

MOB MENTALITY; GOOD GOVERNANCE AND THE RISING TREND OF MOB JUSTICE IN PAKISTAN; SOCIAL AND PSYCHOLOGICAL PERSPECTIVES

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ABSTRACT

In any community, mob justice—also referred to as “mob lynching,” “mob action,” or “jungle justice”—is a precursor of societal injustice. In recent years, mob/street justice violence has dramatically increased and has become a typical occurrence in Pakistan. It is now a standard procedure and a recognized method of handling and reacting to criminal situations, such as armed robbery, abduction, pickpocketing, theft, rape, etc. These outbursts of society are generally triggered once the masses lose their faith and hope in government, judicial system and law enforcement agencies. It is a well-established fact that such emotional outbursts and frustrations have deep-rooted psychological reasons like economic and social disparity. These factors force the masses to defy the laws and resort to uncivilized acts. Intricate access to justice, corruption and lengthy judicial proceedings are major attributes which cause discontent in the community; these factors once coupled with economic disparity, engender feelings of deprivation and hopelessness which results in lawlessness and anarchy. This study intends to analyze the rising trend of mob mentality/violence, and its impact on our society and identify the ways and means to prevent this trend in Pakistani society. In Pakistan, mob justice has become more prevalent. People’s lack of faith in the formal criminal justice system is a reflection of the sad reality. The study is of vital importance to comprehend the factors responsible for mob violence and how to curb it.

Keywords: good governance, Pakistan, mob mentality, mob justice, herd mentality, hive mentality.

INTRODUCTION

A crowd is a group of people assembled for a common purpose like a political procession or audience of a concert. When a crowd transforms into a mob, there comes a complete variation of its mentality, nature and connotations about frustrations, anger and violence. The incidence of mob mentality is showing a rising trend in Pakistan and the alleged criminals are subjected to gruesome acts of violence as a consequence of street justice carried out by people themselves. A mob, according to Merriam-Webster, is “a big unruly assembly, especially one bent on riotous or destructive conduct,” (Merriam-Webster, 1928a) yet “the assignment of merited rewards or penalties” (Merriam-Webster, 1928b) is what justice is, according to the dictionary. Mob justice

is defined as the use of force or execution without due process to punish real or imagined offences. Legal criminal systems are laid to control the people taking the law into their hands. In our legal system, it is the Pakistan Penal Code, 1860 which deals with mob actions. Section 34 reads as: “Acts done by several persons in furtherance of common intension: when a criminal act is done by several persons, in furtherance of the common intentions of all, each such person is liable for that act in the same manner as if it was done by him alone” (Pakistan Penal Code, 1860). However, if people involved in mob justice are not punished, it encourages other fractions of society to resort to such quick means to judge, decide and execute a violent punishment to the alleged criminal(s).

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM:

The mob violence being witnessed in Pakistan in recent years is a prelude to social judicial activism; such incidents of street justice are also prevalent in other parts of the world. These outbursts of society may indicate that people have lost their hopes in the existing system of justice and law enforcement agencies. It indicates that there is a major failure of government functionaries who have failed to control the elements of frustration infesting society. There is an assumption that our criminal justice system has lost its credibility in the eyes of the public. This study intends to look into the core reasons which lead people to resort to such barbarous acts. After having analyzed the reasons and incidents of mob justice, this study would try to suggest ways and means to avoid such heinous manifestations. Lukewarm response and mishandling of such emerging trends are likely to encourage its frequency.

METHODOLOGY:

This research has been conducted through relevant books, the internet and research papers on mob mentality/violence, dynamics of collective behaviour, and the act of violence and aggression. Telephonic & personal meetings with the public, concerned police and judicial officers have provided the details and analysis of the incidents, whereas data and figures have been gathered from crime records from the Investigation branch of the police department and the daily newspapers.

SIGNIFICANCE AND SCOPE OF RESEARCH:

The paper has confined its scope of social justice activism to mob justice. This phenomenon is examined in comparison with contemporary international incidents and similarities are drawn between national and international forms of mob justice for better comprehension. The scope of studies does not include a discussion about the 'guilt' of the victims but is restricted to the total absence of due processes in such incidents. The research is significant for the improvement of government institutions as it points out important neglected areas in our governance system. Important sub-topic of study include; the rising trend of mob mentality through the chronological description of mob justice incidents; caveats in the

criminal justice system and social tendencies given rise to such behaviour.

Emphasis has been drawn that good governance, better functioning of the institutions, protection of citizens and availability of merit and justice system for all is the need of the time. If a safe, livable country is required, one very critical lesson learnt from the research is that it is not the severity of the punishment, but the certainty of punishment which maintains peace in society. It is then only that people do not have a law in their hands for they are satisfied that due justice could be meted out by the justice system.

LITERATURE REVIEW:

Mob violence is a type of violent behaviour in which a group of people, pretending to administer justice, seizes control of the situation and executes a suspected criminal, frequently after torturing and mutilating them (Baron, 1971a). Simply put, "mob violence" refers to a self-constituted court that sentences a person on the spot without the need for formal legal procedures. In certain situations, the accused offence may be as little as disobeying a local custom or religious conviction or as terrible as theft or even murder. The victim's guilt is typically not a big deal because the mob acts as its prosecutor, judge, jury, and executioner.

Aggression and violent outbursts serve as the foundation of mob justice. The evolution of a mob's collective behaviour depends on the inter-stimulations of its members and is largely spontaneous, disorganized, unexpected, and aimless (Thomas and Drabman, 1975). Mob justice in Pakistan is not a spontaneous act but ammunition is already fed up to the maximum extent which finds expression at any first opportunity. As per the Contagion Theory (Blumer, 1975), it is anonymity, impersonality, suggestibility, stress, and international amplification as the factors of the collective behaviour of a crowd (Baron, 1971b). Although the Emergent Norm Theory (Aguirre et al., 1998) contradicts the holding that crowd behaves relatively rationally, exercising discrimination and with some purpose. The Convergence theory of 'collective behaviour' says that in a crowd there is a commonality of needs, impulses, dislikes and purposes. As a result, mob behaviour develops from the members' observations and complaints, which are then fed by the contagion process. Eventually, a norm that

justifies and establishes boundaries for crowd behaviour develops (Newburn, 2020). However, there are certain limitations to the crowd behaviour like acceptance of violence. Lynching in America did not take place where people used to strongly condemn this act. Besides police, it is an effectual control with few exceptions. Most lynching was preceded by either the “open convenience of law enforcement officials” (Attaullah and Ijaz, 2016) or by their merely “token resistance” (McDonald, 2020) and with very few exceptions, serious riots are evidence of police failure.

The literature review provides the following observations:

- i. In crowd individuals lose their identity so there is a sharing of responsibility which encourages people to carry out any heinous act. Thus if the crowd/mob is treated as given in PPC-1860 (Pakistan Penal Code, 1860) which announces each one of them as an individual criminal, nobody would dare to take part in such crimes and do away with it.
- ii. There is a more likelihood of exciting mob tendencies when people are stressed as is in Pakistan where the public is barely surviving amidst harsh facts of inflation, lawlessness, corruption, nepotism, high rate of unemployment and an unjust system prevalent all around (The World Bank, 2022).
- iii. A frustrated crowd needs a punching bag, just to vent out its anger. This explains why people not only beat the offenders/suspected but often kill them and humiliate their dead bodies, hence depicting the height of anger and frustration against those factors which have made lives miserable for them (Bushman, 2002).
- iv. Mob violence is more prevalent where there is a public acknowledgement (Raymond and Blank, 2015). The media in Pakistan has not condemned mob justice incidences. The reporting of the Karachi and Sialkot incidents was presented in a way that portrayed the mob as a justified party. Such irresponsible media reporting coupled with inaction from the government has already made grounds for public acceptance of mob justice.
- v. Last but not least, mob justice is carried out by the connivance of police or their failure to take action at the right time (Verma, 2012). The failure of armed police personnel to

watch the entire fiasco in the Sialkot incident is evidence of this observation.

The demonstration of mob mentality/violence is an inevitable feature of any society, where the formal and informal system of justice fails. When the legal system cannot be trusted and society believes that the criminals are not going to be punished through established legal procedures then, people resort to mob justice. It is an outburst of frustration by the people due to extreme social deprivation, lawlessness, and social apathy. The models of this violence around the world reveal that such acts have an inherent potential to be followed by others. The trend of mob violence is on increase in Pakistan. It is indicative of the deteriorating state of affairs in society. The majority of people in Pakistan believe that government and law enforcement agencies have failed to deliver and the judicial system is ineffective. As a result, once suspects in crimes are detained and turned over to the police, many of them can work their way out either by abusing the complexities of the law or by engaging in corruption and political connections. This further alienates the general people and reinforces the perception that the police and courts are biased in favour of criminals. So, the public believes that taking the law into their own hands and turning these criminals over to the court system is unproductive (Khurshid, 2020).

It is a fact that intricate access to justice, corruption and lengthy judicial proceedings are major attributes which have resulted in increased discontent and trust deficit in Pakistani society. These factors, once coupled with socio-economic conditions and economic disparity like poverty and unemployment and illiteracy etc. further aggravate the situation. The increasing trend of mob mentality/violence in the country is not only an alarm about a deteriorating state of affairs but also a wake-up call for those who are at the helm of affairs.

THEORY OF MOB VIOLENCE:

Since the research paper is focusing on mob justice, it would be beneficial to comprehend the mechanics of mob factors that contribute to the sudden occurrence of such incidents of violence and aggression (Thomas and Drabman, 1975). All crowds have the potential to become violent mobs. Yet, a crowd is not a mob, but it has the potential to become one because when people become

engrossed in a crowd, the crowd's mind takes over, which can result in aggressive and destructive behaviour (Schweingruber and Wohlstein, 2005).

There are different categories of people acting in a mob. The riot is started by irrational, lawless individuals who then incite other people to violence (O'Reilly, 1988). According to Thomson and Robinson (2010), suggestible individuals, who are susceptible to persuasion, tend to imitate the more violent. Menezes and Oliveira-Santos (2021) say that cautious people enjoy getting into arguments but wait till they can hide behind anonymity. Then there are the yielders, who hold off until a large enough number of people participate in the activity to provide the idea of universality (Salihu and Gholami, 2018). Fans of the programme like it and even yell their support out (O'Reilly, 1988). The sixth category is made up of psychopaths who are enraged by the world and so don't participate in mobbing. The last category is 'resisters' who oppose violence and any extra-judicial action (Younes, 2015). The mob formation has three main stages, namely, the initial stage when the individuals are in the milling process after a particular incident, the stage of collective excitement when the crowd becomes unified and few stirred individuals initiate the action and finally the stage of social contagion where bystanders and trouble seekers accumulate to carry out the mob justice (Carey, 2021). It is the faceless existence of a large group that allows a person to commit crimes or atrocities more anonymously. There are several social psychological hypotheses for mob mentality that contend that when individuals are part of a group or mob, they lose self-awareness and a feeling of individual identity. Being a part of a group can cause individuals to experience higher levels of emotion, such as excitement, rage, aggression, etc., and behaviours that are typically viewed as improper on an individual basis suddenly become acceptable. Instead of being an individual responsibility, violence becomes a communal obligation (Davies, 2011).

Throughout the world, mob justice has been used in numerous societies. In the 19th and 20th centuries in America, white people employed mob justice, a violent public act, to intimidate and dominate Black people. The most common pictures that came to mind were of Black men and women

being hung from trees, but they might also include torture, mutilation, decapitation, and degradation. Some victims received burn injuries (NAACP, 2021). In Guatemala, people were killed and suffered serious injuries by mobs between 1996 and 2000, usually administered by setting the victims on fire (Garrard-Burnett, 2010; Tuckman, 2001; Feldman, 2001). In Tanzania, people were reported to be killed by the mob between 2000 to 2004. The majority of those killed in such occurrences were young people between the ages of 15 and 40, with robbery serving as the primary motivation for the killings and stoning and burning to be the most common methods of murder (Ng'walali and Kitinya, 2006; Sherrington, 2007). South Africa and north Ireland also have a history long of conflicts which had made them desensitized to violent crimes. Mob justice has developed as a result of high crime rates, perceived police inefficiency, and allegations of legal system corruption. Society has accepted this degree of violence as being acceptable and has regarded it to be a better state of peace than what had previously existed. According to Kobrak (1997), it works as the crime routinely goes way down after a lynching and communities say "it's a last resort."

A rising trend of mob violence is also observed in India (Khurshid, 2020). The communal incidences of Godhra and Gujrat are the most glaring examples of such behaviours. The Indian police do not tend to register cases against such mobs indicating that it does not usually treat it as a criminal act. Reasons behind these outbursts were frustration and corruption, delayed justice and manipulation of the system by the rich and powerful apart from the very obvious communal conflicts. In Burundi, the society believes that "if a thief steals no trial is necessary. He is immediately killed. Mobs killed individuals for a variety of alleged offences, including adultery, petty theft, armed robbery, rape, and murder" (Ghoshal, 2010). After experiencing long years of civil war, the frustration level has mounted to an extent that hungry ailing people are burnt alive even for stealing a bunch of bananas. The main causes of mob justice are lost faith in the police and judicial systems as a result of corruption, inefficiency and inadequate resources, distressed poverty, poor security, incomplete justice, destabilized public institutions, and lack of trust in public administration. A frequent comment by people

involved in mobs was, “When we apprehend thieves and turn them over to the police, they are freed two or three days later. So we decided to take justice into our own hands” upon investigating the reasons by the researchers from Human Rights Watch and the APRODH.

Mob justice is a well-liked type of informal justice in Uganda also. It is well-liked because judges were chosen from among those who once rendered judgment in the interests of the people, and the processes entailed active participation from the community (Museveni, 1986). They thought that the modern world should not merely be defined by logical bureaucracy and a formal justice system (Weber & Rheinstein, 1969). They understood that cultures have always produced their forms of popular justice and that norms and organizing systems can also emerge spontaneously (Baker, 2004).

Although the incidents have occurred in different countries the core reasons are quite common. Primarily it is the conflict-ridden societies which have witnessed such gruesome acts and have developed apathy towards human bloodshed. Secondly, it is the apartheid socio-political circumstances and finally the non-credibility of police and criminal justice system due to corruption inefficiency and mismanagement of which the natural outcome is not but mob justice.

MOB JUSTICE IN PAKISTAN:

Mob violence is not a new trend in Pakistan; such incidents have always remained a part and parcel of our society. Whether the protest is against electricity/gas or water shortage, reservation issue or perceived slight to some political leader or a traffic accident, a mob emerges from nowhere in Pakistan and instantly destroys everything and physically assaults anyone caught in the surroundings. However, the intensity and harshness have dangerously increased particularly in the last decade. Earlier, displays of mob violence were limited and people used to show their frustration by inflicting some damage to government/private assets etc. whereas, now day people not only destroy the national infrastructure but often do not even hesitate to brutally kill victims.

Country-wide violence upon the assassination of Benazir Bhutto (27-30 December 2007), the Sialkot Incident (23 August 2010), and incidents of

target killing and killing of lawyers (burning alive) in Karachi (AHRC, 2008) are some of the trailers indicating the level of aggravation among Pakistani society. The killing of dacoits during police encounters had been quite frequent in past and even today. On 26 October 2010 five dacoits were killed in such an encounter in Faisalabad, (Geo News, 2010) out of eight who were found fleeing after robbing a fuel station. However, the killing of alleged criminals by the public/mob appeared on the scene when on the 10th of May in the suburban area of Toba Tek Singh, (BBC, 2010) where eight dacoits were killed by the villagers. The killing took about two hours but the police could not reach them till the dacoits were killed. A judicial inquiry was ordered but nothing substantive was done against the killers and inefficient police of that area which encouraged such actions ahead also. Then Sialkot incident continued the shock waves started from the Karachi killing. Not only had it triggered many other such incidents, one of which is the horrendous incident of killing in Gujrat manifesting collective ruthlessness, apathy, inactivity, and refusal to accept the formal system of law and order. It started with only a verbal fight between a group of lawyers and some common man. The lawyers started throwing stones and bricks at him till the person bled to death. On October 14, 2010, a second gruesome murder occurred in Dera Ghazi Khan. Naseem Abbas, a cloth merchant and local Tehrik-e-Jafria official, was slain during a spat by Hafiz Abdullah Chandia, a father of thirteen children, for unspecified reasons. Ideally, his case should have been heard in court because he killed someone. At the police station, he was shot by officers. In addition, he was given to the deceased person’s family, who stoned him to death. The deceased body was then dragged, beaten, hit with sticks, and finally set on fire in front of everyone. What’s more alarming is that nobody intervened; instead, onlookers all took pleasure in the entire performance. The entire town and nearby markets were closed to see the event and take pleasure in this heinous and horrifying deed. Police, as has been practised in past, maintained their previous records of being silent spectators. The DSP Chandia under whose supervision this gruesome action was committed continued to work on his post (Saeed, 2010).

Alarming frequently, acts of violence are committed in the name of religion. Even though no

one has been sent to death for violating the contentious blasphemy laws, from 1990 to 2023, mobs in Pakistan killed more than 70 people who had been charged with the crime (Fair, 2023). The custodian of a mosque in Khanewal District accused a mentally ill person of burning a Quran within the structure on February 12, 2022. The 41-year-old was killed by a crowd that used axes, batons, and iron rods before hanging him from a tree. Three police officers were hurt as a result of the mob's overwhelming numerical advantage over the police. Subsequently, around 80 men were detained for the slaying (BBC News, 2022). The murder of Priyantha Kumara, the manager of a Sri Lankan clothing factory, on December 3, 2021, in Sialkot was the most well-known mob lynching in Pakistan. A mob killed him and burned his body on the motorway after accusing him of blasphemy. The incident drew international anger, which led to a mass trial involving 89 people, and also resulted in a diplomatic crisis between the two nations. In the end, six persons in the case received death sentences (Fair, 2023). A copy of the Quran was allegedly desecrated on February 11, 2023, and as a result, Waris was attacked by certain people. Waris was detained by police in the Punjabi province's Nankana Sahib District and sent to the Warburton police station. He was slain later that day by a crowd of hundreds who stormed a police station and claimed they were punishing him for disrespecting the Quran (Newswire, 2021). A group of students brutally murdered Mashal Khan, a journalism student at the Abdul Wali Khan University in Mardan, in an assault that attracted extensive international notice for its harsh and vicious nature. In one case, 61 people were detained. Of those, one received the death penalty, seven received life sentences, 25 received terms of four years in prison, and 26 were found not guilty (Fair, 2023).

ANALYSIS OF INCIDENTS:

By the analysis of the above incidents following facts were established:

- i. In most cases, the victims are found involved in robberies, thefts, murders, child abusers or people causing road accidents.
- ii. People from age groups ranging from 15 to 30, were mostly the victims of mob violence.
- iii. The majority of incidents take place in ruler areas or outskirts of major cities where the

literacy rate is low and the sense of deprivation is relatively high.

- iv. Idle people, market vendors, small-time traders, taxi drivers, and other members of the informal sector of society who are both illiterate and destitute are the people most frequently involved in these crimes.
- v. The involvement of educated people in mob justice is not very common.
- vi. The mob group gives the individuals protection by hiding information from the police about other participants.
- vii. Rumours can drive the mob and people become part of the mob without witnessing anything wrong but just finding people beating up a victim.
- viii. The majority of those involved in mob justice have previously been victims of crimes where the perpetrator was never found.
- ix. Many people experience stressful events daily, and taking part in mob justice cases is one way to reduce that tension.
- x. In most such cases the police have been conspicuous by their absence or officers have stood by as the crowd has administered justice.
- xi. Where the police do try to intervene into the fury of the mob is so great that officers are unable to do much.

MAJOR CAUSES OF MOB VIOLENCE IN PAKISTAN:

During the research, it was endeavoured to make out the rationale behind mob violence in Pakistan. Moreover, interviews/opinions from the public, police officials and judicial officers were solicited to identify the reasons which render law enforcement agencies and government institutions futile in curbing such violent acts. The details of the same are as under:

- i. **Corruption:** Pakistan is a developing country and is suffering from burgeoning economic, social and political problems. It is the 140th number as per the report of transparency international about corrupt countries of the world (CPI, 2022). Transparency International states that the Police in Pakistan are the most corrupt whereas the judiciary is ranked number three among all public organizations. The governance is poor and institutions are on the verge of falling apart.

Anything is possible with nepotism and corruption and merit is nowhere available anywhere. People do not have any protection for their life and property. Basic constitutional rights are not being provided. It can do anything and wouldn't get caught because it is strong and wealthy. One instance of mob justice in Pakistan takes place in a rural location where the authorities have trouble accessing, and the incidents are never reported. The cost of a crime scene investigation, an examination of the evidence gathered at the scene, and any related costs must be covered by the victim. As most victims cannot afford to pay, it is challenging to hold an alleged offender accountable for the crime.

- ii. **Poor economic conditions:** Due to dwindling industry and unsupported agriculture sector, the country is suffering from an economic crunch and is mired in a vicious circle of both national and international debit. There is huge unemployment and acute poverty. The gap between rich and poor is ever widening. Over all frustration level in society is increasing day by day which manifests through aggression and violence. Poverty is a big socio-economic issue in Pakistan. The poor do not have money to fight for its right in court as they can not afford to hire lawyers. Therefore, it is generally speaking, the poor just cannot win cases in Pakistan because despite evidence of lack of money to hire a lawyer and bribe the judges cannot make people win the case. Those who are present at a crime scene and are easily mobilised when the term "thief" is called out are those who are participating in mob justice. Most mob justice incidents occur along the sides of the road, where the unemployed predominately live.
- iii. **Easy availability and display of arms:** During the Afghan war, there was a huge influx of arms and ammunition in Pakistan. Before 1979, the name 'Kalashnikov' was unheard but in the 1980s AK-47 became a household name with widespread and easy availability. Society was never disarmed when war was over. Moreover, films and other media in particular have increased the violent tendencies in society (Kartha, 2000).

iv. **Faulty criminal justice system:** The people of Pakistan still have a long way to go before experiencing swift justice. The court system's administration has fallen short of expectations. As of July 13, 2022, the nation's superior and lesser judiciaries were coping with a massive backlog of 2.144 million cases due to the decision of 4.102 million cases and the filing of 4.06 million new cases in 2021. (Tanoli, 2022). The problem of delayed justice is common in Pakistan. Sometimes, the cases linger on for years, even decades. In such a situation, people who have lost their trust, take the law into their hands and prefer to perform immediate *justice*. The percentage of acquittal of cases is huge which weakens the writ of the government and encourages culprits to carry on criminal activities. Even if that 33% were convicted in murder cases, 44% could escape the death penalty. The number of pending cases at the end of the judiciary is a loud advocate of the famous quotation that "justice delayed is justice denied." Society knows that once the criminal is handed over to the police, he will be in safe hands and will be released soon after bribing the police or by manoeuvring legal provisions to protect him. The lack of strict laws both for offenders and people involved in mob justice is another problem. It is thought that when an alleged offender who was apprehended the day before is seen walking the streets again the following morning.

v. **No trust in the criminal justice system:** Generally people do not trust the efficacy of the criminal justice system. Various reasons for this include policies with indifferent or favourably biased attitudes towards criminals and harsh and unreasonable attitudes towards complainants. The judicial system in Pakistan does not offer the public any predictability. According to responses from the public during the research, the public believes that because the penalties are arbitrary, anyone with money can always buy their way out of jail. In the sense that everyone is aware of what will happen if someone commits a crime, mob justice can be considered a way for the public to promote predictability. No respectable decent person wants to approach the police because police officials create more

trouble instead of helping them. Concerning prosecution, there is no genuine scientific investigation. People tend to avoid offering themselves as witnesses as there is no witness protection program. Without nepotism, they cannot reach the concerned authorities and no one would listen to their grievances. Similarly, the judicial system is very expensive and people cannot afford it. The procedures are too cumbersome and lengthy with several stages with delays. Besides, there is rampant corruption and malpractices at all levels of prosecution, trial, police and judiciary. One point of view is that the public knows that they are at the mercy of criminals. The law enforcement agencies are either insufficient or protect the criminals, therefore there is no one to save them. Since people feel threatened therefore they are sure that there is no saviour but themselves therefore they have started taking the law into their own hands.

- i. **Delays in registration of cases:** Non-registration of FIR is a common phenomenon in the routine working of the Police (Abbas, 2021). Dacoits in Buttar village of Sialkot had made the life of people hell and the police were not taking any cognizance of this crime. It was not doing anything to prevent the rising incidents of robberies in the area. Finally, when people found the opportunity, they got into mob frenzy when the news of the death of one of the robbery victims reached and that frenzy turned into an orgy of blood and death resulting in the death of two brothers.
- ii. **Impact of fake encounters:** Fake encounters by the police are not warranted by the law. The police do it openly and with impunity. They drag the dead bodies of so-called criminals for deterrence. Such actions encourage the mob to do the same when they get hold of criminals.
- iii. **Unbalanced role of media and ignorant society:** Ignorance is a hallmark of Pakistani society. Show of mob violence creates a kind of excitement which can perpetuate further mob violence. Media presents gruesome acts like setting dacoits on fire or beating criminals to death giving ideas to innocent, irrational and ignorant persons, especially youngsters. Illiterate people do not know how the legal system works thus the majority of incidents

have occurred in rural areas where the literacy rate is low.

- iv. **Lack of police accountability:** The police are particularly not accountable for their actions; both DSP and SHO of the Choti police station / D G Z KHAN Incident were absolved of their charges during departmental inquiries. Similarly, in the case of the Sialkot incident, some action was taken due to the involvement of the Supreme Court otherwise in none of the other incidents anyone was held responsible or got punishment. It is a common perception that whatever action or inaction the police do it can get away with it. A departmental probe by senior police officers of the rank of additional IGP and a judicial inquiry by the honourable high court fixed the responsibilities of senior police officers but till now no departmental or penal action has been undertaken.
- v. **Crime Prevention:** Many Pakistanis believe that mob justice harms the number of thieves in the population. As a result, it is employed as a strategy to reduce the number of thieves and deter potential thieves and lawbreakers. One way to look at mob punishment is as a lesson for those considering committing a particular crime. For instance, a thief might decide not to commit the same crime himself after witnessing another thief being executed because he believes that action will result in his execution at some point. It serves as a warning to other crooks.

CONCLUSION:

The rising trend of mob violence in Pakistan shows that people have lost their faith in the criminal justice system of the country and nothing substantial is being done to control the situation and control the public perception. The dismal state is a serious blow to the writ of the government and rule of law that everybody is innocent till proven guilty and is also responsible for bringing a bad name for the country which is already suspected to be the most extremist and dangerous country. It is only electronic media and the judiciary which have started unveiling such dark faces. There is a general disappointment and frustration due to ever-rising inflation, lawlessness, unemployment, and unequal opportunities for health and education. This anger and frustration come up into aggressive actions.

Because of how frail and unreliable the legal system is, a significant portion of the populace ends up enforcing the law on their own. Media prejudice is practiced and violence is encouraged by how it is presented and portrayed. By gradually dampening emotional reactions to successive demonstrations of aggression on television and in real life, violence that has been repeatedly displayed has become something that is generally tolerated (Bushman and Huesmann, 2001; Thomas et al., 1977). The widespread consumption of violent entertainment media, which adds to the high level of violence and aggression, is one of the causes of increased violence that has been pinpointed. The question of the victim's guilt is typically secondary in mob justice because the mob serves as the prosecutor, judge, jury, and executioner.

PREVENTION FROM MOB VIOLENCE – WAY FORWARD

After having analyzed the causes of the rising trend of mob mentality in Pakistan and dreading the coming draconian times of frenzy mob ruling the system and unleashing violence across the country, it is time to make the following rectifications:

- i. Revamping is required in police from apolitical and merit-based recruitment to effective accountability. No one can be above law and the police should not be any exception. The police structure needs to be strengthened. If the police act quickly and detain the suspected offenders, it may prevent many of the supposed offenders from dying in mob violence. To avoid mob justice, crime scenes must be responded to quickly. The issue might be resolved by expanding the workforce. Police must be made accountable for each action of inefficiency and corruption. Strict accountability and harsh punishments more than just dismissals from service are suggested for any defaulter.
- ii. Appropriate training is required to improve the inefficiency and performance of the police. The currently practiced police station culture which does not consider common citizen as respectful clients need to be discouraged. For this, the training system needs to be revamped on modern lines. During training, trainers should not treat the trainees as animals. It is inhuman attitude that

they receive at the academy makes them ruthless as they have already lost human touch in their dealings. There has to be rotation to public schools, etc. to keep their human touch alive.

- iii. Community policing should be practiced at the highest levels. There it has been given a legal cover through police order 2002, yet there is a need to make it functional throughout the length and breadth of this community. They should be made to reside in the area of their jurisdiction so that they own their community.
- iv. Mere improvements in the police would nullify its effects unless the judiciary and judicial process are improved upon. The judiciary is overloaded which causes unlimited delays. Through direct management reforms, magisterial powers were taken away from district magistrates without taking cognizance of the insufficiency of human resources to share the burden.
- v. It is suggested that the old system should be revived at least to the stage of bail, through necessary amendments in law. Moreover, alternate Dispute Resolution Committees should be formed to share the burden.
- vi. Owing to cumbersome procedures and insecurity, people tend to avoid approaching courts and genuine witnesses are also lost. The entire judicial course should be a facilitator to the problem faced by people. The system needs to be rationalized to improve service delivery if we want to bridge the public trust deficit.
- vii. Urgent social reforms are needed of the hour. It is more important to enlighten society than to educate. Awareness, consciousness and self-responsibility are of prime importance than mere literacy. Through media and effective sensitization, the required reformation could be achieved. Every Friday, sermons should be addressed to remove the irritants from society. It should be reminded that Islam is a religion of peace and one of its basic principles is forgiveness. Community justice is being practiced internationally which involves the community participating in the judicial process. Community boards to look after the safety of the community

through expedient and certain punishments for criminals may also be formed.

- viii. PEMRA (Pakistan Electronic Media Regulatory Authority) should give a code of conduct and not allow media to present gruesome videos to save society from getting desensitized. This code of conduct should be adhered to and any deviation should be seriously penalized.
- ix. It is important to address youth unemployment and perceived economic inequities. To stop mob justice, there should be more opportunities for youth employment.
- x. It is essential to incorporate legal concepts into the curriculum so that students are taught about their legal rights and responsibilities from an early age.
- xi. Improving the educational system for children is another strategy. In the long run, this would avoid poverty, unemployment, and school dropouts.
- xii. To meet the nation's complex challenges, all institutions must collaborate.
- xiii. The state that was on the verge of capitulation needs to be better equipped to handle violent situations. All acts of mob violence must be investigated, regardless of who committed them, and those proven guilty must face serious legal consequences.
- xiv. Reports of judicial investigations concerning mob justice, target killings, and violence against minority communities must be made public, and any suggested recommendations must be given appropriate consideration.
- xv. Transparency between the government, the legal system, and the public on lawmaking and how the law is applied is crucial if the government is to regain the public's trust. Furthermore, all criminals must receive a transparent and fair trial in an impartial court.
- xvi. The police in a community where a crime has been committed shall provide feedback as to what happened to a caught criminal. In other words, greater communication between the police and residents is intended to raise awareness of the legal system.

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