**Mob Psychology and Effects on Religious Extremism**

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Mob psychology is considered a critical psychological phenomenon throughout the globe, which is leaving significant consequences on the fabric of society. People in mob mentality feel unidentified within the large group, making them carefree and unaccountable for their acts. In such circumstances, any act of violence is considered a behaviour that is not the responsibility of any individual but a group. The researchers have concluded that in mob psychology, any individual within the larger group is deeply influenced by the giant mob around while neglecting their feelings and thought processes. This state of mind, also known as De individuation, can end in anger and hostility. The recent incident at one of the Tehsils of Faisalabad (Jaranwala) has sent shocked waves in the entire nation over the violent acts of the mob towards the Christian minorities of the area. This incident and many others of such type in the past make us believe that the people of this country are not a nation but becoming a “Mob.” Mob violence in Pakistan is becoming increasingly common. Regardless of the size of the crowd, the mob, in many incidents, is willing to perpetrate violence, thus causing significant damage.

The horrific incident of Jaranwala is yet another barbaric incident and will proceed from the first to second and eventually third page of the newspaper with great speed. The details of the incident reveal that a violent mob was encouraged through announcements at loudspeakers from local mosques that reported alleged damage to Islamic religious scriptures by the three Christians. This has resulted in ruthless attacks on churches and homes of the Christian community. While looking at the particulars, it becomes a known fact that mob violence is typically flared up with little planning. Countries with a lack of education, high levels of poverty and unemployment, and a lack of recreational facilities indeed leave the youth directionless. Such a young lot is attracted to the excitement, and they like to defy authorities. Not a large, but usually a small percentage of people who are considered hard-edged criminal characters are identified among the mob. Rest is the followers who are instigated and like to set the vicious tone of chaos. Misusing religion and religious interpretations is another lubricant for such mass destruction. They lived among the mob, which is directionless and primarily instigated by so-called religious scholars. The minorities of Pakistan are forced to live under the clouds of fear and uncertainty. Allegations of blasphemy, and forcible conversion of minorities in the form of marriages of minor girls, particularly the safety and dignity of the minorities, are compromised in the country.

Extreme mindsets can be changed through education based on the right philosophies, opportunities in job markets, and building a fair and just society.

The key incidents in the past years against minorities have involved religion, and a typical mob in a typical community setting has always been provoked against people of other faiths. The Islamic values, including the holy Quran and Sunnah teachings, have stressed no place for any violence in religion. Islamic principles are set upon religious tolerance. The constitution of Pakistan, particularly Article 5, provides that “adequate provision shall be made for the minorities to profess and practice their religions and develop their cultures freely. As per Islamic laws, Muslims and non-Muslims are equal, and no such superiority is given to Muslims on any grounds. Tolerance is considered a religious as well as a civic value. There is a dire need to fashion a unified and comprehensive strategy to stop the mob, which assumes others know more than they do and mindlessly follow. In Pakistan, the participation of individuals in violent mobs against other faiths is influenced by certain religious philosophies that need to be curtailed through educating the masses on the real teachings of Islam to obstruct any future unfortunate incident. Teachers, journalists, members of civil society, and lawyers can contribute by providing useful input on real Islamic ideologies. It is equally important to engage the minorities in productive dialogue, which is meant to dispel their fears and apprehensions. In addition, concerning the dealings and treatment with minorities, the holy book of ALLAH Almighty, the Quran, has communicated a strong message by saying. “(O Glorious Messenger!) Invite the path of your Lord with strategic wisdom and refined exhortation and (also) argue with them most decently. Surely your Lord knows him who strayed away from His path, and He also knows well the rightly guided.” (16:125).

Lastly, extreme mindsets can be changed through education based on the right philosophies, opportunities in job markets, and building a fair and just society by reducing inequalities and implementing existing laws. The absence of these elements has already triggered violence and extremism in Pakistani society, where people are facing collective frustration, disillusionment, and a sense of deprivation, primarily due to the collapse of the social institutions of the society.

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