a legal spouse and a long-term live-in partner, how will the law decide who has stronger rights?
4. What happens when a couple in a live-in relationship moves from a UCC state like Uttarakhand to a state where such laws do not exist? In such situations, which law will govern their relationship and legal rights?

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This research paper follows a doctrinal method of research. It is mainly based on secondary sources such as books, research articles, case laws, statutes, and online materials related to live-in relationships in India. The study focuses on understanding the legal position and the changing social nature of such relationships. The paper also uses a descriptive and analytical approach to examine the issues and challenges faced by couples in live-in relationships. This study also uses a comparative approach by examining international models such as France's PACS (Pacte Civil de Solidarite) and the UK's Civil Partnership Act to understand alternative legal frameworks for recognizing non-marital relationships. The purpose of this comparison is to evaluate whether similar models can help address the legal issues relating to live-in relationships in India. Further, it analyses the gaps in the existing legal framework, especially in the context of the Uniform Civil Code.

RESEARCH OBJECTIVE

Research objectives of this paper are:

- To study the legal status of live-in relationships in India
- To look at how courts have interpreted and recognized such relationships
- To study the provisions related to live-in relationships under the Uniform Civil Code

- To identify the gaps and challenges in the current legal framework, including issues of privacy, proof, inheritance, and lack of uniformity
- To check whether the Uniform Civil Code provides a clear and effective solution to these issues

LITERATURE REVIEW

This part of the study looks at key laws, reports from the Law Commission, and research papers to understand how India views live-in relationships. It helps us see how far we've come in recognizing these relationships and what's still missing from our current laws. By looking at these important documents, we can identify the gaps that need to be filled to make our legal system more comprehensive. This review is crucial in highlighting the progress made so far and the work that still needs to be done to fully acknowledge live-in relationships in India.

1. Statutes

Protection of Women from Domestic Violence Act, 2005 – Section 2(f)

This Act was one of the first laws in India to recognize relationships “in the nature of marriage.” It gives protection to women in live-in relationships against domestic violence and also provides remedies such as maintenance and the right to residence.

The law doesn't really explain what a live-in relationship is, so courts have to make decisions based on the specific details of each case. This means that the outcome can be different every time, depending on the circumstances. Also, the protection that the law offers is mostly for women, and it doesn't deal with things like who gets what when it comes to inheritance or property if the relationship ends.

Code of Criminal Procedure, 1973 – Section 125

Section 125 CrPC has been interpreted by courts to provide maintenance in certain long-term live-in relationships. This provision helps in protecting women from financial abandonment.

The law doesn't specifically talk about live-in partners, so their protection relies heavily on how judges interpret it, which can be unclear. Also, it doesn't cover important issues like who gets what when they separate or inherit property.

Indian Evidence Act, 1872 – Section 114

The Indian Evidence Act allows courts to presume marriage from long cohabitation. This has helped children born from live-in relationships receive legitimacy and certain legal protections.

However, it's worth noting that this assumption isn't set in stone and can be disputed. Additionally, the law doesn't necessarily guarantee that a live-in partner will inherit anything after their partner's passing, even if they were together for a long time.

Indian Succession Act, 1925 – Section 30

The Indian Succession Act protects testamentary freedom, meaning a person can distribute property according to their own wishes through a valid will.

But what if the Uttarakhand Uniform Civil Code protects live-in partners when it comes to inheritance - that's where things could get complicated. The problem is, the law isn't clear about what happens if someone makes a will that leaves out their live-in partner - would that will still be valid, or would the live-in partner be able to make a claim based on the Uniform Civil Code?

Uttarakhand Uniform Civil Code Act, 2024 – Sections 378–388

The Uttarakhand UCC is the first legislation in India to directly recognize live-in relationships. It introduces mandatory registration, recognizes children born from such relationships as legitimate, and provides maintenance rights in certain situations.

Despite these benefits, the Act has several concerns. Registration is compulsory, and failure to comply may attract penalties. The law also requires disclosure of personal details and allows objections from third parties, which raises privacy concerns. Further, the Act does not clearly address issues such as interstate recognition, inheritance disputes, or an opt-out mechanism for couples who do not wish to receive marital-like obligations.

Overall, the existing statutory framework provides limited recognition and protection to live-in relationships, but the laws remain fragmented. While the Uttarakhand UCC attempts to create legal uniformity, it also introduces new constitutional and practical concerns.

2. Law Commission Reports

Law Commission of India – 21st Report on Uniform Civil Code (2018)

The 21st Law Commission observed that a complete Uniform Civil Code was not necessary at that stage. It suggested reforms within personal laws and supported voluntary registration of live-in relationships for legal clarity.

However, the report did not discuss how registration would operate practically or how issues like proof, privacy, inheritance, and interstate recognition would be resolved.

Law Commission of India – 205th Report on Family Law Reforms (2008)

This report focused on reforms in family law relating to marriage, divorce, and inheritance.

Although useful in understanding broader family law reforms, the report did not specifically examine live-in relationships or rights of cohabiting partners.

22nd and 23rd Law Commission

The later Law Commissions restarted discussions on the Uniform Civil Code and issues relating to gender equality and inheritance.

However, detailed recommendations specifically dealing with live-in relationships, privacy concerns, interstate movement, or inheritance conflicts are still missing.

Overall, the Law Commission reports recognize the need for reform but do not provide a complete framework dealing with the modern legal issues arising from live-in relationships.

3. Academic Journals and Research Papers

Ashish Mohan, Bhupnesh Kumar, Siddharth Thapliyal, and Jageshwar Nath Singh, in their paper “*Live-in Relationships: Reconciling Article 21 of the Constitution of India with Societal Morality*”, *Journal of Recent Legal Advances (JRLA)*, Vol. 2, No. 1, 2025, pp. 146-158, discuss the constitutional protection given to live-in relationships under Article 21 and analyze important judicial decisions.

The paper explains the absence of specific legislation and the difficulties faced by couples in proving such relationships. However, it does not examine issues such as privacy concerns arising from Aadhaar-based registration, digital evidence, or the interstate movement problem.

Priya Singh and Rashmi Singh Rana, in “*Legal Recognition of Live-in Relationship by Uniform Civil Code: Challenges and Critical Analysis*”, *International Journal for Multidisciplinary Research (IJFMR)*, Vol. 6, No. 6, November-December 2024. (ISSN: 2582-2160), Critically analyze the registration provisions of the Uttarakhand UCC and discuss the proportionality principles laid down in *Justice K.S. Puttaswamy v. Union of India*.

The paper raises important privacy concerns regarding mandatory registration and police involvement. However, it does not discuss the problem of courts relying on WhatsApp chats, location history, or payment records to prove cohabitation. The paper also does not address inheritance conflicts or interstate recognition.

Saumya, in “*Live-in Relationships: A Socio-Legal Commentary*”, *Indian Journal of Law and Legal Research (IJLLR)*, Vol. VI, No. III, pp. 5367-5382. (ISSN: 2582-8878) (Published by National Law School of India University, Bengaluru) critiques the moralistic approach sometimes adopted by courts while discussing live-in relationships. The paper also questions whether excessive state control through compulsory registration is desirable.

At the same time, the study does not provide solutions regarding the cycling loophole, opt-out mechanism, or interstate legal conflicts.

Shama Mohammed Adil Zariwala, in “*Legality of Live-in Relationship in India*” (Institutional Paper, Shree L R Tiwari Law College, Mumbai), gives a detailed discussion of judicial developments relating to legitimacy and rights of children born from live-in relationships.

However, the paper mainly focuses on earlier judicial trends and does not analyze the specific provisions introduced under the Uttarakhand UCC.

Utkarsh Singh, in “*The Constitutional Debate Surrounding the Uniform Civil Code in India*”, (Student Paper, Amity University, Amity Law School, Noida. discusses the historical and constitutional background of the UCC and compares international models.

The study is useful in understanding the larger constitutional debate, but does not specifically focus on live-in relationship registration, inheritance disputes, or privacy concerns under the Uttarakhand UCC.

P.V. Suma, in “*Breaking Taboos: Judicial Recognition of Live-in Relationships in India*”,

International Journal of Research and Analytical Reviews (IJRAR), 2025. (ISSN: 2348-1269) summarizes major Supreme Court judgments and explains changing judicial attitudes towards cohabitation.

However, the paper lacks a detailed analysis of recent UCC provisions and does not discuss constitutional gaps relating to proof, privacy, or interstate recognition.

Karishma B. Gavai, in “*The Breakdown of Live-in Relationships in India: Legal Recognition and Consequences*”, *International Journal of Law Management & Humanities (IJLMH)*, Vol. 8, No. 3, 2025, pp. 2539-2543 examines legal consequences arising after the breakdown of live-in relationships, especially maintenance and domestic violence issues.

Still, the paper does not discuss inheritance rights, registration requirements, or the federal issues created by the Uttarakhand UCC.

Overall, most academic studies focus on judicial recognition, social acceptance, maintenance rights, and the legitimacy of children. However, important issues such as the surprise marriage trap, privacy-proof conflict, cycling loophole, interstate movement, and conflict between testamentary freedom and inheritance rights under the UCC remain insufficiently explored.

HYPOTHESIS

This paper is based on the following hypotheses, which arise from the study of the Uttarakhand Uniform Civil Code Act, 2024 and the present legal framework relating to live-in relationships in India.

1. The recognition of marital-like rights after a fixed period of cohabitation may create a “surprise marriage” situation where couples who intentionally chose a live-in relationship instead of marriage may still receive legal obligations similar to marriage without giving clear consent. The absence of an opt-out mechanism further strengthens this concern.
2. The registration and proof requirements under the Uttarakhand UCC, including disclosure of personal information and possible reliance on digital evidence, may interfere with the right to privacy protected under Article 21 of the Constitution. These requirements may not satisfy the proportionality principles laid down in Justice K.S.

Puttaswamy v. Union of India because less intrusive alternatives could be used.

3. The absence of a clear opt-out provision under the Uttarakhand UCC may raise constitutional concerns relating to personal liberty and individual choice under Article 21. Since the law applies a uniform framework to all registered live-in relationships, couples may lose the freedom to decide the extent of legal recognition they want for their relationship.

ANALYSIS

- **How does UCC define "live-in relationship"?**

A live-in relationship refers to a situation where two people who are not legally married choose to live together for a long period of time. In such relationships, the couple shares emotional and physical bonding like marriage. They may also present themselves as partners or spouses in society. This shows that live-in relationships are similar to marriage in many ways.

In simple terms, a live-in relationship means living together without marriage but having a stable relationship. In recent years, live-in relationships have become more common, especially in the twenty-first century. This trend is not only seen in Western countries but also in many Asian nations, including India. However, in India, such relationships are still not fully accepted due to social stigma and traditional beliefs. Because of this, couples in live-in relationships often face social and legal challenges. This situation makes it important to re-examine the existing legal framework governing such relationships.

In some contexts, such relationships are also compared to the idea of a “common law marriage”, although this concept is not formally recognized in India.

- **Judicial Interpretation of Live-in Relationships:**

The concept of live-in relationships has also been interpreted by the judiciary, which has laid down certain conditions for their legal recognition

In *D. Velusamy v. D. Patchaiammal*, (2010) 10 SCC 469, the Supreme Court of India provided an important definition of live-in relationships in legal terms. The Court explained that not all live-in relationships are automatically recognized under the law. Only those relationships

which are “in the nature of marriage” can receive legal protection under the Protection of Women from Domestic Violence Act, 2005.

However, the Court in *D. Velusamy v. D. Patchaiammal* did not give a precise definition of a live-in relationship. Similarly, the Uttarakhand Uniform Civil Code Act, 2024 also does not clearly explain what amounts to a live-in relationship in substance. Instead, the law mainly focuses on registration under Section 378.

This creates an unusual situation where a couple who has lived together for ten years without registration may not receive legal recognition, while another couple who registered their relationship recently may receive legal status within a much shorter time.

The Court laid down certain conditions for such recognition. It stated that the couple must present themselves as spouses to society, must be legally eligible to marry, and must live together for a significant period of time in a shared household. The relationship should also be voluntary and stable.

The Court further clarified that if a man is already legally married, then another relationship cannot be treated as a valid live-in relationship for legal protection. This judgment is important because it clearly defines when a live-in relationship can be recognized under Indian law.

- **Challenges in Judicial Recognition of Cohabitation:**

- 1. Proof and privacy problem**

One major challenge in the judicial recognition of live-in relationships is the requirement of proof. Since live-in relationships are not formally registered like marriage, courts often ask for strong evidence, such as documents, witnesses, or proof of continuous cohabitation, to establish the relationship. This may include rental agreements, joint bank accounts, photographs, or statements from neighbors and family members.

- 2. Privacy concerns and Proof requirements**

These concerns become more serious under the registration requirements introduced by the UCC. Partners are required to provide details such as Aadhaar information, phone numbers, nationality, religion, previous relationship status, and photographs. The law also allows

objections from third parties, which may force couples to disclose sensitive aspects of their private lives in order to receive legal recognition.

In *Justice K.S. Puttaswamy v. Union of India*, the Supreme Court recognised privacy as a fundamental right under Article 21 and held that any restriction on privacy must be reasonable and proportionate. Although the UCC may aim to prevent misuse, some requirements appear excessive. Mandatory Aadhaar linking, police involvement in certain situations, and objections by third parties may lead to unnecessary interference and harassment.

Further, if one partner denies the relationship, courts may rely on registration records or even demand digital evidence such as WhatsApp chats, payment history, or location data to prove cohabitation. Requiring such private information may not satisfy the proportionality standard laid down in *Puttaswamy*, especially when less intrusive alternatives are available.

Therefore, while the UCC attempts to create legal recognition for live-in relationships, its proof and registration requirements also raise serious privacy concerns. In my view, the law should maintain a balance between proof requirements and the right to privacy by providing less intrusive alternatives for establishing such relationships.

Because of this, even though courts recognize such relationships, it becomes difficult for people to prove them and get legal protection.

The law should balance between proof requirements and the right to privacy.

3. Inheritance & Will conflict

Another important issue in live-in relationships is related to inheritance and property rights. In India, there is no clear legal rule that gives inheritance rights to partners in a live-in relationship. Unlike married couples, partners in such relationships are not automatically considered legal heirs. Because of this, if one partner dies without making a will, the other partner may not get any share in the property.

For example, if a couple lives together for many years but is not legally married, and one partner dies without a will, the property may go to their legal family members instead of the live-in partner. This can create unfair situations, especially when both partners have contributed to the relationship or property.

The Uttarakhand Uniform Civil Code Act, 2024, introduces a common system of intestate succession that applies for all religions. However, the law does not clearly answer an important question: if a person leaves a valid will excluding their live-in partner, will the partner still be able to claim inheritance rights under the UCC?

This creates a conflict between two legal principles. Under the Indian Succession Act, 1925, a person generally has the freedom to distribute property through a will according to their wishes. At the same time, if the UCC gives live-in relationships rights similar to marriage, it may indirectly create a situation where a live-in partner cannot be completely excluded from inheritance.

The issue becomes more confusing in relation to children born from live-in relationships. The Supreme Court has recognised such children as legitimate and entitled to certain property rights. However, courts have also stated in many cases that live-in partners themselves do not automatically receive inheritance rights unless there is a specific legal provision. Although the UCC attempts to provide such a framework, it does not clearly explain how inheritance rights will operate when a valid will already exists.

Because of this gap in law, many people in live-in relationships remain financially insecure and dependent on unclear legal protection.

4. Priority Between Spouse and Live-in Partner

The Uttarakhand Uniform Civil Code Act, 2024 does not clearly explain whether a valid will excluding a live-in partner can be challenged under the UCC. However, under the Indian Succession Act, 1925, a person generally has the right to distribute property through a will according to their wishes. Courts have mainly recognised forced inheritance rights only in the case of legally recognised spouses under personal laws. Since the UCC does not fully place live-in partners on the same footing as spouses for every purpose, courts are likely to uphold a valid will excluding a live-in partner. In such cases, the partner may only be able to seek maintenance as a dependent from the estate.

A more complicated situation arises when a person has both a legal spouse and a long-term live-in partner. Under the present legal framework, the legal spouse continues to enjoy stronger inheritance rights. The UCC does not clearly change this position. In fact, courts, including the

Madras High Court, have observed that a live-in partner cannot normally claim inheritance when a legally wedded spouse survives. Because the UCC remains silent on this issue, the legal spouse is likely to receive priority, leaving the live-in partner with limited remedies such as maintenance rather than inheritance rights.

5. Inter-state (federal) problem

Another important issue is the no uniform rule in judicial decisions across different states. India follows a federal system, where different High Courts may interpret the law in different ways. Because there is no clear national law on live-in relationships, courts rely on their own interpretation of existing laws and constitutional principles.

For example, some High Courts have recognized live-in relationships as part of the right to life and personal liberty under Article 21 of the Constitution and have given protection to such couples. However, other courts have taken a more conservative approach and imposed stricter conditions or expressed disapproval based on social or cultural values.

Because of these different interpretations, couples face confusion in law depending on where they live. This can also lead to problems like choosing courts that support them more, where people approach courts that are more favorable to their case. Overall, this creates a problem in the legal system and shows the need for a uniform law on live-in relationships.

6. Interstate Recognition and Federal Issues

The Uttarakhand Uniform Civil Code Act, 2024, applies not only to residents living within Uttarakhand but also to those residing outside the state. This means that a couple who registers their live-in relationship in Uttarakhand may continue to be governed by the UCC even after moving to another state. However, this creates several practical and legal difficulties.

The first issue is recognition by non-UCC states. If a couple shifts to a state such as Uttar Pradesh, where no similar law exists, local courts or authorities may not fully recognize the legal status created under the Uttarakhand UCC. For instance, a court in another state may refuse to apply Uttarakhand's inheritance provisions to property situated outside Uttarakhand, leading to jurisdictional confusion.

The second issue relates to enforcement. Even if the UCC claims to apply to residents living

outside the state, courts in other states are not automatically required to enforce those provisions. Under India's federal structure, state laws generally operate within their own territorial limits. As a result, the law of the state where the dispute arises may be given preference.

Another problem is the possible conflict between the law of the "home state" and the "host state." The UCC does not clearly explain which law should apply when a couple resides outside Uttarakhand. In practice, courts may apply the law of the state where the case is filed, which can encourage forum shopping, where parties choose a state that is more favorable to their claim.

Therefore, the Uttarakhand UCC leaves an important federal issue unresolved. While the law attempts to extend protection beyond state boundaries, there is no guarantee that other states will recognize or enforce those rights. Without a nationwide Uniform Civil Code or a system for interstate recognition, couples moving across states may continue to face uncertainty and inconsistent legal protection.

7. Duration / automatic rights problem

Another problem in live-in relationships is related to the time period and automatic legal rights. There is no clear rule about how long a couple must live together for their relationship to be legally recognized. Courts usually say that the couple should live together for a "reasonable period of time", but this is not clearly defined. Because of this, different cases may get different decisions depending on the facts.

Also, unlike marriage, live-in relationships do not automatically give rights such as maintenance, inheritance, or property rights. These rights are given only when the relationship meets certain conditions laid down by the courts.

For example, a couple may live together for a short time, but the court may not consider it a valid live-in relationship for legal protection. On the other hand, a long-term relationship may be recognized, but there is no fixed rule. Because of this, people in such relationships face confusion regarding their legal rights.

Under the Uttarakhand Uniform Civil Code Act, 2024, the law does not clearly mention a fixed two-year limit in its text. However, media discussions and legal commentary suggest that

registration may become compulsory and marital-like rights may arise after two years of cohabitation.

This creates a situation where couples who never intended to marry could gradually be treated like married partners under the law without giving clear consent for it. The issue becomes more serious for individuals who intentionally choose a live-in relationship to avoid the legal responsibilities that come with marriage.

8. The Cycling Loophole

The Uttarakhand Uniform Civil Code Act, 2024, indirectly follows a two-year cohabitation rule before marital-like rights arise. This may lead to misuse, as a person could deliberately end a live-in relationship at 1 year and 11 months and then begin a new relationship to avoid giving legal rights to any partner. The law does not clearly stop this kind of repeated pattern.

The UCC can adopt a system where the total period of cohabitation is considered instead of looking at only one relationship separately. Another possible solution is to make registration compulsory within thirty days, with legal rights starting from the date of registration rather than depending on later court decisions about the duration of the relationship.

9. International Comparison

France's PACS (Pacte Civil de Solidarité), introduced in 1999, provides an alternative between marriage and informal cohabitation. Under this system, couples voluntarily enter into a legal agreement that gives them certain rights relating to taxation, inheritance, and social security without placing them under the complete legal framework of marriage.

Unlike the Indian UCC model, PACS does not automatically treat cohabitation as marriage after a particular period of time. The couple chooses this legal status through clear consent. A similar model in India could help provide basic legal protection to live-in partners while also respecting individual choice and avoiding unwanted marital obligations.

A similar approach can also be seen in the United Kingdom through the Civil Partnership Act, which provides legal recognition to couples outside traditional marriage. Such models show that legal protection can be granted without automatically imposing full marital obligations, thereby maintaining a balance between individual choice and legal security.

Another important constitutional issue relates to same-sex relationships. If the State grants marital-like rights to heterosexual live-in couples after long-term cohabitation, denying similar legal recognition to same-sex couples may raise concerns under Articles 14 and 21 of the Constitution. This creates a larger debate regarding equality, personal autonomy, and the scope of legal recognition under the Uniform Civil Code.

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, this paper has studied the legal position of live-in relationships in India, especially in the context of the Uniform Civil Code. The study shows that although courts have recognized such relationships in certain cases, there is still no clear and uniform legal framework governing them. The analysis highlights several key issues, including problems of proof, privacy concerns, lack of inheritance rights, absence of a fixed duration, overlapping rights, consent and inconsistent judicial interpretations across different states.

Because of this, certain steps can be taken to improve the situation. First, an opt-out option should be provided so that individuals can choose whether they want legal recognition of their live-in relationship. Second, instead of an unclear duration, a shorter and clearly defined time period with optional registration can be introduced to avoid confusion. Third, a separate legal status for cohabitation can be created, which is different from marriage but still provides basic rights and protection. Further research can focus on how other countries regulate live-in relationships and whether those models can be adapted to the Indian context. More empirical studies can also be conducted to understand the real-life experiences of people in such relationships. In the end, the law must keep pace with changing social realities while also protecting individual rights and dignity.

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