

Is Mob Lynching a Contemporary Social Problem in India?

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Abstract: The cases of mob lynching against the vulnerable groups are the matter of grave concern in contemporary Indian Society which is the worst form of crime against humanity. Today, people belong to vulnerable groups such as minorities and *Dalits* are seriously attacked and assaulted to death by a mob of people of a particular community. These cases of mob lynching definitely affect the way of life and sense of well-being of minorities and *Dalits* to a large extent causing a fracture in their social and personal status in society which they have got as a human being. The objectives of the study are to understand the nature of mob lynching in the socio-cultural context of India and to examine the linkage between social media and mob lynching. The present study employs content analysis for the study of mob lynching. The data have been collected from lynching affected regions of the country through various Newspapers (Hindustan Times, The Hindu, The Indian Express and The Times of India etc., Delhi Edition) and monthly magazines (India Today and Economic Political Weekly etc.). The cases of mob lynching have been collected from March, 2013 to September, 2019. The study has found that the cases of lynching are committed against minorities and *Dalits* due to suspicion of beef consuming, cow slaughtering, skinning of dead cows child lifting, and theft. The study also indicates that most of cases of mob lynching are committed due to fake news, rumors and hate speeches which are circulated on social media platforms.

Keywords: Mob Lynching, Theory of Ethnocentrism, Content Analysis, India.

INTRODUCTION

Which Indian society was architected with the notion of democratic and welfare based philosophy after getting independence that is undermining due to number of social problems. The problem of mob lynching is one of them. The mob lynching is the matter of grave concern in contemporary Indian society because it is the worst form of inhumanity. The cases of mob lynching are increasing fast in the last few years across the country in the name of religion and kidnapping and the people of every community (minority, majority, and schedule caste and schedule tribe) are being targeted due to mob lynching. The spate of incidents of lynching over the past few years has led to a heightened sense of insecurity among the marginalised communities. These communities are based on sex, race, caste or religion, characteristics that define their identity (Jaising, 2018). This is found that 27 people were killed people in 15 cases of lynching by frenzied mobs blinded by viral rumors of child-kidnappers and cow smugglers in eleven states such as Assam, Bihar, Chhattisgarh, Gujarat, Jharkhand, Karnataka, Maharashtra, Rajasthan, Tamil Nadu, Tripura and West Bengal in the last one year (Indian Express, July 2018). Due to fake news of child lifting on May 23, a 26 year old job searcher boy was beaten to death by an angry mob in Bengaluru (New Indian Express, 2018). Two friends were lynched and one was killed by the villagers in Alwar due to be cow

smugglers (Indian Express, July 2018). According to a report, now days now a days the cases of lynching are not only being committed to see the caste and religion of the individuals but also anyone is being targeted by an angry mob (Dainik Bhaskar, July 2018).

These cases of mob lynching are definitely affecting the way of life and sense of well-being of the individual to a large extent causing a fracture in their social bonds and human rights. On the one hand, the mob lynching is weakening the social bonds (attachment, involvement, belief and commitment) of individual of such community towards the democratic structure of society. On the other hand, the mob lynching is violating the right to life and right to freedom of such people. The mob lynching involves injury or murder of an individual who is considered as a criminal or accuse for the other community. The individuals are targeted for lynching under the rumors and pretext of being such as beef eaters, child lifters, practitioners of witch craft, romeos, anti-nationalists and blasphemous (Halai, 2017).

Concept of Mob Lynching

The term lynch was derived during the American Revolution by two Americans known as Charles Lynch and William Lynch who were from Virginia that was used as a phrase "Lynch Law" which was known as punishment without trial (Christopher, 2006). According to them, lynch laws were used by the supporters of British side to deal with "Negros". According to Collins English Dictionary, "A lynch mob is an angry crowd of people who want to kill someone without a trial

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because they believe that person has committed a crime". The mob lynching consists of prohibited acts such as attacks by vigilantes, murder, rape, harassment, assault, theft and so on. National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP, 1922) has defined mob lynching in the United State of America that mob lynching can be understood in these words: (i) there must be evidence that a person was killed (ii) the person must have met death illegally, (iii) a group of three or more persons must have participated in the killings and (iv) the killing is carried out in public.

Theory of Ethnocentrism and Mob Lynching

Ethnocentrism is the act of judging another culture based on preconceptions that are found in the values and standards of one's own culture – especially regarding language, behavior, customs, and religion. The usual definition of the term is "thinking one's own group's ways are superior to others" or "judging other groups as inferior to one's own". "Ethnic" refers to cultural heritage, and "centrism" refers to the central starting point... so "ethnocentrism" basically refers to judging other groups from our own cultural point of view (Barger, 2018). Further, Barger (2018) says that ethnocentrism leads to misunderstanding others. The individuals falsely distort what is meaningful and functional to other peoples through their own tinted glasses. This misunderstanding inhibits constructive resolutions when the individuals face conflicts between social groups. When we see issues of mob lynching in India from the specs of ethnocentrism, we find that mob lynching is closely related to ethnocentrism. The reason behind this, India has many diversities like languages, way of life's, food habits, religions, customs and etc. which create various communities on the basis of these diversities. The individuals who belong to a particular community, they think their community is superior to other community. The communal superiority creates discrimination among the communities. As a result, the individuals begin to see themselves from the other communities comparing from language, way of life, culture, food habit and custom etc. For instance, a number of cases of mob lynching have been highlighted in India which have been committed against the minorities and *Dalit* communities. It was found in these cases that these minorities and *Dalits* have been targeted by vigilant groups (*Gau Rakshak Dal*) of the upper communities of Indian society. These cases have indicated that these vigilant vigilance groups lynch the minorities and *Dalits* for protecting the cow and to prevent the *Dalits* to raise the voice against the

upper class communities. It is considered by the upper class communities in India that cow is a respected and slaughter and consumption of beef are crime. These vigilante groups calling themselves *Gau Rakshak Dal* have targeted minorities and *Dalits* over cow and beef slaughter, consumption, trade and even possession. In these vigilante attacks, whether the victim actually possessed beef, or whether cows were actually being transported for slaughter (Citizens against Hate, 2018). The sociologists and the mental health experts have examined that case of mob lynching are rising in India due to unprecedented change in the societal set-up of society. They say that unlike older times, there is no folklore anymore. They have also pointed out that fracture in traditional institution like family and society, inadequate changes in human behaviour along with a speed up of technology which gives a boost to the spread of such rumors and fake news (Khanna etc., 2018).

Objective of the Study

To understand the nature of mob lynching in the socio-cultural context of India.

To examine the linkage between social media and mob lynching.

To assess the role of law enforcement agencies to control the mob lynching.

METHODOLOGY

This study is based on secondary data. The secondary data have been collected from lynching affected regions of the country through various newspapers (Hindustan Times, The Hindu, The Indian Express and The Times of India etc., Delhi Edition) and monthly magazines (India Today and Economic Political Weekly etc.). The cases of mob lynching have been collected from March, 2013 to September, 2019. The author has employed content analysis method to analyse the cases related to mob lynching. The analysis is summarized in Tables (1-2) and Figures (1-4).

Content Analysis

Content analysis is a method of qualitative and quantitative data analysis. It aims to analyse the content of documents, books, newspapers, magazines and other forms of written material. Written, verbal and visual communication messages can all be analysed through content analysis (Elo and Kyngas, 2008).

Sarantakos (1998) has argued that content analysis uses the same steps as other methods of research, namely, selection of the research area, formulation of the research topic, research design, data collection and data analysis. The difference in content analysis and other methods lies only in the “content” of each step. Such topics may be chosen in the selection of the research area, aspects of which are discussed by newspapers, magazines, books and news channels and television serials such as mob lynching and hate crime. Therefore, the author has decided to employ this technique as the newspapers in India are the biggest and the best source of the report on mob lynching. Making use of content analysis allowed the author to easily access data on cases of mob lynching occurring within a certain period. The newspapers invariably reported the possible reasons for mob lynching as well as how an individual is targeted for lynching by a mob which proved to be a pivotal source of information on one of the major objectives of the study.

The data have been collected from across the country like Andhra Pradesh, Assam, Haryana, Karnataka, Kerala, Maharashtra, Rajasthan, Tamil Nadu, Tripura and Uttar Pradesh, etc. The cases of mob lynching reported from these areas were the main reason to select these places for the current study. These regions have been divided into rural and urban areas. The author collected newspaper reports of 50 incidents of mob lynching from these areas. These incidents of mob lynching have been categorized into six groups, such as victims' age group (10-25 years, 26-40 years, 41-55 years, 56-70 years and age not known), area of mob lynching (rural and urban), gender (male and female), target group (Muslim, *Dalit*, government official and unknown), causes of mob lynching (theft, *gokashi* (Cow Slaughtering), beef consuming, child lifting and unknown) and the reaction of mob lynching (murder, attempt to murder and injury). Based on the data obtained from the news items, the researcher applied the content analysis technique to understand and explain the causes and consequences of mob lynching.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Victims' Sex

Table 1 shows that a total of 45 (90%) incidents of mob lynching have been reported against the men as compared to 5 (10%) incidents of mob lynching reported against the women.

Table 1: Victim's Sex

Sex	Number of case	%
Male	45	90.00
Female	5	10.00
Total	50	100.00

Lynching Scene Area

Table 2 shows that a total of 20 (40%) incidents of mob lynching have been reported in rural area as compared to 30 (60%) incidents of mob lynching reported in urban area.

Table 2: Lynching Scene Area

Area	Number of case	%
Rural	20	40.00
Urban	30	60.00
Total	50	100.00

Victim's Age Group

Figure 1 reveals that maximum 28% people who belong to age group of 26-40 years have been lynched. While 20% incidents of mob lynching belong to 10-25 year age group, 16% incidents of mob lynching against age group of 41-55 year and 6% case of mob lynching have been found against 56-70 year age group. Moreover, study has found that the age group of victims is unknown in 30% cases of mob lynching.

Target Group (Community)

The study has found (Figure 2) that most of people who belong to Muslim community (38%), have been lynched more as compared to *Dalit* community (22%). The present study has also found that in 10% cases of lynching have been committed against Government officials (police). Moreover, researcher has found that victim's community is not available in 30% cases of lynching.

Causes of Mob Lynching

The study reveals in Figure 3 that 36% cases of mob lynching have been committed because of rumors and fake news which is followed by child lifting (34%), theft (14%), *gokashi* (10%) and beef consuming (6%).

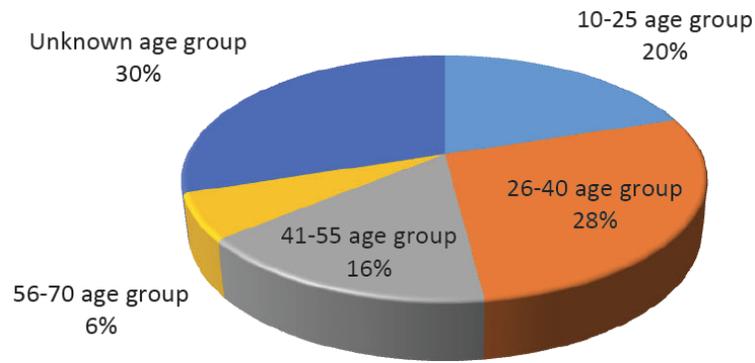


Figure 1: Victim's age group.

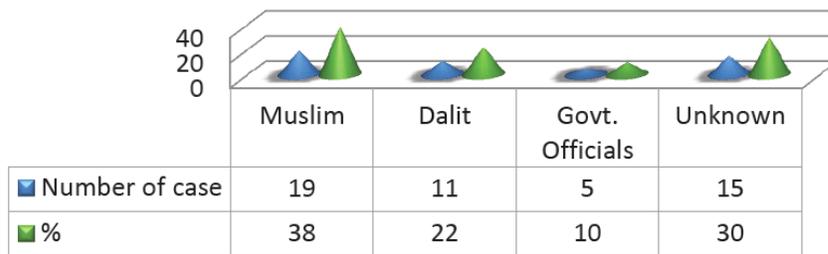


Figure 2: Target group.

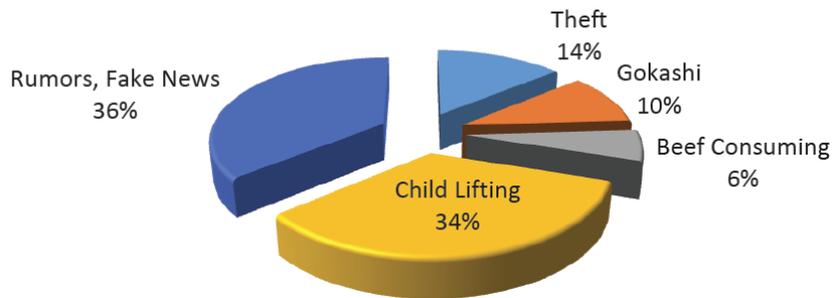


Figure 3: Causes of mob lynching.

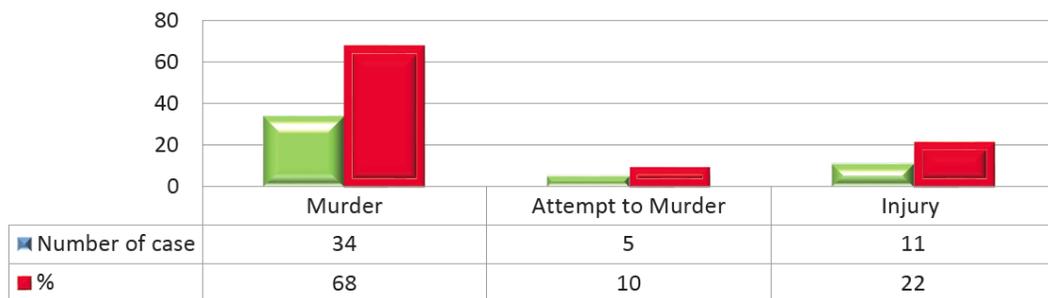


Figure 4: Reaction of mob lynching.

Reaction of Mob Lynching

Figure 4 shows that 68% people have been killed by mob as compared to 22% people have been seriously injured by mob. While 10% cases reveals that the mob of people attempted to murder of victims.

Mob Lynching in the Socio-Cultural Context of India

The phenomena of mob lynching in India moving towards becoming the new “normal.” It has failed to invoke unconditional condemnation from a large section of society. Mob lynching is a pattern of negative

behaviour in the socio-cultural context of society. It shows the social domination of a particular group of people and due to this they lynch the target people or groups without any fear of punishment (Drennan, 2017). "Mob lynching is a product of an intense hatred for someone or some group, which is no longer expressed verbally or through social disassociation. When this hatred is encouraged, stoked, made legitimate by the state apparatus and politically incentivised, we get patterns of such behaviour" (Drennan, 2017).

The cases of mob lynching have broken the limitations such as time and geography in recent times which are increasing fast across the country (Mander, 2019). It has risen the psychological threat of mob lynching anywhere, anytime and still during walking on the road among the individuals (Giri, 2019). There are two aspects of mob lynching in Indian society for understanding; first aspect from minority's point of view and second aspect from *Dalits* point of view.

The experts have given the views that the mob violence based on religious identity is different and more dangerous. They consider that the violence between Hindus and Muslims which is known as communal violence; is not new in Indian society. Communal violence between Hindu and Muslim in pre- and post-independence history of India decided the partition of country (Giri, 2019). The lynching of the country's minorities has surged in last five years. Hundreds of people have been injured in religiously motivated attacks. Most of the victims are Muslims, members of the country's largest religious minority and other victims are lower caste Hindus and Christians (Frayer, 2019).

The reasons behind the lynching of Muslims are beef consuming and *gokashi*. It is well known that cow is more respected animal in Hinduism and cow is worshiped as demigod who is instigated under the assessments of Hindu since antiquated occasions (Rathore, 2018). A group of people of Hindu think that cow comes in struggle with dietary patterns of the Muslims and other minority communities are also threatened by the groups of lynching. Attacks on Christians remain under-reported, but incidents involving churches and priests accused of converting Hindus to Christianity continue (Apoorvanand, 2017; Rathore, 2018). The present study has found around 30% Muslims have been lynched from 2013 to 2019 due to beef consuming, cow slaughtering and *gokashi* by *gau rakshak dal* (Cow Vigilantes). For instance,

some important cases can be discussed related to the lynching of Muslims who have been lynched by *gau rakshak dal*.

Dadri, Uttar Pradesh Mob Lynching Case, 2015 (The Hindu, October, 2015)

This mob lynching case was very famous which happened in Bishara village of Dadri tahseel of Uttar Pradesh. This case of mob lynching is known as a first case of lynching which was religiously based in the name of cow and beef. In this case Mohammed Akhlaq and his son Danish were accused and beaten for storing cow calf meat because of that Hindu mob lynched both them. The incident at Bishara village has come in the wake of uninterrupted controversies and communal tensions that have been kept alive around the issue of cow slaughter and ban on beef in different parts of the country. The Bishara incidence has extended communal violence and motivated Hindu communal forces to target for lynching and rise fear of lynching among the Muslim community of the country.

Tughlagabagh, Haryana Mob Lynching Case, 2017 (BBC News, June, 2017)

This case of mob lynching happened in train when four Muslim boys Junaid, Hasib, Shakir and Mohsin were travelling after Eid shopping from Tughlagabad to Ballabgarh to their home. They were abused with religious slurs and lynched by the group of 20-25 persons who had boarded the train from Okhla station. Junaid was stabbed to death while three other boys Hasim, Sakir and Mohsin were injured by the group people because of suspicion of carrying beef and hate-related to Muslim community.

Alwar, Rajasthan Mob Lynching Case, 2017 (India Today, September 2017)

In this case of lynching Muslim cow traders were lynched by cow vigilantes in Alwar. Pehlu Khan and six other Muslim cow traders were brutally attacked and beaten on the Highway linking Jaipur to Alwar by a mob of more than two dozen cow vigilantes when they were coming back to purchase cow for milk business. Pehlu Khan later died from his injuries and other six people were seriously injured. The victims of this case told during police investigation that we had all the relevant papers to show that we were carrying the cows for dairy farming but cow vigilantes were in no mood to listen to us and they destroyed our papers and started to beat us.

Dhatkidih, Jharkhand Mob Lynching Case, 2019 (The Hindu, June, 2019)

In this case a 24 year old boy Tabrez Ansari was lynched by a group of Hindu mob due to suspicion of bike theft. This case of mob lynching was circulated on social media where a Muslim boy was tied to a tree by the mob and brutally beaten and being forced to say the chant praises to Hindu gods. He was continuously beaten till 12 hours and he was crying and pleading mercy. After mob submitted him to police and where he died because of serious injuries.

So for now, I have discussed about the lynching of minority people in the socio-cultural context of India. Now I will examine the factors affecting lynching of *Dalits* in various part of Indian society.

We can look at the history of lynching in different social, political and cultural contexts of India which gives us some views to understand the recent incidents of *Dalit* lynching in India. Lynchings have existed in India for a long time. *Dalits* have been similarly treated merely for being *Dalit*. Today, reservation system which has been given to *dalits* to uplift their social status to measure social justice under the concept of equality, liberty and fraternity has been distorted to such an extent to achieve petty political ends. None of that changes the fact that the actual violence against *Dalits* is planned, sanctioned and executed by upper caste oppressors for thousands of years (Dutta, 2019). The SC/ST (Prevention of Atrocities) act that is implemented for the protection of *Dalits* from hate crime and abusive behaviour. Under this act every year number of cases *Dalit* torture are registered against the perpetrators who belong to upper caste of society. But their complaints are suppressed because of influence of powerful caste groups which underestimate their problems. Amnesty reports that 65% of all hate crimes committed in India are against *Dalits*, and in a whopping 83% of the cases where sexual violence was involved, *Dalit* women were the primary victims (The Hindu, 5th March, 2019). National Crime Records Bureau (2016) data shows that the rate at which Indians commit crimes against their *Dalit* compatriots have risen by 25% in the decade spanning 2006-2016. At the same time, number of cases of anti-*Dalit* hate crimes that are pending police investigation has almost doubled in the same period. Further, Drennan (2017) quoted that: *“withdrawal of accommodation for people the majority does not consider bona fide Indian citizens, is seen as a way for a threatened Hindu man and a disempowered Hindu woman to gain some self-*

respect and strength. This allows people engaging in violence against women, Muslims, Dalits and Tribal people to think of their actions as justified and legitimate. It is dangerous to live in a country where a stratum's ego is so easily bruised and ruptured.”

farnagar, Uttal is bitter truth of Indian society where *Dalits* are eliminated and marginalized form mainstream of society. *Dalits* are victims of casteism, feudalism, patriarchy and communitarian allegiance which are existing in Indian society (Louis, 2007). Further, Louis (2007) has mentioned that the level of discrimination of *Dalits* can be understood from the following saying that is popular in North India: *“You may make a dalit the prime minister of the country, but if you attempt to make a Dalit the president of our village council, there will be serious consequences.”* This is the mindset of the dominant caste which they get because of their aristocracy and it provide the basis for the oppressive and exploitative social structure in the society. Consequently, *Dalits* are exploited by the dominant caste. Historically, there is caste violence against *Dalits*, including rape, murder, and other forms of physical attacks by mobs. For instance, some important cases can be discussed related to lynching of *Dalits* who have been lynched by a dominant caste of Indian society.

Dulina, Haryana Mob Lynching Case, 2002 (The Times of India, November, 2020)

Dulina village is the witness of most gruesome violence in the name caste and cow protection against the *Dalits* by dominant caste of this village. The skinning of dead cows and dead buffaloes was the traditional occupation of few *Dalits* in this village. They found a dead cow on midway when they were going to sell the skin of dead animals. They started to skin it in order to add it to their consignment. A group of people saw them and assumed they killed the cow and due to this they reported in police station and they arrested by police. This news spread across the area and an unruly mob gathered and attacked the station and the victims were violently beaten and dragged by mob till death.

Una, Gujarat Mob Lynching Case, 2016 (Hindustan Times, August, 2016)

The cow vigilantes assaulted and beaten seven members of a *Dalit* family who were skinning the carcasses of dead cows in Mota Samadhiyala village near Una. They were approached and threatened by the cow vigilantes for cow killing. They tried to convince

the cow vigilantes that they were skinning dead cows. But they were not convinced and tied them in cars and beaten with sticks, iron pipes and knife. In this case seven boys of *Dalit* community were publically flogged by cow vigilantes for skinning a dead cow in Una. The video of this mob violence was circulated social media due to this *Dalit* community protested across Gujarat state against cow vigilantes of dominant caste of that area. Forty three people and four police officers were arrested and case of Una lynching in under trial.

Muzafar Pradesh Mob Lynching Case, 2018 (India Today, April 2018)

A *Dalit* boy was assaulted and beaten to death by five people of upper caste due to suspicion of theft of some goods in Baghra village. The case has been registered against five men under relevant sections of IPC and the SC/ST (Prevention of Atrocities) Act.

Umrala, Gujarat Mob Lynching Case, 2018 (India Today, July, 2018)

A *Dalit* boy was assaulted and killed by some upper caste men for owning and riding a horse in the village.

Mehsana, Gujarat Mob Lynching Case, 2019 (The Times of India, June, 2019)

A *Dalit* boy was on his way to his wedding riding a horse, as is common practice he was stopped and threatened by a group of upper-caste people of village. They insisted that riding a horse was an upper-caste privilege.

The Linkage between Social Media and Mob Lynching

In the era of cyber technology people are provided various social media channels for making communication with near and dears. Today, people are using various social media channels like face-book, twitter, whats-app, insta-garm and other sources for online chatting, messaging and some they circulate various video on various social issues. Nobody can avoid the position of social media in everyday life because we live on social networks and spend more time there than what we spend in our reality. On the one hand, social media is working to bring nears and dears on a common platform for sharing their views and maintaining healthy relationship with people. On the other hand, social media platform is being misused to threat for lynching, trolling and hate speech by some people of the society. In the last few years the social

media has violated the social cyber harmony and in fact it has become a hatred platform in contemporary Indian society. Today, it has been found in many cases that number of people related to particular community have been lynched because of hate speech and video which have been circulated on social media platform. More than 30 people have been killed across the country by mobs, often gathered under the influence of the fake news rumors and hate speech that they receive as social media notifications and messages (Palelil, 2018). It is as serious as a breakout of an epidemic. Fake news, rumors and hate speech have been weaponized to target minorities, Dalits, individuals, activists and others.

The social media channels provide a common platform to its users to receive and share the information and they forward that information to other users which information is true or wrong, rarely checked and verified. It has not only misinformed the users on social media but also triggered violence and barbaric killings around the country (Bali and Desai, 2019). T.K. Oommen has quoted about this *"misinformation and rumors are not a one-time event. They emerge due to unrest in society. This is usually the situation in a society characterized by fear. The general tendency in society is that they are unreliable. That leads to consequences which are usually bad"* (Khanna etc., 2018). The mob attacks and vigilantism are growing fast in India because social media is spreading fake news, rumors and hate speeches against a particular community and individuals. It is recognised in many cases that fake videos of abducted children, instigating locals to target any stranger and someone who cannot speak their language are circulated and shown on the social media (Uikey and Dubey, 2018).

The nature and impact of social media in India is complex and often empowering, the mob lynching represents the dark underbelly of internet technology. The Indian state is not equipped to deal with the spread of misinformation and fake news on social media. Social media companies are loath to take steps on the grounds that it will compromise their business model and freedom of speech (Sen, 2018). Sharma (2018) has mentioned about the lynching due to social media that *"delivered by volatile crowds provoked to murderous rage, the all-too frequent lynching are being played in all their goriness within hours on smartphones screens across India. As lynching becomes the new buzzword, occupying headline space and dominating drawing-room discussions, the*

montages of violence circulated endlessly highlight the gratuitous nature of the killings, the brittle civility that gives way only too easily to collective violence and the nonchalance of the bystander busy capturing the action rather than saving the victim". The social media has the remarkable influence to increase the speed and force of messages that advocate abuse against minorities and Dalits which allows hate speech, intolerance, disharmony that is cause for lynching with them (Mirchandani, 2018). For instance, some important cases can be discussed related to mob lynching which have been committed because of fake news, rumors and hate speech which have been circulated on social media.

Dhule, Maharashtra Mob Lynching Case, 2018 (India Today, July, 2018)

The five people were killed by villagers because villagers suspected that they were the part of a gang of child lifters. Police said that there were rumors for the past few days on social media that a gang of child lifters was active in the area.

Aurangabad, Maharashtra Mob Lynching Case, 2018 (India Today, July, 2018)

Two men were assaulted and beaten to death by a mob. It was found in investigation that the lynching was committed because there was a fake message was circulated on Whatsapp. Due to this message, villagers attacked the victims on suspicion of being robbers.

Hapur Uttar Pradesh, Mob Lynching Case, 2018 (India Today, July, 2018)

There was a rumor of cow slaughter on social media. Showing this rumor, mob of people attacked on victims and compelled him to confess to having slaughtered a cow. Police found in its investigation that the lynching was occurred because of rumor on social media.

Tripura Mob Lynching Case, 2018 (India Today, July, 2018)

Three cases of mob lynching were reported from three different district of Tripura. These all cases were related to child lifting which happened after circulation of fake news related to child lifting on social media. The victims were a woman, a hawker and one other person. DGP of Tripura police said during investigation of these cases that "SMS, WhatsApp, Facebook, Twitter and YouTube are being widely used for transmission of

fake images and videos as well as text messages which have potential to incite violence in the state at a larger rate."

The Role of Law Enforcement Agencies to Control the Mob Lynching

There is no specific law to deal mob lynching cases in India, however, the cases of mob lynching are investigated and inquired under Section 300, 302, 304(A), 331 and 339 of Indian Penal Code. The Section 223(a) of the Code of Criminal Procedure (CrPC), 1973 states that persons or a mob involved in the same offence in the same act can be tried together (Jain and Chawla, 2019). Moreover, other laws like Representation of The People Act, 1951, Protection of Civil Rights Act, 1955, Religious Institutions (Prevention of Misuse) Act, 1988 and Cable Television Network Regulation Act, 1995 have made some provision to control hate speeches which make cause for mob lynching. These laws are not able to control the cases of mob lynching because they do not talk directly about the lynching and definition of lynching is not mentioned in these laws. Moreover, these laws do not explain that which anti-social behaviour should be considered as a lynching that is unclear.

The Supreme Court of India (2018) described lynching as a "*horrendous act of mobocracy*" in the case of *Tehseen S. Poonawalla v. Union of India* and directed guidelines to Centre and State governments to frame laws specifically to deal with the crime of lynching (Mishra, 2018). The Court laid down certain guidelines to be incorporated in these laws including fast-track trials, compensation to victims, and disciplinary action against lax law-enforcers. There are few states are working to make law on mob lynching as directed by Supreme Court of India. Manipur government brought first law against mob lynching as directed by Supreme Court of India in 2018. Manipur has defined about mob lynching and there would be nodal officers in each district to control such crimes (Mander, 2019). Inspired by this Rajasthan and West Bengal has formulated their version of laws to curb mob lynching. Rajasthan Protection from Lynching Bill, 2019 provides for life imprisonment and a fine of between Rs. 1 and 5 lakhs for those convicted in cases where mob lynching led to the victim's death (The Hindu, 2019). The West Bengal law on mob lynching is more stringent as it provides for punishment for lynching to death, is punishable with the death penalty or life imprisonment and a fine of up to Rs. 5 lakhs (The Hindu, 2019). Moreover, Uttar Pradesh Law

Commission also came up with a draft Bill recommending harsh punishment, including life imprisonment, for people involved in cases of mob lynching (The Hindu. 2019).

CONCLUSION

The paper is based on content analysis of a few newspapers and news portals of India. The sample area in the paper covers only few places. The sample area chosen does not reflect a complete picture of mob lynching in India. The researcher has observed that the rising incidents of mob lynching are posing a challenge for the sociologists and lawmakers to examine the underlying factors in the social order which are leading to mob lynching in India. The study has implied that mob lynching is a concerning social issue in contemporary Indian society that may have been caused by many factors such as beef consuming, gokashi, child lifting, theft, fake news and rumors. The present study has also found that most people belong to Muslim community (38%) have been lynched more. It has been also found that Muslims are targeted for lynching due to slaughtering of cows and beef consuming by cow vigilantes. Moreover, in the case of *Dalit* community, people are lynched by upper caste people due social discrimination. The study has also found that few victims have been lynched because of suspicion of child lifting and theft. The study has found that number of people is creating and circulating various hate speech, hate video related to a particular community, rumors and fake news on social media which motivate to stand a group people against minorities and *Dalits*.

The notion of Indian Constitution is that everyone should live a dignified life without any discrimination. It does not allow anyone to violate other's rights and does not promote to any to take law into their hands. We can say that lynching of a person is discrimination based caste, class, race and community which worst form violation of Fundamental Rights of Indian Constitution. Consequently, Supreme Court of India is more serious to see the heinousness and cruelty of mob lynching against minorities and *Dalits* and explained that lynching is a horrendous act of mobocracy. This is the reason that Supreme Court of India has directed the central government and state governments to make a strict law to control the incidents of mob lynching and to protect the minorities and *Dalits*. Many states governments like Manipur, Rajasthan, West Bengal and Uttar Pradesh have made

law and guidelines to prevent the incidents of mob lynching.

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Received on 10-07-2020

Accepted on 30-07-2020

Published on 07-08-2020

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.6000/1929-4409.2020.09.30>

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