



Countering Violent Extremism by Christian Community: A Case of Yuhanabad Mob Violence

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Abstract

The aim of this study is to evaluate the mob violence and killings of Christians in Yuhanabad, Lahore, in the context of religious intolerance based on the blasphemy allegations resulting in suicide attacks. This article explains the crisis state by looking at Christian victimization. The purpose of this study is to decipher the type of mob violence in Yuhanabad. This categorization is based on the liability system and the organizational level. Within that framework, three theoretical viewpoints are examined. First, a thick-and-thin view of religion is needed to understand the rising radicalization and the resulting attacks on minority Christians. Second, the deliberate targeting of Christians and ensuing sectarian strife through the well-planned framework of violence and oppression. Third, the deliberate process of scapegoating demonstrates the plurality in-and-out group discourse leading to the castigation of, and persecution of, minority Christians. The study attempts to comprehend the sociological concept of mob violence as a marginalizing mechanism, which was examined at Yuhanabad. In this study, lynching by mobs is interpreted as a process of marginalizing Christians.

Keywords: Violent Extremism, Christian victimization, Mob Violence, Church Attacks, Minorities.

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Introduction

In recent years, the situation has gotten worse for Pakistan's numerous religious minorities. Religious minorities, including Hindus, Christians, and Ahmadis, have endured discrimination for a long time. The difficulties of truly "belonging" in Pakistani society and taking part in the country's political life, notwithstanding Reports on the situation, indicate modest signs of improvement. The condition of minorities on the ground continues to deteriorate and degrade. Based on People's yearly ranking of Minority Rights groups under Threat, Pakistan has regularly performed well in international (MRG) comparisons since 2008 (Saleem, 2014).

Being one of the ten most populous nations in the world, the most severe kind of violence is referred to as violence. The circumstances with which minorities must cope show signs of being filled with hate speech and references to laws against blasphemy, and escalating violence towards religious sites pertaining to religious devotion. Numerous occurrences, such as the, serve to illustrate this point. In the month of September of last year, two bombs were detonated at the All-Saints Church in Peshawar—the worst attack on the Pakistani people in modern history. The Pakistani Christian community and the allegations against it In May 2014, 68 attorneys were accused of blasphemy. (Walsh, 2013). Recent incidents have also demonstrated that even the most fundamental freedom of movement may be abused. Restricting the activities of some religious organizations' doctor's murder in May 2014 made this very clear evidently; this is because he's an Ahmadi (Press, 2014). As a result of the suffocating surroundings, it has become increasingly difficult for many religious groups, and they find it challenging to maintain a sense of security in their communities where they have frequently spent time, and without fear for their safety their entire existence (Pakistan, 2018).

Therefore, it is not uncommon for them to have been pressured and threatened by different radical elements and groups to migrate to a more secure area of the nation overseas, as evidenced by the huge number of Pakistani migrants. Every year, a large number of Hindus leave for India. Unlike the vast majority of Sikhs and Hindus who came to India during the British Raj, most Christians at the division lived in the newly established Pakistan. In accordance with the United States Census Bureau's 1998 estimate, Christians account for around 1.59 percent of the population. 100 percent of Pakistan's population lives in poverty (Saleem, *Searching for Security: The Rising Marginalization of Religious Communities in Pakistan*, 2014). In actuality, this is the precise. There's no way to know for sure. However, estimates range anywhere from 2

to 3 million people are expected. Some people identify as Christian. Localities in the province of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, such as Peshawar, have a population of roughly 70,000, with the majority being Pakistani. Karachi, Lahore, Faisalabad, and other cities in Pakistan are home to a significant number of Christians. Punjab has a large number of tiny Christian towns (Peoples, 2018).

More than any non-Muslim faith group, Christians have made substantial contributions to Pakistan's social development, as evidenced by the construction of educational and medical facilities, health care providers, and hospitals in every state. Christians have experienced discrimination similar to that experienced by other religious minorities. Prejudice and persecution are widespread in Pakistan. (Talbot, 2021a) As a result of this issue being mostly ignored, unable to exert control over the most basic of human needs institutions erected by the Christian faith group. Since 2001, there has been an increase in acts of violence, and bias against the number of Christians is rising. (Talbot, 2021b) Seen as being a part of the 'West' in some way, Christians have been persecuted for many years due to their religious convictions. Accused of being the brains behind the US-led invasion of Afghanistan and the enormous human suffering that is also a result of large-scale operations in other nations, Muslims are the majority in these areas. There has been no decrease in recent times in the level of violence.

Religious extremists have been aiming to conduct a social and economic boycott on Christian agents, as well as mob violence and violence against the broader public, to bring about a total persecution. Christians wrongly accused of blasphemy or mob assaults are disproportionately targeted. The purpose of social banning is to induce fear and prevent victims from embracing the humiliation and oppression brought on by blasphemy accusations and violent acts. Protest movements have been used to increase tension and terror among Christians. (Malik, 2002). It manifests as disruption or restriction of essential services, as well as public threats and mob violence. Several of these cases involved hate propaganda propagated by groups and people in cities and rural areas across the country, an issue not recognized, much alone addressed, by federal regulations. The frequency of such incidents is alarmingly increasing, indicating rising Islamist radicalization, intolerance, and violence across Pakistani society. The marginalization of Christians as "disbelievers" or even "enemies of the state" is another kind of mass violence. Derogatory statements and language are routinely used in such claims. In Pakistan, religious extremists use societal isolation not only to threaten Christian beliefs but also to push people to flee the nation. Several municipal authorities are attacking

and threatening Christians, “openly urging that they leave the nation” and “launching mob attacks on them.”

Literature Review

Defining violence is complicated because it is difficult to acknowledge the scan feature without focusing on one nationalistic or hegemonic definition, which is a double-edged sword. As a result of these difficulties, Mary Jackman has developed a broad yet culturally neutral meaning of the term. “Actions that impose, threaten, or cause damage,” she says, constitute violence. She adds that violent actions can be “corporal, worded, or verbal” and that the injuries can be “corporal, psychological, material, or social,” as well as physical. Violent acts can take numerous forms, including ear-piercing, industrial mishaps that might be prevented, individual persecution, group oppression, as well as assault and murder. This definition challenges the popular belief that violence is always aberrant. It also acknowledges that people’s perceptions of violence are heavily influenced by their cultural context (Jackman, 1994 a).

Religion is frequently held up as a reservoir for inner and social harmony, and for good reason. What is the best way to comprehend its raging currents? Modern theorists were confident that religion would either fade in importance or become a cornerstone of universalistic culture, supporting a genuine community of men based on an uneven tendency over the centuries toward cultural variety and freedom. As a result, religion received little attention in the grand narratives of modernity despite its role as a flashpoint for violence. However, as the catastrophes of 9/11 have all too vividly demonstrated, such an interpretation of historical evolution is altogether too optimistic a perspective.

Religion and violence seem frequently intertwined in the tapestries of history, as a little moment’s reflection demonstrates. A wide range of religious traditions have sanctioned violence in particular instances, and others were embroiled in the processes of violence. In the classical civilizations, Zoroastrianism converted prior combat stories into a doctrine of everlasting apocalyptic battle between good and evil. At the same time, ancient Judaism formed a confederacy in the midst of a time of war with the Persian Empire. It had its martyrs in the early days of Christianity, and the medieval Roman church had its crusades and inquisitor (Cohan, 1993) .The tight relationship between authoritarian rule and religion, as well as the notion of jihad /holy

war as a vehicle of reformation, infuse Islam's political system with an inexhaustible reservoir of violence.

There is a lot of debate on the relevance and character of severe violence in religion. Religious violence, according to Mark Juergensmeyer, may be characterized by the pursuit of a battle that cannot be accomplished but in which loss is nonetheless unfathomable (Hall, 2003a).

Terrorism, according to Brian Jenkins, is just violence done for its own sake. There is no suggestion in either Juergensmeyer or Jenkins that symbolic violence does not have a purpose. Even solely symbolic aggression can legitimize physical violence, as Juergensmeyer and S.N. Eisenstadt both assert. Terrorism has far-reaching consequences, and they're not merely symbolic. Rather, terrorists' acts can have a significant impact on the dynamics of a wider system (Hall, 2003 b). For example, lynch mobs were a powerful tool for white supremacists in the US South, even. However, the number of lynchings was modest compared to the black population. A "logical" genocide against a minority in India is aided and abetted by even seemingly spontaneous riots in India. Even though planes were used as weapons of mass destruction in the 9-11 terrorist attacks targeting the World Trade Center towers, Pentagon, and White House as symbols of global capitalism, the attacks killed hundreds of innocent civilians. They sparked a lengthy military response from the United States government. Violence may have both symbolic and other effects on its perpetrators (McVeigh, 1999).

Sociologist Rene' Girard has provided a very detailed overview of the issues of mob violence and extremism in any civilization. A process for scapegoating is described in detail in the book *The Scapegoat*; the topic being addressed was extreme violence, which he describes as "acts of violence directly perpetrated by a mob of killers, like the persecution of Jews during the Black Death." Generally speaking, the procedure of scapegoat violence occurs in three stages. The first step is stereotyping the problem, the second phase is the character of the allegation, and the third stage is choosing a victim to be accused of the crisis. A brief summary of these three steps will establish the focus of the conversation. In the first phase, the citizens of a society grieve the disappearance of previously recognized cultural distinctions. There is a sense of loss of culture and values and a dialogue about it (Girard, 1987 a). A rising worry is expressed about the deterioration of society's old-fashioned social structure. At a time when society is experiencing some real difficulties, this rhetoric of crisis magnifies and finds a mimic multiplication. These include the spread of epidemics, the occurrence of natural disasters (such as floods,

earthquakes, famines, and other natural disasters), the emergence of violence in society, civil war, religious extremism, etc.

Overall, a societal “crisis” is implied. In the second stage, a society mourns the loss of ideals and is on the brink of disaster, accusing someone of being to blame. Logic implies that the members are too responsible if a society is disintegrating or controlled by violence. However, they would not take responsibility for this, instead looking for scapegoats and blaming others. Since human links are destroyed in the process, Girard argues that the objects of such connections cannot be wholly unaware of the phenomenon. Not taking responsibility for their acts, individuals always point the finger at the community or those who appear to be harmful for obvious reasons. Thus, in this second degree of accusation, heinous crimes, sexual offenses, and blasphemy/desecration are the principal charges against those held accountable. Finding victims who are ‘weak’ in every aspect is crucial. In this sense, “weak” and “minority” are interchangeable.

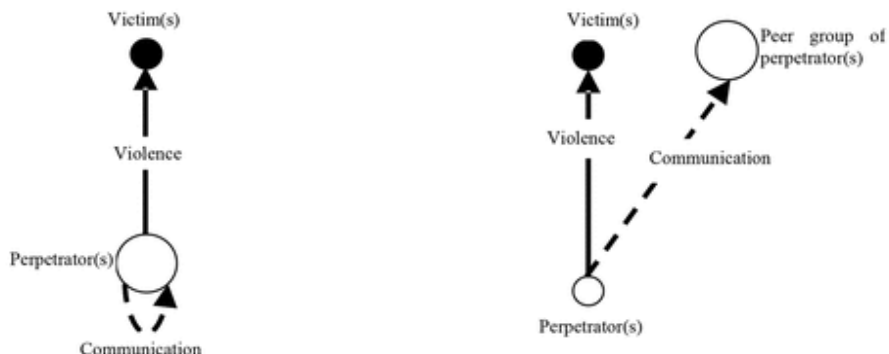
Some of the segments of society that are attributed with the above accusations (offenses, religious expletives, sexual transgression) and, as a result, cause social crisis (inflation, job loss, and persistent violence) are individuals or groups of people that are punished by protestors that represent the vast majority throughout. Persecutors always believe that a small group of people, or even one person, may cause immense harm to the entire community.

In this way, Rene’ Girard’s theory aids in understanding the scenario. This circumstance shows a scapegoating process by a large group of disenfranchised people. In Pakistan, picking victims is crucial. Minorities are underrepresented within a group. Petty criminals, religious minorities, and women are among the victims in Pakistan who have been ostracized by society. Victims are chosen based on their social class, the act’s unpredictable nature, and the effect of gossip (Girard, 1987 b).

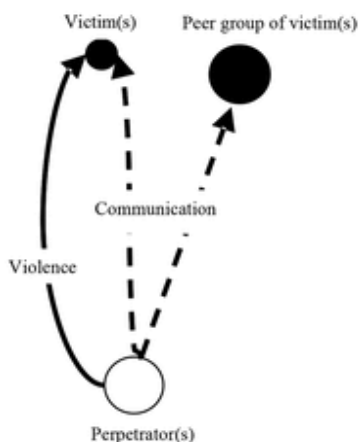
Victims identify with a social class. True, the great majority of victims are from the most underprivileged groups. Girard identified the ‘poor’ as a prospective social sacrifice and classified them as such. Poverty exposes a person’s weakness, and vulnerability invites more vulnerabilities. Even if the poor are products of society, they must face the wrath of their creator due to their social status. Also, being affluent signifies a group of potential victims in a Girardian system because one’s minority position. Pickpockets, phone snatchers, and store looters claimed the most victims in Pakistan. They

undoubtedly represent the lowest social strata. As has been noted, victims of various forms of mob lynching were disproportionately poor.

Collective identity-building intergroup violence Social identity-building intergroup violence



Intergroup violence as social control



Source: The space goat: Book by René Girard

Some theories explain a deep connection between religion and violence and analyzing violence as sacralized action sheds light on the symbolic structures of conflicts. On the other hand, there are many ways in which religion is linked to violent conflict, and our model doesn't include all of those avenues. Religion, at times, appears to be an ideology that is asserted or a social cleavage across which other conflicts are mapped. When violence happens inside the context of religion, however, the cause may be elsewhere. There is no barrier separating religion from other complex realities, and many social events leading to violence — such as attempts to control people — exist both

within and outside of religion. Religion is more than metaphorical currency; it is also used to convey profoundly held societal objectives, such as nationalism, anti-colonialism, or civilizational conflict, throughout diverse historical developments (Hall, 2003 c).

Research Methodology

With the ultimate objective of producing a comprehensive explanation of countering violent extremism by the Christian community targeted against them by the Muslim majority on the premise of religious distraction, this study is heavily reliant on qualitative research techniques. Secondary information from a number of sources was used to construct the majority of the research, which was complemented by interviews with prominent victims. A full analysis of the available literature is provided through secondary and third-party sources, such as peer-reviewed academic publications (both domestic and foreign) and books. Information on victims' beliefs, attitudes, and experiences that is not numerical was acquired through surveys; on the other hand, the case studies will draw on both secondary and primary data from a number of sources. The study brought Individual and community perspectives to light through data collection and analysis processes developed specifically for it. These tactics include conducting structured questionnaires geared towards the victims of such attacks, who are primarily Yuhanaabad residents, and conducting focus groups with the victims of such attacks.

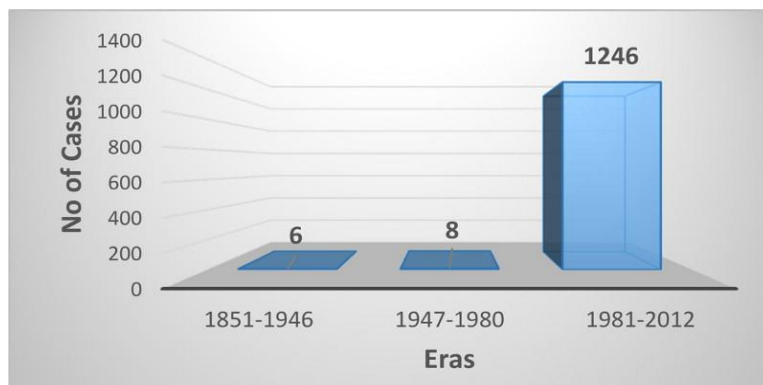
When doing qualitative research, interviews are often employed because they provide participants with a unique opportunity to share their opinions about their social life. As part of the project, the interviews were taped and transcribed. Pseudonyms were used in order to safeguard the anonymity of the participants. The information gathered from the interviews was compared to secondary information gathered from secondary sources in order to discover similarities and discrepancies.

Many pieces of literature have been written and discussed that demonstrate a distinct relationship between religion and violent behaviors. The extent of violent activities is not only studied in detail; we also have a comprehensive understanding of the relationship between religion and violence. Both the range of insights offered by various analytic techniques and the diversity of empirical relationships between violence and other factors are discussed. To date, there has been a pronounced disparity between the investigation of violence and religion. In addition to major comparative and general analyses, several excellent case studies have been published. Despite this, our

conceptions of social dynamics linking religion and violence are still in their infancy.

Analysis and Discussion

The restricted atmosphere created by fundamentalists has made it difficult for many religious groups to live in peace and safety in areas where they have commonly spent their lives. As a result, people are frequently forced to relocate to safer locations within the country or outside to prevent further persecution. Religious violence is resurging. Violent sectarian and religious disputes have increased dramatically during the last decade. Causes include Islamic radicals actively fighting worldwide jihad, power conflicts between Muslims and minorities, particularly Christians in Pakistan, religious intolerance, mob victimization related to religion, terrorism, and harassment of minority women for breaching religious norms.



Religious bias violence is easier to explain than categories. Tactics vary from intimidation, harassment, and jail to terrorism and outright warfare. It usually arises when the fundamental values that define a group's identity are seriously questioned. Communities that identify as "in-group" vs. "out-group" increase extremism, sometimes helped by fundamentalist religious leaders.

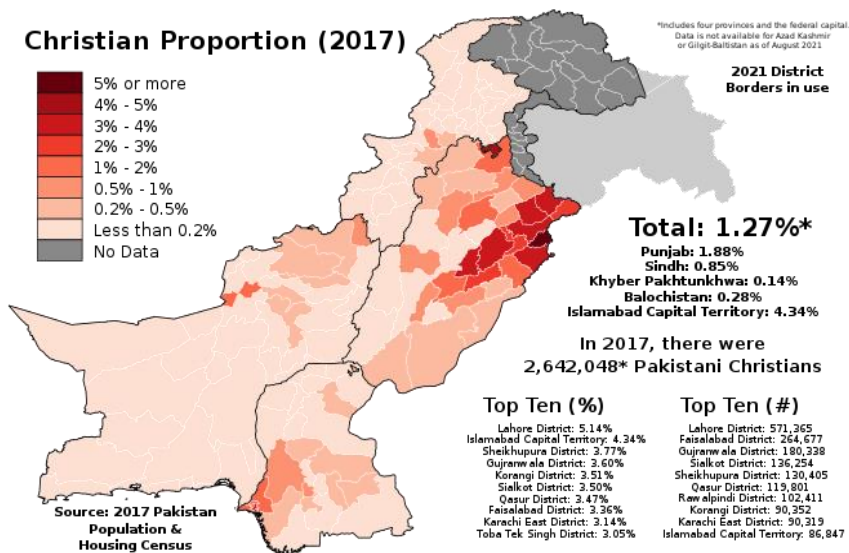
Certain people feel they have the capacity to regulate themselves while the authorities stand on the sidelines, especially those participating in blasphemy trials, public prosecutions, and mob violence. To hide their conduct, mob violence participants took advantage of the hostile climate toward minorities. A striking element of this phenomenon is that a disproportionate majority of victims are religious minorities.

Pakistan ignores several international legal responsibilities, including the right to life and liberty, personal freedom, conscience, religion or belief, freedom of speech, equality before the law, prohibition of discrimination, and prohibition of arbitrary detention. Law enforcement, prosecutors, and judges often use vague legislation, resulting in hearings that consistently violate the right to a trial and the presumption of innocence. Various laws allowed charging people who didn't want to commit a crime, including mentally ill people or minors, even if they knew or agreed to it.

Impunity for atrocities committed in the name of religion

Pakistani authorities have consistently failed to provide proper protection for religious minorities against religious-based violence over several decades. Even though certain governments have pledged to bring offenders of faith-based offenses to justice, these pledges have not been followed through on in the case of crimes perpetrated against non-Muslims. The inability of the state to combat impunity for such crimes is interpreted as implicit support, and this has led to an increase in religious intolerance as well as an increase in overt acts of violence and discrimination against minority groups.

Christian persecution has an influence on individuals on an individual level, yet, in many circumstances, it also has an influence on the greater community on a broader scale as a result of the persecution. Certain assaults are sometimes completely needless, yet in other circumstances, the actions of one group member result in an attack on the entire community as a kind of retaliation against that one member of the group. Violence against Christians in Pakistan is undoubtedly one of the most heinous and, tragically, one of the most prevalent kinds of persecution that the country has to offer. Extremism and terrorism are being used to further the persecuted Christians in Pakistan on a big scale. (International, 2016).



Several of the most horrible attacks on churches and their congregations, as well as attacks against their families, are conducted by extreme Islamic terror groups operating in the name of Islam to inspire fear and send political messages to predominantly Christian countries. Furthermore, these terrorist organizations are regularly affiliated with and even supported by the Pakistani state, which shares a shared ideology with several groups that operate under the name of al-Qaida in the Middle East. For example, in the instance of Youhanabad, mob violence is perpetrated by extremists who have developed a continuous dread of depreciation in their community and property. However, the extreme organization enjoys widespread backing, which it uses to provoke radicalization and consequential attacks on minorities.

A question for religious clerics and the role of media

When it comes to curbing religious extremism, religious leaders frequently get a bad rap for not doing enough. Entire religious groups are accused of complicity when they fail to denounce every act of extremism openly. This is a travesty of justice. Indeed, huge numbers of people of religion are actively aiding the impoverished and oppressed and promoting peace in the wake of conflict. They may be enlisted through their religious institutions, such as their synagogues, mosques, and synagogues, or by international humanitarian organizations and missions. Even though religious leaders are usually accused of igniting sectarian conflict, they often endeavor to accomplish the exact opposite, such as mediating peace deals and advocating nonviolence.

In Pakistan, religious minorities face a variety of types of discrimination, from political and economic constraints to outright violence. Together, these disparate types of prejudice serve to strengthen and perpetuate one another. Similarly, in Pakistan, religious prejudice is intertwined with other forms of oppression. Media coverage in Pakistan has expanded dramatically in the last two decades, as has the number of sources it may draw on.

Discrimination against minorities in the media is very pronounced. Organizational tactics, including posting stickers on buses, scribbling on walls, and handing out booklets, have been used to incite hatred against people of color. Clergy openly exhort their followers to murder and harm minorities at conferences around Pakistan. Even while the media frequently covers such anti-Semitic rhetoric, neither the integrity of the words nor the perspective of Ahmadis is ever questioned. “Organized” conversions to Islam. The media depict Christian groups as “agents of the West,” anti-Pakistan, and adversaries of Islam. The government does not protect discrimination and intimidation against these populations. These types of insurgencies give rise to mass genocide by the religious fundamentalist who are being properly brainwashed by their religious scholar, promising them a great sign of virtue and blessing in reward for the attack.

After the Christ Church incident, Asifa Bibi’s main concern was protecting the rest of her family. Victimization of the Christian community in such a systematic and standardized manner develops a horrific scenario related to their safety. Suffering in Pakistan as a religious minority is an example of how difficult it can be to live as a Christian.

She said:

“My main concern was for the well-being of the rest of my household. The safety and security of my family was the main concern as the riots began to explode. I was under a great deal of stress, and as a result, I suffered bodily issues. The most difficult challenge over the first several months was securing food.

Talking about the financial cycle for his family, she further added,

“We managed to arrange for our requirements and afterward chose to work to fulfill both ends of the spectrum... As a result of the fact that one of my sons was working and the other was a car mechanic, we had some

money saved. This was our method of surviving... I don't have a job... Nonetheless, I have become weaker... We haven't been able to get back on our feet. The two of us are trying to stay afloat, both financially and mentally” (Bibi A., 2021).

According to the Christians in Pakistan, the primary reason for their continued deterioration is because the official itself is one of the primary causes of oppression and persecution. Islamist radicals, in collaboration with officials at all levels, aggressively encourage abuses of the human and constitutional rights of Christians in Pakistan. It is necessary to characterize the persecution of Christianity in Pakistan as an act of internalized state-sponsored terrorism in this context. The persecution of Christians is widespread and may be found across Pakistan, from the capital to the provinces, and in both urban and rural locations.

As opposed to persecution of Christians in other parts of the world, persecution in Pakistan is organized and systematic; it does not consist solely of irregular, episodic operations carried out by a small number of individuals or groups. Oppression must be regarded as comprehensive because it affects all aspects of professional and personal life, including the social, economic, and political sectors. It is the goal of the offenders not only to eradicate Christianity from the country but also to destroy Christian communal and cultural life, as well as the educational opportunities and economic conditions available to them. In Pakistani culture, social and cultural aspects demonstrate how discrimination and prejudice against particular religious communities, such as some Islamists, have become deeply rooted.

A variety of laws, constitutional changes, and legislative actions established in Pakistan during the previous few decades have served to increase discrimination against religious minorities. As a result of this bias, which gives religious minorities a weaker position at the institutional level, it has a significant influence on the everyday activities of members of religious minorities and also their capacity to engage in Pakistani politics. While Pakistan's Constitution promises equal protection under the law to all people, religious minorities' involvement in the government's political sphere is severely restricted.

Mobs have assaulted Christian settlements several times, and when they have failed to kill a particular individual, they have instead set fire to entire settlements, leaving the remainder of the community too afraid to venture

outside their borders for fear of being attacked again—religious teachings in mosques, which give people the power to murder, often infuriate extremists. Islamist nations like Pakistan, where Christianity is the majority religion, have a history of forcing people to give up their Christian beliefs completely. As a result of their acts, religious extremists often use violence and intimidation to attain their goals.

Following the death of her husband, Naima Bibi main concerns were the safety and security of his family in order to survive

She said:

“I was completely unprepared for what transpired. I was concerned about the well-being of my young children... I had to deal with a great deal of pressure... Due to my family’s dire financial circumstances, I began working at a factory to make ends meet (Bibi N., 2021 a)

Adding about the financial circumstances, she further added:

However, I was forced to quit since no one was available to watch over my small children, and my first worry was their well-being. Members of my husband’s family work as day laborers and contribute financially to our household. The incidences have completely wrecked our lives as people who are disguising their true identities because of them” (Bibi N., 2021 b)

Even if protecting others’ rights is a legitimate rationale for governments to restrict certain human rights, such as freedom of speech and expression and the ability to proclaim one’s religious beliefs publicly, it excludes safeguarding the religious sensitivities of others. The state failed to ensure the safety of its citizens besides leaving them on their own (Saleem, 2014,b).

People with a mob mentality won’t bother checking the facts of the situation. The mob mentality takes precedence over reason (Carey, 2021). Violent vigilantism is legitimized by using laws as a shield. Even though Muslims make up the bulk of those killed in such assaults, members of religious minorities make up a sizable minority. There are several sorts of gang violence: persons accused of blasphemy being shot.

MPA Punjab Assembly Rameesh Singh Arora spoke on the role performed by the Pakistani government in the aftermath of the violent attacks on Churches in Yuhanand when people were attending Sunday mass prayer.

He said:

“I wasn’t personally involved in delivering help to the victims, but as a member of the ruling party, I can describe in great detail the exact procedures done by the administration. As part of the ongoing Benazir Income Support Program (BISP), the government registered the victims’ relatives, encouraged the development of their talents, and provided interest-free loans to the widows of the victims.”

While talking about women’s empowerment, he further added,

“It’s also worth noting that at the time, a distinct government agency was set up to concentrate on women’s empowerment, and this department collaborated closely with civil society to help widows of victims cope emotionally. Personally, I’ve taken part in several lectures and debates at colleges across Pakistan to help promote Christian-Muslim cooperation, and I’m confident that most Pakistanis are quite tolerant and have no problems coexisting peacefully with minorities” (Arora, 2021).

Although launching such an effort is a commendable move, the state failed to fulfill its primary role of providing a safe haven for all of its citizens, regardless of their religious affiliation. It has nothing to do with the federal or state governments. Even though religious minorities in Pakistan are legally protected, several regulations are misinterpreted or ignored, and as a result, they have done nothing to alleviate the terrible conditions that religious minorities face. There may be a policy of divide between Muslims and non-Muslims continuing in the current environment, as well as a promotion of a nationalist ideology defined by religion that excludes people. There are also allegations that religious groups exerted pressure on police to pursue blasphemy charges in other cases. Finding a lawyer willing to represent someone guilty of blasphemy has always been extremely difficult due to the inherent risks. Because religious clerics hold such sway in society, they have the power to foment uprisings and incite violence against marginalized communities.

As a result of their social isolation and the potential for physical harm, Christian minority are less likely to take part in day-to-day activities and socialize with others. Getting involved with people outside of their neighborhood makes them uncomfortable. Dr. Ayra mentioned this during an interview,

She said:

“Families in distress must participate in productive activities such as expanding their social network, going for a daily walk, exercising, and eating healthfully. They require social contact to express their sadness and loss (Ayra, 2021 a).

While talking about the multi-culturalism and acceptance in society, she further added:

“Changing one’s environment can be a useful cure, and seeking psychiatric assistance can help prevent depression from erupting. However, people’s attitudes against Christians cause them to be depressed to a greater extent” (Ayra, 2021 b).

Conclusion

In order to ensure the long-term security of the state related to minorities as a whole, Pakistan’s ability to protect its mixed culture and safeguard the interest of all religious organizations will be critical. This will be true not only for the safety of its minorities but also for the long-term consistency of Pakistan as a whole. However, while the contemporary persecution of numerous religious minorities is somewhat motivated by Pakistan’s previous past, it is also an unmistakable indictment of the country’s administration and regard for fundamental human rights. The targeting of members of these groups, as well as pervasive prejudice against them, which is sometimes assisted by the apathy or deliberate backing of authorities, has also contributed to the continuous degradation of Pakistan’s security. As a result, the country’s destiny is highly determined in great portion by the country’s ability or inability to accommodate members of all faith communities as equal citizens. Although the Christian minority in Pakistan faces similar challenges to other religious minorities, the reality of their plight stands in sharp contrast to Pakistan’s political leadership and international accords that the country has signed. Because of a variety of causes, Christians in Pakistan are among the most

persecuted religious minorities in the world. When taken as a whole, the ramifications of these changes are rather obvious. As a result, the flood of neo-fundamentalism has managed to grow so strong in contemporary Pakistan, and the properly constituted authorities become so vulnerable the former can easily overwhelm the latter on issues of ‘taking law in their hand’ – which heats up in the end to a majority notion, whipped up by the neo-fundamentalism, that those who do not acknowledge the doctrinal premises of their own neo-orthodox perception of Islam.

Recommendation:

- 1- Defining hate speech in the media and enforcing laws that makes it a criminal, such as section 153-A of the PPC, should be the top priorities. Collaborate with PEMRA to keep an eye out for hate speech being spread through electronic media.
- 2- Guarantee that officers quickly respond to situations of prejudice; police monitoring or reform should be implemented. Law enforcement officers should also get sensitivity training regarding minority and gender problems in order to increase their ability to deal with forced conversions and other forms of exploitation.
- 3- Ensure that all citizens are represented equally and that minorities are not kept isolated from the rest of the community. Allow non-Muslims to take positions at all levels of government and repeal provisions like Articles 41(2) - 91(3) of the Law that restrict non-Muslims from being head of state or prime minister. Constituents should be able to create minority political parties or propose a minimal number of candidates.
- 4- Provide proper access plus security to sites of religious worship, among other things. Ascertain that the necessary state entities safeguard religious places for all groups, allowing them to peacefully practice their religion in an environment that is free of danger. In addition, authorities should repeal discriminatory rules governing the building and maintenance of religious structures and structures of worship.
- 5- Meet the obligations imposed by international treaties to which Pakistan is a party, including but not limited to Bringing Pakistan’s legislation into compliance with the many international accords that the country has signed that encourage religious freedom. Check to see

that the laws that actually protect religious freedom are being enforced as effectively as possible.

- 6- Increase the representation of minorities at the federal and regional levels. Advocate and encourage the effective participation of minorities by international norms and standards. Create systems that enable minorities, particularly women from underrepresented groups, to participate in decision-making and execution. Implement systems that provide minority representatives a unique role – such as consulting and particular voting privileges – in considering any legislation that significantly impacts minorities' civil and political rights.
- 7- Law enforcement agencies can benefit from training and awareness-raising events, as well. Police and judges should be made more aware of minority rights and prejudice so that they can respond more effectively in the event of violent attacks or other rights violations, with special emphasis paid to the needs of minority women. In order to build a comprehensive picture of institutional shortcomings, it is necessary to investigate and monitor victim reporting, registration, and subsequent processes.
- 8- Organize in collaboration with civic society to foster interfaith dialogue and minority engagement. Collaborate with non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and activists to encourage dialogue and trust-building activities amongst religious groups. Conduct seminars on political engagement for religious minorities to improve their involvement in politics and their understanding of their legal rights and responsibilities.
- 9- Working closely with minorities to combat discrimination is essential; by offering training, legal counseling, advocacy platforms, and other types of aid to religious minority members, particularly minority women, we may assist them in taking action against injustices, bad depictions, and human rights violations.

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