In 21st century domestic violence is a great social and legal problem among women. Many women are now aware about their basic human rights, but still domestic violence is widespread in Indian society. In India, specially in West Bengal, many women after marriage are harassed by their husbands and in-laws, brutally and inhumanly in their matrimonial homes. But due to lack of economic and moral support from their parents and other relatives, they often suppress their miseries and reluctant to lodge F.I.R. against their husbands and in-laws. Only a few women can acquire strength and move to court of law for Justice. Due to that reason, the majority of cases are not even reported to the police station. Therefore today, in India, specially in West Bengal, a large number of women are suffering from different types of domestic violence, like torture or cruelty due to insufficient dowry demand, wife beating, bride burning, murder, marital rape etc. Many women are forced to abort their female foetuses because, still female child is unwanted in many families, in West Bengal. Now, domestic violence is not only confined in less educated society of the illiterate women, it is also spread among the highly educated elite class. Domestic violence jeopardizes the women’s dignity and prestige and make their lives hell. The government of India has introduced many legislative measures against domestic violence to eradicate this problem from the society but due to lack of proper implementation of these laws and absence of adequate enforcement mechanism the total eradication of this evil could not be possible.

Today the scope of domestic violence against women is vast, so in this research, I, the researcher, have confined my study only to domestic violence against married women at their matrimonial homes covered under section 302, 304B, 306, 494, 498A etc. of Indian Penal Code and the relevant provisions of Dowry Prohibition Act and the newly enacted ‘The Protection of Women from Domestic Violence Act 2005’. 
This research makes a humble attempt to take a holistic view into this burning problem, and also make a thorough study of different National and International laws against domestic violence like heinous crime and thereby presenting an Empirical study of Domestic violence against women in West Bengal.

This study is divided into Seven Chapters.

First Chapter is the “Introduction” chapter which contains the Historical background of women in their matrimonial homes, definition of domestic violence, different forms of domestic violence, causes of domestic violence, theoretical perspective of domestic violence, domestic violence as health hazards and its effects upon children, domestic violence as human rights issue, needs of present study, objectives of the study, hypothesis, methodology adopted for the study, limitation of the study.

The Second Chapter critically examines the different International laws relating to domestic violence and other national laws relating to it in different countries of the world i.e. domestic violence law of Kenya, South Africa, Egypt, Morocco, China, Japan, Peru, U.S.A., U.K., Russian Federation.

The Third Chapter examines the Law relating to Domestic violence in India including the recently enacted civil law “The Protection of women from Domestic violence Act 2005”.

The Fourth Chapter is an analysis of the Judicial response on this problem.

The Fifth Chapter is the review of the role of National Commission for women, West Bengal Commission for women and different NGOs for women for protecting women from Domestic violence.

The Sixth Chapter presents an empirical study relating to domestic violence against women in West Bengal. The primary data were collected from Calcutta High Court, West Bengal Commission for women and 50 victims of domestic violence offences and the data which have been collected are analysed and presented in the forms of tables and diagrams.
The **Last Chapter** is on conclusion and suggestions. Conclusion is drawn on the basis of discussion made in the previous chapters and important suggestions are mooted to combat the present situation.

Some of these suggestions are—

- This study has revealed that incidence of domestic violence is less where women are better educated and marry at a later age. Therefore in first instance, we should focus on women education and ensure enforcement of existing laws regarding the age of marriage.
- Often in cases of domestic violence, women are lacking their self confidence and suffering from severe mental trauma. So to acquire self confidence women should be self employed and they should be given opportunity of vocational training leading to their self employment.
- Today gender sensitisation of police and judiciary is very much essential for proper implementation of all the laws relating to domestic violence against women. Apart from sensitising the men, we need to increase the number of women in both police and Judiciary and number of women police station should be increased.
- The Family Court concept needs to be adopted in all states of India and more short stay homes with facilities of medical treatment and child care are required. Besides the shelter homes for victim women, family counselling centres are also very essential in urban and rural areas in India specially in West Bengal.