

Long-Term Psychological and Social Concomitants
of Witnessing Lynching: A Developmental Perspective

Master's Thesis in
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Abstract

Aim: The study aimed to investigate the long-term psychological and social concomitants of exposure to lynching on individuals, exploring the multifaceted impacts on mental health and societal interactions.

Method: A qualitative study was conducted by interviewing five experts experienced with helping lynching victims. The interviews were semi-structured and consisted of 12 questions. Twelve themes were found to be significant and common within the interviews: legal framework, mechanisms to support victims, influence on societal cohesiveness, mitigation of trauma, psychological theories, the perspective of law enforcement agencies, community healing, sociocultural help, the role of societal belief, the difference in class and effects, promising practice, and measures from society. The themes were analyzed.

Results: Experts unanimously recognize the severe psychological and societal impacts, stressing the erosion of social cohesion and trust in the legal system. There's a call for comprehensive strategies encompassing legal reform, mental health support, educational changes, and community policing to mitigate trauma, enhance societal resilience, and prevent future incidents.

Conclusions: To promote a more educated, united, and law-abiding society, the discussions highlight the significance of a comprehensive approach that combines law enforcement activities with community participation and support networks.

Key Words: Lynching, community policing, mental health support, legal reform, Bangladesh

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1. Introduction

1.1 Aim of the Study

This study aims to investigate the long-term psychological and social concomitants of exposure to lynching on individuals, exploring the multifaceted impacts on mental health and societal interactions.

1.2 Understanding Long-Term Psychological Effects

Groups use and experience aggressiveness more frequently than individuals in communities worldwide (Meier & Hinz, 2004). Lynchings are caused by collective phenomena resulting from an intricate and intertwined mix of internal and external factors. Group aggression is the collective manifestation of hatred or damaging behaviors by a group toward another (Brewer & Silver, 2000). Lynching encompasses a range of activities that can profoundly impact the psychological landscape of those who witness such occurrences (Baron, 1977). In exploring the long-term psychological and social concomitants of witnessing lynching from a developmental perspective, this thesis aims to analyze the profound psychological and emotional impact such traumatic experiences can have across the lifespan. Embarking on a qualitative research endeavor, this study will conduct in-depth interviews with experts in various fields.

This study explores the enduring psychological and emotional consequences experienced by individuals who, during their formative years, were exposed to the distressing act of lynching. The study aims to unravel the complex tapestry of the long-term effects by drawing on the expertise of professionals such as law professors, peace and conflict studies experts, psychologists, and police officials. The focus on expert opinions aims to provide a nuanced perspective on the psychological, emotional, and social repercussions of lynching, shedding light on the multifaceted aspects that influence individuals who have experienced this trauma during their developmental years.

Written with a grim but accurate pen, human history is a list of groups of people who want to harm other groups of people (Goldstein, 2003). There has probably never been a more obvious, harmful, and persistent human flaw. Extralegal group assault or murder motivated by social control concerns can be found in many global cultures and eras. Lynching is group violence, perpetrated by a collectivity upon individuals who serve as representatives of another

collectivity (Lancaster, 2021). The goal of lynching is fundamentally structural, to preserve the exploitable station of the target population. Understanding the complex relationships between human conduct and social peace requires a thorough understanding of group aggressiveness (Densley & Peterson, 2018). An unauthorized organization or gang that is part of or represents another group feels obligated to take revenge for any perceived infraction (Stevenson, 2021). They feel this need when they murder or physically mistreat someone who is identified as a member of one group, usually a targeted and hated group. The main component of a terror campaign or lynching is carried out to support an unfair social system.

Understanding how group aggression affects individuals is important because it can have long-lasting effects on the mental and emotional health of those who observe these kinds of incidents (Brown & Hewstone, 2005). Those who experience group aggression may have to negotiate a difficult interplay between their feelings, thoughts, and interpersonal dynamics, which might affect how they perceive the world and how they will react in future interactions. This long-lasting trauma affects all aspects of a person's mental health; it is not limited to isolated occurrences. On a societal level, lynching contributes to a culture of fear and perpetuates cycles of violence and injustice. It can deepen divisions, erode trust between communities, and have lasting effects on the collective psyche of affected populations (Clarke, 1998). Those from marginalized communities often suffer more from lynching because of its racial and cultural connotations, which intensify their suffering. Something such as this might contribute to reinforcing existing systemic inequities by raising awareness of the vulnerabilities in a particular social situation.

This study aims to investigate the effects of exposure to group aggression on individuals with post-traumatic stress disorder, acknowledging the critical need for investigation into the long-term repercussions. The intention is to demonstrate how these sorts of experiences, met at different times in life, intertwine with the narrative of a person's psychological and social development as it unfolds by concentrating on a developmental viewpoint. This study might contribute to the reduction of stigma around mental health concerns by illuminating the psychological effects of witnessing violence. Findings from research can be integrated into the training of mental health professionals, law enforcement, and other first responders.

This study aims to investigate the long-term consequences of witnessing lynching while also emphasizing the developmental perspective that is used to analyze these effects. The study uses a developmental approach to shed light on the complex relationships between observed

aggressiveness and different phases of personal development, ranging from early infancy through adolescence and emerging adulthood.

1.3 Research Question

This study seeks to address the following key question:

1. What are the long-term psychological and social consequences of exposure to lynching on individuals?

1.4 The Dynamics, Motivations, and Implications of Mob Lynching

A mob lynching is an extrajudicial, violent act in which a crowd of people decides to enforce the law on their own. Usually, this involves attacking or murdering a person who is suspected of committing a crime. This type of vigilantism is frequently motivated by feelings such as fear, rage, or dissatisfaction inside the crowd and is typified by a lack of due process, evidence, or a fair trial (Stevenson, 2021).

Incidents of mob lynching can happen in a variety of settings, from charges of social, religious, or cultural transgressions to suspicions of theft or robbery. These crimes are motivated by a breakdown in the rule of law, a mistrust of the legal system, and occasionally by ingrained biases or prejudices in the community. Mob lynchings have serious and complex repercussions that affect not just the victims and their relatives but also the whole community by feeding a cycle of violence, mistrust, and terror. Such occurrences show how important it is to have a strong legal system, educate the public, and foster social cohesiveness to avoid and resolve complaints through legal channels and guarantee that justice is administered in a just and compassionate manner. Efforts to address the root causes of mob lynching involve promoting awareness, strengthening the rule of law, and fostering a culture of tolerance and respect for human rights.

An extrajudicial group killing is known as a mob lynching. This denotes that a group of people, frequently without a trial or due process, take the law into their own hands and murder someone. The crowd generally acts out of fear, prejudice, or rage after accusing the victim of a crime, real or imagined. Mob lynching is a grave human rights violation that frequently affects underprivileged groups because of their color, ethnicity, religion, or other traits. Additionally, it may be used to terrify whole populations or put an end to protests.

Regardless of the apparent rationale, mob lynching is illegal and goes against basic legal norms. A victim's group is frequently the target of bias and animosity in mob lynchings. Throughout history, underprivileged communities have been oppressed and intimidated by mob lynchings. Mob lynchings continue to occur worldwide even though less frequently than in the past.

1.5 Understanding Patterns and Motivations of Lynching Incidents

Mob lynching is illegal and against basic legal principles, regardless of the reason behind it. Even now, there are instances of violence such as lynching. Lynching is mostly done to impose mob justice when there is no established judicial system. The act of lynching is considered a violent crime due to its extreme disrespect for human life, use of force in public to maintain power, impunity for those who do it, and its ability to terrorize a particular social group.

Racial Lynching: Historically, racial lynching has been a noteworthy and unsettling occurrence. This type of lynching is defined by acts of violence committed against someone based on their race or ethnicity; African Americans are frequently the target of these crimes.

Religious or Communal Lynching: Lynchings may occasionally be motivated by conflicts within the community or religion, with victims being targeted for violence because of their identification as members of a particular group, association, or religion.

Social or Cultural Lynching: Perceived transgressions of societal norms, cultural traditions, or conventions may serve as the driving force for this kind of lynching. Those who act in ways deemed deviating from socially or culturally acceptable standards may become targets.

Economic Lynching: Lynchings may occur because of economic conflicts, such as rivalry or theft accusations, and can also be influenced by economic considerations.

Political Lynching: Lynchings may occasionally be politically motivated, with victims being singled out for their political involvement, political ties, or perceived opposition to a specific ideology or government.

1.6 News Coverage of Mob Lynching in Bangladesh

Incident 1: False social media reports have incited mob violence in Bangladesh that has resulted in the murders of eight persons, including women. The stories, which mostly circulated on Facebook, said that while a huge bridge was being built, children were being abducted and

sacrificed to appease spirits. According to police investigations, none of the dead were engaged in such activities ('Bangladesh Lynchings', 2019).

Authorities launched a crackdown after over thirty more people were attacked about the rumors. All police stations in the nation received instructions on how to proceed to stop the spread of misinformation. Ten websites, sixty Facebook pages, and twenty-five YouTube channels were shut down consequently. Following allegations of a young man purportedly discovered with a child's severed head in the northern area of Netrokona, the killings started (Mahmud, n.d.)

Taslina Begum, a mother of two, was one of the victims. A crowd in Dhaka beat her to death because they thought she was a kidnapper of children. Concerning her murder, police have detained at least five persons and arrested eight others for disseminating false information on social media. Police are utilizing loudspeakers to dispel myths and increase awareness because they are worried about the potentially fatal effects in rural regions (Mahmud, n.d.)

Sociology professor Monirul Islam of Dhaka University believes that the lynchings may be an indication of mistrust in the current law and order system. He also raised the idea that some people could be intentionally attempting to incite trouble or fear in the neighborhood. The Padma River, a significant Ganges tributary, is the site of the mega-bridge construction, which is expected to be Bangladesh's largest. In Bangladesh, there have previously been reports of human sacrifices for the construction of bridges; such instances took place in 2010 ('A Human Sacrifice Bridge Rumour Started Circling on Facebook — Then Eight People Were Murdered', 2019).

Incident 2:

In a Bangladeshi town called Burimari in the Lalmonirhat district, a man was allegedly beaten to death and lynched by a crowd of hundreds for desecrating the Muslim holy book, the Quran. The incident occurred after the man and another person were accused of disrespecting the holy books in the main mosque by searching for weapons in a way deemed disrespectful by the imam. The crowd seized the two men, confined them to a room, and later attacked one of them, beating him and setting his body on fire. The victim, a 35-year-old former librarian, was reportedly struggling with psychological problems after losing his job. The police found no weapons in the mosque, and the second man was taken into protective custody. Mob beatings and violence fueled by rumors and superstitions are not uncommon in Bangladesh. The incident coincided with heightened anger in the country over alleged Islamophobic comments made by

French president Emmanuel Macron, leading to anti-France rallies and calls for a boycott of French products (A Brutal Lynching in Lalmonirhat, 2020).

1.7 Bangladeshi Newspapers Analyze Mob Lynching Incidents

Bangladeshi newspapers explore the unsettling surge in mob violence, correlating it with diminishing confidence in the nation's judicial system and law enforcement effectiveness. The media emphasize the critical need for heightened public awareness, improved police accessibility, and thorough investigations to deter such crimes and ensure justice. Specific instances, such as the tragic case of Taslima Begum Renu, who met an untimely demise while seeking information about her child's school admittance, are highlighted. The articles express concerns about the efficacy of the judicial system, particularly in cases where offenders remain masked and elusive (Chandan, 2019).

Presenting factual accounts, statistical data, and expert opinions, these newspaper articles adopt a concerned tone regarding the persistent occurrence of mob violence. A particular focus is placed on the recent incident involving the lynching of Abu Yunus Md Shahidunnabi Jewel in Lalmonirhat. Experts quoted in the articles attribute mob lynching to factors such as sluggish investigations, lack of proper education, and a sense of entitlement among the population. The deep-rooted belief that individuals can take the law into their own hands, coupled with the lack of accountability for perpetrators, is identified as a contributing factor.

The articles recommend swift trials, improved education, and local government intervention as solutions, emphasizing the necessity for community education on values such as compassion, lawfulness, tolerance, and religious harmony. The newspapers underscore that mob lynching is a complex issue with deep societal roots, urging multifaceted approaches to address its underlying causes. The inclusion of expert perspectives, statistical analysis, and coverage of specific incidents underscores the newspapers' serious and analytical approach, reflecting a genuine concern for societal well-being and a call for proactive measures to tackle the complexities of mob violence in Bangladesh.

1.8 Root Causes of Mob Lynching

A complicated phenomenon, mob lynching is impacted by a range of political, social, cultural, and economic variables. Although the precise causes might fluctuate depending on the situation and the area, mob lynching is frequently caused by several common factors:

Distrust in the Legal System: The formal judicial system's lack of confidence is one of the main causes. Those who feel that the authorities are unfair, incompetent, or corrupt may turn to mob justice (van damme & Pauwels, 2012).

Spread of Rumors: Unverified information can incite emotions and spark mob violence; it is frequently disseminated via social media and word-of-mouth. Lynchings may occur because of rumors of theft, kidnapping, or other crimes (Wilkinson, 2018).

Deep-Rooted Prejudices: Preexisting prejudices related to caste, religion, or ethnicity may be a factor in mob violence. Discriminatory attitudes have the potential to provoke attacks on those who are seen as different or dangerous (Green & Seher, 2003).

Displacement and Unemployment: Social discontent may be exacerbated by economic causes such as unemployment and relocation. Economic concerns can sometimes lead to false accusations of criminal activity against individuals (Raphael & Winter-Ebmer, 2001).

Political Motivations: Political benefit can be achieved by manipulating mob violence. To accomplish their objectives or make amends with opposing parties, politically motivated individuals or groups may instigate violence (Jones et al., 2017).

Sensationalism: Fear and terror may be made worse by sensationalized media coverage, which might result in mob violence. Public views and responses are shaped in part by the media (Wong & Harraway, 2020).

Low Educational Levels: An increase in mob lynching instances may be observed in areas with lower levels of education. Vigilantism can be exacerbated by ignorance of human rights laws and procedures (Stoddard et al., 2015).

Misuse of Technology: Mob violence may escalate swiftly when social media and instant messaging services are abused to disseminate incorrect information (Bock, 2012).

It is crucial to understand that these elements frequently interact in intricate ways and that there can be significant regional and incident-specific variations in the motivations for mob lynchings. A comprehensive strategy including media responsibility, community education, legal reforms, and attempts to reduce socioeconomic tensions is needed to address the problem.

1.9 Concomitants of Witnessing Violence

Individuals may have a wide range of serious long-term effects from seeing hostility and violence. These effects might show themselves as behavioral, emotional, and psychological issues. The following are some typical outcomes.

Psychological impact

Trauma: Witnessing violence can lead to psychological trauma, causing distressing thoughts, nightmares, and flashbacks. It may contribute to the development of post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) (Muller, 2016).

Fear and anxiety: People who are exposed to violence may develop fear and anxiety, which will make them extremely watchful and circumspect about their safety (Moss, 2003).

Desensitization: Desensitization is a condition in which people become less sensitive or receptive to violent stimuli over time because of repeated exposure to violence (Mrug et al., 2015).

Emotional consequences

Fear and apprehension: Aggression can make one feel helpless, angry, depressed, or afraid. People could start to feel increasingly uneasy in their surroundings (Al-Nuaimi et al., 2015).

Depression: Extended exposure to violent content might potentially exacerbate depression, which is typified by enduring emotions of melancholy, despair, and disinterest in activities (Hessel et al., 2019).

Anger and hostility: Increased amounts of rage and animosity brought on by seeing aggressiveness may hurt relationships and one's general mental health (Weisburd et al., 2018).

Behavioral changes

Aggressive behavior: Some people could become more aggressive and violent in their activities by copying the hostile behaviors they have seen in others (Farrell et al., 2020).

Avoidance: Witnesses may use avoidance techniques, avoiding places or circumstances that bring up the violent occurrence in their memories (Pineles et al., 2011).

Sleep disturbances: Violent exposure can cause sleep disorders, such as trouble falling asleep, nightmares, or irregular sleep patterns (Koffel et al., 2016).

Cognitive effects

Impaired cognitive functioning: Seeing violent acts can hurt one's memory, focus, and ability to make decisions (Brandes et al., 2002).

Negative worldview: People might start to see the world more negatively, as frightening, and harmful (Kimble et al., 2018).

Social consequences

Isolation: Those who witness violence may become socially isolated and retreat from society, because they find it difficult to trust people or are afraid of being hurt (Fox et al., 2021).

Relationship difficulties: Relationships can be strained emotionally after seeing aggressiveness, because people may find it difficult to communicate and build trust (Campbell & Renshaw, 2018).

Long-term impact

Chronic health Issues: Long-term exposure to violence has been linked to many chronic health conditions, such as immune system damage, digestive difficulties, and cardiovascular problems (Koenen & Galea, 2015).

Inter-generational effects: Those who witness violence may leave behind trauma and coping techniques for their offspring, which can influence future generations (Yehuda & Lehrner, 2018).

It is significant to remember that people react to seeing violence in different ways depending on a variety of circumstances, such as their resilience, their coping strategies, and the support networks that are accessible to them. Seeking therapy or counseling from a professional may be quite important for people who are coping with the fallout from seeing hostility and violence.

Being present during a mob lynching is a horrific event that can have a long-lasting, significant impact on a person's mental health and frequently result in the onset of Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD). The symptoms of post-traumatic stress disorder might last for a long time after being exposed to a stressful incident. The recurrence of upsetting memories and thoughts is a major feature of post-traumatic stress disorder (Brewin, 2015). Witnesses of mob lynchings can suffer from intense flashbacks and intrusive thoughts that cause them to relive the horrible incident years after it happened. The severe and upsetting character of these events has a role in the emergence of bothersome symptoms that interfere with day-to-day functioning.

PTSD often manifests as avoidance habits and emotional numbness. When faced with reminders of the traumatic incident—such as people, places, or activities—witnesses to mob violence may deliberately want to avoid them. This avoidance can result in emotional numbness, a state in which people lose interest in things they used to love and become emotionally detached from other people (Taft et al., 2011). Witnessing mob lynchings can also have negative mental and emotional effects on victims. Frequent symptoms include emotional swings such as melancholy, guilt, or shame, along with persistently negative thoughts about oneself, other people, or the world. Witnessing violence can cause trauma that distorts a person's perspective and compromises their mental health in general (Mann & Marwaha, 2024).

PTSD is further characterized by alterations in arousal and reactivity. Those who have seen mob lynchings may exhibit increased irritation, hypervigilance, and amplified startle reactions. These symptoms may interfere with day-to-day activities, influencing emotional stability generally, sleep habits, and focus.

Although PTSD does not always occur in those exposed to traumatic situations, it is important to acknowledge the possible psychological effects of witnessing mob violence. For those with chronic issues, receiving professional assistance—such as therapy or counseling—is crucial. To help people, in recovering and maintaining mental health after experiencing traumatic experiences, therapeutic interventions, support groups, and education are essential. A thorough and caring strategy is needed to address the psychological effects of seeing mob lynchings to assist people in achieving resilience and recovery (Mukherjee, 2020).

1.10 Analyzing Mob Lynching Through Theoretical Frameworks

Understanding group violence, such as mob lynching, requires examining it from different perspectives. Factors such as societal patterns, psychological traits, and historical events play roles in explaining this complex behavior. This study explores theories that explain group violence, revealing the motivations that drive people to participate in such acts.

Moral disengagement: Moral disengagement is a mental process where people justify harmful actions without moral guilt. When detrimental activities are justified by moral grounds, this is known as moral disengagement. As far as mob lynchings are concerned, people may use moral defenses such as self-defense, perceived dangers to their community, or a warped sense of justice to excuse the violence. This concept, developed by Albert Bandura, is related to mob lynching and group violence (Li et al., 2023).

Diffusion of Responsibility: In groups, people often feel less responsible for their actions because they do not see themselves as solely responsible. This diffusion of responsibility allows them to distance themselves morally and downplay their role in the harm caused (Beyer et al., 2017).

Dehumanization: Moral disengagement frequently entails treating the victims as less than human beings, dehumanizing them. Dehumanizing the people who are being targeted in a mob lynching can be a cognitive tactic used to disassociate oneself from the moral ramifications of harming another human being (Vaes et al., 2021)

Displacement of Responsibility: People may shift accountability from themselves to the group or authoritative people, blaming their behavior on other forces. It is simpler for them to act aggressively without feeling directly guilty because of this displacement, which enables them to disassociate themselves from personal accountability for the detrimental conduct (Hinrichs et al., 2012).

Euphemistic Labeling: Euphemistic labeling is a type of moral disengagement in which people distort the meaning of damaging acts with words. People who engage in collective hostility may employ euphemism language to minimize the seriousness of their acts or to make mob lynching seem less violent (Frazer, 2023)

Selective Information Processing: Individuals who engage in a group aggressively may selectively interpret information, highlighting details that validate their conduct and disregarding data that contradicts or challenges it. By supporting people's convictions about the

morality of their acts, this biased processing might lead to moral disengagement (Smeijers et al., 2020).

Social Pressure: Social pressure involves the influence that others have on an individual's thoughts, feelings, or behaviors. In the context of mob lynching, social pressure from the group can be a powerful force that compels individuals to conform to the actions and attitudes of the majority. The fear of social exclusion or disapproval can drive individuals to participate in aggressive behaviors, even if they might not personally endorse such actions (Lou, 2023).

Conformity: Conformity is the tendency to adjust one's beliefs or behaviors to align with those of a majority. In a mob setting, individuals may conform to the group's behavior due to the desire for social approval or the fear of rejection. Conformity can lead individuals to participate in mob lynching even if they might not agree with the actions on a personal level, as they seek to avoid standing out or being ostracized by the group (Eckhardt, 1974).

Groupthink: Groupthink occurs when a group prioritizes consensus and harmony over critical thinking, leading to poor decision-making. In the context of mob lynching, groupthink may contribute to a lack of dissenting voices within the group. Individuals may suppress their reservations about the morality or consequences of their actions to maintain group cohesion. This can result in a collective mindset that supports and justifies violent actions (Goldstein, 2003).

Deindividuation: Deindividuation is a phenomenon in which individuals lose their sense of personal identity and responsibility in a group setting. In a mob, deindividuation can occur, making individuals more likely to engage in aggressive behaviors they might avoid when acting as individuals. This loss of personal identity reduces the sense of accountability for one's actions, contributing to the escalation of violence in a mob setting (Reicher et al., 1995).

Social Identity Theory: Social Identity Theory suggests that individuals categorize themselves and others into social groups, and this categorization influences their attitudes and behaviors. In the context of mob lynching, individuals may identify strongly with the group, leading to an "us versus them" mentality. This heightened social identity can contribute to the dehumanization of the perceived "enemy" and increase the likelihood of participating in violent actions (Harwood, 2020).

2. Method

2.1 Sample

The study was conducted over a two-month period where those who are experts in dealing with mob lynching victims were asked to participate in semi-structured interviews. Five expert interviews were conducted with who have worked as professors in psychology and law, police officials, and journalists in Bangladesh. To gain a holistic overview of the aftereffects of witnessing lynching, these experts were invited to participate in the study. The recorded interviews were transcribed verbatim, and a thematic analysis was conducted. Each person interviewed is a native of Bangladesh and resides there. All the audio call interviews were recorded. The interviews and the interviewees are described in Table 1.

Table 1

Description of the Expert Interviews and the Interviewees

| Interview | Interviewee | Organization | Position | Interview date | Interview duration |
|-----------|--------------------------|--|---------------------------------------|----------------|--------------------|
| I | Malay Kumar Bhowmick | Rajshahi University Journalist Association | Senior Journalist | 23.02.2024 | 69:59 Mins |
| II | Md. Shahal Uddin | University of Rajshahi | Professor of Law | 26.02.2024 | 41:31Mins |
| III | Anonymous | DBC News | Journalist | 26.02.2024 | 29:38 Mins |
| IV | Md. Mashudul Haq Siddiki | Rajshahi College | Professor of Psychology | 29.02.2024 | 52:39 mins |
| V | Anonymous | Bangladesh Police | Additional Deputy Police Commissioner | 17.03.2024 | 45:54 mins |

2.2 Instrument

The interviews were semi-structured, and the direction of the discussion was largely based on the expert's willingness to discuss sensitive subjects. Additionally, topics that were not included in the interview questions were also explored during the interview, particularly if the interviewee introduced these topics.

The instrument for this study was a questionnaire of 12 questions. The questionnaire was written both in English and Bengali, and all the interviews were conducted in Bengali. Later the interview was translated into English. The questions were the following:

1. How do existing legal frameworks in Bangladesh address the long-term consequences of witnessing traumatic events such as lynching?
2. What legal mechanisms are there in Bangladesh, if any, are in place to support individuals who have experienced such trauma during their formative years?
3. In the context of peace and conflict, how can the long-term effects of witnessing lynching impact community dynamics and social cohesion?
4. Are there preventive measures that can mitigate the psychological and emotional aftermath of witnessing such violence?
5. What psychological theories or frameworks can help elucidate the long-term effects of witnessing lynching on individuals, particularly during their developmental years?
6. How do law enforcement agencies in Bangladesh currently address the psychological well-being of individuals who have witnessed acts of violence, specifically lynching?
7. What role can police officials of Bangladesh play in fostering community healing and resilience in the aftermath of such traumatic experiences?
8. From a sociocultural perspective, how do communities in Bangladesh grapple with the long-term effects of witnessing lynching, and what cultural resources exist to support affected individuals?
9. Are there societal narratives or norms that either exacerbate or alleviate the psychological impact of witnessing such violence during one's formative years?
10. How do intersecting identities, such as race, gender, and socioeconomic status correlate with the long-term impact of witnessing lynching?
11. Can you identify any promising practices that account for the intersecting identities of individuals affected by witnessing lynching, particularly in terms of resilience and healing?
12. From your perspective, what measures can be taken at a societal level to prevent the occurrence of traumatic events such as lynching and minimize their impact on individuals?

2.3 Procedure

Once the interviewees were contacted, it was agreed that the interviews being voice recorded would be arranged via phone call. All voice-recorded interviews were transcribed both manually and partially transcribed using Microsoft dictation. All the interview was held in Bengali and was transcribed and translated by the author. All transcribed interviews and interview notes were then returned to the interviewees, where they had the opportunity to delete any passages that they regarded as sensitive or wished to have excluded from the transcript.

2.4 Ethical Considerations

The study is consistent with the principles concerning human research ethics of the Declaration of Helsinki (World Medical Association, 2013), as well as follows the guidelines for the responsible conduct of research of the Finnish Advisory Board on Research Integrity (2012).

3. Results

3.1 Comparisons between the Experts

3.1.1 Theme 1: Legal Framework

While all the experts agree that Bangladesh does not have any explicit laws against lynching, they also admit that lynching instances may fall under the purview of existing laws against murder and injury. Their worries are similar to the lack of assistance provided to witnesses as well as the wider social and psychological effects. Their points of emphasis vary, though; some draw attention to the state's dearth of assistance and recompense for witnesses and victims, while others concentrate on the psychological and sociological components of lynching as well as its societal acceptance. Their differences also lie in the extent to which they discuss the legal processes that may be used to combat lynching; several experts have quoted specific sections from the Penal Code.

In Bangladesh, there is currently no legislation about lynching instances. Still, the High Court made a historic comment. A writ petition was filed by someone by the name of Isharat Ali, and the high court made five observations on the plea. Those findings do not constitute law. According to social psychology, in a culture such as ours in Bangladesh, incidents such as Lynching do not evoke feelings of criminality in the slightest for an ordinary individual. This is a sad situation. (Expert A, Senior Journalist)

To the best of my understanding, there are no specific laws regarding it. Even though the 1860 Penal Code makes the act of murder illegal. It will, nonetheless, be seen as a murder rather than a lynching. In response to your question concerning the state's payment to witnesses of lynchings, I would say that there is none. (Expert B, Professor of Law)

Bangladesh does not have a particular law to criminalize lynching. Lynching fatalities are homicides. The concept of mass engagement does not get special attention. Ultimately, there are no legal protections or avenues for redress available to those who witness lynchings. (Expert C, Journalist, DBC News)

It is criminal to kill human beings, thus this cannot be justified in any manner, even if there is no explicit law in Bangladesh that addresses this. Lynching cannot be justified in any state in the world, and this also applies to Bangladesh. Even when there is no explicit legislation against lynching, there are broad rules that might make it illegal. (Expert D, Professor of Psychology)

Bangladesh acknowledges the criminality of lynching. Killing someone is forbidden under any circumstances. According to Bangladeshi law, it is a crime. In a situation such as this, the Penal Code, 1860, Sections 302 and 324 should be relevant. Murder penalty is covered by section 302, while intentionally causing harm with hazardous weapons or methods is covered by section 324. Even while it

may be illegal in Bangladesh, there aren't many systems in place to lessen the trauma witnesses must endure. (Expert E, Police Official)

3.1.2 Theme 2: Mechanisms to Support Victims

Though the experts disagree on the efficiency of current attempts to address these issues and the condition of mental health care, they are concerned about the effects of violence, especially lynching, on Bangladeshi youth and the wider populace. Everyone agrees that violence has a major psychological impact, and that Bangladesh lacks adequate mental health resources. Opinions, however, range from critical ones on the lack of cooperation and action to more upbeat ones regarding current developments and continued initiatives to enhance mental health services.

Teenagers are profoundly impacted when they witness these kinds of events. When older people lynch people without feeling sorry for it, I believe this sends a bad message to teenagers. In our society, this still isn't an alarming issue. Some writers may be discussing this topic in newspaper columns or for organizations in small towns or cities. This type of crime, in my opinion, is not being eliminated because NGOs and state institutions are not working together. It does not raise many red flags when it is not recognized as a crime. (Expert A, Senior Journalist)

More people are impacted than others, especially those who are still developing. However, I am not aware of any Bangladeshi support networks for them. While some governmental organizations offer counseling, their efficacy is questionable. In Bangladesh, mental health has long been considered a taboo topic that is usually disregarded when formulating policies. Unfortunately, there are only two or three universities that offer clinical psychology or educational and counseling psychology departments. These departments produce therapists each year, though far fewer than would be ideal and they primarily offer private solutions, making it expensive for low-income families to use mental health facilities. (Expert C, Journalist of DBC News)

Even a few years ago, mental health was not given much importance in our nation. With the opening of the clinical psychology program at the University of Rajshahi and the counseling psychology program at the University of Dhaka, things have recently altered. Numerous non-governmental groups are addressing this health-related issue. Numerous institutions are appointing clinical psychologists. Things are changing, but not quickly enough. (Expert D, Professor of Psychology)

In Bangladesh, an organization provides psychological support, but it never tries to let people know that it exists. If someone is impacted, they must acknowledge it and visit this resource. The victim must decide to go there; the government makes no recommendations. A children's trauma center exists. The social welfare ministry occasionally hosts lectures about the trauma that kids experience. There is no assistance available for lynching witnesses; it is only a portion of general awareness. (Expert E, Police official)

3.1.3 Theme 3: Influence on Social Cohesiveness

All experts agree lynching harms societal progress and cohesion, fostering violence and eroding trust in legal systems. Differences arise in focus: Expert A discusses the clash between societal advancements and outdated mentalities; Expert C sees lynching as a trigger for aggression and social unrest; Expert D highlights its psychological impact and the cultural encouragement of violence; while Expert E views it as a destructive force against social unity and modern society's regression. Essentially, while agreeing on the negative impacts, they examine the issue through varied lenses such as legal, psychological, and social.

Positive groupings are what we mean when we discuss social cohesion. A group is also involved in lynching. Justice ought to be supported by social cohesiveness. Events involving lynchings pose a serious obstacle to society's advancement. of infrastructure is unrelated to such things. Although the quality of our lives is increasing, our mentality remains outdated. These occurrences pose significant obstacles to progress. (Expert A, Senior Journalist)

Lynching has an impact on society. People who see incidents of this nature may get aggressive. The only way to obtain justice is by lynching, and if people continue to believe this, the legal system will not be able to assist the government. Lynching is a tactic that can be used to exact personal retribution. It turns into a revenge tool. It may lead to social unrest among individuals. Society will become disordered because of these practices. (Expert C, Journalist, DBC News)

Lynching is a horrible crime. People frequently lose their humanity when a mob becomes aroused. Witnesses to such events have the scars for the rest of their life. It is more likely that people would be encouraged to resort to violence to resolve conflicts. Based on social norms and cultural values, social reinforcement is a powerful inducer of aggressiveness. This is when someone gets rewarded by their community for engaging in a certain activity. Discouragement of this is necessary, and trust in the judicial system needs to be rebuilt. (Expert D, Professor of Psychology)

One crucial element of society is social unity. Lynching, though, might be viewed as a destructive kind of Unity. Certain groups or people get together when a rumor spreads. Lynching severely impairs social cohesiveness, undermines unity in general, and further marginalizes certain populations. How a society settles its disagreements and issues is significant. If using lynching as a problem-solving tactic becomes the norm, modern society will regress. (Expert E, Police official)

3.1.4 Theme 4: Mitigation of Trauma

Collectively, the experts stress the necessity of cultural and educational changes to stop lynchings. They stress the significance of promoting rational and scientific thinking, strengthening the criminal justice system, providing psychological assistance, and raising public awareness. They both believe that preventive actions and post-event interventions are

essential, but they concentrate on various areas, such as law modifications, educational changes, institutional and family assistance, and public awareness campaigns. Despite these disparate approaches, they all suggest a comprehensive strategy that addresses the underlying causes and concomitants of lynching through community involvement, legal action, and education.

These days, science and reasonable thought are absent in our lives. Reasoned and scientific thinking must be taught in the educational setting. It needs to be focused on living rather than outcomes. People will be able to distinguish between justice and injustice if we can make the educational system focused on life. An educated individual would be able to distinguish between right and wrong, and that same person would want laws made to address it. Our culture and educational system need improvement. We also need to shift the political landscape. There are two kinds of changes needed in politics: philosophical and qualitative. The fact that there is no legislation against these kinds of crimes is regrettable. We are aware that West Bengal, India, has legislation that addresses these kinds of instances and defines Lynching. (Expert A, Senior Journalist)

There is potential to improve Bangladeshi criminal procedure. The law is powerless to halt lynchings. Deciding what might incite a crowd and how they will respond to that provocation is not a legal question. The law can only be of assistance after an incident has occurred; nonetheless, incidents of this nature ought never to have occurred in the first place. It is feasible if individuals are informed about this and possess reasonable thought processes. Such conduct is the result of unemployment or illiteracy, which may be eliminated to bring about change. (Expert B, Professor of Law)

A victim's family may significantly lessen the psychological toll that the incident has on them. Family may conduct as much therapy as they can to foster understanding. The government is able to provide institutional guidance. The government would have to work on the laws and educate the populace about what is and is not appropriate behavior. People would be prevented from engaging in this sort of action because it would put up a barrier between them. The rule of law is essential. (Expert C, Journalist, DBC News)

When someone joins a crowd, they lose themselves and their sense of self-control. The circumstances of the time take hold of them. It's critical to raise public awareness. People often panic when they are under pressure or in an uneasy circumstance. Using radio, television, newspapers, and other media to raise awareness, psychosocial learning should be expanded. Here, the state must take a leading role. The courts, educational institutions, and law enforcement organizations all have significant roles to play. (Expert D, Professor of Psychology)

3.1.5 Theme 5: Psychological Theories

Expert A criticizes cultural norms that stifle individual maturity and independence. Expert D examines how early relationships and observing behaviors shape emotional health and attitudes

toward violence. Expert E looks at the impact of witnessing violence through an ecological lens, noting the possibility of resilience and growth despite trauma. Each expert provides a distinct perspective on human behavior and development, highlighting societal influences, early experiences, and environmental factors.

One of the numerous ideas that attempt to describe human character and behavior is the Argyris Maturity Theory, which Chris Argyris proposed in Personality and Organization. He demonstrated that a mature individual should exhibit seven characteristics. Such as, An adult is self-reliant, a mature person has a future vision, and A profound thinker is someone mature. We will discover that every signal in our culture is unfavorable if we examine them all. Individualism is not valued in our culture; people are unable to make decisions for themselves. When people get to university, they grow up and behave such as babies. They are unable to decide and tend to rely on their parents. To make an aware citizen, we must work on the indicators and make them positive. We must shift the citizens towards thinking normally. (Expert A, Senior Journalist)

It is important to explore theoretical frameworks such as attachment theory and social learning theory. According to the attachment theory, our capacity to build safe connections and control our emotions is shaped by the early encounters we have with our caregivers. Seeing violent acts can throw off these attachment patterns, making it harder to build stable relationships and causing emotional instability. According to the social learning hypothesis, humans pick up social norms and behaviors through imitation and observation. For some people, seeing a lynching normalizes violence, which affects their views toward aggressiveness and dispute resolution in the future. (Expert D, Professor of Psychology)

I can consider Bronfenbrenner's theory, which emphasizes the significance of diverse environmental systems in development. At different points in our lives, we are exposed to a variety of surroundings, and the organizations and individuals in our community have an impact on us. The experience of seeing a lynching affects a person not only at the microsystem level (personal experience), but also at the mesosystem level (school), the exosystem level (societal attitudes toward violence), and the macrosystem level (cultural norms). While some people experience lifelong effects, others demonstrate resiliency. While concentrating on the negative effects, it's crucial to recognize that some people show resilience and even evolve because of traumatic experiences. The theories of resilience and posttraumatic growth examine why and how certain individuals might overcome trauma, emphasizing the need for supportive networks, inner assets, and constructive coping mechanisms We have seen real-life cases of individuals when they surprised us with resilience after a traumatic event. (Expert E, Police Official)

3.1.6 Theme 6: Perspective of Law Enforcement Agencies

Experts A and B draw attention to the inadequate assistance provided to lynching victims and witnesses, highlighting the psychological effects and difficulties in obtaining justice within Bangladesh's judicial system. Expert D notes that while law enforcement responds quickly to these kinds of occurrences, indirect victims may not receive the same level of support. To

increase accountability and efficacy, Expert E details the proactive steps taken by the Bangladeshi police to interact with the people and strengthen police-public relations through routine operations and programs such as beat policing. In conclusion, there are calls for improved judicial procedures and criticisms of the victim support system, but there is also an acknowledgment of the work made by law enforcement to enhance community relations and policing techniques.

These occurrences only affect a small number of individuals; not everyone is impacted by them. After this occurrence, some people find it difficult to fall asleep, while some people might be able to sleep through it. The fact that someone is impacted makes these instances extraordinary. It has the power to impair one's creativity and render someone unsound. Few individuals would respond in such a way as to be greatly impacted by it; most people in our culture do not find it to be at all bothersome. The law enforcement authorities are not stepping forward to assist the witness victims in situations such as this. (Expert A, Senior Journalist)

Some people may view lynchings as ordinary occurrences, while others may take inspiration from them and decide to repeat the act in the future. Some individuals in Bangladesh may be experiencing hallucinations, difficulty falling asleep, or excruciating pain, but there isn't adequate awareness of these symptoms. When anything such as this happens, the police often file a case. Since there is no chance of identifying the persons connected to the crime due to its large scale, trials typically come to an end without any success. Under the act of Bangladesh criminal procedure, the police file a case, and it continues.

When a victim of lynching is discovered alive, authorities take them into custody and transport them to the hospital. Following the victim's treatment, authorities attempt to obtain the victim's statement and inquire as to whether the victim is aware of any assailants. The police take appropriate measures after attempting to determine who initiated and participated in the lynching. Nevertheless, victims who witness lynching occurrences are not provided with any assistance. (Expert B, Professor of Law)

There is no way for one person to punish the accused even if they commit a crime to ensure that justice is served. It is the law enforcement authorities' exclusive duty to apply the law to the accused. The law enforcement authorities respond quickly to instances such as lynchings, offering their assistance right away. While assistance is restricted to direct victims, indirect victims such as bystanders receive little to no support. (Expert D, Professor of Psychology)

When an event occurs, Bangladeshi police always follow certain standard procedures. In comparable cases, identical procedures are taken regardless of where it happened. Police speak with people in general in public areas to raise awareness and organize a meeting with the relevant parties in the region, such as elected authorities, local government officials, and religious leaders. Usually, several seminars come after them. Additionally, there is beat policing, which organizes Uthan Baithak gatherings. Recently, Uthan Baihak has formed a movement inside the police force. These are the smaller-scale

gatherings that are held to connect with the public. At this Uthan Baithak, in addition to the police station officer in command, there are inspectors and upper-rank officials. The public-police connection is strengthened by these initiatives, which raises police accountability and dependability. A beat is the area and time that a police officer covers, according to police terminology. Beat policing, which has its roots in traditional policing, makes use of the intimate ties that officers have with the people living on the designated beat to increase police effectiveness and promote teamwork in the pursuit of a safer community. (Expert E, Police Official)

3.1.7 Theme 7: Community Healing

Expert A emphasizes the societal responsibility to prevent crimes such as lynchings through education and a values-based approach, pointing out the limits of police intervention after the fact. Expert B discusses the dual responsibility of citizens and police in handling offenders, highlighting the need for public trust in law enforcement to ensure legal compliance and community safety. Expert D reflects on the historical role of the police in Bangladesh as suppressive, suggesting current efforts towards community engagement and public service as positive changes. Expert E focuses on the proactive and sensitive roles of police in dealing with lynching incidents, from preventing such crimes to handling victims and witnesses with care and using the media wisely. In essence, all experts recognize the need for a collaborative effort between society, the police, and the media to address and prevent violence, emphasizing trust, education, and community engagement as key factors.

Despite the diversity of religion, race, and community, we have lived here together for a thousand years. However, when events like lynchings occur, multiculturalism and unity become weakened. People coexist here despite their many languages and cultures, but when crimes like lynchings and looting occur, animosity grows. There is a lot of adversity in the world right now. These actions are inimical to mankind. The reform needs to come from within society; the police force cannot bring about change on its own. Though they usually show up after something has already happened, we expect the police to respond to these occurrences and assist the individuals. We need to prevent such incidents instead of curing them. We should receive a scientific, logical, and values-based education. (Expert A, Senior Journalist)

This is a citizen's obligation as well as the responsibility of the police. As required by law, people should turn over offenders to the police. The police may educate the public through their efforts. The public's faith in the police must be restored. People who have negative stereotypes about the police and mistrust them are more likely to enforce the law themselves. When people can trust the police, they will turn over suspects to the police whenever a crime is committed, and they are taken into custody by regular people. In this manner, no one would suffer harm, and the legal system would function as intended. Police must improve their interpersonal skills and forge closer ties with the public. (Expert B, Professor of Law)

When we examine the history of the police in Bangladesh, we find that their purpose was not to serve the public interest but rather to repress it. This explains why there are a lot of instances between the public and the police, which drives a wedge and mistrust between them. However, these days, the police want to be as helpful to citizens as they can. In Bangladesh, there is community policing and police week. Police are people, people are police is the phrase. Community policing is a commendable endeavor aimed at raising public awareness. (Expert D, Professor of Psychology)

Initially, law enforcement will go for the offenders. In addition, they host gatherings with professionals, scholars, and members of civil society. The media may be used to raise awareness. When it comes to lynching victims, police ought to be more tactful. Police may ask the media not to air anything that would upset witnesses to the occurrence since it could make them feel awful. Any witness victims should not be provoked by an investigation; it should be cordial. Following a lynching, victims and spectators alike need to be treated with compassion. (Expert E, Police Official)

3.1.8 Theme 8: Sociocultural Help

Experts on lynchings agree that victims must get multifaceted support that integrates many strands of advocacy and care. Expert A emphasizes the arts' and cultural activism's capacity for healing while highlighting how these forms of expression promote solidarity. In addition to emphasizing the necessity of trauma-informed care and the significance of integrating victims into social activities, Expert C broadens the discussion to include the crucial engagement of intellectuals, civic society, and the government. Expert D highlights the inherent resilience of family and community support networks in Bangladesh, which inherently provide a protective barrier against the fallout from violent incidents. Expert E expands the discussion to highlight the necessity of all-encompassing help that considers witnesses in addition to direct victims, arguing that legal aid should be accompanied by a deeper awareness of cultural and emotional issues. When taken as a whole, these viewpoints highlight a cohesive strategy for resilience and healing that is based on a strong sense of community, cultural inclusion, and a profound understanding of both individual and group experiences.

Cultural assistance comes slowly. Individuals can participate in cultural events, watch theatre, or create other content that supports the victims. There would be no solution to this. The only way we can support them as cultural activists is by standing by them. Student organizations, sports organizations, and social organizations can all engage in these kinds of activities. The victim would feel less alone and more hopeful when these groups stood behind them. Scholars can also express their support for the victims. Victims are met and reached out to. In this way, cultural institutions may support the victims even though performances of plays, ballets, and songs have a gradual effect. This type of action fosters reconciliation and sends the message that society is unified in its opposition to lynching episodes. Instead of fracturing the oneness, this will maintain the multiculturalism and unity of the society. (Expert A, Senior Journalist)

Here, intellectuals and civic society can be useful. They can disseminate encouraging words and social advice. They may act as advocates of the law. The victims of these types of crimes must always be included in social gatherings. They cannot be left alone. What the government should do is encourage trauma-informed treatment for these individuals. To help them overcome the trauma and resume their regular lives, there must be a program that builds resilience. (Expert C, Journalist, DBC News)

In Bangladesh, the family unit is quite strong. People gather to support one another when they are in need whenever someone gets into difficulties. We have the social structure in place to assist anyone who witnesses a lynching and is experiencing emotional trauma. People who are in difficulty receive a lot of support from friends, family, coworkers, and neighbors. This is a good feature of Bangladeshi society, in my opinion. We usually face calamities together and shoulder one other's burdens. (Expert D, Professor of Psychology)

Following each such incident, civic society and organizations have united in protest. They visit the victims and their loved ones. Nevertheless, it is restricted to the victims who experience it firsthand. It's important to evaluate who watching has an impact on right now. While the police may assist with legal issues, there should also be some support for cultural issues. Encouraging people to be heard, seen, and understood in all facets of their cultural identity is key to ensuring they are not feeling alone. In addition to facilitating the healing process, this assistance fortifies social ties and creates atmospheres that value difference and encourage resilience. (Expert E, Police Official)

3.1.9 Theme 9: Role of Societal Belief

The experts offer a nuanced perspective on the emergence of religious fundamentalism and its ramifications in Bangladesh and throughout South Asia, emphasizing the connections between socioeconomic developments, cultural upheavals, and issues with the legal system. Expert A dates the phenomena back to the 1980s, highlighting the creation of a new middle class that exacerbated concerns of terrorism and intolerance by creating a cultural vacuum and giving rise to fundamentalist views, notwithstanding the economic benefits of work in the Middle East. Expert B's observation of the pervasive issue of religious sensitivity in South Asia, which is made more difficult by the improper use of technology to propagate false information and provoke violence, complements this story. Experts B and D, on the other hand, both criticize the legal and law enforcement systems, pointing out that the public's mistrust is developing because of perceived corruption and inefficiency, which encourages vigilante justice while ignoring the psychological effects on people and society. When taken as a whole, these observations provide a complicated picture of a society that is juggling quick changes in the socioeconomic landscape, technical difficulties, and a loss of faith in the legal and cultural systems, all of which combine to create an environment that is conducive to fundamentalism and social unrest.

A new phenomenon that we are witnessing is the rise of a new middle class during the 1980s. These individuals moved to the Middle East in search of employment after selling their little possessions. Their homes were devoid of any cultural customs. They possessed no books nor musical instruments. They left the nation, gained a lot of money, and acquired a large tract of property in Bangladesh since the cultural standards there were quite low. They brought part of their native culture with them, in addition to elevating their status. There used to be a large secular population in Bangladesh, but fundamentalist thought began to take hold in the 1980s. These individuals then began to think that their religion was the greatest and that it was the only one that should be practiced. My ideas have to be established, and there should not be any other ideas. Terrorism and fundamentalism became established throughout the nation. There are a ton of baseless stories that someone saw the face of a war criminal on the moon, causing hysteria. It was similar to lynching as they destroyed the properties of others and hurt people to stop the trial of the war criminals. In places where culture and education are lacking, terrorism has occurred. Bombings have happened during cultural events. The use of fundamentalism as a political weapon is occurring. People are encouraged to enforce their laws by religious fanaticism. (Expert A, Senior Journalist)

A major problem in South Asia and the Indian subcontinent is religious fundamentalism. The use of religious sensitivities for rumor is common. There is looting, burning of houses, eviction from dwellings, and property damage. Similar events have occurred during the ethnic cleansing of the Rohingya people in Myanmar. This is a universal truth, but in South Asia, religious sensitivity is a major problem. These days, disseminating false information via technology is a major problem.

When we discuss Bangladesh, we discover that the judiciary is seen with frustration by the populace. They take matters into their own hands when they believe that the police or courts are not going to take the appropriate action and they lose trust in the legal system. (Expert B, Professor of Law)

In society, there is a perception that police may be bought off or swayed, and those who are accused can escape justice. This notion breeds disbelief in law enforcement and the police. A society where there is no law may be brought about by this culture of unfairness or a lack of trust in the legal system. Additionally, watching may be damaging to a person, but this is seldom taken into account because mental health issues are still not taken seriously in our culture. (Expert D, Professor of Psychology)

3.1.10 Theme 10: Difference in Class and Effects

The experts point out several ways that the trauma of witnessing a lynching intersects with socioeconomic position, gender, and community identification. Multiple researchers agree that economic gaps make fewer wealthy people more vulnerable to manipulation and violence. This suggests that economic disparity may worsen tensions within communities and fuel crime as a form of retaliation. Gender is a significant factor because women may experience trauma that is exacerbated, particularly if they see violence against family members. This highlights how

trauma is experienced and managed differently depending on a person's gender. After violent actions, marginalized communities—including religious minorities—feel more vulnerable and alone. This is made worse by the difficulty in getting help in isolated places. These groups' sense of safety and sense of community are negatively impacted by the communal memory of violence against them, which exacerbates their trauma. The long-term concomitants of witnessing a lynching are mostly determined by the combination of socioeconomic position, gender, and community identification, with marginalized groups experiencing the greatest difficulties in recovering from trauma.

One significant aspect is socioeconomic status. Certain individuals are affluent while others face financial discrimination. People certainly tend to become envious of others who are enjoying better lives when there is a significant income disparity. Because less solvent individuals are dissatisfied, it is simple to use less solvent against the solvent. A large economic disparity would inevitably lead to an increase in crime. People attempt to exact retribution in many ways when they believe they have been the target of discrimination or have not received what is rightfully theirs. At that point, individuals stop feeling bad about committing a crime. To vent their resentment, they attempt to exact retribution in several ways. They start raping, plundering, and setting things on fire. They are expressing their dissatisfaction via these. The impact of seeing a lynching is correlated with one's social standing. (Expert A, Senior Journalist)

It is possible for men and women to handle traumatic events differently and to use various coping mechanisms. For example, if a woman witnesses a male family member being lynched, she may feel powerless and responsible for the family. Another factor is that members of marginalized communities may feel vulnerable and suspicious if they witness a member of their group being lynched. They may believe that it is a social rejection of their group, which can cause them to feel alone and have mental health issues. (Expert B, Professor of Law)

Religious minorities may experience insecurity due to the lack of legal protections available to them. The Hindu community in Bangladesh has frequently witnessed acts of violence against them during religious festivals. The impact of trauma is exacerbated when violence happens in remote locations because it may restrict the victims' access to support for mental health or legal action. Both the sense of community cohesiveness and personal safety can be negatively impacted by the collective memory of violence against their community, which can intensify the experience of being targeted. (Expert C, Journalist, DBC News)

People become restless when there is excessive prejudice or inequality between various societal groups. People may become irritable and unhelpful in situations when one party is too strong, and another is too helpless. The socioeconomic standing of an individual might catalyze lynching. (Expert D, Professor of Psychology)

To be honest, it does not affect someone well-off or powerful in society. Things grow worse for those who are part of a group that is marginalized, vulnerable, or a minority; these effects don't go away quickly.

For women in our patriarchal culture, everything becomes challenging. One may be forced to constantly relive trauma due to the financial need to continue to work in or close to regions where such violence happens. Moreover, women—who frequently take on the role of primary caregivers—may need to manage their trauma while providing for their children or other family members who may have also been impacted by the same events, with little access to professional psychiatric help. (Expert E, Police official)

3.1.11 Theme 11: Promising Practice

Experts agree that helping lynching victims and witnesses requires a comprehensive strategy that prioritizes social, legal, and family support systems. Expert B recommends state-funded counseling for mental health problems resulting from such violence and highlights the significance of Bangladesh's tort law in making up for the lack of action taken by the government. Expert C emphasizes the importance of social groups and recommends developing community support systems and awareness programs to share experiences and reduce violence via education, particularly for young people. Expert E emphasizes the critical necessity for legal help, stating that fairness and proper legal representation may stop such instances and give victims more power. All experts concur that to confront and recover from the trauma of lynching, a nuanced and comprehensive response is required, one that incorporates legal remedies, social assistance, and education.

When it comes to the subject of healing and resilience, Bangladeshi tort law ought to be implemented more skillfully. Someone should receive compensation if they suffer harm because of the government's inaction. The state must assist the affected person if it is unable to put an end to instances such as lynchings and someone suffering from mental health issues. The state needs to work more at providing the victims with therapy to help them heal. (Expert B, Professor of Law)

Numerous kinds of social groups might continue to play a part in this. Establishments can ensure quality care for victims of abuse. Similar victims would be able to communicate their traumas and emotions if there was a communal support network for them. It is possible to raise awareness and organize a campaign. Politicians have a part to play. Children can learn values from their families about the harmful effects of violence. Children are more likely to avoid violence if they are aware of it and its harmful repercussions. (Expert C, Journalist, DBC News)

Following an occurrence of this nature, victims require legal assistance. If they receive the right legal assistance, they will not feel alone and powerless. If the victims receive justice, such events in the future will either decrease or cease entirely. Judges, attorneys, and police must handle lynching occurrences with sensitivity. Support for filing incident reports, pursuing legal action, and pushing for legislative modifications that shield vulnerable populations from harm are all included in this. (Expert E, Police Official)

3.1.12 Theme 12: Measures from Society

Experts agree that addressing the problem of lynchings requires a multipronged strategy that prioritizes cooperation, legislative changes, awareness-raising, and education. Senior Journalist Expert A emphasizes the necessity for global collaboration and political unity, emphasizing that individual countries such as Bangladesh cannot resolve geopolitical concerns such as lynching on their own. According to this viewpoint, global cooperation and the educated middle class are the main forces behind systemic change in politics, culture, and education that is necessary to create a society that is caring and peaceful. Experts C and D, a psychology professor and journalist, respectively, emphasize the significance of the judicial system and public knowledge. They propose that in addition to supporting responsible media coverage and public awareness efforts on lynching's consequences, the government should enforce laws more forcefully and hold law enforcement officials accountable.

To avoid lynchings, Police Official Expert E highlights the need for community policing and the judicial system. They contend that individuals may be taught a feeling of responsibility and respect for the law by integrating the community in policing initiatives and guaranteeing speedy justice through timely trials.

In conclusion, the experts concur that to stop instances such as lynchings, cooperation between the government, law enforcement, media, and the international community is crucial. To promote a law-abiding, well-informed, and caring society, this involves political initiatives, legislative reforms, public awareness campaigns, and educational initiatives.

Collaborative efforts are necessary to decrease these events, as solo efforts are not feasible. Sensitivity should increase among the people in the society. The revolution could only take place if politics, culture, and education changed. To make a difference, the middle-class educated people need to step up. Without an uprising, civilization would not be cohesive. This is the reason I am arguing that politicians ought to take the initiative and work together on this. For instance, Rohingyas had to flee their own country and take refuge in Bangladesh. I consider these similar things like lynching as people are forced to leave their homes in fear of a force. Geopolitical interest is growing in this kind of scenario. A single little nation like Bangladesh cannot accomplish much on its own if we do not wish to create a compassionate world together. These politics are of importance to many nations because they want to sell weapons and maintain fighting wars. Bangladesh is limited in its ability to address such interests. To establish a universal government that is both peaceful and compassionate, all international politicians would need to step forward. (Expert A, Senior Journalist)

There should be a movement among individuals to uphold the legal system. The government has to be under more pressure to create an effective policy. Enforcing policies and improving the effectiveness and accountability of law enforcement organizations are both essential. Above all, prolonged trials should be avoided as they incite individuals to enforce their own set of rules. To lessen the impact of these acts on the victims who are witnesses, responsible media reporting is also crucial. (Expert C, Journalist, DBC News)

To raise awareness, social institutions such as law enforcement agencies, colleges, and universities should be enhanced. The media can effectively educate the public about the harmful consequences of lynching. We see that awareness is raised over the whole week when there is a traffic week. Similar campaigns to raise awareness of acts of violence such as lynchings can be conducted. (Expert D, Professor of Psychology)

It is essential to recognize and uphold the law to stop instances such as lynchings. It is also critical to raise people's awareness of the reasons they should turn over perpetrators to the authorities rather than trying to enforce the law themselves. More community policing is necessary. To instill in individuals a sense of community duty, police must include the public in their operations. Participation in community policing will also reduce the amount of work that has to be done by the police. To set an example in cases such as lynchings, it is equally crucial to have access to justice and a prompt trial. (Expert E, Police Official)

3.2 Conclusion of the Themes

The themes and the answers are described in Table 2.

Table 2

Description of the Themes and the Answers of the Experts

| Theme | Expert A | Expert B | Expert C | Expert D | Expert E |
|----------------------------------|--|--|--------------------------------|---|---------------------------------------|
| Legal Framework | Lack of explicit laws | Quotes specific sections from the Penal Code | - | Focuses on psychological and sociological aspects | Lack of assistance for witnesses |
| Mechanisms to Support Victims | Critiques of current mental health care efficiency | - | Highlights lack of cooperation | - | Upbeat about current developments |
| Influence on Social Cohesiveness | The clash between advancements and mentalities | - | Trigger for aggression | Psychological impact | Destructive against social unity |
| Psychological theories | Cultural norms stifle maturity | - | - | Early relationships impact | Ecological lens on violence |
| Perspective of Law Enforcement | Inadequate victim support | Inadequate witness support | - | Notes quick response to incidents | Proactive steps to interact |
| Community Healing | Societal responsibility through education | Dual responsibility of citizens and police | - | Historical suppressive role of police | Proactive and sensitive roles |
| Sociocultural Help | Emphasizes arts and cultural activism | - | Engagement of Civic Society | Family and community support | All-encompassing help |
| Role of Societal Belief | Links emergence to 1980s | Observes issue of religious sensitivity | - | Criticizes legal and enforcement systems | - |
| Difference in Class and Effects | Economic gaps make some more vulnerable | - | - | Gender as a significant factor | Impact on marginalized communities |
| Promising Practice | | State-funded counseling and the significance of tort law | Community support systems | | The critical necessity for legal help |

Many general conclusions are reached because of the theme analysis conducted from these many points of view:

1. Legal and Judicial Framework: Experts agree that Bangladesh lacks sufficient legislation specifically prohibiting lynching, but they also note that current laws against

murder and assault may be applicable. The focus is on strengthening the judicial system to specifically handle lynching, improve protection for witnesses, and offer victims and their families greater assistance. Defending the legal system and making sure that justice is served promptly and fairly are essential to halting the activity.

2. **Support for Victims:** Scholars highlight the psychological concomitants of lynching on witnesses, victims, and the public, emphasizing the urgent need for better mental health services and support networks. To offer complete care that tackles the immediate trauma as well as the long-term psychological ramifications of such violence, there is a necessity for a more coordinated approach.
3. **Social cohesiveness and Community Dynamics:** It is well acknowledged that lynchings hurt social cohesiveness. Experts contend that to prevent lynching, it is imperative to address the underlying social and cultural issues that lead to its acceptability and practice. As preventative measures, they emphasize community involvement, education, and the advancement of reasoned and scientific thought.
4. **Mitigation of Trauma and Community Healing:** To stop lynchings and deal with their aftermath, there is a strong push for a multipronged strategy that incorporates social, legal, and educational initiatives. This entails improving the criminal justice system to deter such incidents, as well as encouraging community reconciliation through educational programs and cultural activities.
5. **Psychological Theories and Explanation Violence:** The study presents a sophisticated explanation of the psychological aspects of lynching, indicating that attitudes toward violence are significantly shaped by early interactions, cultural norms, and societal influences. This emphasizes how psychologically grounded interventions are necessary to effectively combat the culture of violence.
6. **The function of law enforcement and the legal system:** Although there is recognition of the efforts made by law enforcement to interact with communities and foster better relationships, more must be done in terms of accountability, efficacy, and assistance for victims and indirect victims. It is crucial to strengthen law enforcement organizations' capabilities and make sure they function within an environment that upholds community trust and human rights.
7. **Community Involvement and Prevention:** Emphasis is placed on the proactive role that public awareness, education, and cultural initiatives can play in creating a society that rejects violence and values the legal system, as well as the significance of community involvement in preventing lynchings and providing support to victims.

8. **Sociocultural Support and Resilience:** The talks highlight how resilient communities are and how important it is for families, communities, and cultural expressions to act as sociocultural support systems to promote healing and discourage violence.
9. **Impact of Fundamentalism and Societal Beliefs:** Scholars have seen the rise of religious fundamentalism and its effects on social cohesiveness and violence, highlighting the intricate interactions between socioeconomic developments, cultural transformations, and legal obstacles that feed these dynamics.
10. **Impact of Socioeconomic and Demographic Factors:** The research recognizes that gender, community identification, and socioeconomic level have an impact on trauma and reactions to lynchings, underscoring the need for specialized assistance and intervention techniques.
11. **Promising Practices and All-encompassing Strategies:** It is widely acknowledged that a comprehensive strategy is required to prevent violence, support victims, and address the underlying causes of lynching. This strategy must emphasize the roles of education, community support, and the state.
12. **Societal Measures and Collaborative Efforts:** Collaborative efforts between the government, law enforcement, media, and the international community are essential to creating a peaceful and law-abiding society. Legislative reforms, international cooperation, and education are the main areas of emphasis in this regard.

These findings demonstrate how difficult it is to combat lynching and other comparable acts of community violence, emphasizing the necessity of an all-encompassing strategy that cuts across the legal, social, psychological, and educational spheres.

4. Discussion

4.1 Summary of Findings

There is broad agreement that lynching impedes societal advancement when discussing how it affects social cohesiveness and community dynamics. Experts stress the necessity for comprehensive ways of promoting community healing and resilience, ranging from psychological repercussions to legal mistrust.

To lessen the effects of such violence, experts advocate for a mix of legislative, cultural, and educational reforms in addition to preventative actions and psychological care. This is consistent with research that shows treating the underlying reasons and offering all-encompassing assistance may greatly lessen the psychological toll on people as well as communities.

There are recommendations for improving police-public relations and aiding indirect victims as well as a critical analysis of the roles played by law enforcement and community policing. This suggests a shift toward more compassionate and community-focused police methods since it is viewed as crucial for both avoiding lynchings and promoting community reconciliation.

The cultural consensus calls for addressing the long-term repercussions of witnessing violence using the arts, education, and community assistance. This cultural approach is considered essential for community healing and resilience, supported by trauma-informed care and public awareness initiatives.

In conclusion, the experts' talks about social interventions highlight the necessity of a multifaceted approach that includes collaboration, alterations to the law, and awareness-raising to stop lynching and lessen its effects. To create a society that is more knowledgeable, compassionate, and compliant with the law, a comprehensive strategy that integrates legal, social, and educational activities is essential.

4.2 Limitations of the Study

For this study, five experts who had worked with lynching victims and provided mental health care for years were interviewed. The limited number of experts might not accurately represent the range of opinions on such a complex subject. A larger, more diverse group of experts might provide deeper, more comprehensive information. A more nuanced understanding of the issue

could arise by including activists, families of victims, and people from the affected communities on the expert panel in addition to specialists from other disciplines.

The study is mostly focused on cases that happened in Bangladesh, where all the experts involved are native speakers. If there is no variation in the geographic or cultural background, the study's findings could not apply to other circumstances where social, legal, and cultural standards are considerably different. Opinions and data could only cover a specific time frame, ignoring recent changes in the public's perception, new advances in legislation, or adjustments to police enforcement practices.

The process includes a qualitative analysis of expert viewpoints. While qualitative research is essential for gaining deep understanding and deciphering complex mechanisms, quantitative data may enhance the study. A mixed-methods approach that incorporates expert observations with quantitative data on court cases, public opinion, and lynching incidents may yield a deeper understanding.

4.3 Implications of the Study

The study findings have several applications for legislators, lawyers, teachers, and community leaders. These ramifications may direct the creation of more potent tactics to cope with and stop lynching and other such acts of communal violence.

Legal changes, such as the creation of specialized anti-lynching laws, may be prompted by the identification of lynching-related inadequacies in the current legal system. It also emphasizes how important it is to assist victims and witnesses throughout the court system.

Understanding how lynching affects social cohesiveness and community trust points to the need to create community policing programs, public awareness campaigns, and educational projects as a means of restoring confidence and promoting peace in society.

4.4 Suggestions for Future Research

Comparative research across various areas or nations, like Pakistan and India, may reveal local and universal elements that contribute to lynching and provide insights into regional and international preventative and reaction plans. A dynamic knowledge of the problem might be enhanced by long-term research looking at how society's attitudes about lynching have changed

over time and how successful different types of remedies have been. Examining how social media and technology contribute to and hinder lynchings may reveal novel ways to use technology for the benefit of society.

Future research can build on the results of this study by examining these areas, providing more profound understanding and potent remedies to counteract lynching and related acts of violence.

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