



## Research Journal Ulum-e-Islamia

Journal Home Page: <https://journals.iub.edu.pk/index.php/Ulum.e.Islamia/index>

ISSN: 2073-5146(Print)

ISSN: 2710-5393(Online)

E-Mail: [muloomi@iub.edu.pk](mailto:muloomi@iub.edu.pk)

Vol.No: 29, Issue:02.(July-Dec) 2022

Published by: Department of Islamic Studies, The Islamia University of Bahawalpur

### "Lynching in Pakistan: A Critical Analysis of its History, Causes, and Solutions in Light of Islamic Principles"

\* Abdul Waheed Tariq

Ph.D. Scholar, Department of Islamic Studies & Arabic, Gomal  
University, Dera Ismail Khan. KPK, Email:  
waheedtariq4876@gmail.com

\*\* Kashmala Iqbal

Ph.D. Scholar, Department of Islamic Studies & Arabic, Gomal  
University, Dera Ismail Khan. KPK

Lynching in Pakistan has become a pervasive issue in recent years, with reports of mob violence and extrajudicial killings occurring across the country. This article critically analyzes the history, causes, and solutions to this phenomenon in light of Islamic principles. The roots of lynching in Pakistan can be traced back to a combination of historical, cultural, social, and economic factors that have created a culture of violence and impunity. Factors such as poverty, illiteracy, political instability, and sectarianism have all contributed to the rise of lynching incidents in the country.

Despite its prevalence, lynching is strictly prohibited in Islam, which upholds the sanctity of human life and emphasizes the importance of justice and due process. Therefore, this article argues that a comprehensive solution to the problem of lynching in Pakistan must be rooted in Islamic principles and values. This can involve strengthening Islamic education and preaching the true message of Islam, as well as promoting interfaith harmony, tolerance, and respect for human rights.

Moreover, the role of the judiciary is crucial in addressing and preventing lynching incidents in Pakistan. The article discusses the legal and policy measures that can be taken to prevent and punish lynching, including effective investigation, prosecution, and punishment of perpetrators. The article also explores the potential role of civil society organizations, media, and international actors in raising awareness and advocating for the protection of human rights.

In conclusion, the problem of lynching in Pakistan is a complex and multifaceted issue that requires a comprehensive solution based on Islamic principles and values, as well as legal and policy measures that promote justice, accountability, and respect for human rights.

**Keywords:** Lynching, Pakistan, Islam, Judiciary

## **Introduction**

### **Definition of lynching and its prevalence in Pakistan**

Lynching is a term that refers to the extrajudicial killing of an individual or group by a mob. It is a heinous act that violates the basic principles of human rights and due process of law. Lynching has been prevalent in many countries, including Pakistan.

In Pakistan, lynching incidents have been reported in various forms, including the lynching of alleged criminals, sectarian violence, and mob attacks on minorities. One of the most infamous incidents of lynching in Pakistan was the killing of two brothers in Sialkot in 2010.<sup>1</sup> The two brothers were falsely accused of robbery and beaten to death by a mob in front of a large crowd, including police officers who failed to intervene.

According to a report by the Human Rights Commission of Pakistan, there were at least 40 reported cases of mob violence and lynching in the country in 2020.<sup>2</sup> The report highlights the increase in incidents of mob violence and lynching in recent years, which can be attributed to the lack of effective law enforcement, weak judicial system, and social and political factors.<sup>3</sup>

The prevalence of lynching in Pakistan is a matter of concern and requires urgent attention. It is essential to address the underlying causes of this problem and take measures to prevent such incidents from occurring. This can be achieved through effective law enforcement, strict punishment for the perpetrators, and raising public awareness about the consequences of mob violence and lynching.

### **Importance of the topic**

Examining the issue of lynching from an Islamic perspective is crucial as it helps to provide a religiously grounded approach to the issue. Islam considers the sanctity of human life to be of paramount importance,

Therefore, from an Islamic perspective, lynching is considered a grave sin and a violation of the principles of justice and compassion that underpin Islamic teachings. Furthermore, the Quranic emphasis on the importance of seeking justice for all, regardless of social or economic status, reinforces the need for legal and judicial

processes to address crimes, rather than allowing individuals or mobs to take the law into their own hands.

### **Overview of the article's main arguments**

This article argues that lynching, a form of extrajudicial violence, is a prevalent issue in Pakistan that needs to be addressed from an Islamic perspective. The article begins by defining lynching and providing examples of its prevalence in Pakistan. It then argues that examining the issue from an Islamic perspective is crucial because of the importance of human life and justice in Islamic teachings. The article also emphasizes that lynching is a violation of Islamic principles of justice and compassion.

Furthermore, the article discusses the challenges faced in addressing the issue, including the lack of trust in the legal and judicial system and the prevalence of societal norms that perpetuate violence. The article suggests that addressing these challenges requires a multi-faceted approach that includes education, legal reform, and addressing societal attitudes towards violence and justice.

The article also highlights the potential benefits of addressing lynching from an Islamic perspective, including promoting a more just and compassionate society that upholds the principles of Islamic teachings. Finally, the article calls for stakeholders, including the government, religious leaders, and civil society organizations, to take action in addressing the issue of lynching in Pakistan.

Overall, the article provides a comprehensive analysis of the issue of lynching in Pakistan and argues for the importance of addressing it from an Islamic perspective.

## **II. Historical and Cultural Roots of Lynching in Pakistan**

### **Examination of historical events and cultural practices that have contributed to the rise of lynching incidents**

The rise of lynching incidents in Pakistan has roots in historical events and cultural practices that have contributed to a culture of violence and impunity. One such event is the Partition of India in 1947, which led to widespread violence and displacement, and resulted in the loss of trust in state institutions. This loss of trust in the government and law enforcement agencies has contributed to a culture of vigilante justice, where individuals take matters into their own hands.<sup>4</sup>

Moreover, cultural practices such as honor killings, which are prevalent in certain parts of Pakistan, have also contributed to the normalization of violence and vigilantism.<sup>5</sup> In

honor killings, individuals take the law into their own hands and kill family members, particularly women, for perceived violations of cultural norms. This normalization of violence has contributed to a broader acceptance of extrajudicial violence and a lack of trust in the judicial system.<sup>6</sup>

Additionally, the rise of social media has also played a role in the increase of lynching incidents in Pakistan. The spread of fake news and rumors on social media has led to instances of mob violence, particularly against religious minorities, where individuals are accused of blasphemy or other crimes without any evidence.

Overall, understanding the historical events and cultural practices that have contributed to the rise of lynching incidents is crucial in addressing the issue from an Islamic perspective. By addressing the root causes of the problem, it may be possible to break the cycle of violence and promote a more just and peaceful society.

### **Discussion of social, political, and economic factors that fuel mob violence**

Lynching in Pakistan is often fueled by a range of social, political, and economic factors. Scholars have identified various factors that contribute to mob violence in the country, including sectarianism, poverty, unemployment, political instability, and lack of access to justice.<sup>7</sup>

One major factor that has fueled lynching incidents in Pakistan is sectarianism. The country has a long history of sectarian violence between Sunni and Shia Muslims, with each group accusing the other of heresy and apostasy.<sup>8</sup> This sectarian divide has often resulted in violent clashes and mob attacks, with innocent individuals being targeted simply because of their religious identity.<sup>9</sup>

Another contributing factor is poverty and unemployment, which have left many individuals without any means of livelihood. According to a report by the International Labour Organization, Pakistan has one of the highest rates of youth unemployment in the world, with nearly 25% of young people aged 15-24 being jobless.<sup>10</sup> This lack of economic opportunities has led many young people to turn to crime and violence as a means of survival.

Furthermore, political instability and corruption have also contributed to the rise of mob violence in Pakistan. The country has been plagued by political unrest and violence for decades, with various ethnic and religious groups vying for power and influence.<sup>11</sup> This instability has often led to a breakdown in law and order, with mobs

taking matters into their own hands and resorting to violence as a means of seeking justice.

In conclusion, lynching in Pakistan is a complex issue that is driven by a range of social, political, and economic factors. Unless these underlying issues are addressed, it is unlikely that the country will be able to put an end to this heinous form of violence.

### III. Islamic Perspective on Lynching

Islamic principles and values place a great emphasis on the sanctity of human life and the importance of justice and due process. The Quran states:

"مَنْ قَتَلَ نَفْسًا بِغَيْرِ نَفْسٍ أَوْ فَسَادٍ فِي الْأَرْضِ فَكَأَنَّمَا قَتَلَ النَّاسَ جَمِيعًا"<sup>12</sup>

"Whoever kills a soul unless for a soul or for corruption [done] in the land - it is as if he had slain mankind entirely".

The Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) also emphasized the importance of respecting human life and warned against taking the law into one's own hands. As he (peace be upon him) said:

"المسلم من سلم المسلمون من لسانه ويده"<sup>13</sup>

Rather, he (peace be upon him) would have advised to respect the deceased as well, as he said:

"لا تسبوا الاموات، فإنهم قد افضوا إلى ما قدموا"<sup>14</sup>

Justice has been given such importance in Islam that even if one's self, parents or children are affected, even then the aspect of justice cannot be left. As stated in Quran:

"يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا كُونُوا قَوَّامِينَ بِالْقِسْطِ شُهَدَاءَ لِلَّهِ وَلَوْ عَلَىٰ أَنفُسِكُمْ أَوِ الْوَالِدِينَ وَالْأَقْرَبِينَ  
إِنْ يَكُنْ غَنِيًّا أَوْ فَقِيرًا فَاللَّهُ أَوْلَىٰ بِهِمَا ۖ فَلَا تَتَّبِعُوا الْهَوَىٰ أَنْ تَعْدِلُوا"<sup>15</sup>

"O you who have believed, be persistently standing firm in justice, witnesses for Allah, even if it be against yourselves or parents and relatives. Whether one is rich or poor, Allah is more worthy of both. So follow not [personal] inclination, lest you not be just". This verse highlights the importance of standing firm in justice, even if it goes against one's personal interests or those of their loved ones.

Furthermore, the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) emphasized the importance of justice in his teachings and actions. He said,

أَحَبُّ النَّاسِ إِلَى اللَّهِ أَنْفَعُهُمْ لِلنَّاسِ وَأَحَبُّ الْأَعْمَالِ إِلَى اللَّهِ سُرُورٌ تُدْخِلُهُ عَلَىٰ مُسْلِمٍ أَوْ تَكْشِفُهُ عَنْهُ كُرْبَةً أَوْ تَقْضِي عَنْهُ دَيْنًا أَوْ تَطْرُدُ عَنْهُ جُوعًا وَلَا أَنْ أَمْشِيَ مَعَ أَخٍ لِي فِي حَاجَةٍ أَحَبُّ إِلَيَّ مِنْ أَنْ أَعْتَكِفَ فِي هَذَا الْمَسْجِدِ يَعْنِي مَسْجِدَ الْمَدِينَةِ شَهْرًا<sup>16</sup>

"The most beloved of people according to Allah is he who brings most benefit to people, and the most beloved of deeds according to Allah the Mighty, the Magnificent, is that you bring happiness to a fellow Muslim, or relieve him of distress, or pay off his debt or stave away hunger from him. It is more beloved to me that I walk with my brother Muslim in his time of need than I stay secluded in the mosque for a month"

Islam gives so much importance to human life that even the killing of non-Muslim minority in the Muslim society is considered a great crime, as said by Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him).

"مَنْ قَتَلَ نَفْسًا مُعَاهِدًا لَمْ يَرِحْ رَائِحَةَ الْجَنَّةِ، وَإِنَّ رِيحَهَا يُوجَدُ مِنْ مَسِيرَةِ أَرْبَعِينَ عَامًا"<sup>17</sup>

"Whoever killed a Mu'ahid (a person who is granted the pledge of protection by the Muslims) shall not smell the fragrance of Paradise though its fragrance can be smelt at a distance of forty years (of traveling).

Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) likening killing a human being to disbelief said:

"لَا تَرْجِعُوا بَعْدِي كُفَّارًا، يَضْرِبُ بَعْضُكُمْ رِقَابَ بَعْضٍ"<sup>18</sup>

"Do not return after me as disbelievers by striking (cutting) the necks of one another."

These verses and hadiths clearly condemn taking the law into one's own hands and emphasize the importance of due process and the rule of law and provide a clear Islamic perspective on the issue of lynching and extrajudicial killings, emphasizing the importance of justice, due process, and the rule of law. Furthermore, Islamic law emphasizes the presumption of innocence until proven guilty and the right to a fair trial. It is imperative to apply these principles when dealing with cases of mob violence and lynching, to ensure that justice is served and the rights of all individuals are protected.

#### **IV. The Role of Education in Preventing Lynching**

By promoting Islamic education, individuals can learn the importance of these values and principles, which can prevent them from engaging in violent behavior. Moreover, Islamic education can help individuals develop critical thinking skills and the ability to differentiate between right and wrong.<sup>19</sup>

Religious leaders play a crucial role in shaping the attitudes and behavior of their followers. They have a unique responsibility to promote Islamic teachings that emphasize compassion, mercy, and respect for human dignity. In the context of lynching incidents, religious leaders can use their influence to promote peaceful conflict resolution and prevent the escalation of violence.<sup>20</sup>

One way to do this is through the promotion of Islamic education that emphasizes the sanctity of human life and the importance of justice and due process. Islamic educational institutions, such as madrassas, can play a key role in this effort. By incorporating these principles into their curriculum, madrassas can help prevent the spread of extremist views that condone violence against perceived enemies or minorities.<sup>21</sup>

Religious leaders can also use their platform to condemn lynching incidents and extrajudicial killings. They can issue fatwas and statements that emphasize the importance of respecting human rights and the rule of law, as well as the need to reject violence and extremism. In addition, they can work with civil society organizations, human rights groups, and government officials to promote interfaith dialogue and collaboration on issues related to peace and security.

## **V. The Role of the Judiciary in Addressing Lynching**

One of the most important steps towards preventing and punishing lynching incidents is effective implementation of the law. In Pakistan, lynching and extrajudicial killings are criminal offenses, and the perpetrators can be charged under several provisions of the Pakistan Penal Code, including murder, manslaughter, and assault.<sup>22</sup> However, the enforcement of the law remains weak, and the perpetrators often go unpunished due to a lack of political will and corrupt law enforcement agencies.<sup>23</sup>

One potential solution is to increase the accountability of law enforcement agencies and judicial institutions. This can be achieved by ensuring that these institutions operate independently, free from political influence, and with a focus on justice and due process. The government can also allocate more resources to the police and the judiciary to enable them to carry out their duties more effectively.

Another important measure is to raise public awareness about the negative impact of lynching on society and the economy. This can be achieved through the media, social media, and public campaigns that emphasize the importance of tolerance, respect for human rights, and non-violent conflict resolution. Religious leaders can play a crucial role in promoting these values and preaching against lynching incidents. By taking these measures, it is possible to prevent and punish lynching incidents and promote a more peaceful and just society in Pakistan.

## **VI. The Role of Civil Society Organizations and Media**

Civil society organizations and media can play a crucial role in preventing and addressing lynching incidents in Pakistan. These organizations can raise awareness about the issue by organizing public campaigns, providing legal and emotional support to victims and their families, and advocating for the protection of human rights. They can also hold state institutions accountable by monitoring and reporting on cases of lynching, and by pushing for effective investigation, prosecution, and punishment of perpetrators.<sup>24</sup>

Media can also play a critical role in shaping public opinion and promoting a culture of tolerance and respect for human rights. By highlighting the negative consequences of mob violence and emphasizing the importance of due process and the rule of law, media outlets can help to counter the narratives that fuel lynching incidents. They can also provide a platform for victims and their families to share their stories and seek justice.<sup>25</sup>

Furthermore, media outlets can provide a space for religious leaders and scholars to promote the message of peace and non-violence that is central to Islam. Through interviews, sermons, and other forms of public discourse, religious leaders can emphasize the importance of respecting the sanctity of human life, promoting justice and equality, and rejecting violence and extremism.<sup>26</sup>

In addition to civil society organizations and media, the government can also play a critical role in preventing and addressing lynching incidents. By enacting and enforcing laws that criminalize mob violence, the government can send a clear message that such acts will not be tolerated. Furthermore, by investing in effective investigation, prosecution, and punishment of perpetrators, the government can demonstrate its commitment to protecting the rights of all citizens.

## **VII. International Perspectives on Lynching in Pakistan**

The international human rights framework recognizes the right to life and due process as fundamental human rights. The Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR) states that "everyone has the right to life, liberty and security of person" and that "no one shall be subjected to arbitrary arrest, detention or exile" (Article 3 and 9).<sup>27</sup> Similarly, the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR) affirms the right to life and due process and prohibits arbitrary deprivation of life (Article 6).<sup>28</sup>

Moreover, the UN General Assembly adopted the Basic Principles on the Use of Force and Firearms by Law Enforcement Officials in 1990, which provide guidelines for the use of force by law enforcement officials, including that force should be used only when strictly necessary, and that law enforcement officials shall, as far as possible, apply non-violent means before resorting to the use of force. The principles also require that investigations be conducted when deaths or injuries occur as a result of the use of force by law enforcement officials.

In addition, the United Nations has established mechanisms to monitor and promote the protection of human rights globally. The Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) oversees the implementation of international human rights treaties and provides technical assistance to countries in implementing human rights standards. The Human Rights Council, a subsidiary body of the UN General Assembly, is responsible for promoting and protecting human rights around the world, and can establish special procedures to investigate and report on human rights abuses.<sup>29</sup>

Pakistan is a signatory to the UDHR and the ICCPR, and has ratified several other international human rights treaties, including the Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment. However, the implementation of these treaties in the country remains a challenge, and incidents of lynching and extrajudicial killings continue to occur. The international community has repeatedly called on Pakistan to take concrete measures to protect human rights and prevent such incidents.<sup>30</sup>

### **VIII. Conclusion**

In summary, this article has examined the issue of lynching in Pakistan from an Islamic perspective, highlighting the importance of promoting education, preaching tolerance, and enforcing legal measures to prevent mob violence. The article has demonstrated that lynching incidents are prevalent in Pakistan due to a complex interplay of historical, social, political, and economic factors. However, Islamic principles and values related to the sanctity of human life, justice, and due process provide a strong foundation for condemning such acts and advocating for their prevention.

The article has discussed the potential of alternative dispute resolution mechanisms, civil society organizations, and media in preventing lynching incidents, while also highlighting the challenges and opportunities for these actors in addressing the issue. Furthermore, the article has examined the international human rights framework related

to the problem of lynching and the potential role of international actors, including intergovernmental organizations and foreign governments, in addressing the issue.

Overall, this article provides a comprehensive analysis of the issue of lynching in Pakistan and calls for action by all stakeholders to prevent and punish such acts. It highlights the critical importance of promoting education and religious values that promote tolerance, respect for human rights, and non-violent conflict resolution, while also emphasizing the need for effective legal measures and international cooperation to address the problem

---

<sup>1</sup> "The Sialkot Lynching Incident." The News International. Accessed March 20, 2022. <https://www.thenews.com.pk/archive/print/531305-the-sialkot-lynching-incident>.

<sup>2</sup> "Human Rights Commission of Pakistan: Annual Report 2020." Human Rights Commission of Pakistan. Accessed March 20, 2022. <https://hrcp-web.org/hrpweb/wp-content/uploads/2021/04/HRCP-Annual-Report-2020.pdf>.

<sup>3</sup> Haider, Rifaat. "Lynching in Pakistan: Understanding and Combatting a Growing Phenomenon." *Georgetown Journal of International Affairs* 20, no. 1 (2019): 105-112. doi:10.1353/gia.2019.0012.

<sup>4</sup> "The rise of mob justice in Pakistan" by BBC News (2019)

<sup>5</sup> "Lynchings, mob violence and vigilantism in Pakistan: A systematic review" by Zainab Tariq and Farhan Navid Yousaf (2020)

<sup>6</sup> "Mob Violence in Pakistan: The Urgent Need for Legal and Social Reforms" by the Human Rights Commission of Pakistan (2018)

<sup>7</sup> Niaz, U. (2019). Mob violence in Pakistan: A critical analysis. *Journal of Research in Social Sciences*, 7(1), 1-8.

<sup>8</sup> Ali, K. (2018). Shia-Sunni sectarianism in Pakistan. In S. M. Khan & J. Kugle (Eds.), *Islam, Muslims, and the US: Essays on religion and politics* (pp. 1-13). Springer.

<sup>9</sup> Jafri, S. Z. (2019). The rise of mob violence in Pakistan: Exploring the causes and implications. *Journal of Political Studies*, 26(1), 11-23.

<sup>10</sup> International Labour Organization. (2017). *Global employment trends for youth 2017: Paths to a better working future*. Retrieved from [https://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---dgreports/---dcomm/documents/publication/wcms\\_598669.pdf](https://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---dgreports/---dcomm/documents/publication/wcms_598669.pdf)

<sup>11</sup> Niaz, U. (2019). Mob violence in Pakistan: A critical analysis. *Journal of Research in Social Sciences*, 7(1), 1-8.

<sup>12</sup> Quran 5:32

<sup>13</sup> Al-Bukhari, Muhammad ibn Ismail. *Sahih Al-Bukhari: Arabic-English*. Translated by Muhammad Muhsin Khan. Riyadh: Darussalam Publishers, 1997. Hadith No. 6484

<sup>14</sup> Ibid 6516

<sup>15</sup> Quran 4:135

<sup>16</sup> al-Mu'jam al-Awsat lil-Ṭabarānī Hadith No.6026

<sup>17</sup> Sahih al-Bukhari 6914

---

<sup>18</sup> Ibid 7078

<sup>19</sup> Ali, K. (2018). Religious Education in Pakistan: An Analytical Study. *Journal of Education and Practice*, 9(28), 68-78.

<sup>20</sup> Ahmed, I. (2018). Religion, conflict, and peacebuilding. In P. T. P. Wong, & L. C. J. Wong (Eds.), *Handbook of multicultural perspectives on stress and coping* (pp. 293-307). Springer.

<sup>21</sup> Islamic Research and Training Institute. (2018). *Combating hate speech: A guide for policymakers and social media companies*. Islamic Development Bank Group.

<sup>22</sup> Pakistan Penal Code. (n.d.). National Assembly of Pakistan. Retrieved from [http://www.na.gov.pk/uploads/documents/1343579793\\_998.pdf](http://www.na.gov.pk/uploads/documents/1343579793_998.pdf)

<sup>23</sup> Siddiqui, N. (2017). Lynching in Pakistan: Understanding the Dynamics of Mob Violence. *Journal of International Affairs*, 70(2), 141-158. Retrieved from <https://jia.sipa.columbia.edu/lynching-pakistan-understanding-dynamics-mob-violence>

<sup>24</sup> Ali, A. (2019). Lynching and extrajudicial killings in Pakistan. Pakistan Institute of Peace Studies.

<sup>25</sup> Munir, S. (2019). How Pakistan's media is fighting back against the scourge of mob justice. Retrieved from <https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2019/4/19/how-pakistans-media-is-fighting-back-against-the-scourge-of-mob-justice>

<sup>26</sup> Pakistan Press Foundation. (2020). Civil society launches national campaign against lynching. Retrieved from <https://www.pakistanpressfoundation.org/civil-society-launches-national-campaign-against-lynching/>

<sup>27</sup> United Nations General Assembly. (1966). International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights. Retrieved from <https://www.ohchr.org/en/professionalinterest/pages/ccpr.aspx>

<sup>28</sup> Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights. (n.d.). Human Rights. United Nations. Retrieved from <https://www.un.org/en/sections/issues-depth/human-rights/>

<sup>29</sup> United Nations. (1990). Basic Principles on the Use of Force and Firearms by Law Enforcement Officials. Retrieved from <https://www.ohchr.org/en/professionalinterest/pages/useofforceandfirearms.aspx>

<sup>30</sup> United Nations General Assembly. (1948). Universal Declaration of Human Rights. Retrieved from <https://www.un.org/en/universal-declaration-human-rights/>