

**ANGLIA RUSKIN UNIVERSITY**  
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**A STUDY OF PRISONERS CONVICTED OF  
VIOLENT OFFENCES IN PAKISTAN**

**WAHEED AHMED ABBASI**

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# **Declaration of the Original Work**

I hereby confirm and declare that I have written this thesis and this is all my own work.

I also confirm that this thesis has not been submitted for any professional degree or any publication.

Signature: -----

Date: -----

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# **Dedication**

**This research work is dedicated to:**

**My father, Allah Bux and mother, Zubaida**

**My sweet sister Anees,**

**My wife, Waheeda, and**

**My children, Maryam, Areeba, Kabeer, Inara and Mahir.**

## **Abstract**

This qualitative research project contributes to understanding of violence in Pakistan. It examines how prisoners convicted of violent offences (murder, kidnapping, robbery, violent assault and honour killing) describe, explain and justify violence. This research involved interviews with forty prisoners incarcerated in four prisons in Sindh, Pakistan. This was supplemented by interviews with professionals such as police, advocates, academics and local politicians. The narratives interviews were thematically analysed.

Western prisoner-based research indicates that offenders have a relatively strong sense of personal responsibility. This contrasts with Pakistani prisoners whose narratives portray them as victims of social circumstance and of an unjust and arbitrary criminal justice system. Prisoners locate themselves in a set of unfair, unequal and victimising social, cultural, political and economic circumstances, which leave them with no other choice but becoming violent, in a context where violence is normalised. Similarly, the processes whereby the acts of violence are punished are largely and strongly believed in terms of discrimination, misfortune and victimisation. In this context, the most of the offenders neutralise their violent acts by blaming their social background, unequal social, economic and political opportunities and physical victimisation by police and feudal lords. For most of the offenders, violence is normal and routine and many see themselves as innocent or as behaving honorably.

It is challenging to conduct research of this kind in the Pakistani prison system and there has previously been limited qualitative criminological work in this context. The empirical data generated, however, shows the value of this approach and sheds new light on the comparative study of violence.

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## **Introduction**

This thesis opens windows to the understanding of violence by analysing lived experiences, narrative explanations, and justifications of violent acts collected from prisoners convicted of violent offences and parallel analytical narratives gained from professionals in Pakistan. Violence is a serious problem in Pakistan which manifests in different forms like murder, violent assault, kidnapping, robbery, honour-based violence and ethnic violent conflicts. The high levels of violence have been serious concern for public, stakeholders and social scholars including criminologists like Mahfooz Kanwar (Kanwar, 1989) and Imdad Sahito and his colleagues (Sahito et al., 2009), and sociologists like Najma Noor Phulpoto (Phulpoto, 2010), and many others (e.g., Nadeem, 2002; Siddiqi, 2010; Waheed, 2010; Ali, 2011). However, despite much concern about the problem, current research on crime and violence in Pakistan is limited theoretically and methodologically (e.g., Kanwar, 1989; Quraishi, 2002; Fasihuddin, 2013). This is because there is a lack of commitment from academicians and funding agencies to conduct research on violence and violent crimes, and there are no many educational institutions providing opportunities to professionals and concerned researchers to initiate studies about serious crimes to produce criminological and sociological literature (Quraishi, 2002). Consequently, the problem of violence remains under-researched and misunderstood.

The little literature available explains that violence is highly influenced by social, psychological, and cultural variables like poverty, unemployment, weak justice system, historic notions like revenge, and cultural values like justification of honour- based violence against women (Kanwar, 1989; Suhail and Javed, 2004; Phulpoto, 2010). The literature also indicates that violence takes place differently in rural and urban areas due to different nature and cultural characteristics of the locations (Kanwar, 1989; Quraishi, 2002; Suhail and Javed, 2004; Narejo and Kharal, 2010; Fasihuddin, 2013). Most of the available literature on crime and violence including criminological, sociological and psychological is of quantitative nature (Kanwar, 1989; Quraishi, 2002; Suhail and Javed, 2004), lacks proper theoretical framework and does not provide understanding of the

problem specifically from the narrative perspectives of convicted violent offenders. In addition, existing criminological research including American (e.g., Agnew, 1994) and Pakistani (for example, see Kanwar, 1989; Hashmi et al., 2000; Suhail and Javed, 2004) attempts to know violence and violent behaviour from limited acts of violence like murder, assault and robbery or from the victim perspectives (Kelly, 1987; Phulpoto, 2010). Therefore, lack of criminological research, comprehensive theoretical information, and application of proper research methods creates a gap of understanding violence on proper theoretical and methodological approaches. More details about the gaps in existing criminological literature and contributions to knowledge are given in Chapter Two.

In order to fill in the research gaps, this prisoners-based research looks into the lived experiences, narrative explanations and accounts of justifications of convicted men, and provides comprehensive understanding about violence and violent behaviour in Pakistan. This research based on qualitative interviews studies and examines narrative accounts collected from prisoners convicted of violent offences like murder, robbery, kidnapping, violent assault and honour killing, and opens windows to the understanding how convicted prisoners make sense of their committed violence. This study steps ahead and supplements the information of convicted men by examining the narrative views of professionals like senior police officers, advocates, academicians, psychologists, psychiatrics, politicians and social workers that how do they explain violence in social, cultural and political context. By analysing all different perspectives from prisoners and professionals, this study finds that violence is highly influenced by disorganised structural conditions.

This study also finds that often violent acts including murder, kidnapping and robbery are not personal responsibility rather are motivated by social and criminal victimisations. A violent act, for example, murder, as this study finds, is not crime and moral issue, but an action that is necessary to take revenge of past victimisation and resolve social and criminal problems. On the other hand, some violent acts like killing in the name of honour and assaulting stand as justified behaviour on cultural bases, and further are motivated and shaped by situations. Additionally, important supplementary, this study

provides comparative criminological analytical approach by investigating Western and Pakistani literatures to unpin the differences and similarities for understanding violence across the nations and obtaining cross-cultural understanding of violence.

Being a concerned academic criminologist in Pakistan I was very much aware of the gaps in knowledge and understanding of this topic area. Therefore, the purpose of conducting this research actually was of contributing advanced and fresh literature to the criminological understanding about violence and violent behaviour in Pakistan.

For the purpose of criminological research in violence, I sought an admission in PhD in Anglia Ruskin University, Cambridge Campus in the UK. I arrived in the UK wishing to research violence but without a clear focus or approach. Initially, I had some academic ideas about the use of quantitative methods to research crime but no firm theoretical knowledge. However, having had the opportunity of reading more literature on the topic of violence and violent crime, I became convinced of the merits of a qualitative approach and of understanding the lives and stories of violent offenders to know their how and why about their committed violent acts. Therefore, through initial readings and much discussion with my supervisory team, David Skinner, Samantha Lundrigan and Colleen Moore, my initial proposal about explanations of violent crime in Pakistan developed into a study of prisoners convicted of violent offences. As I went on reviewing and comprehending the Western and local qualitative literature, I found qualitative approach as best for this research topic, since the area of my research was less developed on theoretical and methodological grounds in Pakistan. All these problems like seriousness of the research area and low professional research interest in this concern provided me a justified rationale for studying violent offenders in prisons in Sindh, Pakistan.

After gaining initial motivational understanding from theoretical and methodological approaches from the Western and local criminological works, given in the Chapter One and Chapter Two respectively, I became confident and keenly interested in knowing violence in Pakistani context. Given my local knowledge and contacts, it made sense for me to base the empirical work in Sindh province I belong to and where violent crimes such as murder, armed robbery (dacoity), kidnapping and honour violence are high

(Nadeem, 2002; Sahito, et al, 2009; Siddiqi, 2010; Waheed, 2010; Phulpoto, 2010). Therefore, in order to comprehend the problem and add to its understanding in Sindh and Pakistan, I developed two main objectives:

1. To gain an understanding of the biographies, narratives and experiences of violent offenders in Pakistan
2. To appreciate and evaluate explanations of violent offending put forward by offenders themselves, and by criminal justice professionals and academics

I was aware as my research objectives indicate that I wanted to understand violence by analysing lived experiences, life stories and narrative explanations of perpetrators of violence and by evaluating explanations about social problems and violent offending put forward by the professionals who possess first- hand information about the topic in hand and the society. However, given the relatively limited development of criminological research in Pakistan, I took the decision to conduct a study that explored the relevance of Western analysis and methods to a Pakistani context. This comparative approach is reflected in the structure of the thesis.

### **Structure of thesis**

Chapter One reviews current criminological literature that places violence in social context. There is a vast body of research out there on violence and violent crime around the world, especially in European and Western countries. The criminological literature sees this issue from a variety of perspectives including socioeconomic, cultural and situational. Yet, there are major gaps so far in the understanding of violence from theoretical and methodological levels in the existing literature. Structural or disorganised approaches examine violence from the perspectives of social conditions such as poverty, unemployment, illiteracy and many other associated factors. However, within the same framework of understanding of violence there is much debate around the knowledge that all poor social groups and communities do not necessarily become involved in violent offending behaviour. Similarly, some violent crimes like murder and assault are not

essentially driven by economic motivations, but some other factors like cultural value systems such as honour. Subcultural or cultural research approaches argue that individuals develop certain moral beliefs and values which motivate them and encourage them to resort to violence; moreover, cultural values are used as justification for and rationalisations of the violent activities. Other researchers argue against both of those perspectives describe there are certain situations and circumstances which make violent interactions possible. The situational perspective strongly believes conflicting interactions between offender and victim along with other elements such as the availability of weapons and the background of the offender largely influence the possibility of violent interaction.

Further understanding of violence is developed by exploring social conditions in the Pakistani context, as discussed in Chapter Two. The limited literature on violence explains that it is divided in relation to rural and urban areas and various social problems such as poor socioeconomic and political conditions including poverty, unemployment, a weak criminal justice system and cultural problems. It also describes how communities being motivated by its own structural and cultural conditions create possibilities of violence for people that they become involved in various violent criminal activities from their early age. However, the poor quality of research and not enough literature on the problem in Pakistan provide an unclear and complicated understanding of violence. Furthermore there is no criminological understanding developed from how people explain and describe their violence.

Chapter Three explains how violent crime may be understood by qualitative research conducted in prisons by exploring lived experiences and narrative accounts of prisoners. This Chapter highlights the importance of prisoner-based research and argues that prisoners provide narrative accounts which provide extensive information for a researcher to analyse to understand why individuals become involved in violent activities. Moreover, it emphasises violent offenders, by using different types of narratives deny and justify their violence. Such a methodological approach is widely appreciated and used,

and which provided me with a research design and approach to investigate violence from prisoners' perspectives.

In Chapter Four I describe the research process. The chapter tells how I gained access to four prisons in Sindh province and was able to interview forty offenders, albeit under less than ideal circumstances. When conducting these interviews I attempted to use a narrative approach taken from Western studies. The chapter considers the challenges of adapting this technique to a very different cultural and institutional context. In addition to the prisoner interviews, I also interviewed approximately the same number of professionals from the police, prison service, the court system, academia and local politics. As the chapter describes, I analysed both sets of interviews using thematic network analysis. Chapter Five begins discussion of the empirical data. It provides demographic information about the prisoners and considers their accounts of their early life experiences and paths into offending. In doing so it begins two important analytical themes. The first of these is the significance of poor socio-economic conditions. The second is the contrast between urban and rural settings.

Chapter Six discusses how offenders make sense of their violence. A key theme here is the ways in which offenders minimise their responsibility and justify their violence using a variety of techniques. Prisoners locate themselves in a set of disordered social, cultural, political and economic circumstances, which leave them with no other choice than to become violent, and, in those contextual problems, they justify their violent act as normal and routine behaviour. Most of the offenders neutralise their violent acts by blaming their social background, unequal social, economic and political opportunities and physical victimisation by police and feudal lords. For most of the offenders, violence is normal and routine and many see themselves as innocent or as behaving honorably.

Chapter Seven focuses on the criminal justice system. It shows how for offenders the processes whereby violence is punished are largely understood in terms of misfortune and victimisation. There is a surprising amount of overlap between prisoners and professionals in their accounts of the limitations of the system. Chapter Eight offers some

conclusions and considers the implications of the study for criminology in Pakistan and for the comparative study of violence.

## **Chapter One**

### **Structural and subcultural analysis of violent crime**

Violence is a physical force that harms human beings. Yet, it is complex to understand why some people harm others. The complexity becomes complex since it manifests in different forms and each form of violence may be motivated by different or a variety of incentives and variables. Violence as a physical force manifests in different acts and behaviours such as killing, injuring, robbing, kidnapping, and assaulting. However, these acts or behaviours of violence may be motivated by different societal variables. For instance; some acts of violence, such as, robbery may be motivated by economic benefits (Ferguson, 2012; Dai, 2013); kidnapping and murder may be motivated by economic strains, revengeful thoughts and personal hostility (Ferguson, 2012; Agnew, 2003); while killing in the name of honour, injuring and assaulting may be influenced by particular cultural pretext and distinctive moral values (Gill, 2004). Violence therefore stands as a complex phenomenon to understand.

#### **Violence as a complex phenomenon**

Social researchers are much concerned with understanding of violence. For criminologists and other social scientists, violence remains a complex behaviour. Various scholars by examining and studying violent behaviour and social variables have provided their views and understandings about violence. It is strongly believed that violence can be better understood within social and cultural contexts where it takes place. For instance, Larry Ray, a British sociologist, contends, “the social context for both the performance and understanding of violence is of central importance” to better conceptualise violence (Ray, 2011: 6). In a social environment where there is a complex interaction of social groups and the presence of a variety of societal variables and cultural differences, understanding violence remains a difficult problem for social scientists to unravel. Different scholars locate violence in different places. Randall Collins (2009), a sociologist and Elizabeth Kandel Englander (2003), a criminologist, consider violence as a form and means of social activity, which serves the practical interests of people. In this



respect, violence becomes a relative and contextual phenomenon; since it is perceived, defended and criticized in the relation to its particular social contexts, political backgrounds and cultural value systems. For instance, violence is used as a weapon or tool against political aggressors and as a political manifestation in revolutionary movements, thus, serving the interest of the particular groups and particular ideological groups (Fearon and Laitin, 2000). In addition, the use of violence has been a source of catharsis for the enslaved and downtrodden people leading to desire for social change, thus, a 'class can be resurrected through violence' (Khalaf, 2002: 40). Since involvement in conflict and violence serves some purposes for people. As, scholars and historians know that individuals or groups participate in different activities for example, social and political violence, in order to find their identity and obtains some goals through their participation. James D. Fearon and David D. Laitin, political scientists and Rusi Jaspal and Marco Cinnirella, sociologists, believe that a social class or political groups attempt to attain or maintain its identity through involvement in conflict activities (Fearon and Laitin, 2000; Jaspal and Cinnirella, 2012). Violence and its understanding has remained contested issue for social scientists.

Some criminologists locate violence in individual and collective domains. Christopher Birkbeck and Gary LaFree (1993) argue that symbolic interactionist theorists emphasise the role of the actor of violence as an important component, how an actor defines and creates situations of conflict is a central question. However, they also believe that a perspective which blames the enactor of violence also neglects both important opportunities available to that actor and the social background in which he or she is located. Randall Collin (2009), an American criminologist, locates violence within the situational interaction of offender and victim, and believes it is difficult to ascertain what, shapes violence, whether it is an actor, a victim or the presence of other elements like weapons, which is most significant. In contrast, Larry Ray (2011:191) locates violence within "systems of power and meaning." When individuals find their social benefits being disturbed by disorganised social and economic conditions, they construct cultural meanings to suit their own personal purposes, thus their reaction getting benefit from social and cultural meanings become involve in different violent activities. What social

and cultural conditions affect individuals to becoming violent and why individuals derive their social and cultural definitions and meanings from the conditions are some of the questions that many present criminologists are interested in to know and investigate. For example, Lary Ray (2011) asks questions that what type of society generates violent behaviour and how social, political, legal affects individuals and cultural conditions that they behaviour become violent. To what extent an individual becomes affected by his social surroundings and how certain cultural meanings and values support him becoming aggressive and hostile, however, answer of these questions are difficult to measure and calculate.

However, as violence is difficult to measure so it is highly difficult to establish that, because of the certain acts of violence, some nations may be labelled as violent. Yet, the concept that some societies and cultures are violent suggests that there might be various societal problems, which support emergence of violence. Based on the prevalence and levels of violence, certain nations may be assumed as peaceful while certain others as dangerous. For example, the United Kingdom, Australia, Japan and the United States may be called as non-violent nations where violence especially interpersonal acts, such as murder, kidnapping and armed robbery have historically and significantly declined (Ray, 2011; Hawkins et al, 2000; Eisner, 2003; Tselon et al, 2010). Violence may have decreased historically in above-mentioned countries, yet the United States still shares higher rate of violent crimes including homicide than the other most of the industrialised countries in the world (DeKeseredy, 2011). In addition, violence against women is one of the increasing phenomena in that nation, according to the recent 2010 figures, the rate of killing of women by their husbands including ex-husbands and boyfriends increased from 32.9 % to 37.5 % in the same year. Moreover, because of the domestic problems including economic and psychological, 94% percent women were the victims of the intimate partner violence out of 72 % homicide-suicide cases between the month of January 1 and June 30, 2011 in the United States (Sheehan, et al, 2015). In the United Kingdom, young boys are increasingly involved in violent activities who form criminal gangs, according to the recent statistics of 2013, 10 % young people of 10-19 years are affiliated with criminal gangs and 8% of 10-15 years young boys have multiple

experiences of violence against them (Sundaram, 2016). Such different evidences indicate violence in different forms and types exist in advanced and industrialised countries. While, some other developing countries are observing high violent incidents. For example, Pakistan has historically been observing increasing rate of violent crimes, such as, murder, robbery and violent assault, which are ever increasing (Nadeem, 2002; Riedel, 2008; Blair et al, 2013).

Such understandings of levels of violence in different countries are usually developed by mere statistical figures, however the sense developed from the counts of violent crimes do not necessarily justify labelling countries as violent or non-violent and do not certainly clarify qualitative understanding about why and how such problems of violence take place. Moreover, there are various types of violent offences; not all of these however may rise in the same levels in the same county (Ferguson, 2012). For example, homicide violent crimes may be low in some countries such as Japan and the UK, but suicide rate in Japan is high (Dai, 2013) and self-harming acts especially by women are high in the UK (Sheehan, et al, 2015). Importantly, the statistical/quantitative measurements of the counts of violent crimes cannot provide qualitative explanations, interpretations and understanding about how and why people engage in violent criminal activities. In similar veins, as Elizabeth Kandel Englander in his textbook, 'Understanding Violence,' holds, that 'official statistics' about domestic violence and violent crimes "are not a deliberate attempt to mislead the public, they can be easily misinterpreted" (Englander, 2003: 14).

Quantitative approach though has potential for researching and understanding crime and violence but this methodological approach if examines violence which particularly is under researched may not be an appropriate choice. Quantitative research has much contributed towards examining and exploring social phenomenon, it has positive aspects though. The quantitative research has been widely acknowledged for a number of reasons in criminology for understanding and measuring acts of crime and social indicators in society. For instance, quantitative methods are highly used to test theories in order to develop comparative knowledge about certain crimes in relation to certain social factors and to gain numerical relationship between certain acts of violent crimes (Moran, 2014;

Hough, 2014; Jacques, 2014). In terms of comparison of the research publications, some social researchers, for instance, Black (2000), claim that quantitative research is published more than qualitative research in criminological journals (Black, 2000; also see Jacques, 2014). Moreover, much importance is given to quantitative methods in research circles; truly speaking, a number of social scientists including criminologists content "quantitative research as being far superior due to its reliance on statistical inference" (Jacques, 2014: 318).

Yet, many other criminologists go against such methodological arguments and quantitative criminologists. For instance, Jeff Ferrell (2009) and Jock Young (2004) strongly value qualitative methods in criminology to understand changing cultural and social factors and their influence on crime and violence (Young, 2004; Ferrell, 2009). Jock contends while referring to crime victimisation research that, the cultural differences not only support education levels but also helps violence. In this respect, by using quantitative methods, it will be difficult to estimate and interpret the cultural differences and their impact on acquisition of education and levels of violence (Moran, 2014). So, as Jock believes, quantitative methods often come with 'scant scientific justifications' in presenting findings of the research (Jacques, 2014: 462) and, as Moran (2014) and Jacques (2014) accept, the qualitative research by analysing underlying social factors explains violence and thus helps develop criminological theories. For the topic of research, such as violence, which is under researched and poorly investigated, qualitative research methods are the best suitable and appropriate choice. Proper theoretical and methodological approaches need to be devised as to properly understand violence, which is a serious problem around the world.

A well-known British criminologist holds that "there is no known human society where the equivalents of assault, rape, robbery, or murder do not occur" (Eisner, 2013; 137). Violence being pervasive part of almost every society affects wellbeing of human beings and disturbs social structure of a given society (Spierenburg, 2012; Ganpat and Liem, 2012; Eisner, 2013). It causes injuries and death to the population. International Homicide Statistics (IHS) maintained by The United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime

(UNODC) estimate that interpersonal violence such as intimate partner or family related homicide affects almost every country in the world. Statistics collected by IHS during the year 2013 reveal that a large proportion of global interpersonal personal homicide incidents take place in Asian, European and Oceania regions. However, Pakistan is the most violent country among those in Asia. According to the statistics of 2003 and 2008 (UNODC, 2010), Pakistan observes highest homicide rate among the Middle East/South West Asian countries (Dai, 2013: 15). In addition, there is increase almost in every form of violent act like robbery, kidnapping, murder, violent assault (Kanwar, 1989; Sahito, et al, 2009, also see Appendices I and II), sectarian and ethnic violence (Siddiqi, 2010; Ali, 2011), gender-based violence (Phulpoto, 2010) and violent terrorist activities (Fair, 2004; Fair, 2007). Under what social conditions, violence takes place and how people come to involve in various violent activities are the qualitative questions that I am particularly concerned. As an academic criminologist, my overall objective therefore is to understand violence in Pakistani context and this understanding will be developed by exploring and evaluating the experiences of social and violent life of violent offenders and explanations of various professionals about social structure and violent conditions in Pakistan.

In this chapter, I will attempt to comprehend violence and my focus therefore, will be on: what violence is, how to understand it and what comparative criminological literature discuss about violent crime. By doing so, I will be able to understand violent crime and develop theoretical and methodological understandings that may be applied to examine violent crime in the Pakistani context.

### **Defining and understanding violence**

Defining and understanding violence has been continuous challenge and debatable points for the social scientists and criminologists. Within social science circles, scholarly attempts have been made to define and understand violence; by benefiting from those scholarly arguments, I will attempt to review them as to gain its proper definition and comprehension.

Violence is one of the most challenging and urgent tasks for the social sciences. Social scholars including criminologist by studying various types of violent acts like homicide,

gender-based violence, school violence, intimate-partner violence, ethnic or racial violence and structural violence, have contributed much to the theoretical and methodological knowledge about violence (Galtung, 1992). Some others analysed and examined the lived experiences and explanations gained from various sources like victims, offenders and observers of violence, and other statistical data on violent offences (Herrenkohl, et al, 2011; Ferguson, 2012) to understand violence. Nevertheless, the progress of defining and understanding “has been slowed by the lack of a precise and standard definition that accounts for the myriad expressions of violence” Herrenkohl, 2011: 13). Not having precise definition and lack of comprehensive scientific understanding in this concern, it becomes imperative and urgent need to collect answer of what actually ‘violence’ is (Stanko, 2003; Jackman, 2002; Herrenkohl, et al, 2011). In addition, consistent challenges in defining violence are constructed because of the various disciplinary attitudes and approaches such as sociology, criminology, psychology, public health and biology. These disciples engaged in studying etiology of violence produce their results on independent basis without consulting the views and theoretical and methodological inputs of others (Stanko, 2003; Herrenkohl, et al, 2011).

Violence within criminological literature is analysed and seen from a number of different theoretical and methodological perspectives and approaches, which however, create problems for defining and understanding it. For example, some criminologists who examine violence from an offender’s perspective define it as legitimate (Kanwar, 1989; Gill, 2009), while those who see it from the victim's perspective declare it as illegitimate (Gill, 2009; Dobash and Dobash, 2011). Even the concept of legitimacy and illegitimacy varies between different enactors of violence. For example, soldiers who cause injuries and death to people in the battle field may not consider their acts of injuring and killing as violent (Ferguson, 2012). Moreover, violence sanctioned by state does not carry blame that it is morally and legally wrong; as Marvin and Ingle (1999) contend, some people who are authorised to use violence may not be held accountable their violent acts of injuring and killing. It is not only state that legitimises violence but certain cultures do as well. As Wolfgang and Ferracutti (1972) content that, certain people being influenced by

cultural or subcultural values and moral justifications may not blame themselves as responsible for their violent criminal behaviour and activities.

Given the differences in theoretical and methodological approaches, and differences in cultural settings, every different discipline attempt to adhere “protecting their turf, thus diminishing the opportunity to be informed by others’ insights and findings” (Herrenkohl, et al, 2011:15). In such varied cultural, theoretical and scholarship differences, making straightforward definition of violence would certainly be difficult task (DeKeseredy & Kelly, 1993; Kelly, 1987; Kelly, 1994). For example, Liz Kelly (1987) analysed life experiences of women and children victims of violence and argued definition and concept of violence changes within different groups of women because of their different social experiences, perceptions and attitudes towards violence. She also comments that definition of violence changes within different social contexts, timeframes and cultures. In her scholarship, she concludes violence offers complex continuum on which it seems violence socially and culturally approved behaviour and its definitional variations and concepts are deeply rooted in certain cultures. For instance, in a patriarch and traditional nature of society, aggression and violence of male becomes justified and approved behaviour (Kelly, 1987). Getting more examples it may be put that, some traditional practices like female genital cutting and honour killings are widely condemned by Western cultures, whereas body rituals and exposure assumed as feminine equality are socially accepted practices (Kelly, 1987). In contrast to this social and cultural disapproval of violence, honour killing and some other forms of gender-based violence like force-marriage are traditionally and culturally practiced, and accepted in some Asian countries like Pakistan (Siddiqui, 2003; Gill, 2004). Violence seems to be reacted in different ways in different social and cultural contexts.

Violence is complex human behaviour that may be acted on various reasons and motivations. It is acted on the motivations of “hostility and the wilful intent to cause harm” and on the other hand it is “legally, socially, or morally” considered as “deviant human activity” (de Haan, 2008:27). Despite it being considered morally and legally deviant and criminal by mainstream society, the act of violence is justified and

internalised within some certain social groups and subcultures, some psychologists like McGuire (2004) and social researchers like Sykes and Matza (1957) believe. Violence, thus, stands not as a narrow concept, of which understanding may be derived from a single perspective. Since it can be “individual or collective, interpersonal or institutional, national or international, symbolic or structural,” and, it can be “private, or public and the victims may be family members, acquaintances or strangers” (de Haan, 2008: 28) and it is acted in different social contexts with different moral and motivational grounds. Violence therefore becomes multifaceted social aspect in human life.

Violence taking place within social groups is widely viewed and seen as a physical force against other individual(s) (Herrenkohl, et al., 2011; Jones, 2000; Jackman, 2002; Wikström, et al, 2009). However, various scholars and various social sciences have attempted to define violence. Their arguments and definitions however can be categorised into two main domains: restrictive and inclusive. The former perspective locates the source of violence within individuals, while later finds it within society. I will explain each one as follows.

According to the 'restrictive' definition, as Olweus (1999 cited in Herrenkohl, et al, 2011: 16) defines it, violence is “aggressive behaviour in which the actor or perpetrator uses his or her own body or an object (including a weapon) to inflict (relatively serious) injury or discomfort upon another individual.” Violence is physical power used against others through physical acts and use of weapons. Some scholars blame the criminal intention of individuals causing violence, for example, Stanko (2012: 316) defines violence as a “form of behaviour by an individual that intentionally threatens to or does cause physical, sexual or psychological harm to others or themselves” (Stanko, 2012:316). For example, murder, rape, robbery and kidnapping are violent acts carried out with the intention of killing, sexually assaulting, robbing people of their valuable items and purposefully abducting people (Curtis, 1973). Likewise, other researchers for example, Wikström and his co-researchers, find violence to be an intentional act that may be carried out to cause physical harm, injury or death to other individuals and also to cause damage to property (Wikström et al, 2009). They further explain violence, in terms of moral values, that the



act may result from certain desires or needs, or from cultural values such as honour. So certain values and desires may provide motivational grounds for violent act.

Violence is a physical power used intentionally against others causing them physical, psychological and sexual harm. However, all forms of violence are not intentional; some acts may result from negligence (Ray, 2011), others from spur of moment action (Kanwar, 1989; Gilligan, 2000; Ray, 2011). Thus, a violent act can occur for several reasons. Physical acts taken against others, with intention or being driven by certain, sudden emotions or desires are considered as characteristics of violence. It is clear that restrictive definitions assume individuals are responsible for violent acts. However, there are certain situations, which experimental psychologists believe (e.g., Geen, 1990), play a significant role in creating chances for violence and driving individuals to be aggressive; such characteristics and of violence and aggression are considered as a “journey to crime” (Birkbeck and LaFree, 1993:115) and violent conflicts. Individuals are susceptible to certain unavoidable situations, which demand their reactions. These situations of violence may be influenced by a variety of factors.

However, many scholars believe that situations may further be motivated by various previous social strains and backgrounds experiences (Wilson, 2012). The situational perspective argues that situational interactions interweave and play a significant role in increasing the probability of violent conflicts. Several researchers, for instance Wolfgang (1958), Weaver et al (2004) and Wikström et al (2009), suggest that interaction of criminal and victim and availability of weapons further enhance the chances of violence. For example, actor-network theorists (Holligan, 2014) believe that much family violence is carried out with a knife because of its availability in homes. Moreover, many other scholars believe that drunken individuals are more likely to initiate violent acts in many situations (Phillips and Maume, 2007). It means individuals are partly responsible for their violent acts because of their criminal intentions and partly because of other elements, for example, conflicting interaction with the victim, and easy availability of weapons. Yet, many other scholars believe an offender’s intentions and involvement in violent situations may be determined by some other forces such as physical victimisation,

an antagonistic attitude and past experiences of humiliation (e.g., Galtung, 1990; Ferguson, 2012; Ray, 2011). Therefore, the sources of violence may not always lie within individuals and situations, but within wider society. This concept, which locates factors of violence within society, explains a variety of factors, which motivate individuals to be involved in violent acts and offers a broader conceptualisation of the issue.

On the other hand, the inclusive perspective sees violence in relation to various social correlates. Felson (2009) describes violence as a physical aggression that causes harm to other individuals; however, the harm may not always be physical, it may be social harm or deprivations of social and material resource. Some social harm developed, created and imposed by some agencies of structural power and powerful hierarchy in society are also imposed by them against other social groups. Thus, unsystematic conditions of society are arranged in a way that causes social harm to people. Other inclusive definitions propose that, “any action or structural arrangement that results in physical or non-physical harm to one or more persons” is also an act of violence (Barak (2003:260). Social structural conditions, according to this definition, may not harm physically but may cause emotional disturbance. Definitions and norms developed by the agents of structural power and determining forces, as Jackman (2002) suggests, put in the words of de Haan (2008), may be “detached from their social, moral or legal standing,” however; all these are applied and enforced against the will of others. For example, vulnerable conditions like decreased conditions of unemployment, relative poverty in certain communities, deprivation of political and legal rights, widespread disease with no preventive measures are the conditions created by the disorganised social system of the State (Galtung, 1990; Sampson, 2000; Jackman, 2002; Zizek, 2008; Ferrell, et al., 2008; Ray, 2011; Pridemore, et al, 2013). Individuals, according to this definition, are vulnerable victims of disorganised social conditions, which deprive people of their hope and limit their social development.

An anthropologist, David Riches, in his text, “The Anthropology of Violence” sees violence as “an act of physical hurt deemed legitimate by the performer and illegitimate by (some) witnesses” (Riches, 1986:8). This definition, as Riches contends, shares basic

characteristics and properties of definitions of violence that is almost valid and considered agreeable within many cultures across the world. Focus in this definition is on performance and subjective construction of meaning, for the one who perpetuates, offender, an act of violence considers his act as legitimate while the one who is harmed (the victim) considers the actions as illegitimate. Violence becomes subjective phenomenon that because of the distinctive experiences and perceptions is subjectively viewed, explained and perceived differently by different people. While, some other researchers view it mainly on the basis of nature of its acts, irrespective of the meanings and explanations attached with it. For instance, Jackman (2002) sees violence detached from any individual construction of meanings of violence that may be influenced by social, cultural and moral settings. Jackman's (2002) definition includes the "actions that directly inflict injury as well as those that either threaten or result in injury". According to this definition, physically injurious actions and their outcomes may result in immediate, delayed or probabilistic consequences for some social groups and their life. However, it does not take into account motivations of offender or involvement of victim or any other agent in the action leading to result in harmful consequences, and does not consider acceptance or rejection of society or culture (de Haan, 2008: 32).

In contrast to Jackman's definition, that neglects psychological results and consequences, Henry (2000) proposes a broader definition that is more inclusive and includes supplementary characteristics of the definition of violence. This definition replaces the word 'force' with 'power' and provides ample understanding of harm caused by violence (de Haan, 2008). Violence in this perspective is defined as "the use of power to harm another, whatever form it takes" (Henry, 2000: 3). This definition further explains that harm conceptualised in it is beyond the physical consequence and encompasses "psychological or emotional, material or economic, social or identity, moral or ethical, and so on" (de Haan, 2008: 32). Furthermore, the harm identified by this concept of violence is of two kinds: "harms of reduction and harms of repression" (de Haan, 2008: 32). Professor Willem de Haan further explains these two kinds of harms that "harms of reduction remove something from a person's existing status as a human being. For

example, physical harms or reduction produce bodily pain or loss (of blood, organs, limbs, physical functioning). Material harms of reduction remove some of the person's economic status (property, wealth, money). Psychological harms of reduction have destructive effects on the human mind and weaken a person's emotional or mental functioning (such as in posttraumatic stress syndrome).

However, social and symbolic harms of reduction lower a person's social status (by violating their human rights, sexuality, social identity). Moral or ethical harms of reduction corrupt standards of concern for the well-being of others (as in hate, pressure to cheat, and the like). In contrast, harms of repression reveal how the exercise of power acts to systematically limit another person's capability of achieving higher levels accomplishment along any of these dimensions. Violence, then, is the exercise of power over others by some individual, agency, or social process that denies those subject to it their humanity to make a difference, either by reducing them from what they are or by limiting them from becoming what they might be" (de Haan, 2008: 32-33).

The other inclusive definition that is broad in its scope and includes a range of structural conditions, is given by Johan Galtung (1990), a peace scholar and who proposed the idea of structural violence. He accuses the state of being responsible for violence and believes that any condition, which makes people vulnerable, marginalised and criminalised, constitutes violence. Galtung sees "violence as avoidable insults to basic human needs, and more generally to *life*, lowering the real level of needs satisfaction below what is potentially possible" (stress on 'life' is original) (Galtung, 1990:292). State performances and structural variables systematically and invisibly mold the life of social groups into a dead end where there is no hope of meeting social and political needs. Violence, then, is structured and maintained through systematic, visible or invisible means; offender and victim are arranged in such a way that they are not aware of their actions. Galtung (1990) presents the example that the majority of the husbands involved in wife-beating, do not actually know that they are automatically motivated to act on their actions. Wife beating in this respect serves as wide spread cultural practice and means of structuring of society (along gender lines). Thus, culture becomes part of the structural element of violence by

providing rationalisations and neutralizing methods for social groups to act differently (Galtung, 1990; Dobash and Dobash, 2011). Culture as part of structural arrangements provides the opportunity for violence.

Culture then, as part of social structure, contributes to violence. Many scholars (Galtung, 1990) and criminologists (Wolfgang and Ferracuti, 1972; Dobash and Dobash, 2011) believe that certain communities nourish particular cultural or subcultural values such as masculinity, honour and jealousy, which serve to justify, for them, their violent criminality. Societies are divided on cultural differences; cultural differences become a major source of conflict between communities. Conflicts are expressed through power. In this respect, violence is referred to as performance of “power and domination” in certain cultures (Ferrell, et al., 2008:11) and that, the power becomes an instrument to resolve conflicts. In certain cultures, for example, patriarchal or powerful, violence in physical and sexual manner may be used systematically and commonly against those who are vulnerable groups such as women, children and the poor (Kanwar, 1989; Lee and Ousey, 2011). Therefore, from this perspective, violence and power become part of the culture that is used to resolve conflicts within or between social groups, and may be widely expressed against the vulnerable groups.

Psychological understanding has also been developed to define and understand violence. Some researchers, for example, Levi and Maguire (2002), see violence as a psychological or emotional, sexual and verbal or non-verbal behaviour. They believe violence produces threat and harmful results for other human being and society as a whole. In this confused milieu of defining and understanding, the psychological definition of violence “is indeed far from straightforward” and is challenge for criminology and psychology as well (Pakes and Winstone, 2007: 57). World Health Organisation (1999) by diverting focus from criminal violent acts has recognised violence as social and psychological injury that deprives individuals of their physical wellbeing, social and economic identity and psychological safety. A broad definition by WHO (1999) defines violence as “the intentional use of physical and psychological force or power, threatened or actual, against oneself, another person, or against a group or community, that either results in or has a

high likelihood of resulting in injury, death, psychological harm, mal-development, or deprivation” (cited in Herrenkohl, et al, 2011: 16). This definition stresses upon the threats, power and intimidation that create feelings of insecurity for an individual or community and cause or likely to cause physical or psychological harm or neglect or material deprivation. Such considerations and elements of violence widen the scope of violence on definitional and analytical grounds. This definition however may not be applicable in all cultures and may not be “uniform interpretation across cultures” since certain behaviours of violence do not receive rejections but acceptance (Jackman, 2002). For example, some acts of violence against women in some cultures may not receive dismissal and may not morally be considered as domestic violence (Herrenkohl, et al, 2011).

In addition, on the bases of motivations of the perpetrator of violence, it “may be “angry, impulsive, hostile, expressive, dispute-related, instrumental, or predatory” (de Haan, 2008: 28) and it may be out of blue and may be intentionally planned for longer periods. On the other hand, there may be devastating and chronic consequences for the victims of violence. Psychological consequences caused by forms of psychological actions and behaviours of violence may last longer for who have been victims of violence. For example, the perception of shame or humiliation may be developed by some victims and may cause their mental abnormality and motivate them to be aggressive and violent against their oppressor(s). It is highly believed by some scholars, for example, Mary R Jackman (2002), that, fear, anxiety, shame or loss of self-esteem experienced through psychological interactions or public humiliation, stigmatisation and loss of earnings may have lasting shocking and devastating consequences for the social and psychological welfare of humans. By incorporating various characteristics and ingredients in violence, it seems to recognise that violence includes a genus of behaviours that are directly injurious to physical or psychological, material or any way harmful to human identity and development. The range of different behaviours and motivational reasons further complicates the issue how to define it. Moreover, the analytical understanding and explanations of violence also depends on the social context and cultural psychological make-up, thus it is believed the "actions of violence may either be condemned and

considered immoral, illegal and disruptive or admired and considered moral, legal and functional" within certain cultures (de Haan, 2008: 28). The topic of violence, however, in such complex social contexts and psychological milieu becomes "deeply emotive on social, political and legal perspectives" (Levi and Maguire, 2002: 795), which however generates an inquisitive mind how to better way define and understand it.

The most important element in analysing violence is the outcome of human behaviour that may be harmful for the social, psychological and material wellbeing of other human being. Another definition suggested by a philosopher, Garver (1977), indicates psychological aspect of violence. Garyer (1977) blames and counts every act that almost causes abuse of personal wellbeing. It also focuses on violation of personal rights and also discusses the blockage of means of social, economic and material opportunities and disrespecting of resources of psychological stability. This definition does not see violence as only physical act that causes injury to social, material and psychological security, but also in a broader perspective sees violence as an act which may cause the "violation of a person" (de Haan, 2008: 34). Violation of person, according to this definition, may be executed by victimising persons on their social, economic and psychological levels. However, the result of violence would be lethal if the series of victimisation last longer and causes serious moral implications.

Violence, as Garver (1977) proposes, violates persons through harming their physicality and blocking or limiting their psychological and moral abilities for making decisions of their social and psychological development. However, in both ways, violence serves to take "both personal and institutionalized forms" (de Haan, 2008: 34). Furthermore, by differentiating overt to covert forms of violence, Garver (1977) calls "the quiet forms which do not necessarily involve any overt physical assault on anybody's person or property." Violence in this idea, is not executed by person but becomes 'institutionalised' which hinders or likely to hinder physical, material, moral and psychological avenues of the welfare of persons. Some scholars, for example Platt (1992), react to the conceptualised ideas and characteristics of violence given by Garver and sarcastically

argue that 'quiet violence' may let people or researcher count every act of person or institution which may be reacted against or considered as violation of personal capacity as violence (Garver, 1977). By considering all 'quiet' acts as violent however, may create problems for researchers when analysing violent offenders' perspectives, for violent offenders may have different reasons to act on violence. It would be therefore difficult for a researcher to analyse what sorts of acts may actually be considered as violent, legitimate or illegitimate and whether acts may be seen from the perspective of offender, victim or observing agents.

Understanding of violence has also been developed by psychological analysis of offender, victim and the situations which support violent behaviour. Psychological examination which helps criminology to understand violence, investigates psychological behavioural characteristics and motivations of offender, role of victim in precipitating violent acts, and the situations which support violence (Wolfgang, 1958; Luckenbill, 1977; Jones, 2008). Close analysis of violent behaviour including murder or interpersonal violent actions like robbery, homicide, kidnapping and violent assault may be understood by psychological analysis of events, histories, cultural issues and meanings constructed by offenders of violence (Wolfgang, 1958; Luckenbill, 1977; Jones, 2008). It has been observed that many of the confrontational murder events have been involved in by men on minor matters of disputes which when flare up lead to violent and lethal results (Jones, 2008). On the other hand, some scholars believe murder may be acted on with intention of taking or it may result from psychologically perceived meanings of threat as some scholars argue. For example, Luckenbill (1977) explains that, any move or act of the eventual victim may be forethought or perceived by eventual offender as a danger or possible challenge or insult to offender himself or his family (given in Jones, 2008: 180). In such events of murder or violent interactions, the offender may "choose to respond to the perceived insult by making some kind of 'retaliatory move aimed at restoring face and demonstrating strong character'" (Jones, 2008: 180) or might opt to ignore the event or find some other reasons to excuse the insult or threat (Jones, 2008). In this perspective, it is assumed that psychological make-up and character of offender define violent murder



and violent behaviour, Luckenbill concludes that “murder is the outcome of a dynamic interchange between an offender, victim, and in many cases, bystanders. The offender and the victim develop lines of actions shaped in part by the actions of the other and focused toward saving or maintaining face and reputation and demonstrating character” (1977:186-7). Here the act of murder is initiated in order to save the honour and character by an offender in the confrontational interaction, such acts of violence provide deep psychological understanding of violent offender that why and how he constructs the meanings of his acts and meanings of social and cultural structure in which he lives (Jones, 2008: 181).

The arguments and definitions discussed above suggest violence cannot be understood from a single perspective or definitional angle, but as it is multidimensional, so its understanding should be developed from multi perspectives. As understood, violence is not only a physical force by a person or persons against other person or persons but it is also psychological or emotional behaviour that may cause physical, psychological or emotional and material deprivation and loss. It is in most of the cases carried with criminal intention such as in homicide, robbery and kidnapping, and violence against women. However, the violence of men against men and women may be influenced by various social, cultural, legal and political reasons. Moreover, the violence not only causes harm to physical body or psychological wellbeing but also property. But, there are many other inclusive and contributory factors which equally influence physical violent behaviour. These may be structural variables like economic strains and deprivation, experiences of victimisation and cultural values and desires. Moreover, violence may be triggered because of the situations like physical and psychological character of offender, past experiences of offender of insult and humiliation and cultural values like revengeful attitude of offender, and instigations perceived by offenders from victim and any other societal variables.

By summing up all these restrictive and inclusive definitions, it may be concluded that violence is an intentional physical force used against others; however, its intention may largely be controlled and determined by external societal variables and its occurrence

may be supported by personal and situational factors. Nevertheless, there remains some confusion as to what societal variables most motivate the violence. Therefore, many commentators, for example, de Haan (2008), Ferguson (2012) and Ray (2011), suggest that it is task of social researchers to understand violence from multivariate theoretical perspectives. The above arguments conclude that violence does not emerge from a single factor but from the interplay of various factors in society. Moreover, it is often socially and culturally sanctioned and organised behaviour. Not all societies have the same social, cultural and violent conditions. Therefore, violence being affected by different societal variable manifest in different levels across cultures and nations.

In the following section, I will seek to understand why levels of violence vary in different nations.

### **Understanding changing patterns of violence**

Violence is not equally distributed across nations and equally important to say, it does not equally exist between the communities within the same nation. Researchers and scholars through different studies and analysis have examined that violence occur differently in different nations and different at different times even. Various historical evidence about interpersonal violent interactions have been analysed around the world. For example, homicide in England was high, it was ten to twenty times higher in the past than today, twice that of the United States today (Gurr, 1989:157; see also Stone, 1983, Garland, 1993; Green, D. A. 2007) and America was the capital of violent criminal activities during 1913 (Adler, 2009). However, in recent years interpersonal violence like murder, violent assault and robbery has declined significantly in many advanced and modern countries like the United Kingdom, America and Australia (Ray, 2011; Hawkins et al, 2000; Eisner, 2003; Jobes et al, 2004; Tselon et al, 2010). This decline has been associated with major social change in society and in social relations. Ted Gurr (1989) assumes that the decline of violence was a result of control of aggressive behaviour and social development. Violence reduced as social conditions improved. Many other scholars presented their views about reasons of decline of violence in Europe.

Norbert Elias, a cultural historian, who proposed a thesis of 'the civilizing process,' emphasises violence has significantly declined in the European nations; however, the decline in violence was not achieved because of the positive change in behaviour within interpersonal relations but also due to change in social and political strategies. In addition, there was much positive development in relations between nations with the passage of time. The wars with neighbouring regions, which caused destruction to society, began to be resolved through political manners and strategies (Braithwaite, 1993; Eisner, 2003). Moreover, there were several significant, positive changes in economic conditions, taxation systems, health services and criminal justice systems (Eisner, 2003; Ray, 2011). Because of the improved economic conditions, people found more opportunities to develop their social career, which resulted in decreased levels of frustration and increased levels of social cohesion (Eisner, 2003; Ruggiero, 2006). Furthermore, many external changes also affected the composition of society. Ray (2011) argues that Elias, though, did not deny the influence of industrialisation and urbanisation on the structure of people's lives but he identified that, overall, society witnessed a substantial growth in the refinement of social interaction which sidelined aggressiveness and violent behaviours within social groups. A complex array of social factors, then, is significant and has an important role in decreasing violent behaviours.

At the international or national levels, European and Western countries may have achieved the status of 'civilised' and a reduction in the rate of violence, but despite this, violence still resides within their communities. Though there has been a significant decline in the rate of interpersonal lethal violence, including murder, in developed countries, urban violence is still higher than rural in many countries like America, Australia and the UK (Osgood and Chambers, 2000; Jobes et al, 2004; Weisheit, Falcone, & Wells, 2006). There are many significant differences in forms of violence in both settings. Knife violence is common in urban communities (Holligan, 2014), whereas lethal violence like murder and kidnapping are rare in both urban and rural communities in the UK (Kaylen and Pridemore, 2013; Holligan, 2014) and Australia (Jobes et al, 2004). Intimate partner violence (IPV), higher levels of stalking, symbolic violence and violent assault occur differently and increasingly in rural as compared to urban areas

(Grama, 2000; Jobes et al, 2004; Logan and Molotch, 2007). Such wide differences in violence in both areas are due to diverse social structural and geographical factors. Urban areas in Western societies are densely populated, while rural areas are thinly populated (Osgood and Chambers, 2000; Lee and Ousey, 2011; Kaylen and Pridemore, 2013). Jobes et al (2004) also point out that rural areas are located at a certain distance from the main centres. Differences in social structure and geographical locations influence violence and its types. Rural areas widely observe low levels of violence but the major portion of that violence is against women. In contrast, urban violence still occurs within interpersonal relations but its intensity is low. Organised societies observe low levels of violence, while disorganised societies observe high levels. Disorganised societies may also have various additional social problems which equally exert their influential pressure for violence.

Several scholars study violence from different theoretical and methodological perspectives with the result that they produce conflicting results. Some study violence from disorganised, structural conditions, some from a subcultural approach while others see it from a situational perspective. Those who study violence from resulting from socially disorganised conditions believe that poverty and socioeconomic factors influence violent behaviour. After studying the disorganised structure of America during the mid-twentieth century, Shaw and McKay (1969) presented a thesis of social disorganisation. They argue that disorganised structures in a society deprive people of adequate social and economic resources, and thus deprived communities become involved in various violent activities. Furthermore, they argue that violent activities of young children of 10 to 20 years are highly influenced by economic conditions, ethnic diversity and residential mobility. Sampson and Groves (1989) contribute more to this perspective and contend that disorganised family structure, socioeconomic conditions and urbanised conditions of cities motivate many social groups towards personal violent activities. Osgood and Chambers (2000) and Kaylen and Pridemore (2013) studied youth violent acts in American rural and urban areas. They found economic instability within residential areas, ethnic diversity, disturbed family structure and poverty as determinants of violent crimes.

In spite of various factors found to be associated with violent crime, many other researchers argue that all types of violent crimes are not equally affected by the same social structural factors. For example Parker (1989) argue that robbery and kidnapping may be carried out with intention of gaining economic benefit, while Agnew (2001) suggests that murder and violent assault may not result from economic frustration and strains. However, many scholars reject socioeconomic conditions as being influential factors; instead, they emphasise that violence results from cultural values.

Culture is a highly significant factor in motivating individuals to commit acts of violence. Cultural or subcultural analysis sees the problem of violence as located within cultural value systems. This analytical perspective views cultural or subcultural values and beliefs as legitimising and rationalising violence. Several researchers believe individuals situated within certain subcultural environments develop positive attitudes towards violent crimes linked to honour and masculinity (Wolfgang and Ferracuti, 1969/1972; Galtung, 1990; Markowitz, 2001; Dobash and Dobash, 2011). In contrast, other researchers reject socioeconomic conditions and cultural values and believe that dynamic situational factors affect violence.

Situational analysis of violence argues that past experiences of victimisation, conflicting interactions between offender and victim and the presence of particular elements such as weapons contribute to violent interactions (Wolfgang, 1958; Luckenbill, 1977; Birkbeck and LaFree, 1993; Pizzaro, 2008; Phillips and Maume, 2007). Scholars present conflicting arguments. Some believe structural factors like socioeconomic conditions affect violent crime, while others argue that poverty and socioeconomic conditions do not explain other types of violent crimes, such as murder and assault. Cultural and subcultural theorists believe that communities harbor certain distinctive cultural values which help them rationalise violent behaviour, while the situational perspective indicates that situations are shaped by experiences of relative economic conditions, previous victimisation and the presence of certain elements like weapons. The absence of agreement over what specific factors cause violent crime creates room for further research.

The problems in defining and measuring violence make it more difficult to properly conceptualise it. Since violence does not mean a single act but there are various forms and all these various forms emerge out from the complex interaction of social groups, so data collected from a single act of violence and single source of informants may not necessarily provide qualitative understanding of violence. Many studies have been limited in their investigation of violence, for example, to certain acts of violence such as homicidal acts (see Sampson and Groves, 1989; Parker, 1989; Wolfgang and Ferracuti, 1972; Eisner, 2013). Therefore, the understanding built on homicide violent acts clearly neglects the other types of acts of violence such as robbery, kidnapping and violent assault. In addition, most of the previous studies are quantitative (Shaw and McKay, 1969; Sampson and Groves, 1989; Parker, 1989; Wolfgang and Ferracuti, 1972; Cohen and Felson, 1979; Osgood and Chambers, 2000; Jobes et al, 2004; Kaylen and Pridemore, 2013). For example, in order to understand the theory of social disorganisation and its components such as socioeconomic status, residential stability and ethnic heterogeneity, Sampson and Groves (1989) analysed the first British Crime Survey (BCS) of England and Wales, and found a significant relationship between burglary, motor vehicle theft, vandalism crimes and poor economic conditions. Kaylen and Pridemore (2013) used two different sets of data, one collected about the victims of aggravated assault from hospitals in American cities and another, of the arrest record of aggravated assault from American cities already collected by Osgood and Chambers (2000). They found significant differences in them. Wiersema et al (2000) argue that different results and interpretations can emerge when using different data sources to understand the same problem.

On the other hand, communities may not have the same social conditions, so theoretical models built on by examining social conditions may lead to different results and interpretations. For example, Kaylen and Pridemore (2013) find social disorganisation theory relevant to understanding youth violence in rural areas of America; while on the other hand, Jobes et al's (2004) quantitative analysis does not find social disorganisation theory as relevant to understanding violence in rural communities in Australia. Therefore, understanding built on mere statistics or number may not provide quality of information

on violence and homicide; qualitative studies are needed to explore the varying nature of social problems and cultural patterns as being influential for human behaviour.

Many studies, while establishing explanations of violence within culture do not explore cultural values and beliefs by examining certain “strategies of actions” and the perceptions of violent offenders (Shaw and McKay, 1969; Wolfgang and Ferracuti, 1972; Parker, 1989; Heimer, 1997; Jobes et al, 2004; Kilburn, Jr., and Lee, 2012). Rather, they rely on taken for granted assumptions about cultural values and beliefs (Swidler, 1986:275; Lee and Ousey, 2011). Culture itself may not influence human actions and perceptions but humans perceive cultural values in different ways to justify their acts. However, many researchers believe culture is a qualitative phenomenon and that its relationship to violence can better be understood using a qualitative approach and methods (Wood, 2004; Lee and Ousey, 2011). For this reason, many recent researchers have studied violent offenders qualitatively to explore their perceptions and ideas about their violent acts (Presser, 2004; Brookman et al., 2011). Moreover, some scholars believe that culture can be expressed through actions and narrative stories of personal experiences about violence (Swidler, 2011). Through the exploration of personal narratives and actions of individuals, culture can better be understood and any relationship between culture and violence can be established.

There is a vast body of literature exploring the causal factors of violent crime. Theoretically speaking, there is also disagreement on what causes violence. Questions about violence, studied from various theoretical approaches remain unresolved. Various analytical approaches are used to examine violence, which can be divided into three main categories, structural, subcultural and situational analyses.

### **The structural analysis of violent crime**

Society produces various problems and different social groups are affected by social problems differently. Poor socioeconomic conditions and poverty are some of the structural variables which invariably influence individuals. Several researchers believe that poor socioeconomic conditions motivate individuals to violence (Shaw and McKay,

1969; Wolfgang and Ferracuti, 1972; Cohen and Felson, 1979; Parker, 1989; Morenoff and Sampson, 1997; Sampson, 2000; Markowitz, 2001; Agnew et al, 2008; Dobash and Dobash, 2011). For example, Parker's quantitative study looking into racial composition and structural indicators including poverty and income differences in cities in the U.S., finds poverty is significantly relevant to violence (Parker, 1989). He concludes poverty invariably affects types of violence like homicide within non-intimate relations and robbery within different ethnic groups. He contends that violence results from socioeconomic conditions and increased population size (Parker, 1989).

In order to examine the relationship of disorganised social structural characteristics with teenage criminality in different communities in England and Wales, Sampson and Groves (1989) undertook a quantitative analysis of the first British Crime Survey (BCS) of England and Wales. They found, like Shaw and McKay (1942/1969), both conflict theorists and social disorganisation theorists, that communities suffering from low economic resources are always frustrated with their poor conditions. They also concluded that low economic resources leave a negative influence on family members in that teenagers, not properly looked after by their parents, join criminal gangs and adopt various delinquent and violent activities such as mugging, burglary and robbery. Morenoff and Sampson (1997) find more problems resulting from poverty and low economic resources and suggest that the urban residential areas which do not have sufficient resources for social survival tend to migrate from their original place to other areas. Such poor and economic conditions not only affect the behaviour of individuals and create social dislocation but also affect their perceptions. Parker (1989) suggests, "some individuals evaluate their socioeconomic position in relative terms and they are bothered by the perception that others have more desired social and economic resources" (Parker, 1989: 985). Poor socioeconomic conditions not only lead individuals to become involved in violent activities but also motivate them to develop negative perceptions and strains which make them further vulnerable to poor conditions and violent reactions.

Perceptions that social and economic opportunities are inadequate will result in individuals developing significant frustrations and resentment against society. Strain



theorists, for example, Robert Agnew and his co theorists believe individuals or communities suffering from economic and social deprivations develop various strains, angry feelings and antagonistic attitudes towards others and to society more generally (Agnew, et al., 2008). Similarly, subcultural (Wolfgang and Ferracuti, 1972), intergenerational theorists (Markowitz, 2001) and many others (Sykes and Matza, 1957; Dobash and Dobash, 2011) assume that socio-demographic and regional economic conditions help individuals develop favourable attitudes, norms and values with which to rationalise violent actions and thus they continue to live with criminal and violent life styles. Self-control theorists argue that individuals who do not find easy opportunities to meet their desired social requirements react defiantly against others. A meta-analysis by Pratt and his colleagues, found people lose self-control in certain situations, for example in extreme conditions of economic deprivations, people feel themselves as highly neglected and insulted which lead them to think aggressively and do "lots of bad things" (2014: 103). Such feelings of economic deprivations and social alienations impact mind of people so much that they experience strains and antisocial feelings against other society members.

Social control and cohesive relationships play an important role in creating a positive and well socialised environment; however, the "lack of contact or sustained interaction with individuals and institutions" causes a breaking of social bonds and disrupts the cohesion between social groups and community members (Wilson, 1987: 60). Similarly, Jobes and his colleagues (2004) suggest that a lack of cohesiveness and bonds among community members creates alienation which leads to the development of antagonistic, rival attitudes and aggressive, confrontational behaviour (Jobes, et al, 2004). Tentatively, it can be suggested that the communities suffering from weak social control and relatively poor economic conditions experience more violent activities than the communities having effective and responsible political and economic institutions. It is strongly believed then, that in the disorganised communities and societies, bond between families and communities become disrupted because of the lack of social and economic opportunities (Sampson and Groves, 1989), in addition, people tend to migrate to other places in search of economic resources, employment opportunities and a better quality of life.

Disorganised social institutions stimulate violence. Many researchers argue that failure of social institutions in addressing social and economic problems will create a frustrating environment in which individuals will not develop cohesion and bonds between them. On the other hand, individuals finding no means of positive social development will adopt criminal means such as joining gangs to entertain themselves and meet their social and economic needs. By using the theoretical concept of social disorganisation, Peterson et al, (2000) believe that an organised social structure and community enhance social control systems as mediating factors in reducing negative socioeconomic conditions and lowering rates of violent crimes.

Some social disorganisation theorists, for example Shaw and McKay (1969), have argued that socially and economically sound communities are better able to control their community members, especially young people, by involving them in healthy and entertaining opportunities. However, communities and social groups which are denied equal social opportunities and political benefits will develop certain problematic attitudes and behavioural characteristics. Galtung (1990) does not see this problem as one where people fail to receive their desired opportunities, but instead, he argues that it is the state and its social institutions, which wrongly and systematically distribute social and economic opportunities to certain social groups while depriving certain other groups. As a result, inadequate attention of social institutions and state agents to the appropriate distribution of those benefits creates frustration and strains within the deprived communities and social groups (Peterson, et al, 2000).

To analyse the "influence of economic deprivation, local institutions, and public housing on violent index crime rates for census tracts in Columbus, Ohio, for 1990," Peterson and his friends collected data from different censuses from 1990 and 1991, from the U.S. Population and Housing, and police department (2000). They find violent crimes like robbery and assault result from the lack of effective and positive role of social institutions. The researchers observed that certain communities, which do not have access to a desired number of recreational facilities such as libraries and retail shops, suffer from frustration and become involved in violent conflicts. Lack of adequate resources for

social development will disturb the social networks and local participation of individuals lead to a sense of alienation and disassociation between the members of the community. Consequently, as Shaw and McKay (1969) found, young individuals between ages 10 to 20 are more likely to be involved in gang related criminal activities and form criminal gangs. Such findings in recent years, that because of low economic status and weak community bonds, young people become involved in criminal and violent activities, are supported by Sampson and Groves (1989) and Kaylen and Pridemore (2013).

Communities, because of their structural differences, observe differences in criminal activities. Several researchers have found that structural differences in criminal violent activities vary between rural and urban communities. Kaylen and Pridemore (2013) believe rural farming communities may suffer less residential instability and fewer ethnic differences; thus they maintain more cohesion and more connected relationships among the resident population. In contrast, they suggest that urban areas face a variety of problems such as an increasingly heterogeneous population, deindustrialisation and more strains because of a lack of economic facilities. Several researchers, for instance Barclay et al (2004) and Donnermeyer (2006) believe that some rural communities facilitate criminal activities and do not usually report some crimes like livestock theft and crime within families to police. At the same time, police do not necessarily proactively investigate criminal and victim incidents in such communities and avoid disturbing community relationships.

However, it is not always the case that low socioeconomic conditions within communities disrupt community cohesion; it may serve to unite people. A quantitative study by Morenoff and Sampson (1997) found that differences in homicide in urban areas are not directly related to population change but rather to socioeconomic conditions, and that the black population does not necessarily move to other places because of the fear of crime or because of low economic conditions. In contrast, they found that black communities, despite such problems, tend to experience population growth. On the differences between rural and urban communities, Kaylen and Pridemore (2013) suggest that theoretical variables relating to social disorganisation may not be applicable in the

same way to examine crime and violence in both rural and urban settings. Kaylen and Pridemore (2013) assumed that various structural problems, including low socioeconomic status and criminal activity, do not affect communities in the same way. Social groups and communities experience structural problems in different ways and thus they react differently. It is not clear why certain social groups in different social structural conditions react violently and develop certain reinforcing attitudes and moral values which support them in carrying out their violent acts.

On the other hand, socioeconomic conditions serve to victimise social groups who do not receive equal shares and suffer from a lack of access to adequate social and economic resources. The people who become involved in criminal activities are already victimised by their structural conditions, such as unequal distribution of economic and social sources; thus, they can equally be considered as victims themselves. Being a victim of social environmental conditions, individuals resort to criminal activity as a means of meeting their desired goals.

However, particular experiences of victimisation cause individuals to adopt criminal practices to meet their social needs. Subcultural perspectives on violence argue that distinct social and cultural environments tend to victimise individuals and, as a result, they react differently from one another. Subcultural theorists believe that “there is a potent theme of violence current in the clusters of values that make up the life-style, the socialisation process, the interpersonal relationships of individuals living in similar conditions” (Wolfgang & Ferracuti, 1967, p. 140). Though individuals involved in violence share same social and cultural conditions, their experiences are more likely related to being vulnerable to more criminal and violent victimisation and, as Ezell and Tanner-smith (2015: 145) argue, they share “a legitimate form of expression within the subculture” which influences them in a way that leads them to rationalise their criminal and violent acts. Inappropriate dealings with communities in terms of failing to provide some with their legitimate share will create 'differences' in those communities with the result that some people may be offended by the unfair process.

John L. Hammond (2009), while examining violence in rural Brazilian communities, found the state does not address the social problems of poor individuals but instead, supports rich people, thus operating a dualism system where certain communities remain socially restricted and disadvantaged while others enjoy access to more social resources and facilities. He blames the state for not addressing the land related problems of rural areas with the result that some communities remain socially strained and deprived of equal possession of agricultural lands. Through the support of political and court officials, he claims, some individuals have been able to occupy more areas of agricultural land in rural areas; however, many remain victimised and deprived of their rights. Such victimisation, deprivations and a corrupt political and criminal justice system, including police and courts, motivates the landless individuals to become involved in violent, direct action and conflicts against their landowner victimisers. In response to this violent interaction, victimisers turn into reactive violent actors while powerless individuals take action against powerful groups. The challenged weaker power emerges as reactive violent force. The disorganised system of social institutions including police, court and unequal land distribution system render social groups divided and distanced from one another. Additionally, the violence and reactive conflicts disorganise and disrupt rural community union and cohesion to an even greater extent.

Social structural problems influence violent crime. Social groups and communities suffering from various negative socioeconomic conditions and the inappropriate dealings of social institutions will react differently. Relative socioeconomic conditions invariably influence individuals and communities, for example, all people who are involved in murder and violent assault may not have the motive of obtaining financial benefits from the act or victim. However, people do gain monetary benefits by committing robbery and kidnapping for ransom.

### **The situational analysis of violence**

Situational analysis of violence is given equal place in criminological research which aims to understand violence. Situational aspects of violence describe how a violent event is shaped by a variety of factors. Numerous factors may motivate offenders to become

involved in violence; for example, the structural conditions which shape social and economic background of an offender, along with the presence of certain elements like weapons which enhance the opportunities of violence, and the subjective perceptions and interpretations of offenders about cultural values and beliefs. In respect to understanding occasions of violence, various theories focus on the situational aspects, for example symbolic factors (Luckenbill, 1977; Felson and Cohen, 1979) and opportunity (Hindelang et al, 1978; Felson and Cohen, 1979; Cohen et al, 1981). Symbolic interaction theory examines violent interactions between offender and victims (Luckenbill, 1977). The theory argues that violent crime can be better understood by studying how actively violent offenders interpret the situations of violence; while opportunity theory understands situational aspects of violent criminality. Christopher Birkbeck and Gary LaFree (1993) in reviewing various theories describing situations of violence and crime contend that most of the research conducted from this perspective provides a link between self-image and its association with violent criminality. However, they do not necessarily link the subjective interpretations of violent offenders with theoretical views.

Situations of aggression may of different types and forms like symbolic or physical, usually between an offender and a victim and sometimes, in the presence of bystander(s). However, the situations themselves may be triggered by various variables such as the emotional power derived from having a lethal weapon and perceptions about victims. All these elements can make conflicts more violent and even lethal. So there is variety of situational factors that affect violent and mood behaviour of individuals and create chances of violence; situations of violence are an amalgam of various factors, therefore, “some ideas, attitudes, means, goals, or conduct may be ‘situationally induced, not simply normatively induced’, ‘if the situation changes, in these circumstances, presumably values and behaviour change, thus indicating no real and enduring normative allegiance’ (Wolfgang and Ferracuti, 1969:105). Then, it is difficult to predict what certain situation or face to face relations might determine a decisive pattern of violence. All forms of violence like murder, kidnapping, robbery and assault take place in different situations and perpetrators do not necessarily have the same intentions. For example, robbery may be enacted to relieve individuals of their valuable possessions forcibly,

while assault may be enacted to harm victims physically. On this basis, situations may be created differently.

Structural and cultural theories do not explicitly explain the situations in which certain individuals become involved violently. Both theoretical perspectives somehow meet at a certain point where both are influenced by each other. Cultural or subcultural values are influenced by social and economic conditions and different communities or social groups have different cultural perceptions and attitudes, while social conditions vary in different societies and across communities. Not all poor people or all sub-culturally different people become involved in violent crimes. A question arises; however, why do certain individuals within subcultural communities and being deprived of socioeconomic conditions react violently in certain situations? A better or fuller understanding of violence may be developed if we look at the situations which ensure violence will occur.

Theoretically and methodologically, the study of violence falls within two main paradigms: macro-level and micro-level. Kai-D. Thaler (2015), a researcher on social violence, laments that violence is not approached properly on methodological grounds (Thaler, 2015). He further argues that the macro-level perspective understands violence by examining data related to various socioeconomic and cultural characteristics and relates them to the levels and forms of crime and violence in communities. Though this macro-level perspective seeks to gain answers of the question why individuals become involved in violence which collects information of social structural and cultural conditions as causal factors, but it neglects other significant aspect of personal feelings and construction of antisocial violent attitude of individuals. Other important methodological approach is micro-level that studies violent criminals by asking them about their social experiences and their value judgments regarding their committed violent actions (Thaler, 2015). In addition, the latter methodological approach attempts to know why and how certain individuals react violently in certain situations. Other researcher on violent situations, Randall Collins (2009), values micro level approach as to examine reactions and responses of individuals of violence in socially and economically deprived conditions and communities. He writes, “micro-situational conditions favor

attacking victims inside the community of the oppressed, much more than its ostensible class oppressors” (Collins, 2009: 22). It means violence is not enacted against the structural or cultural agents who cause states of deprivation and the values of the subculture, but it manifests within the interactions of two or more than two persons: offender and victim.

Violence can be understood if we know why certain individuals react violently in certain situations, even while situations of violence themselves are structurally and culturally shaped. There are many variables which are considered as triggering individuals to act violently against their victims. There are three main elements which are considered as responsible for violence: first, the offender; second, other external elements such as weapons, and third, the victim. The first two elements of violence are influenced by structural conditions like socioeconomic and disorganised structural conditions, whilst the third is considered to be cultural variable equally contributing to violent actions. I will describe each category as follows.

Firstly, offenders, because of their previous social and psychological backgrounds, are deemed as responsible for their involvement in violent situations. Offenders are motivated to act with violence against their victims. Various researchers discuss different incentives that motivate individuals to become involved in violent situations. Some researchers for example, Luckenbill and Doyle (1989) and Thaler (2015), describe violence as face-to-face interaction which takes place because of the offender's psychological characteristics and previous experiences of economic deprivation and violent victimisation. Various researchers add a number of other features which encourage offenders readily to become involved in violent conflicts. For example, Routine Activity Theorists present a macro perspective on crime which predicts the influence of social and economic variables on rates of crime and victimisation. At the same time, they believe such conditions also motivate criminals to select their victims where there is an absence of guardians or police (Felson and Cohen, 1980). Criminal events and conflicts are not usually random but criminals meaningfully and knowingly choose their targets of crime.



In addition, they believe that the vulnerable condition of victim and perceived sufficient rewards from the acts will motivate offenders to initiate criminal behaviours (Felson and Cohen, 1980). Though, Felson and Cohen do not consider why certain women increasingly become victims of violence, they believe young males and suitable times such as night-time increase the likelihood of high-risks situations and the offender's choice of crime. Within this perspective, some researchers (for example, Luckenbill and Doyle, 1989; Wood, 2003; McGovern, 2011) believe that individuals become involved in violent acts because of their rational and irrational choices.

Secondly, the other most important element that triggers situations of violence is use of lethal weapons. The interaction between offender and victim will be more lethal if, as often happens, a weapon is used against the victim. This of course, usually increases the seriousness of the violence. Quantitative analysts, Phillips and Maume (2007), while examining the use of guns in violent conflicts, found that in those interpersonal conflicts where participants had guns, the 75% turned into acts of violence compared to those incidents where participants do not have guns. Moreover, the researchers also believe having a gun testifies that there is an intention of violence. In a similar vein, various scholars, for example Wolfgang (1958), Luckenbill (1977), Weaver, et al (2004) and Pizarro (2008) suggest that the availability or use of guns continues to be a major factor in triggering and escalating the seriousness of violent situations. The above arguments indicate that structurally created conditions and situational elements together enhance the chances of violence.

Thirdly, the situations of violence are also shaped by cultural characteristics and perceptions. Brookman (2005) suggests that Wolfgang and Ferracuti's (1967/1972) subculture of violence thesis identified several situations which can be described as cases where cultural expectations were involved in triggering violent acts. Sub-cultural expectations and beliefs such as the importance of honour, of masculine characteristics, and a physically overwhelming attitude significantly contribute to increasing the likelihood of violent interactions between offenders and victims (Brookman, 2005). Situations combined with various factors play an important role in enhancing the

probability of an act becoming violent. According to victimisation theory, the victim is held accountable for creating situations of crime (Meier and Miethe, 1993). This theoretical perspective is driven by the concept of “victim precipitation” proposed by Wolfgang (1958). According to this concept, a criminal event or situation is precipitated by the victim whose language, appearance and other behaviour such as actions or reactions enhance the probability of crime and violence occurring. In cases of aggravated assault, homicide and robbery, the behaviour of victim is held to be responsible for the subsequent action or reaction of an offender (Wolfgang 1958; Meier and Miethe, 1993).

Luckenbill (1977) in her research paper, 'Criminal homicide as situated transaction' explores the lethal interactions of 70 murder cases which involved offenders, victims and bystanders. She found that offenders try to maintain their reputation and character against opponents (victim) in the presence of bystanders. Moreover, she confirmed that such violent confrontations largely depend on many other elements including age, education, gender and social and economic background. Like, Luckenbill, other scholars too, conclude that social class and gender role contribute to the likelihood of criminal violence. For example, Kenneth Polk's (1994) qualitative study in Australia, by using discrete homicide scenarios such as the relationship of victim and offender, and situational circumstances, explained the dynamic nature of violent homicidal encounters between young working class males (Polk, 1994). The author argues, that although confrontational homicides involve the willingness of males to stand against the victim (in most of the cases of male victims), the situation of violence is further aggravated when that masculine power is challenged. Importantly, Polk distinguishes between the behaviour of those who are economically sound and those who are marginalised (Polk, 1994). He explains that the former manifest their masculinity by competing for social careers; however the latter group engage in violent theft and robbery for the attainment of economic benefits. In other words, individuals judge the situations and act accordingly; moreover, they may fear the consequences of their behaviour or express aggression through masculine violent behaviour against a weaker opponent in the presence of bystanders. Thus, the presence of bystanders contributes to making situations more violent and aggressive.

The above arguments and findings indicate that situations of violence are influenced by various structural conditions and cultural variables. Moreover, there is also a strong reason to think that in the absence of police or weak criminal justice, violent conditions may be further exacerbated. Situations of violence involve interplay of various conditions; however, it is difficult to know in which violent crime what structural and cultural variables will play a decisive role.

### **The subcultural perspective on violence**

Cultural values and beliefs influence violent crime. Violence is more common in certain communities which adhere to distinct cultural values and beliefs in support of their violent acts under certain conditions and situations. This argument leads to an understanding of violence in a subcultural context. Wolfgang and Ferracuti (1967/1972) presented the theory of a 'subculture of violence', which argues that certain communities, because of their distinctive subcultural values and beliefs, use violence as a solution to their personal social problems. According to this thesis, violence being influenced and motivated by cultural values and beliefs becomes a rational and legitimised form of behaviour. Moreover, individuals, without experiencing emotional strain or remorse become involved in various violent activities. Particular different cultural values adopted by certain social groups or communities separate them from mainstream culture. Based on this distinction, a subculture, then, may be distinguished from mainstream culture by representing a group of people who violate conventional laws and develop certain distinct ways of lifestyle (Brookman, 2000). Therefore, it may be said that subcultural values legitimise violence.

Cultural values and attitudes are frequently associated with violent crime. To understand culture and violence, there is a huge literature, including criminological literature, which demonstrates that violent crime results from variations in cultural values and belief systems (Wolfgang and Ferracuti, 1967/1972; Parker, 1989; Galtung, 1990; Markowitz, 2001; Dobash and Dobash, 2011). For example, Fred E. Markowitz, a scholar in family violence and culture, believes cultural attitudes induce men to use violence against their spouse and children within family. Though he does not exclude structural factors like

socioeconomic conditions from contributing to violence, he strongly believes that men who perceive their violent acts as normal and necessary usually physically abuse their spouse in domestic life. Another prominent researcher, Galtung (1990), who proposed a cultural violence thesis, believes that culture supports violence. He argues that certain communities or social groups react violently to minor insults, because they perceive any violent move against them is an attack on their masculinity and position of honour.

Though culture or subculture has been a dominant factor in understanding violence, various researchers provide different and contrary ideas which suggest that it is not subculture but economic conditions which influence social groups' willingness to engage in violent activities. For example, Judith R. Blau and Peter M. Blau rejected the relationship of subculture with violence and proposed that economic inequality is the major cause of violence rather than subcultural factors (1982). According to the researchers, social structural elements supersede culture in providing better explanations of violent crime. More recently, other scholarly discussions have indicated that economic inequality may predict violence but it does not explain variations in rates of homicide in different regions and communities (Messner, 1982; Williams, 1984). Other arguments of criticism reflect the conflicts between subcultural and structural perspectives. Subcultural theorists believe culture is more important when trying to understand violence, whereas structural theorists emphasise poverty and disorganised economic variables as determinants of violence.

Loftin and Hill (1974) challenged Wolfgang and Ferracuti (1967/1972) by arguing that they (Wolfgang and Ferracuti, 1967/1972) used statistical models of homicide and assumed a rates of homicide scattered in certain cultural settings but failed to take account of situational and economic conditions in their research approach (1974). Loftin and Hill's thesis based on regression analysis of aggregated data proposed that social and economic conditions equally, but more importantly contribute to influence the rate of homicide incidents. They, in contrast of Wolfgang and Ferracuti (1967/1972), by collecting evidence from southern parts of U.S. focused their attention on regional socioeconomic conditions and violence and constructed a model of 'structural poverty'

(Loftin and Hill, 1974; also see Parker, 1989). They (Loftin and Hill) claimed that poverty, rather than regional cultural characteristics and racial composition, might be held responsible for variations in acts of homicide. Making a congruent argument in support of poverty and violence as of Loftin and Hill (1974), Darnell F. Hawkins (1993) in his article “inequality, culture, and interpersonal violence” strongly adds and argues that violence is not necessarily scattered in distant urban areas but is also in central urban areas where people suffer from poor economic conditions and unemployment. He further believes that violence is equally a choice of many ethnic and racial groups including Native and non-native Americans who observe low rate of unemployment, poor facilities of housing and “cultural dysfunctions” (Hawkins, 1993; 85).

The above arguments demonstrate that cultural or subcultural understanding is equally important to understanding violent crime. In addition, literature examining violence and subculture does not explicitly pay attention to distinguishing which distinctive cultural values and patterns of thinking affect individuals' involvement in distinctive types of violent offence (MacDonald et al., 2009; McGloin et al, 2011) or why certain cultural values are different for different perpetrators of violence?

Subcultural individuals distinguish themselves by behaving against the mainstream cultural values and social norms of their society. Violence thus emerges from culturally conflicting values and situations. As culture is not an active agent, so it does not influence human directly, but humans perceive cultural values in different ways. Culture codes norms and rules for people. As, Livy A. Visano, a scholar interested in culture and crime, argues, “basically, rules are created to protect and promote particular perspectives, and their meanings are always negotiated among more powerful participants....culture frames interpretations by supplying experiences from which inferences are quickly drawn” (Visano, 1998: 37). People living in certain cultures interpret the meanings of cultural values in a certain way that suits their ideas, behaviour and actions. However, when there is disagreement between personal and set guidelines, conflict arises (Durkheim 1966; Visano, 1989; Foucault, 1979; Akers, 2011). Such conflicting

interpretations of cultural norms and values affect the thinking patterns of individuals. Thus distinctive patterns and values are referred to as a subcultural environment.

The subcultural concept asserts, that, “there are value judgments or a social value system which is apart from and a part of larger or central value system. From the viewpoint of this larger dominant culture, the values of the subculture set the latter apart and prevent total integration, occasionally causing open or covert conflicts” (Wolfgang and Ferracuti, 1967: 99). Wolfgang and Ferracuti (1967/1972) based their research on observations about homicide incidents and patterns in Philadelphia and found significant differences in violent acts in different areas. They found that certain violent activities were generally accepted and widely carried out in some areas of city, while they were rejected in other areas. Their research further argues that certain social groups or communities value their violent acts as legitimate in certain conflicting and situational conditions. The scholars conclude that violence often results from insults and threats to masculinity. However, some cultural values such as revenge, honour and masculinity are widely entertained by certain groups whose experiences are largely related to relative marginalisation and social exclusion (Brookman, 2000; Bourgois, 2003). These various findings suggest that individuals defined by their social backgrounds develop certain cultural values; however, such cultural values are not only affected by social conditions but also by regional differences.

Some studies explain that different communities distinguished at cultural levels observe different violent behaviour. For example, Doerner’s (1978) study based on survey data, concluded that individuals from southern regions in America showed more likelihood of the acceptance of “punching an adult male stranger” than the respondents from many other areas. Hayes and Lee (2005) showed that white males from rural communities supported “assaultive violence” in the “situations where general approval” was “very low to begin with” (Lee and Ousey, 2011:902). Distinctions in violent acts were present in both black and white communities; for example, Erlanger (1975) explains that, though, white and black communities in America were equally involved in assaultive behaviour, white people more readily approved of “defensive violence” than the black people. These

varying findings and conclusions identify communities because of their distinctive cultural and regional backgrounds which enable them to perceive their violent activities in different ways. Some communities, as compared to others, approve of their violent actions. However, there is no developed understanding of what makes certain communities develop mitigating ideas which accept violent acts. Van Hinghtower and Gorton (2002) argued that historical social conditions help social groups and communities in developing acting strategies and thinking patterns over an extended period. As some scholars have observed, populations of southern areas and black communities in America who historically, experienced slavery and extreme economic conditions developed violent conflicting behaviour (Gastil, 1971; Parker, 1989; Wilson, 2012; Omi and Winant, 2014). Differences in cultures are shaped by historical social conditions and experiences of victimisation.

Cultural behaviour is affected by social conditions. Assuming regional cultural differences, Max Weber believed that actions of “human beings are motivated by ideal and material interests” (Weber, 1968); however, the extreme disorganised social conditions will generate a “culture of poverty” (Swidler, 2011:274). This perspective leads to the argument that social conditions affect cultural behaviour of humans. An example may be given from some countries which experience low socioeconomic conditions and are involved in violence of a patriarchic nature. For example, people in Pakistan widely experience impoverished and unstable social and political conditions which affect their thinking behaviour such that they consider women as inferior to, and the property of, men (Khan, 2000; Patel and Gadit, 2008). Therefore, it may be deduced that cultural conditions and values are prone to the social environment in certain societies.

The influence of social conditions on culture and violence are widely accepted by many scholars. Galtung (1990) while associating culture with violence includes social, economic, political, and legal characteristics as part of culture and presents a thesis that disorganised structural characteristics cause violence, violence which is largely culturally accepted and acted on. In his view, cultural violence and structural violence is almost the

same thing, resulting from disorganised social structural conditions. There is equally an emerging sense that if social conditions change, those changed social conditions will alter the structure of culture and cultural values? Burke (2009) argues that due to the changing nature of social conditions in different regions, culture carries different meanings to different people. Sumner (2008) believes, it is not easy to establish the relationship of specific cultural values and beliefs to specific violent behaviour. Thus, understanding of the relationship of culture and violent behaviour is crucial challenge for social scientists.

## **Conclusions**

Violence is a complex human behaviour that can be understood by different angles. Violence is a physical force applied intentionally to cause various social, economic, psychological or emotional harms to people. Harm resulting from violence may be of various forms- it may be physical damage like injury or killing, may be economic loss like deprivation of personal property and money or it may be psychological harm done to people. Violence affects physical and psychological being of social groups especially who experience tense social conditions and find criminal justice system as weak not helping them address their criminal issues. Violence being multifaceted is complex phenomenon affected by various emotional and social conditions. Violence within certain groups is culturally justified act under unwanted social, economic and political deprivations and inequalities and criminal victimisations from powerful groups and agencies of justice. In such disorganised conditions, people develop cultural and emotional values and attitudes, which support violence and consequently violent act becomes neutralised and rationalised. Violence therefore suggested here is not personal choice or deliberate act but it is determined and motivated by social, economic, political and cultural inequalities.

Violence as understood from the reviewed theoretical perspectives indicates it is highly influenced by structural disorganised conditions. Under this theoretical concept, people and communities experience various disorganised socioeconomic conditions, cultural practices and conflicting situations, which however affect their violent behaviour. However there is uncertainty and difficulty in understanding what specific factor (s) lead



social groups to violent criminality. Structural perspectives argue that people are highly motivated by inequality and relative social and economic conditions, thus finding no other option but to become involved in violent acts such as robbery and kidnapping to gain monetary benefits. Moreover, strains and frustration within home and community produced by low economic sources such as having no source of education, no development of a social career and not providing adequate facilities to children lead people into many disturbed and problematic behaviours. Because of poverty and poor economic conditions, families and communities remain disturbed and there is low cohesion and weak bonds between them. In economically disturbed homes and communities, children remain deprived of parental supervision and thus join criminal gangs from an early age. Being deprived of fair and substantial social and economic resources, individuals develop certain beliefs and values which support their violent activities. Violent activity is further shaped by certain tense situations which take place during interaction between offender and victim.

Situations of violence are constructed through various social and personal experiences. People who have been economically deprived and violently victimised may react aggressively in conditions of conflict. Moreover, it may be cultural background and position which motivates a person to react against his victim. For the enactment of violence against him or her, the victim may be blamed and thought for his or her role of precipitating and encouraging the perpetrator of violence. It concludes that the previous experiences of social and economic conditions, and cultural characteristics affect individuals becoming aggressive and violent and also equally contribute to determine situations of violence.

Yet, subcultural and cultural values support violent interpersonal conflicts and aggressive attitudes. People living in economically deprived subcultural conditions develop favourable attitudes and values which support their violent activities. The defense of honour, sense of masculinity and revengeful attitude become the sources violence in social groups who particularly deviate from the mainstream culture. Social groups belonging to sub-culture place high values on their deviant moral judgements which

create their strong justified moral ground of their reactions against social and economic inequalities and opposite social groups. The reaction may become so violent that murder, assault and many other violent crimes may result. The people and communities who act on moral values and judgments as favourable to violence represent subcultural entity. Sub-culturally separated communities identify themselves as suffering from class systems and equal distribution of economic sources, thus they develop particular value judgments that help their deviant and violent behaviour within home and street against men, women and society. However, the literature suggests that subcultural values like honour and masculinity are very prominent in poor communities and appear to show that cultural behaviour and attitudes remain vulnerable to social and economic conditions.

The reviewed literature explicitly indicates that violence is highly motivated by social structural inequalities. The structural conditions like inequalities on the levels of social, economic, political and criminal justice influence behaviour of people. In addition, cultural or sub-cultural values and judgements are also determined by the past experienced of social and criminal victimisations. Sub-cultural social groups feel themselves wronged on various social, political and economic levels and most importantly they feel their issues are not addressed by criminal justice agencies. Violence therefore is highly motivated by social, economic, political, social justice and cultural inequalities. Social groups will increasingly and promptly respond to the situations of violence whose life experiences have been marked with economic deprivation and victimisations in the contact with criminal justice personnel and whose cultural values are aggressive and revengeful because they have been wronged and they have been victims of society. However, the most of the reviewed studies are quantitative, have not necessarily explored experiences and narratives of the people who are involved in various violent crimes. Violence and its understanding, therefore, remain unexplored from the point of views of violent offenders. Narrative explanations given by those, whose life directly is influenced by direct involvement in various deviant, criminal and violent activities and whose life has suffered social structural inequalities, will be helpful qualitative inquiry to understand violence.

## **Chapter Two**

### **Structure of violence and violent crime in Sindh and Pakistan**

The previous Chapter One provided understanding of violence, violent crime and violent behaviour on theoretical and methodological grounds by taking benefit from European and Western literature. Violence as physical human behaviour is complex phenomenon which may be justified as legitimate action to act particularly by those who perceive themselves as victims of society. For violent behaviour as justified and rationalised, there interplay various variables like social, cultural and moral values, and situational characteristics. However, the previous chapter strongly indicates that social structural factors play dominant role in shaping, constructing and motivating violence to occur. All these social, cultural and situational factors are influenced by social structural variables, as was seen in the previous chapter that cultural values and emotions of revenge, masculinity and honour are highly held by the communities which are disadvantaged and deprived of social and economic benefits. Additionally, these deprived communities and social groups readily respond to the situations of crime and violence. Victimisation may occur on various grounds, for example, inequalities and differences perceived and experienced on the social, economic, political, cultural and criminal justice levels. The literature reviewed in the previous chapter indicates that violence and violent behaviour become justified, neutralised and essential action and reaction within poor, disadvantaged and deprived communities.

As the previous chapter shows, that violence manifesting in different forms is influenced by various factors. As there are different violent actions like murder and robbery which may not be influenced by same factors, for example, killing/murdering may be motivated by past experience of economic deprivation and physical interaction which may lead to develop emotions of taking revenge. While murder/ honour killing may be initiated to repair lost honour. While some of other forms of violence may not motivated by the same factors, for example, robbery may be enacted to gain economic benefits. Violence being multifaceted presents various explanations and justification by taking support from lived experiences, involvement in criminal and violent activities and experiences of

victimisations. Explanations presented in the form of narratives provide how violent offenders perceive, describe and justify their acted violent criminal acts. Methodologically speaking, violence is essentially qualitative phenomenon can better be appended by exploring narratives of violence, while quantitative methods, as were rigorously used by previous research, may not provide comprehensive picture of violence. In terms of methodology, further to say, most of the research conducted was quantitative and collected different sets of data such as the arrest records of criminals, records of victimisation and economic indicators, for example, the poverty rate and income level of the community. Thus, a lack of understanding from the perceptions and lived experiences of those involved in various violent activities creates a gap in truly and explicitly understanding violence on theoretical and methodological grounds. In other words, how to theoretically conceptualise violence and how to investigate violence, are some of the concerns that need to be addressed and evaluated.

Chapter two described the theoretical and methodological understanding of violent crime by reviewing European and Western literature. At the theoretical level, there is no agreement what causes violence. Theoretically, some researchers attributed violence to poor economic conditions, high unemployment and weak criminal justice policies. Some researchers focus on violence as being rationalised by certain subcultural values like honour and masculinity while others believed that the dynamic nature of situations, characterised by the availability of weapons and behaviour of the victim contribute to violence. These different factors indicate that violence is not related to a single factor and that there are various underlying elements residing in social, cultural and situational variables which contribute to the occurrence of violence. In terms of methodology, most of the research conducted was quantitative and collected different sets of data such as the arrest records of criminals, records of victimisation and economic indicators , for example, the poverty rate and income level of the community. Thus, there is a lack of understanding of violence from the perceptions and lived experiences of those involved in various violent activities.

This chapter is dedicated to understanding violent crime in the Pakistani context. Contextual dynamics provide a better understanding of how the social structure of society and its variables impact on the behaviour of people. The chapter is important since criminological understanding which is mainly European and Western based, may not be translatable to the understanding of violence in the Asian context and in particular, the case here, of the Pakistan context. Pakistan has its own problems where violence, especially interpersonal like murder, armed robbery, kidnapping, honour killing and violent assault, are increasing problems which I am interested in. The same violent crimes have declined significantly in European and Western countries. This understanding of violence therefore should be developed in its own social context, where it actually takes place.

### **Violence and comparative criminological analysis**

Gaining understanding of violence from two different countries by reviewing relevant secondary literature is not easy job in criminology. Countries have different social structures and levels of violence, as discussed in previous chapter, analytical and comparative knowledge derived from two countries provide better comprehension of violence to criminologists around the world (Quraishi (2002). This comparative criminological understanding can help criminologists to analyse how different societies generate social conditions and narrative structures of people and how these motivate people to become involved in deviant and criminal activities (Deflem, 2015). The use of comparative inquiry, as Quraishi (2002, Reid (2003) and Mahoney and Rueschemeyer (2003) believe, enables social researchers to analyse interplay of the types of crimes, socioeconomic indicators and cultural aspects, and between regions and countries. In addition, this type of comparative research not only provide analytical understanding of violence and society on comparative levels but also helps researchers to gain understanding of trends of social inquiry of violent crime. Such research can be beneficial for various reasons as acknowledged by some researchers such as Nelken (1997) and Quraishi (2002). They (Nelken, 1997; Quraishi, 2002) believe comparative criminological research and analysis will generate good literature on culture and violence

on comparative levels which on the other hand will diminish monopoly of some criminologists, provide new life to the criminological research and provide broader understanding of cultural aspects of violence in different nations.

As comparison of two or different nations is not easy, because different nations have different social and legal understanding of crime and violence, therefore, comparative criminology and research may encounter analytical problems. Bierne (1983) argues knowledge of crime and violence on comparative grounds in different nations may generate a 'master theory of research'. However, this seems difficult and ideal approach for having master theory for understanding violence, since motivation of people, cultural backgrounds and social conditions are not same across the nations, and similarly, the definitions and meanings inculcated by different cultures and social groups are not same in all the cultures. Therefore, differences in social and cultural conditions will surely suggest different approaches for understanding violence in different nations. As, Quraishi (2002) believes, at least, criminologists can differentiate and distinguish clearly what differences and agreements are on understanding and defining any crime and violence in different nations and cultures. Understanding sensitivity of comparative research, Bierne (1983) proposed that researchers can apply analytical approaches of 'agreement' and 'difference' when analysing the qualitative information. Analysis of secondary literature on violent crimes and violent behaviour in two cultures provide better understanding of violence, however, the derived analysis can be used to analyse and interpret data on similarities and differences. Such comparative understanding may be helpful for criminologists and researchers on violence to comprehend what causal factors and social conditions influence violent behaviour in particular culture.

Before offering an understanding of violent crime in Pakistani context, I want to introduce readers to the social context in which the violence takes place. Pakistan faces various social problems. The majority of people are highly deprived of their social, economic and political rights. Young people especially, do not have good access to education or opportunities for social development, so they are highly frustrated with

society. On the other hand, as Pakistan is divided into rural and urban areas, each area has its own problems which impact significantly on its relative population.

### **Social, political and cultural violence in Sindh and Pakistan**

Pakistan is situated in the northwestern part of the south Asia comprising a land of 796,096 square kilometers with a population of 184.5 million people. This population is growing rapidly. At present, Pakistan is the sixth most populous country in the world, but according to government calculations, it will be fifth most populous country in the world in 2025 if the same rate of growth continues (Government of Pakistan, 2013). Pakistan is divided into a four number of provinces and each has its own population. According to the Demographic and Health Survery, 2015, on administrative and provincial structure, Pakistan has four provinces including; Punjab, Sindh, Baluchistan and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa along with a number of Federally Administrative Tribal Areas (FATA) and the Gilgit Baltistan area. Punjab is the largest province with its population comprising 56 per cent of the whole population, Sindh, as second largest province, comprises 23 per cent, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa third, comprising 17 per cent, while Baluchistan comprises 5 per cent of the whole population of the country.

Pakistan is divided into rural and urban areas; it is an agricultural country where almost 79 per cent of the population lives in rural areas (Mezzera and Aftab, 2004; Gall & Hobby, 2009). The literacy rate in 2005 was 49.9 percent, where 63 percent of the literate population was male and 36 percent female. There is a high ratio of educational drop out; it is estimated that over two third of the adult population receive no formal schooling (Malik and Courtney, 2011). Violence is increasing in Pakistan as compared to its neighbouring countries. Though, the overall picture of violence in South Asia is dismal but Pakistan as a South Asian country is most susceptible to violent incidents and internal violent conflicts. Comparative figures collected by the Pakistan Institute for Peace (PIPS, 2011) reveal that, in 2010, 10,003 people were killed in Pakistan, 7,123 in Afghanistan, 4,021 in Iraq in violent incidents, while casualties of violent incidents declined significantly in other South-Asian countries such as India and Sri Lanka.

There are various social structural problems within Pakistani society which affect life style and behaviour of people in general. Different social scholars, politicians and social researchers including criminologists share their concerns regarding wayward social structure of Pakistan and its criminal violent culture. Basically, Pakistan being a democratic country aims to protect fundamental rights and interests of people and promote social welfare of population (Dreze and Sen, 1999, p.24). However, the historical evidence and facts identify that it has failed to provide social and economic equality and equity to its people so far. There is wide difference on social and economic levels between social groups and classes. Some social groups enjoy very high social status while some do not have basic needs of social life. Zulfikar Ali Bhutto, the late Ex-prime minister of Pakistan in his book, 'The Myth of Independence,' becoming much concerned about the poor social conditions in Pakistan, commented, the "cold-blooded exploitation of the people is the major cause of the troubles we face today...Pakistan is one of the poorest countries of the world, yet some of our people are amongst the world's richest men" (Bhutto, 1969:154). Moreover, he strongly believed feudal and semi-feudal forces widely repress and victimise population particularly the poor in the rural settings (Mumtaz et al, 2003; Synnott, 2009).

However, it is not only poverty around the country and the feudal structures, which are dominant, especially in rural areas, but many additional structural problems affect life of poor people. Some other criminologist researchers have identified several other factors as determinant of behaviour of Pakistani people. Mahfooz Kanwar (1989), a criminologist by analysing social problems of Pakistan society believes patriarchal nature of society and biased nature of political and religious leadership have affected the life of common people (1989). In addition, ethnic differences based on speaking different languages and the unequal distribution of economic resources in rural and urban areas divide social groups (Husain, 2005). All these problems, created by inefficient government agents and policies, have a major impact on the affected social structure of Pakistan.



On regional levels, there are significant indicators and problems which cause marginalisation and deprivations of people. The statistics of 2012 year on social and demographic indicators reveal that the total population of Sindh is 42 million, half of whom live in rural areas (Ali, 2014). Eighty percent of this rural population depends on agricultural products and its related business but the majority of the people do not have their own agricultural land on which to grow crops (Ali, 2014). Instead, they work on the lands of feudal lords, on a contract basis (Malik, 2002; Siddiqi, 2010; Ali, 2011). They are mostly illiterate and unaware of their social rights. Feudalism dominates rural areas and is an informal system based on controlling and managing agricultural products and their economic distribution among the rural communities. However, it also dominates ideologically and imposes hegemonic rules over the weaker and vulnerable communities of rural areas (Okey, 1986). Feudalism, apart from in the rural areas of Punjab, has long been a symbol of economic exploitation and physical victimisation of poor peasant communities in Sindh. It is widely found that almost every village peasant is a victim of violence within rural areas (Malik, 2002) and rural people, because of limited sources of income and fear of crime, move to urban areas. Some scholars, for instance Shahnaz Hamid, analyse the causes of migration from rural to urban areas, and find married females increasingly, and males as well, tend to move to urban areas. She further explains that people of 10 and above years including males and females, and married people more generally travel from rural areas to urban (Hamid, 2010). It is the fear of crime, experiences of social and violent victimisation and economic exploitation that affect life movement of people from one place to other that may be for various purposes such as changing environment, search for jobs and avoiding criminal atmosphere.

Including above problems, there are many other issues that create social frustrations amongst young people. There are various serious concerns shared by social scholars and reports. Several surveys and reports indicate social groups become victim of social disadvantages and economic vulnerabilities, in addition, many of them find no other alternative to pursue their social career than their involvement in deviant, criminal and violent activities like robber, kidnapping and thefts. Some official reports identify young

people largely suffer from social problems and involve in criminal activities. They are the part of the population who are highly frustrated with the economic and political arrangements of society. The Planning Commission Government of Pakistan (PCGP, 2011) and Pakistan Social and Living Standards Measurement Survey (PSLM, 2010-11) found that two-third (68.4 per cent) of the total population is below the 30 years of age and this trend will increase in coming years. The youth cohort of age group 15-29 years comprising 26.63 per cent of the population was estimated as 1.8 million in 2008; however, the one-third of the youth living in urban areas is expected to reach 50 per cent in 2030. Surveys such as PCGP (2011) and PSLM (2010-11) share their concern that most of the youth are seriously discontented with the political and social structures of the country. Moreover, the reports indicate the majority of the youth suffers from school dropout, incompleteness of education to bachelor level and has no vocational skills. The disadvantaged young children between ages of 15 and 18 are more likely to be involved in various deviant, criminal and violent activities such as murder, theft and robbery (Mahmood and Cheema, 2004; Malik and Shirazi, 2010) all across Pakistan. In addition, Gul Muhammad Baloch (2014), a sociologist researcher studied involvement of women in crimes in Sindh, found that some women are also involved in crimes like killing of the husband, robbery and theft, child and drug trafficking, kidnapping and extra-marital sexual relations. Moreover, Baloch also found that some women, with the help of males, commit organised crimes including kidnapping and theft (Baloch, 2014). Organised crimes such as human and drug trafficking, and white-collar criminality are common phenomenon in many urban areas like Karachi and Lahore (Kanwar, 1989, Tariq, 1991; Baloch, 2014). Many of those involved in organised crimes become scapegoats for more influential and professional white-collar criminals (politicians and feudal lords) (Kanwar, 1989, Tariq, 1991). This disturbed picture of society and violence indicates the failure of the state in addressing social and criminal problems of a vulnerable population.

In addition, there are various issues in law enforcement agencies and the criminal justice system which hinder properly addressing problems of criminal violence in society. Some reforms were initiated by the previous government of Gen. Musharraf during 2001 and

2002 to restructure and update the police system, for example, reformation of the Police Act, 2002; however, successive governments made little commitment to continuing the project (Fasihiddin, 2013). Consequently, as some senior police officers and scholars such as Muhammad Shoaib Suddle (Suddle, 2002) and Fasihuddin (2013) contend, because of lack of political will, lack of adequate financial resources and the unprofessional attitude of governments, police staff are not trained and updated to deal with serious law and order situations. Moreover, there are serious problems within the police system. In a recent news report by DAWN (12 August, 2015), it was reported that three intelligence agencies found 1,000 police personnel involved in various “undesirable acts while serving in the police department”. Police criminality, corruption and lack of coordination within the policing system are some of the contributing factors which further disorganise the structure of policing (Abbas, 2009; Imran, 2011; Fasihuddin, 2013; Jackson et al, 2014). It is not only police but the court system also suffers from problems. Fasihuddin reports that courts of justice are overburdened with criminal cases and prisons are overcrowded with criminals. Conviction rates for crime are significantly low, estimated as 50.88% in 1995 in Sindh (Mwalili et al, 1998: 351). However, according to a newspaper report, DAWN (April, 21, 2010), a former Supreme Court Judge, Nasir Aslam Zahid suggested that the conviction rate of prisoners under trial was 10 per cent in 2010. The low conviction rate exposes failure of court system in dispensing with criminal cases. A lack of professional attitude and ineffective social, political and criminal policies contribute negatively to society and, consequently, crime and disorder prevail and increase. Prevalence of violent crime in different forms, poor socioeconomic conditions and ineffective policies of state and criminal justice system indicate a society is highly disorganised at the structural level.

### **The limitations of current criminological work on violence in Pakistan**

There is little or no online and published literature on violent crimes such as murder, kidnapping, robbery and violent assault in Pakistan. If there is any, it is poor of quality and suffers from theoretical and methodological problems. Violence in Pakistan is very often understood from different approaches and perspectives, such as from the

perspective of women as victims of violence or honour killing (Fikree et al, 1999; Noor, 2004, Niaz, 2009; Narejo and Kharal, 2010; Bhanbhro et al, 2013), or from examination of violent conflicts within migrants and between different ethnic groups in urban areas (Verkaaik, 2004; Feyyaz, 2011; Siddiqi, 2013; Iqbal, 2014), or from evaluation of terrorist incidents and attacks (Fair, 2007; Blair et al, 2013). Factually, violence is not understood mainly and frequently from the perspective of incarcerated convicted criminals involved in various violent crimes. It must be acknowledged that there several researches conducted which examine violence in Pakistan. For example, there is a number of studies, published and kept on online, for instance, a published book of Mahfooz Kanwar (Kanwar, 1989) on homicide and murder in Pakistan; the online work of Suhail and his colleagues (2004) on 'Psychosocial causes of the crime and murder in Pakistan' and of Hashmi et al (2000) on 'A sociological investigation on murders in the Punjab (Pakistan) province.' These studies provide good understanding of violent crimes in Pakistan, particularly in the province, Punjab. Such studies have collected data from the prisoners convicted of violent crimes in Punjab; however, the first qualitative research describes case studies of the offenders convicted of murder, the second, based on semi-structured interviews presents data in quantitative forms, while the third has collected case histories of offenders and presents the data in quantitative forms.

Yet, both latter two studies both suffer from theoretical and methodological problems. For example, Hashmi and his colleagues (2000) conducted their study on convicted prisoners to gain understanding of causes of murder in the Punjab province of Pakistan. The data for this study collected in 1997 through case histories from 26 prisoners convicted of murder in different prisons in the province, aimed to "determine the various reasons of murder in the Punjab province" (Hashmi et al, 2000, p.59). This study presents some underlying factors of murder such as 'Zan', 'Zar' and 'Zameen' (women, money and land), revenge and enmity, sectarianism, sudden provocation, self-defence in quantitative manners. This study however does not explain how convicted prisoners explain such ideas and make sense about them. Moreover, this study being waffle does not provide clear theoretical perspectives and gaps against which data on murder were analysed. In addition, this quantitative study using "well designed, comprehensive and pretested

interview schedule” (Hashmi et al, 2000, p. 59), does not explain well the basis or thematic factors derived from literature or theoretical perspectives. In this way, theoretical support and perspectives are poorly conceptualised and addressed in this study. And most importantly, the study only describes “appropriate techniques” as used to analyse the data; it shows however the study has not devised and used proper methodological strategies to collect the data and analyse the same. This study being old conducted in 1997 and having such failings and flaws creates doubts in the scientific theoretical understanding of the problem of murder in the province which is the highest populated and observes highest rate of crime including violent crimes (Hashmi et al, 2000; Suhail and Javed, 2004).

The second study conducted by Suhail and Javed (2004) explains various social and situational factors of homicides in the Punjab province of Pakistan. This study stipulates on the geographical problems as in rural areas of Pakistan like land and property as being causative factors of violent disputes leading to homicides acts. Except those factors, this study also has highlighted poor and disadvantaged status of perpetrators of homicides and the situational factors which help increase the chances of violent interactions like alcohol, use of drugs, availability of weapons like gun and knife. Through random sampling, 100 convicted prisoners were selected for the semi-structured interviews out of 412 from the Kot Lukhpat, the Central Jail in Lahore, Punjab. Through, the use of Chi square, the significance of differences between the expected and obtained frequencies in the each causative variable of the study was calculated. However, the researchers do not clearly explain and justify how data were collected and how methodological steps were carried out to process and analyse the data. This research work provides significant statistical presentations of the factors of homicide, however, it does not provide how perpetrators of homicide violence explain and narrate their experiences and situations of violent life styles. In addition, this study fails to present the data in the logical theoretical thematic manner which also does not make sense about the theoretical contribution of this study to the understanding of the homicides in Pakistan. This study, too, suffers from clear theoretical explanations and methodological analysis and presentations of the collected data.

By looking at critically reviewed studies and their theoretical and methodological pitfalls, it can be analysed that sociological and criminological research on violence does not provide its scientific and systematic understanding. The sociological criminological understanding of violence therefore suffers from a lack of appropriate theoretical and methodological approaches by professionals and academics which fail to examine cases at the individual levels. Prisoner-based research on violence and narrative-based research on violence have not been conducted so far in Pakistan while these approaches are highly valued elsewhere around the world (see chapter three).

On the other hand, there are various collective and bureaucratic problems which promote negligence and a non-serious attitude towards the development of a scientific understanding of violent crime. Although all social sciences disciplines are considered important around the country and have been accepted as important sources through which to understand various social problems (Baig, 2006), criminology, an important discipline, has largely been neglected in Pakistan (Fasihuddin, 2013). Fasihuddin, a senior police officer and editor-in-chief of the Pakistan Journal of Criminology, regrets that “criminology as an academic discipline and as a profession doesn’t enjoy its deserved status in Pakistan.” He further reports that out of 133 universities in Pakistan, only three universities, the University of Sindh, Jamshoro (Sindh), the University of Karachi (Sindh) and the University of Punjab (Punjab) offer a Masters programme in Criminology. In recent years, the University of Sindh has begun offering a bachelor program in Criminology. Inayatullah (2001) claims that the authoritative nature of the Pakistan government has contributed significantly to creating a weak liberal environment that does not help a scientific community to flourish and develop to understand social problems, including violence. In the same vein, some researchers for instance Quraishi (2002), Zaidi (2002) and Baig (2006) believe, that there is no culture of scientific and independent research to examine crime and violence. Others have identified the main elements which hinder academic and many other researchers from engaging in scientific understanding of violence. For example, Baig (2002: 202-204) has pointed out a number of key problems as:

1. “Unsupportive academic environment, 2. Lack of financial and technical resources, 3. Donor-driven NGO research, 4. Lack of a linkage between academics and practitioners, 5. Absence of links between social research and social policy, 6. Limited access to and use of research findings, and, 7. Poor quality of research output”.

Additionally, among the most important factors which render professionals and researchers ignorant about understanding violent crime is that there is no proper system of recording and maintaining incidents of violence and, people are not willing to report crimes to the police. If we look at the figures of crime and crimes of violence given by different sources and researchers, there are many discrepancies. For example, Yasir et al (2009: 86) have collected figures from the Pakistan Statistical Yearbook, 2008, and according to these, during 2007, there were 24,396 cases of murder including attempted murder, while Waheed (2010: 139) has collected figures from the National Police Bureau of Pakistan. According to these figures the number of murder incidents in the same year 2007 is 10,666. There are wide differences in almost all the data on the violent crimes collected by the sources which explain disagreements and misunderstandings in the counts of the incidents of the violent crimes. However the most important thing to stress here is that, according to these sources, all types of crimes of violence such as murder, kidnapping, robbery and others are continuously increasing (see the Appendix. I and II).

It shows however that there is an unprofessional and inefficient attitude among different government authorities to recording crimes of violence and, it also shows that there is no mutual understanding among researchers on the reliability of data on incidents of violence (Fasihuddin, 2013). Data on crime and violence therefore, collected by police, are subject to doubt by many researchers. Some believe that the official statistics on violent crime are manipulated for political reasons, and that the reliability and validity of the figures is questionable (Kanwar, 1989; Khan et al, 1995; Fasihuddin, 2013). As a result, the improper and unsystematic recording of incidents of violent crime contributes to a weak understanding of violence. On the other hand, there is also a lack of awareness among the public about reporting crimes to the police. Fasihuddin (2013) argues that in a

traditional society, people place high value on the honour of the home so tend to avoid reporting crimes of violence to police. Similarly, Hayat (2002) believes that because of the sensitive nature of violence against women, many incidents of domestic violence are also frequently not reported.

In the following section, I will attempt to understand some of the violent crimes, for example, ethnic violence, murder and violent assault, dacoity (armed robbery) and honour killing, which are of particular interest to me. I want to understand what causes these violent crimes in the context of Pakistan.

### **Ethnic violence and urban structure in Sindh and Pakistan**

Ethnic based violence and many other violent events between different social groups and communities especially in the urban areas in Pakistan have been affected by historical problems and continuous political conflicts and events. Historical events shaped many domestic problems and including coming social, political, cultural and violent problems which significantly influenced social life style of people in Sindh and Pakistan (Kennedy, 1991). The most significant historical event of the partition of the Indian Sub-continent (British India) resulted in separation of two countries, India and Pakistan, after long struggle of Hindus and Muslims. The struggle of two political and religious groups, Hindus and Muslims, ended in seeking freedom from British Colonialism of the Sub-continent in 1947 which resulted in separation of lands, cultures and religions (Kennedy, 1991; Quraishi, 2008). Soon after the announcement of the freedom of the Sub-continent, many of the Muslims living in India, a land of Hindus, opted to join Pakistan as being the representative country of Muslims, in the result thousands of the Muslims living in the areas of India migrated to the territory of Pakistan. Though people began to move to the areas of Pakistan in 1946 but particularly between the years of 1947 and 1958, the largest number of Muslim migrants from the Indian communities such as Uttar Pardesh, Bihar and the Indian western coast came to occupy the cities of Pakistan (Kennedy, 1991; Mahmud, 1997; Quraishi, 2008).



The Muslim migrants called ‘Muhajirs’ in the local language came in huge number and occupied different main areas in Pakistan. The huge number of the Muslim Muhajirs, settled in Karachi city, a main economic place in Pakistan that in 1948, the population of the city increased from 420,000 to over 1 million in 1951 (Quraishi, 2008) and by the 1958 the population rose to 1.40 million in the same city (Fernandes and Fernandes 1994; Quraishi, 2008). The other sources such as Tayyab Mahmud give that almost fourteen million people crossed the border from India to Pakistan and Pakistan to India between the years of 1947 and 1951 (Mahmud, 1997: 669). Almost eight million Muslim people from India to Pakistan and approximately six million non-Muslim people migrated from Pakistan to India (Mahmud, 1997: 670). ‘The Muhajirs’ not only occupied Karachi as the main city but also many other important cities like Hyderabad, Sukkur; according to some estimation, Sindh as a province was occupied by nearly 4.6 million and Karachi by 3.3 million ‘Muhajirs’ in 1981 (Kennedy, 1991). So far in different times and years, migration continued that from different Indian areas almost 6 to 8 million ‘Muhajir’ refugees settled in the Pakistani provinces particularly Sindh and Punjab (Feyyaz, 2011; Iqbal, 2014). Moreover, in the subsequent years, during wars between India and Pakistan in 1965 and 1971, more Muslims came to Pakistan (Feyyaz, 2011; Iqbal, 2014). Though in the early days, the major portion of the refugees/migrants arrived in Punjab because of its size as the largest area, compare to other provinces. Punjab was not highly affected by this because most of those who arrived there (East Punjab which is a present part of Pakistan) were from nearby places like West Punjab (area in present India); they spoke the same language and had almost the same culture as the local people of the Punjab (Gankoviskii, 1971; Rashid and Shaheed, 1993; Feyyaz, 2011).

Migration of Muslim communities from India had significantly historical impact on the structural problems of Pakistan. Sindh, a province of Pakistan was highly affected at the economic, political, cultural and criminal levels. Although, many migrants who have arrived in Sindh from time to time, like Balochis, the Brahuis, the Punjabis, and the Rajasthanis, have assimilated into the culture and adopted language of the area (Feyyaz, 2011; Siddiqi, 2013). But, the Muslim migrants from India called the Mohajirs did not adopt the culture and language of the local population (Siddiqi, 2013). Historical

evidence suggest more than 2 million Muslim refugees who came from India settled in the urban cities of Sindh like Karachi, Hyderabad, Sukkur and Thatta and caused wide spread differences on social and political levels in local communities and populations (Feyyaz, 2011). Initial problems of differences and conflicts were created soon after the independence of Pakistan in 1974 that Muhammad Ali Jinnah, the founder and first Governor General of Pakistan, announced Urdu language as a national language of Pakistan in 1948 (Feyyaz, 2011). This official announcement of Urdu language as being national language caused significant rifts and clashes between Mohajirs and the local population, Sindhis. Mohajirs gained many benefits on the basis of their language, since most of the Mohajirs spoke Urdu language and for getting jobs, Urdu language was compulsory requirement. In this respect, many Mohajirs found easy access to getting jobs because the Urdu language was the criteria for getting jobs, and other facilities on the basis of their language (Feyyaz, 2011). While Sindhi local people who spoke the Sindhi language were denied equal access to employment and other facilities (Siddiqi, 2012; Iqbal, 2014). Such discriminatory policies and conditions caused much frustration within local people, Sindhis and migrants, Mohajirs, which however became the initial cause of violent conflicts and segregation between the two ethnic groups.

Arrival of foreign people and not their mixing with local people caused not only segregation on social and economic levels, but more conflicts and differences also were systematically created at the cultural and political levels. The Mohajirs who came from India slowly occupied good jobs and established businesses in the areas of Sindh. They did not value local people as their equal social partners on social, economic and political levels, Farhan Hanif Siddiqi in his book, “The Politics of Ethnicity in Pakistan: The Baloch, Sindhi and Mohajir Ethnic Movements” writes that the some groups of Mohajirs viewed Sindhi people as ‘culturally inferior, illiterate and backward’ (Siddiqi, 2013: 82). Furthermore, the first prime minister of Pakistan, Liaquat Ali Khan who himself was a Mohajir, considered Sindh as a ‘camel-cart and donkey-cart culture’ (Siddiqi, 2013: 82). In addition, the appointment of Punjabi person, Din Muhammad, as a governor of Sindh was considered as usurp of political rights of local political leadership, this political

appointment created havoc and huge resentment in the public and in political environment (Siddiqi, 2013). Thus, the indifferent attitude of migrants and the political support given to them created a conflicting environment between different ethnic groups in Sindh.

Differences created on the social, political and ethnic basis impacted political scenario especially in Sindh that Sindhis and Mohajirs formed their political parties as to safeguard their social and political rights against each other. However, political efforts gave birth to conflicts and violence between ethnic groups in Sindh. Though Sindhi political leaders formed their political party, Jeay Sindh Qaumi Mahaz, early years like 1970s, however, later on conflicts crated during 1970s which also encouraged Mohajirs politically to form their political party under the name of Mohajir Qoumi Movement (MQM), to claim their ethnic identity in 1980 (Malik, 1995; Siddiqi, 203). Soon after the organisation of the latter political party, numerous violent conflicts took place between the ethnic groups. The most significant incident was in 1988, which marked the Mohajirs demolished the Sindhi leader's monument in Hyderabad. These violent riots and conflicts created antagonistic relationships between the Sindhis and Mohajirs (Malik, 1995; Verkaaik, 2004; Siddiqi, 2013). In order to avenge themselves, Sindhi militants retaliated by killing more than 70 and injuring more than 200 people among the Mohajirs (Siddiqi, 2013). In the response, Mohajirs killed more than 200 Sindhi people in different areas of Karachi in only two days (Verkaaik, 2004; Siddiqi, 2013).

However, in Sindh, there had not only been violent conflicts between Sindhis and Mohajirs but also between other ethnicities including Mohajirs-Pathans, Punjabis and Sindhis and Baloch and Mohajirs, and other groups. For example, in 1985, Mohajirs burned many buses owned by Pathans at Banaras Chowk and the Metro Cinema in Orangi Town. The conflict rose to a level that killed more than a hundred people from both the Mohajirs and Pathans (Gayer, 2007:522; Siddiqi, 20012). The continuous violent conflicts between different ethnic and sectarian groups have resulted in bloody violence and the killing of more than a thousand people in different years (Verkaaik, 2004; Khan,

2002; Siddiqi, 2012). For example, the massacre in the “Aligarh Colony” resulted in killing of hundreds of Mohajirs and destroying Mohajirs’ business areas and homes (Kennedy, 1991). Consequently, the Mohajirs in the revenge of their killings and destructions, violently attacked Pathans in Karachi in Hyderabad, the ethnic violence took so much that army intervened to restore law and order situations in the cities (Kennedy, 1991; Siddiqi, 2012).

Ethnic violence engulfed the whole of urban Karachi killing thousands of the people from all ethnic groups; however, these ethnic rivalries not only encouraged violence but other particular types of violence like sectarian and organised dacoity gang violence. For example, religious parties such as Sipah-e-Sahaba Pakistan, Tahrik-e-Jaafriya Pakistan and Sunni Tahrik emerged to become involved in ethnic-religious violence (Fair, 2004). Gangs of dacoits, such as Lyari gangs including Shoib group, Rehman Dakait and Arshad Pappu became organised and engaged in killing and robbing their opponents and innocent people across Karachi and other places in Sindh (Khan, 2002; Javaid and Hashmi, 2012:65). Sectarian and ethnic conflicts manifested themselves in various social and political issues. PIPS (2010) documents that the majority of the killings and injuries taking place in Karachi were about land ownership problems, drugs related, and based on political ideological and religious differences. Lederach (1995) argues that ethnic and religious groups may express their identity and affiliation through violence, however, violence may also be used to gain social and political benefits and support. Presently, Mohajirs though express their affiliation with Sindh province, but at the same time maintain their identity through distinguished political and ethnic group and violent conflicts with the native people.

Ethnicity in the case of Mohajirs, however, as is the expression of the social feelings of particular groups of people who are conscious about their solidarity and cohesion and being associated with different language, territory and culture (Erikson, 2002; Rex and Sindh, 2003) assert their supremacy and superiority through distinguished identity over local population. The historical problem of migration created ethnic identities and

differences in urban areas. The result of these can be seen in the fact that at present there is much political and ethnic violence in urban areas, especially in Karachi, which results in the death of thousands of people every year. According to the Human Rights Commission of Pakistan (HRCP), there were more than 1,100 killings in Karachi during just six months of the year 2011. These arguments indicate much of the violence in society particularly in urban communities is supported and motivated by different ethnic ideological differences, and unequal, and diversified social, political, cultural opportunities in different ethnic groups, and regions. Additionally, it can be said that, historical problem of migration caused increase number of population which created more social differences and gaps between social groups and communities, and present incidents of violence are also impacted by historical problems.

### **Murder and violent assault in Pakistan**

Murder and violent assault are serious and increasing problem in Pakistan. Murder and violent assault referring to homicides are the most serious and heinous forms of violent crimes, which are highly harmful for the physical and psychological being of humans. Such harmful violent acts not only devastate the physical nature of victims of homicide but also bring unrepairable consequences for the victim's families; moreover, the offender of this act faces long punishment or death and it creates criminal fear in the community (Brookman, 2005). The understanding about how homicide and murder crimes are socially enacted and explained is not widely and rigorously analysed by criminologists particularly by the Pakistani criminologists. On the other hand, Pakistan is highly violent culture where murder and violent assaults are common criminal and routine activities. Murder rate is high in Pakistan. According to the figures by UNODC (2010) given in the Handbook of Asian Criminology, in the Chapter of 'Homicide in Asia,' Pakistan observes highest homicide rate amongst the Middle East/South West Asian countries, however, it was also calculated that the trend in that violent offence was increasing between the years of 2003 and 2008 (Dai, 2013:15).

Homicide is an unlawful act “broadly defined as the killing of one human being by another” (Karmen, 2010: 71). However, killing may be justified act within some social groups and may be taken as criminal and offensive by other social groups, as Hazel May (1999: 489) claims that “there is no single social meaning attached to the killing of one person by another.” Why it is so that killing has different perceptions and explanations, this leads to take into account as May (1999) and Brookman (2005) explain that social meanings of certain acts of violence like murder and homicide rotate around the concepts of culpability and victimisation. In the sense of culpability, a perpetrator of violence though is responsible of his or her acts and consequences but may have justified reasons for his or her acts, while the victimisation refers to the notion that victims of homicide or violence may perceive the violent act acted upon him or her as unjust and criminal (Brookman, 2005; Karmen, 2010). The violent acts such as homicides may socially and culturally be defined and explained differently by different social groups however their severity and nature are determined by various lawful agencies like legislators, police officers and judges, and public. The law examines the nature of violent act including homicide and murder, and explicitly “takes into account whether a killing was carried out intentionally (with ‘express malice’), in a rational state of mind (‘deliberate’), and with advance planning (‘premeditation’). These defining characteristics of first-degree murders carry the most severe punishments, including (depending on the state) execution or life imprisonment with parole. Killing certain people-police officers; corrections officers; judges; witnesses; and victims during rapes, kidnappings, or robberies- may also be capital offence” (Karmen, 2010: 71).

In the U.S., “a homicide committed with intent to inflict grievous bodily injury (but no intent to kill) or with extreme recklessness (‘depraved heart’) is prosecuted as a second-degree murder” (Karmen, 2010: 71). However, “a homicide committed in the ‘sudden heat of passion’ as a result of the victim’s provocations is considered a ‘voluntary’ (or first-degree manslaughter. The classic example is ‘the husband who comes to find his wife in bed with another man.’ A negligent killing usually is treated as an ‘involuntary’ (second-degree) manslaughter, or it may not be subjected to criminal prosecution at all”

(Karmen, 2010: 71). All acts of homicides and murder are not equally punished, for example, “second-degree murder is not capital crime and cannot lead to the death penalty. Offenders convicted of manslaughter are punished less severely than those convicted of murder” (Karmen, 2010: 71).

While the Pakistan Penal Code (PPC) in section 300 defines murder as the unlawful act of a person resulting in the death of another person, while the Pakistan Penal Code (PPC) prescribes in its Section 302 the death or life imprisonment as punishment for murder (*qatl-i-amd*). All homicide is violent in nature, and murder as one of the forms of homicide, is the felonious killing carried out with malice aforethought or criminal intention (Stevens, 1999; Narejo and Syed, 2010). Aforethought or criminal intention may be defined as "thought of beforehand" which means the act was thought for a considerable period of time before it was acted on (Stevens, 1999). On the other hand, all homicidal acts do not carry criminal intention or culpability (Brookman, 2005; Narejo and Syed, 2010; Dai, 2013); for example murder may result from an accident or some homicide acts may be carried out in self-defence, or in a battle field it may be permitted under law of the land. Therefore, homicides mostly fall into two types; excusable and justifiable (Croal, 1988; Brookman, 2005; Narejo and Syed, 2010; Dai, 2013). Moreover, violent homicides and murder may result from any other violent crimes like robbery, violent assault and rape, for example (Narejo and Syed, 2010), and may be carried out with different weapons (like sharp knife, axe, guns, pistols) or strangulation, hanging or poisoning and various other methods (Nasr, 2002).

Various studies have been conducted to examine factors linked to acts of murder and violent assault. Nevertheless there is no prisoner-based study which seeks to understand violence from experiences and narrative explanations of those who are involved in violent offending practices. Most of the studies examining homicide and its causes look into medical reports of patients in hospital records and find the relationship of homicide death caused by firearms (Ghaffar et al, 1999; Chotani, 2002; Hussein, 2004; Rahman et al, 2013; Assadullah et al, 2014). While a small number of studies have been carried out

from psycho-sociological perspectives, which have attempted to examine social and psychological reasons for homicide (Suhail et al, 2004). But a very less number of research works are conducted from a sociological perspective researching the social factors of homicide (Hashmi et al, 2000). Yet, a least number, only one research, so far found, is conducted from a criminological perspective (Kanwar, 1989). But, a vast majority of the research works is quantitative in its approach (e.g Chotani et al, 2002; Hussein, 2004; Suhail et al, 2004; Rahman et al, 2013; Assadullah et al, 2014). Some studies (e.g, Kanwar, 1989; Hashmi et al, 2000; Suhail et al, 2004), which collect data from prisoners about their violent acts do not necessarily examine narrative descriptions and explanations about their involvement in various violent crimes. Therefore, there is scant sociological criminological literature developed from by using especially prisoner-based, for understanding violent crime from the experiences and perceptions of violent offenders. There, therefore, remains a substantial gap in understanding violence and violent crime from how violent offenders describe and view their acts.

The studies conducted explore factors of homicidal violent acts and the researchers agree that most of the cases of homicide and violent assault result from socioeconomic conditions, cultural variables and religious values (e.g., Kanwar, 1989; Hashmi et al, 2000; Suhail et al, 2004; Rahman et al, 2013). Mahfooz Kanwar's (1989) qualitative study based on cases histories of violent homicide offenders found that murder is widely associated with socioeconomic, cultural and religious factors. He further finds that rural people are highly apprehensive about their land, property and any physical material, which can be of any value to them. Therefore, any perceived damage and threat to financial resources is considered as a threat to the wellbeing of the economic life of family. However, the similar factors regarding violent crime are found by some other scholars. Tariq and Durrani (1983) argue that many violent murder incidents take place because of the land and property. They further argue that people are highly conscious of their economic resources. Suhail et al (2004) in their quantitative research found that most of the respondents who were involved in homicide and violent acts were unskilled and poor, and belonged to rural areas. They further found those who were involved in



land disputes leading to incidents of murder were highly concerned about their property and financial issues. Perceived threat to property and economic sources creates frustrations within social groups which all motivate individuals, especially among the rural population, to take violent revenge against those who have caused damaged and threat to their economic sources.

Various reasons and situations lead people to take violent revengeful action against the perceived or real threat. Vengeful violent murder is often enacted by a victim's family member or in some cases a member of the victim community in the cases like kidnapping or killing of one's family member by known person, cattle theft, honour killing or an insult made publically and such other crimes (Kanwar, 1989). However, this kind of vengeful violent response, which is culturally ingrained, is acted on not only through killing, but also by kidnapping and robbing actions. Behind the revengeful habitual act, some other researchers find many factors. It is contented that economic pressure experienced by a family and frustration caused by loss of honour creates chances for violent interactions between known persons including violent and criminal revengeful behaviour (Kanwar, 1989). Suhail et al (2004) suggest the majority of rural homicide incidents occurred because of petty issues, old rivalries, property related issues, honour and family problems. However, in many and the majority of the cases of homicide and murder, lethal weapons are used. Several researchers argue that such weapons contribute to situations of violence. For example, Suhail et al (2004) found that, in the majority (72 %) of cases of murder weapons like a gun, knife and bomb were used. Mazna Hussain, who collected data of dead persons from Khyber Medical College, Peshawar, found that in almost 91% reported medical cases, death occurred due to firearms (Hussain, Mazna, 2006). Similarly Chotani et al (2002) also found weapons used in a majority of the homicide acts. Apart from use of weapons in violent vengeful acts, many other factors contribute to murder.

Low age is widely found by many several researchers. A qualitative study examining the case histories of violent offenders was conducted by Hashmi and his group members

(Hashmi, et al, 2000) in Punjab province. The researchers found that some violent offenders were involved in murder to take revenge of an old enmity, while a smaller number of them acted angrily at sudden provocation. Furthermore, they found the highest age range of violent offenders involved in murder and assault was between 24 and 44. Moreover, more than fifty percent of the respondents had less than 10 years schooling while more than 60 percent of the respondents were from rural areas. However, some other researchers found the lower age group of young people between 15 to 29 ages mostly involved in murder crimes (Tahir et al, 2011). A quantitative study based on incidents of crime scenes data collected from police stations in Gujrat, Punjab, conducted by Tahir et al (2011) found most of the offenders who were increasingly involved in various criminal and violent activities such as drugs, murder and robbery were unemployed. The above studies indicate that murder is carried out for revenge purposes and due to the sudden provocation of anger, while the age range of the violent offenders varies from 15 to 44 years. However, homicide and violent revenge are not only economic and cultural patterns of violence but are also motivated by religious factors.

Many researchers argue that the idea and concept of revenge is very widely promoted in religious teachings and within religious circles. It is highly believed that religions do not motivate and encourage people to be violent and revengeful against any other human being or social groups. However, it is contented that religious leaders in order to dominate their religious ideas and philosophies motivate people through their indifferent attitudes, conflicting and confusing ideas, point of views and sectarian based hostile teachings that people respond with conflicts, hostility and terrorist activities against their counterpart groups (Fair et al, 2012). Some scholars argue that taking personal revenge from the person who has caused physical harm or injury or caused dishonour is equally and viably present in Islamic Laws which stress upon “private vengeance” (Schacht, 1964: 175; Kanwar, 1989). Further to argue that the meanings derived from ill-explained and ill-interpreted religious values and laws cause people becoming aggressive and violent against other human beings (Fair et al, 2012). The claim of ‘private vengeance’ or retaliation for the physical harm including sexual, homicide and bodily injury by the

victim or of his or her next kin is considered as private privilege or entitlement and is salient aspect of Islamic laws (Peters, 2005). In this respect, such claims of vengeance and retribution of “the victim or of his next of kin are regarded as claims of men and not as claims of God” (Peters, 2005: 39). According to such explanations as cited above, the right of the revenge can be demanded or exercised especially in the crimes of bodily harm or murder by the victim or his or her next kin or family member (Niaz, 2003; Shah, 2007).

The retribution of the criminal act particularly of the bodily harm is referred to as Qisas in Islamic Laws (Shah, 2007). The retaliation is a right of awarding of the punishment to the person against whom sufficient evidence has been established to prove his or her guilt. The Qisas or retaliation or personal right of demand of punishment is defined as, a “punishment by causing similar hurt to the convict as he caused to victim, or by causing his death if he has committed *Qatl-i-Amd*” (Shah, 2007: 115, also see Niaz, 2003; Amuda and Tijani, 2012). In other case, if Qisas is not availed or demanded or if it is forgiven, the Diyat (compensation in monetary form) may be exercised by the victim or his or her family (Hussain, Mazna, 2006). As Nafisa Shah comments that, “the *Qisas* and *Diyat*, in bestowing private power to mediate, shifted the domain of justice from the State, the courts to the family” (2007: 149). Further, if Qisas and Diyat are not exercised, there is a third option available to the victim as it is explained here, “the heirs of the victim can forgive the murderer in the name of God without receiving any compensation or Diyat, or compromise after receiving Diyat” (Irfan, 2008: 13). However, the seriousness of the punishment as caused to the victim will not be enacted or carried out by the victim, but this right is to be executed by the state (Niaz, 2003; Shah, 2007; Irfan, 2008).

Idea of personal revenge encouraged by religious teachings also supports violence against women, which however, in some cases leads to injuring and killing women or killing in the name of honour. Of private vengeance and personal revenge, there are some examples found in some cultures. For example, in some Muslim countries such as Pakistan, a husband can exercise a right to take revenge by injuring or killing his wife and the person

with whom she has established sexual and romantic relations. For, it is highly considered by the husband that his wife and the other man have violated his and family honour (Kanwar, 1989), so the husband can exercise the right of killing her or demand a girl or woman from the man who established sexual or romantic relations with his wife (Kanwar, 1989; Phulpoto, 2010). Husband, in this case, considers himself as being the victim of the sexual act acted against his honour or his wife by other male. In this sexual act, his wife also has played equal role of damaging the honour of her husband. Therefore, both have equally contributed in the act of damaging his (husband's) honour because his wife has violated his honour by extending sexual relation with other male and other male has violated his honour by extending sexual relations with his wife and entering the private zone of the husband. However, in many cases, involved or accused woman becomes the target victim of this revenge (Phulpoto, 2010). The victim, a husband, whose wife and honour has been violated, or a person whose family member has been killed, however, can exercise the right of pardon for the accused criminal or agree to take monetary benefit from the accused or proved criminal person (Peters, 2005).

Moreover, in this respect, especially in homicide and injury, “the judge cannot interfere and acts merely as an arbiter who supervises the procedure, assesses the admissibility of evidence, and finally pronounces judgment on the basis of the plaintiff's claim and the evidence produced by him. The state only plays a subsidiary role in cases of homicide and hurt” (Peters, 2005: 39). Such privileges may possibly encourage offended party or victim (or his or her next kin) to take revenge on his or her personal basis, however, people or community as a whole may be encouraged to blame any person for wrong criminal act and claim to take revenge in any violent or financial manner.

People may be encouraged by religious values and ideas for becoming killer and murderer of men and women. Islamic religious inscription such as Holy Quran, that is a highest source of Islamic laws, provides examples where in it is stipulated that men being bestowed upon are instructed to safeguard their women, for doing so, they are allowed to punish them with physical and psychological violence. For instance, the following piece

of a Quranic Verse, 4:34, permits husbands to ‘discipline’ their wives through violence. “Men are the protectors, guardians and maintainers of women, because Allah has made the one of them to excel the other, and because they spend (to support them) from their means. Therefore the righteous women are devoutly obedient (to Allah and their husbands), and guard in the husband’s absence what Allah orders them to guard (e.g. their chastity, their husband’s property etc). As to those women on whose part you see ill-conduct (i.e. disobedience, rebellion, nashuz in Arabic) admonish them (first), (next), refuse to share their beds, (and last) beat them (lightly, if it is useful), but if they return to obedience, seek not against them means (of annoyance). Surely, Allah is Ever Most High, Most Great (emphasis added)” (Kausar, et al, 2011: 97). Ill-conduct or disobedience or dishonour by women against their husbands or family rules is treated as physically punishable act and dealt with psychological abuse. However, ‘beating’ allowed to men (husbands) against women (wives) as a personal revenge in whatever extent may be justified on religious ground in patriarchal societies. Nevertheless, the interpretation of the above verse needs to be verified and recapped whether the word ‘men’ in the first line refers to ‘husbands’ or the men who are rulers/governors that are entrusted duty of safeguarding people including women in society.

Pakistan is an Islamic country where there are many religious sects and sectarian groups, who lead their religious life according to their own sectarian ideologies. However, for their own benefits, these sectarian groups depict the events and teachings of Islam in such a way, as many other people may be motivated to their sect and become part of their religious sect (Tahir and Niaz, 2012). This is the reason what so many vengeful conflicts occur between different sects like Shia and Sunni Muslims. For example, during early 1970s one of the Sunni sects, Deobandi, killed more than 100 Shias in Khairpur city in Sindh (Tahir and Niaz, 2012). Like these violent clashes, there were many others, which describe different sectarian groups because of their distinguished religious ideologies tried to dominate other religious groups and causes much violence in society. For instance, the Ahmadis religious group has been victim of religious strife and violent revenge since 1980s in Pakistan (Zaman, 1998).

The above reviewed literature indicates that homicide and murder take place for the reasons which are rooted in the socially disorganised structural conditions and criminal cultural values and thinking patterns in rural and urban communities. Much portion of the violent crimes largely occur in rural areas where people suffer from inequal socioeconomic conditions and regional problems like agricultural land and physical property related issues and cultural and moral values like honour and masculinity. Moreover, religious values such as personal revenge and situational factors like availability of weapons have determining impact on violent and homicide behaviour of people in their social relations.

### **Dacoity (armed robbery) and kidnapping in Pakistan**

There is very little literature on dacoity (armed robbery) in Sindh and Pakistan and whatever current literature is available is mostly written from a historical perspective, so I have to rely on a limited number of particular articles and works. Imdad Sahito wrote his PhD on dacoits, along with a number of separate articles on the issue from which he has compiled a book, 'Decade of dacoits' in 2005. These various accounts provide significant understanding of dacoity (armed robbery) in Sindh. Although I will review other sources as well, my main source of literature will be Imdad Sahito's works. Dacoity (robbery) as a violent crime is an increasing social problem and has not only affected social life of people but also has created law and order problems in Sindh. The word '*dacoity*' was actually '*dakaitee*,' (armed robbery), frequently used during Moghul rule during the 16th century. The people involved in '*dacoity*' or '*dakaitee*' were called 'dacoits' or '*dakoo*' (robbers) (Rahmoon, 1992; Sahito, et al, 2009: 303). According to the Chambers Dictionary (1970), the 'dacoity' is an act carried out by a large number of people or gangs who are hereditary professionals who raid and loot the countryside. Pakistan Penal Code, Section 391, records that "when five or more persons conjointly commit or attempt to commit robbery" they are said to be committing dacoity (Cited in Sahito et al, 2009). Dacoity or robbery involves physical force or threat with the intention of stealing or

taking anything valuable from a person or persons (Curtis, 1973). However, during the course of its commission, assaulting, killing, raping and destroying and burning physical properties such as shops, houses, trains, buses, hospitals, government buildings and police stations and many other sites can occur (Sahito et al., 2009; Malik and Shirazi, 2010).

Dacoity is a violent act that only brings physical harm to people but also causes financial loss and is a continuous threat to society. According to a rough calculation, between the years of 1984 and 1999, dacoits (robbers) kidnapped 11,436 and killed 1,337 people; moreover, they received large sums of money as ransom from the kidnapped people (Sahito, et al, 2009). During 2008, on a same day, two separate incidents of dacoity (robberies) took place in Khairpur, a city in Sindh, in which a landlord was robbed of his cash and jewellery and an owner of an oil company was also robbed of thousands of rupees in broad daylight (Daily Kawish, 28.08.2013). Muhammad Athar Waheed (2010: 139) in his conference paper indicated there had been a significant increase in the incidence of robbery and dacoity. Between the years of 2000 and 2008, there was a high increase as 165% in the robbery cases; while, over the same period there was 246% increase in the dacoity (armed robbery) (see Waheed, 2010: 139). The increasing incidence of dacoity has not only posed a greater challenge to the security of people but also has defined the failure of the police to control criminal activities.

In primary stage, the dacoity violent crime emerged as a resistance to the foreign power and counter strategy against the increasing influence of the government and powerful people. The resistance against official power developed that much that gangs of dacoits/armed robbers were formed in different regions in the Sindh and Pakistan and even in different regions in the India, then the Sub-continent. Moreover, in various historical periods, dacoity has been largely impacted by various social, economic and political factors. Several social historians and social researchers as Sahito et al (2009) and Malik (2008) document that there were many hideouts of criminals who also had gangs of dacoits including gangs of pirates who carried out numerous violent and criminal

activities against foreign invaders. For example, in 325 BC, the army of Alexander the Great, while on the way to attack Sindh was encountered and made to retreat at a place near the Indus River by the Baluch tribes (Smith, 1999; Malik, 2008; Sahito, et al, 2009). Other important historical conflicts of local pirates with foreign Arab invaders had significant impact on the history of Sindh. During early 7<sup>th</sup> century, a caravan of Arabs crossing from the Arabian Sea was looted by the local pirates (robbers) in Sindh (Sahito, et al, 2009). So, in order to gain back the looted and plundered material from the gangs of dacoits/pirates in Sindh, Arabs sent their huge army under the command of Muhammad Bin Qasim. The huge Arab army waged war with the dacoits/pirates and local population in 712 year which resulted in military and political dominance of the Arabs over the local population and area in Sindh (Sahito, et al, 2009; Jatoi, 2009). These and many others, later on, violent conflicts of gangs of dacoits with foreign powers had huge impact on the structural and violent conditions of Sindh.

Various historical evidence provide many glimpses that because of the invasions and violent behaviour of foreign invaders, local people formed many gangs as to provide resistance to them. For example, during Mughal rule (1526-1707), the robbers Badamani Panro and Poojraj became famous when they offered considerable resistance to Mughal rulers and their armies (Rahmoon, 1992; Sahito et al, 2009). Dacoity continued to exist during the British rule of the subcontinent between years of 1857-1946. For instance, some of the robbers from Baluchi tribes from North West Frontier of Sindh looted 20000 camels which were carrying goods for the British Army (Sahito, et al., 2009). Malangi dacoit (robber) in Sindh and many other robbers such as Jabru, Malangi, Nizam Lohar in Punjab were involved in many robberies and were a great challenge to the British rule (Sandhu, 2009). The incidence of dacoits and many other crimes increased to the level that the British government enacted several laws. For example, the Criminal Procedure Code (PPC-1898) and Civil Procedure Code (CPC-1908) were enacted in order to deal with dacoity; in addition, laws, such as, Anti-Dacoity Legislation and the Colonial State of Exception of 1772 were implemented by the British government to control increasing law and order situations and violent incidents in the regions (Singha, 1998: 32; Hussain



and Bagguley, 2005). On the other hand, rebellious movements and resistance against the government also increased. The dacoits who were involved in violent conflicts with government officials and other powerful gained popularity and were appreciated by their local community members and leaders. For example, the dacoits from Chambal region in present India, who were mostly Jats and Gujjar castes, looted several village officers or governors and landlords, and distributed the looted booty amongst the local people, were highly praised for their social and financial help to the poor people (Sahito, et al., 2009). The resistance and violent conflicts gained so much popularity among the village communities that not only males were involved in but also females became involved in such activities against the administration officials and dominant people. The female dacoits, for example, Putli Bai, Phoolan Devi, Seema Parihar and Neelam Gupta were also involved in violent criminal activities during British rule and later after the division of India (Rezvi, 1961; Sahito, et al, 2009).

For emergence and existence of dacoity and violent resistance, there were several factors. The local people, who were extremely poor and worked on agricultural lands, were physically victimised by local authorities, with the result that many revolted and became robbers and criminals. Sahito et al (2009) explain that many village people were subjected to various types of economic and criminal exploitations, for example, during Mughal and British rule, village officers used coercive and violent methods during collection of revenue from the local people. Consequently, many village people killed and looted local government officials like *darogahs* (village revenue officers) and rich people (Dhillon, 1998; Bayly, 2001). Bayly (2001) believes that one of the reasons for the fall of the Mughal empire was the increased resistance and violence offered by the local populations. The behaviour of the Mughals and later the British rulers became so tyrannical that local people and communities rose against them, Marathas waged wars against the Mughals and the Bengalis rose against the British army in 1857 (Bayly, 2001; Pinch, 2006). Later, after the independence of Pakistan, people were continuously exploited by the then rulers. For example, Dictator General Ziaul Haq during his rule of Martial Law, 1978 and 1988, in Pakistan, found Sindhi political party members a threat

to his rule and subjected them to various forms of torture in public, imprisonment and political violence (Sahito et al, 2009). The continuous economic and violent mistreatment and victimisation affected many of the people in such a way that many of them formed and organised criminal gangs including of dacoits as their life-style.

Dacoity thereafter became organised and structured violence. Sahito et al (2009) believe that dacoity had become organised crime in Sindh, further they suggest that a proclaimed dacoit, Ali Dino, known as Tahir Nakhash, who had served for ten years as a commando in the Pakistan Army, was the expert trainer for the dacoits in rural Sindh (Sahito, et al, 2009). Shah (1997:87) also adds that many of 'deserted soldiers' have joined gangs of the dacoits in Sindh. Moreover, Sahito et al (2009) contend that the Kalashnikov, which was introduced first time by dacoits, then by police; and many other weapons like G3 rifles and TT pistols are used by dacoits in the course of their violent activities. Shah (1997) and Sahito et al (2009) add that dacoits have information networks in many of the government and local agencies; this is how, in most cases of raids, before the arrival of police, dacoits escape. The organised criminality and increased incidents of dacoits created a major threat to society. Dacoity violence though, was a reaction to foreign powers and to economic and violent victimisation exploitation but in more recent years, it came to be organised to pose a serious physical and financial threat to society.

### **Honour Killing in Pakistan**

Honour killing is a social, cultural and historical problem in Sindh. This violent criminal act is enacted against those males and females who are found or accused in mutual sexual relations. Both, male and female, involved in sexual relations are violators of social and cultural norms, both of them are destined to be killed by a close male family member (Patel and Gadit, 2008; Phulpoto, 2010; Narejo and Kharal, 2010). Honour killing is carried out in the name of honour. Although, the honour killing refers to the killing of both offenders (male and female), but in recent years females are increasingly subjected to violent killing. The increasing number of violent incidents against women is alarming

situations for the concerned academicians. As, the killing in the name of honour or honour killing has gained popularity as violence against women or gender-based violence in Pakistan and many other countries like the UK (Patel and Gadit, 2008; Phulpoto, 2010; Narejo and Kharal, 2010; Ljungqvist, 2012; Gill and Brah, 2014). There is a vast literature researching and explaining honour killing; however, most of the research is conducted from the perspective of women victims of violence (Gill, 2009; Phulpoto, 2010; Narejo and Kharal, 2010; Lodhi and Siddiqui, 2014). For example, Patel and Gadit (2008), Perveen (2009), Gill (2009), Phulpoto et al (2012), and Lodhi and Siddiqui (2014) examined this problem by reviewing secondary literature on the issue. Narejo and Kharal (2010) looked at it from reports of violence against women which they collected from police stations; and Parveen (2009) examined the issue by reviewing cases of women victims of violence collected by NGOs in Sindh. There is therefore very little understanding developed from the perspective of offenders, how they enact violence against women in the name of honour and under cultural moral values.

Phulpoto (2010) points out that the word 'honour' is derived from the Latin word 'honos, honoris', and in the Pakistan context, the 'honour' refers to the words '*izzat*', '*namoos*' '*ghairat*' though these are Arabic and Persian in origins and can be translated into English as 'reputation', 'fame' and 'name.' Honour killing, as a form of violence, is widely practiced across the country and each province has its own nomenclature. Honour killing is called *Karo-Kari* in Sindh, *Siyah-Kari* in Baluchistan, *Kala-Kali* in Punjab and *Tor-Tora* in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. *Karo*, *Siyah*, *Kala* and *Tor* mean Male Black, while *Kari*, *Kari*, *Kali* and *Tora* mean Female Black. Various agencies in Pakistan provide inconsistent statistics of violence against women. According to the Human Rights Commission of Pakistan (HRCPP, 2004), during 1998 and 2002, 1,464 incidents of honour killing took place in the country, within the same year. However, the Pakistan Government released a figure of 4,101 incident reported during 1998 and 2003 (Patel and Gadit, 2008: 687) while other figures released by police, estimated 4,383 incidents during 2002 and 2004, out of which 2,228 cases were reported in a single province of Pakistan, Sindh (Patel and Gadit, 2008: 687).

Honour killing or honour violence is one of the forms of fatal violence against women which is carried out within the home. Women constituting, 49 percent, of the total population are vulnerable to family violence, rape, murder (honour killing), abduction, and other social discrimination in Pakistan. Child marriage, exchange of girls in marriage, honour killing are the unacceptable practices and features of the culture across the country. Not only women are subjected to violence but children also become victims of violence in homes and in religious schools (Waheed, 2010). Noor (2004) contends that women face various problems in their homes; they are required to sacrifice their life for the sake of husband, children and other male members of the household. In addition, they are subjected to various forms of physical abuse. Some researchers believe that women are an extremely vulnerable group who are increasingly the victims of interpersonal domestic violence like honour killing perpetrated by close family members (Patel and Gadit, 2008; Phulpoto, 2010; Narejo and Kharal, 2010; Dobash and Dobash, 2011; Gill and Brah, 2014). Narejo and Kharal (2010) collected reports of murder crimes against women for the years 2008 and 2010 from some of the police stations in Sindh Province. They found 70% per cent of women were killed by their husbands (Narejo and Kharal, 2010). Likewise, Patel and Gadit (2008) and Gill (2009) contend that most of the cases of murder of women are carried out by their husbands.

Honour violence is also associated with the nature of society and the power dynamics in society. Honour violence against women is a very common practice in highly patriarchal societies, where males enjoy a very dominant role in society. It is part of the power dynamics that women are considered as inferior while males are given importance. Concepts of honour and dishonour are associated with power and force in relationships. As some scholars, for example Black (2011) and Dobash and Dobash (2011) suggest, honour symbolises social status which is not dependent on wealth, leadership or education but on power and force. Force or power is controlled and maintained by men against women. In crimes of honour/honour killing, men acting on claims of 'honour' use physical force and power against women; however the force of man is structurally and culturally justified and approved of. A report on 'Commission of Inquiry for Women' of August 1997 reports that violence against women like slapping, beating, mutilation and

murder is carried out by any male member in domestic life in almost all families of all social classes. Ahmed (1984) and Narejo and Kharal (2010) argue that wife beating and other related violent behaviour acted against wife or any female member in domestic life are commonly practiced in both rural and urban life.

For honour killing to be carried out, there are various factors. Honor killing, Plant (2005) argues, is practiced for a variety of social and cultural reasons and circumstances. Identity and honor of individuals in many cultures is closely associated with the family unit and with each family member. But in male dominated societies, women are particularly expected to behave well, cook food in time and take care of all family members. Any miscarriage and deviance in terms of carrying her liabilities may cause physical and emotional violence responses by male members of the family (Plant, 2005). In extreme cases, a woman may be killed if she is found to have extended any social relationship with other persons. However, all cases of honour killing are not always real that women have been found in sexual relations with others, there are many other reasons which result in occurrences of such cases.

Narejo and Kharal (2010) believe that killing of a woman in the cases of honour-based violence is not always based on the fact that woman was always found involved in sexual relations. However, they argue that killing of a woman can be carried out because of mere suspicion, a lack of trust and the perception of her being immoral. Other researchers, such Bhanbhro et al (2013), argue that women in Sindh are constantly under suspicion by their male members and any deviance on the part of women can lead to violence against them. They further contend that physical violence against a woman or killing can occur if she is found to be standing by a door or glimpsing outside and wearing fancy dresses. Plant (2005) cites the case where a brother killed his sister. He describes that a brother set his sister on fire in a public place, because his family had heard suspicions of her having an improper relationship with a person in the neighbourhood. In male dominated society, some scholars argue (e.g., Patel and Gadit, 2008; Gill and Brah, 2014), any misbehaviour or deviance by a woman, viewed as sexual

or romantic, is taken as causing shame and dishonour to the whole family, the community, caste or even ancestry.

On the other hand, there are other factors which make women vulnerable to violence. Rural ecology contributes to shaping violent behaviour and the attitude of men towards women. As compared to urban women who enjoy status of a professional like doctor or engineer and have many educational and employment opportunities, rural women mostly work in agricultural fields (Malik, 1997; Critelli, 2010). The low economic status and gender vulnerability of women make them victims of violent reaction of men. For example, some researchers (e.g., Husain, 2006; Patel and Gadit, 2008; Lodhi and Siddiqui, 2014) contend that if a man has killed some person in a personal or property dispute, the killer will, then, kill one of his female family members announcing that she had sexual relation with the killed man. Thus, the act of honour killing will serve as a cover-up for him and he will pretend to be a victim rather than an offender. In this respect, however, many cases of honour killing are fake and are acted on to support personal enmity of men against their counter parts.

There are cultural values which support violence against women. Men do not consider women to be of any value, so they can be used for any criminal or personal opportunity. A qualitative study conducted by Zakar et al (2013) in Punjab, based on interviews with men within the age range of 28 to 64 years aims to examine their perceptions about women. The authors found that 22 participants out of 55 refused to talk about women, while the majority of the people who took part in the study opposed the social and economic freedom of women and wanted them to abide by traditional cultural and religious values. Due to the economic status of women, the cultural power relations and ecological characteristics, women in rural areas are vulnerable and easily subjected to violence. Honour killing as a cultural practice has been expedited by the expectations of community. Historical accounts describe that during the Mughal and the British periods in Pakistan, Sindh had experienced high levels of violence in almost all cities and rural areas; honour killing was one of the most dominant forms of violent crime (Nabi and Balcoh, 2012). People were encouraged to be violent against their female partners. Aftab

Nabi and Dost Ali Baloch aptly document and cite Edward Charles Marston, who had an experience of being high police officer in Shikarpur, Hyderabad, Karachi and Deputy Inspector General of police in Sindh in 1897, when he observed that a woman could be killed on a 'flirtatious turn of mind' by her husband (2012: 2).

Moreover, men were expected to be violent to their female members. There were expectations of community members that instigated men becoming reactive against their women, for example, if a husband did not kill his wife involved in a sexual act with another person, he was insulted so much that he had to behave violently. For example, Cheesman (1981) describes how, on 24 December 1900, a case of honour killing was brought before the Jirga in Jacobabad, one of the cities of Sindh. He describes that Dhani Bux Domki, who avoided killing his wife though she was found involved in illicit relations with another person, was so seriously pressured by the neighbours that he eventually had to kill his wife (Nabi and Baloch, 2010:2). During that time severe punishments were given to those who acted violently against female members. Charles Napier, a British Governor at that time announced a punishment of hanging to death of any person who killed his wife. Listening to this announcement, a local chief of Baluchi tribe reacted surprisingly, "What! Hang him! He only killed his wife." (Nabi and Baloch, 2010: 5; see also, Panhwar, 2009). Killing a wife or woman was accepted behaviour and was widely practiced without guilt or regret. Napier noted, "a slave or a woman here is murdered as readily as a cook kills a chicken" (Nabi and Baloch, 2010: 5). Social, historical and cultural factors affect the behaviour of people in relation to violence against women.

## **Conclusions**

This chapter provided the understanding of violence in Sindh and Pakistani society. By reviewing a variety and various types of violent crimes and social problems, it seems violence and violent crime is highly and significantly motivated by structural anomalies and social structural disorganised conditions. This Chapter has discussed various forms of violence like ethnic conflicts, dacoity, robbery and murder, and argues they are impacted by historical and present disorganisations in economic and political structures. Violent

crime is a serious and ever increasing problem which has not been theoretically explained and understood and methodologically analysed. Therefore, academic criminological negligence in the theoretical analysis of this serious violent issue in Sindh and Pakistan does not provide proper explanations and understandings about it. In addition, no explanation and analysis has been gained from the perspective of perpetrators of violence that how they describe, explain and rationalise their violent behaviour.

A small amount of research, albeit not from a criminological perspective, explains that violent crime such as murder, violent assault, kidnapping, robbery and honour killing is structural problem Sindh and Pakistan. It has continuously been a cause of physical, psychological, economic and cultural damage to human life. Structural conditions like low levels of economic opportunities, limited opportunities for education and employment and the violent attitude of communities influence the life structure of the people. Moreover, such disadvantaged communities place a high value on their cultural values and beliefs. Rural structure therefore contributes significantly to creating the probability of violent interactions between social groups. In addition, the criminal justice system and feudal system, in attempting to resolve the criminal problems of the people, enhance the frustrations and violent attitudes of people. Studies including quantitative and qualitative argue that poor people are increasingly involved in violence in rural and urban areas. However, rural engagement of the communities in violent acts is being motivated by their by local cultural and structural influences. For example, rural communities whose life depends on agricultural products mostly react violently if they encounter any damage or threat to their physical and agricultural resources, like land for example.

In contrast to this structure of rural communities, urban areas which are highly populated with different ethnic, political and religious groups, engage in violence for their identity and survival. Urban areas are also disadvantaged in terms of having low levels of economic and social life, but the ethnic and political rivalries and differences between different social groups trigger violent interactions. People engage in acts of homicide to take revenge for the offences done to their ethnic, political and religious identities.



Despite such debates and arguments, there is no established theoretical knowledge or theories through which violence, violent crime and violent behaviour may be understood and explained. However, limited and a small number of studies create doubts about how to understand such problems and a significant gap remains. There is a need to explore violence and its causes from the viewpoints and explanations of those who engage in violent activities. The overall picture of violent crime suggests that poor economic conditions, political instability, and cultural and religious values contribute to creating the probability of violent conflicts. Moreover, corrupt political and criminal justice system have been continuous underlying factors of violence in Sindh Province and Pakistan more generally.

As seen in Chapter One, recent criminological research on violence focuses on studying violent offenders incarcerated in prison with an objective of knowing from them how they explain their lived experiences and view their violent activities. The researchers believe that by examining explanations and narrative accounts of imprisoned criminals, there can be a substantial learned body of knowledge about violence. Chapter One provided theoretical understanding of violence in European and Western context. The Chapter provided comparative analysis of factors of violence. Although the Western researchers have provided significant reasons about the problem, but within the circles of researchers there is less agreement on what specific underlying reasons influence violence. Nevertheless, there is strong evidence as reviewed above that violent behaviour is susceptible to social, economic and political disorganised conditions in a given society. As some researchers above cited argue poverty, unemployment, illiteracy and structural conditions within urban and rural communities influence violent behaviour of people. In addition, absence or weak criminal justice creates chances for individuals to engage in violent activities.

Some other scholars do not agree with these findings and present their arguments that violence may better be understood in certain situations and social interactions. They argue complex interaction of criminal and victim and other influential elements determine violent conflicts and results. They content that past experiences like strained,

victimised and deprived life structure of offender, reaction and actions of victims/opponent and absence of potential threat of police and presence of weapons, all influence violence to take place. Yet, some researchers debate against those reasons and believe that cultural values and moral beliefs within certain communities and social groups determine aggressive and conflicting behaviour of people. They develop their arguments by believing that cultural or subcultural values influence violence. They contend that certain communities and social groups develop antagonistic sense and rationalised values by which they see their violent acts as justified and neutralised. Thus, their violent acts without suppressed by positive moral values and attitudes emerge in conflict with other social groups.

These various arguments on their own indicate influential and dominant factors of violence. However, these factors and explanations of violence suggested by Western scholars and research may not be translatable to understand violence in the Pakistani social context. Moreover, such factors of violence are not explored from a qualitative examination of offenders' views and explanations but by use of statistical sources like the unemployment rate, arrest rate and victimised reports on homicide especially in urban areas. Limited and foreign explanations on theoretical levels suggested by European and Western research may not be appropriate analyse violence in the social context of Pakistan. There is therefore significant gap and need of understanding violent crime and violent behaviour in Pakistan especially from the point of views of the perpetrators of violence. On the hand, there is paucity of criminological theoretical and methodological understanding on violence in Pakistan. Lack of interests of academic criminologists, educational institutions and non-serious bureaucratic policies has widely and seriously impacted development of literature on violence. In the result, there is no proper and scientific body of literature providing accurate and sensible meanings and explanations about the social problem. Moreover, whatever literature is available suffers from poor quality of theoretical framework and methodological applications. Consequently, there is no theory developed to see violence from certain and defined perspectives. So far, available literature on homicide and violence indicates that high poverty, low sources of

economic and social opportunities and political instabilities and corrupt social and legal institutions influence violent reactive and revengeful behaviour of people. The literature finds more than half of the population living in rural areas characterised with meager sources of social and economic benefits largely involve in murder, kidnapping, violent assault and honour killings. However, culture in rural areas significantly shapes violent interactions between economically deprived social groups. Placing high importance on honour values and masculinity and getting to be reactive and revengeful on land issues and family deviance issues, explain the violent culture of rural areas.

On the other hand, urban structure shaped by political and ethnic diversity and differences motivate individuals to be reactive and revengeful against their opposite ethnic and political groups. Resultantly, there is a high level of killings and homicide rate within urban communities. All these findings and conclusions significantly suggest there are no writ of law and no proper policies of social and criminal institutions to deal with criminal elements in society. Moreover, corruption prevalent in almost all social and legal organisations disturbs structural performance and disposition of justice to poor and deserving people. These understandings are not developed explicitly from views of those involved in various violent activities in Pakistan. However, there is high need of confirming and exploring various social indicators of violence in Pakistan. Paucity of literature and poor quality of available literature may not be relied on to gain scientific understanding of the problem in hand. In the scenario of criminological understanding of violence in Pakistan, there is no prisoner-based research examining lived experiences and biographical narrative accounts of the prisoners convicted of violent offences. This study fills in the gap by benefiting from a qualitative approach best suited to explore the under-researched violent offending behaviour by examining lived experiences of prisoners convicted of violent offences in Pakistan. This study therefore attempts to find answers about how and why of violence and violent crime by studying how violent offenders present themselves in Pakistani context. This research also aims to generate understandings of violence and violent crime in Pakistani context.

## **Chapter Three**

### **Prisoner-based research**

Chapter One and Two provided a critical theoretical understanding of violent crime that it is not motivated by a single factor but a variety of factors ranging from various socioeconomic conditions, cultural values and situational factors. Despite the volume of research, there is less agreement among criminologists and various researchers about what factors specifically influence violence. However, there is methodological issue when measuring the problem. In Chapter One, the Western literature discussed on violence has frequently used quantitative methods to understand the factors of violence. The majority of the quantitative studies on the other hand did not explore the problem from the viewpoints of the criminals involved in violent offending activities. Not having theoretical agreement on what violence is and use of qualitative methods to learn from the perpetrators of violent activities creates a significant gap in proper understanding of violent behaviour.

The Chapter Two attempted to explain violence in the Pakistani context. The literature reviewed in this chapter indicates there is a lack of scientific criminological explanation about violence; however, the low level of literature generated on this serious issue is because of the low interest of academics including educational institutions, policy makers and government. The reviewed literature on violence describes violent crimes such as murder, kidnapping, violent assault and robbery as common phenomenon while murder violent crime is ever increasing. People not finding criminal justice system as fair and responsive come forward to settle their social and criminal problems on their own through violent means. Most of the murder and violent conflicts are enacted because of the rural problems like land, property issues and sexual deviance of women. However, despite such learnings from the literature, it was felt that there is insufficient theoretical criminological understanding, improper use of research methods and very limited use of prisoner based research to clearly provide explanations about violent crimes in Pakistan. The lacks of

theoretical and methodological learning leave much room to properly explain and understand violence in the Pakistani context.

In this chapter, I want to comprehend how and what I can learn from the best possible source of information on violence. This comprehension can be developed however by studying violent offenders particularly incarcerated criminals by analysing their life experiences and explanations and descriptions about acted on violent activities. So this chapter focuses on the importance of violent offenders and their narratives. In brief, the chapter will highlight how a researcher can engage in prison-based research, how and what kinds of information a researcher can collect from prisoners and what ethical problems a researcher can face during meeting them.

Violent offenders are potential source of information on violence. Knowledge gained from them about their social problems and experiences of violent activities can be helpful to understand violence and its underlying reasons. Although there are many other sources of information about violence, nevertheless many of them suffer from authenticity and reliability. Data about crime and violence can be collected from various sources such as criminals, victim reports, official statistics of crime, like survey reports, and police and courts records of criminals and crimes (Bernasco, 2010). However, many of these do not provide accurate data, because many of them suffer from “weaknesses” in their reliability and suitability (Ferguson, 2012: 11; see also Presser, 2009). For instance, police records do not provide accurate numbers of the occurrence of crimes, since many people tend not to report every criminal activity to the police; for example, many incidents of violence against women (honour killings) and children are not usually brought to the notice of police (Kanwar, 1989; Ferguson, 2012). In addition, most surveys based on gaining answers such as ‘true and false’ about views on fear of crime often do not represent exact experiences of people, since different individuals have different experiences of fears of crimes. Thus, the nature of crime and criminals remains ambiguous (Ferguson, 2012:12) and information collected from these sources may lead to pitfalls in the analytical understanding of crime and violence.

However, criminologists who do not rely on such materials suggest other sources of information. In recent years, many criminologists and sociologists suggest studying of criminals incarcerated in prisons (e.g., Presser, 2004; Schlosser, 2008; Hochstetler et al., 2010; Brookman et al., 2011; Ugelvik, 2012; Copes et al., 2014; Crewe, 2014; Earle, 2014). However, some criminologists and researchers still believe that despite much research conducted in prison, prisoner-based research does not “constitute a large body” of qualitative criminological research (Jupp et al., 2000:231, also see Bernasco, 2010). In addition, other researchers believe that comparatively less understanding is developed from the key informants, convicted prisoners (see Nee, 2004; Bernasco, 2010). However, less attention is paid to the exploration of how incarcerated violent offenders describe, evaluate and justify their violent offending behaviour. Such suggestions indicate that prisoner-based research and prisoners incarcerated in prisons can be a potential source of information on violence.

### **Prisoner-based research and understanding of violence**

Prison research has contributed much to the theoretical and methodological developments and understanding of various criminological issues on scientific manner. Prison as a motivation of criminological research has attracted criminologists for years around the world (Cohen and Taylor, 1972; Liebling, 1992, 1999; Beckford, 2005; Crewe, 2006; Quraishi, 2008; Roberts and Indermaur, 2008; Schlosser, 2008). On the other, the prison as a field of research has contributed much to the understanding of issues of crime and violence and there has been a vast body of prison research. There are vast numbers of problems studied within the prison environment in the advanced nations like the UK, America and other nations. For instance, researches have been conducted to study various problems like suicide in the UK prisons (Liebling, 1992); dealings of drugs in the UK prisons (Crewe, 2006); treatment of Muslim prisoners within French and Britain prisons (Beckford, 2005); significance of male prisoners as a potential source of information for men researchers in the British prisons (Cowburn, 2007); treatment of Muslim prisoners by

the fellow prisoners and staff within the prisons in the non- Muslim countries such as France and Britain (Quraishi, 2008); issue of residential burglary by analysing autobiographical accounts of incarcerated offenders (Nee, 2010) and; examination of methodological issues when researching prisoners, in the Columbian prisons (Schlosser, 2008). On the other hand, limited Pakistani prison research also has contributed to the understanding of social problems, for instance, evaluation of social and cultural problems by studying acts of homicides in Pakistani prisons (Kanwar, 1989; Hashmi, et al., 2000). In addition, by using quantitative and qualitative research strategies, several prison researchers (e.g., Goffmann, 1968) have traditionally been interested in knowing distinctive characteristics of prison culture and some (e.g., Morgan, 2002) have collected accounts of prisoners about their pre- and post- experiences of social, political and violent conditions about outside of prison.

However, the researchers interested in prison field also have encountered various ethical and methodological problems within prison environment while researching prisoners. For example, Liebling and Stanko (2001) came across several problems in prisons. They (Liebling and Stanko, 2001) identified that research on violence is essentially saturated with 'squalid politics and ethical predicaments' (p.421). They equally believe that objectivity while studying prisoners has somehow negotiated and subsided in theoretical criminological debate, however, much involvement of subjective 'political allegiance' is widely used by criminologists in prison research fields and studying prisoner subjects (Cowburn, 2007: 277). On the other hand, the researchers may equally and inevitably encounter 'the emotional and methodological dilemmas in managing allegiances and alliances' when researching prisoners of violent offences (Liebling and Stanko, 2001; Cowburn, 2007: 277). Harding (1991) in her critical analysis of the natural science paradigm believes that the objectivity in social science research is mainly influenced by the unidentified and unacknowledged perceptions and viewpoints of the research men subjects belonging to the middle-class population. In this context, she acknowledges that the objectivity would possibly be 'weak' because 'specific cultural location' of the

informant subjects would contribute essentially in 'the production of knowledge' on violence (Cowburn, 2007: 277).

Other correspondingly important issues are of theoretical and methodological analysis of the social information. Several researchers and scholars have provided their ideas and suggestions that produced knowledge on crime is significantly subjective. Some researchers for example, Hearn (1998), suggest that as most of the social theories are written by men scholars, so many of those scholars, most of the time, forget that their gender-based 'preconceptions or prejudices' also influence and shape the theoretical knowledge on social issues. Some other prison-based researchers, such as Muzammil Quraishi (2008), also have suggested that identity of a researcher for instance as being Muslim and having almost same ethnic, religious and language characteristics with prisoners can influence the theoretical and methodological analysis of cultural and religious understanding in prisons. Subjective and biographical background of researchers in this way contributes much to the prisoner-based research output. In addition, the biographical resemblance like language, religion, gender and the decision of selection of area research play significant role in establishing rapport with the prison respondents and analysis of qualitative data (Martin, 2002, Quraishi, 2008).

Involving incarcerated violent offenders in research is called offender or prisoner-based research (Bernasco, 2010). Literature on prisoner-based research suggests that prisons can be both easy and difficult places for research. A prison is a controlled environment (Waldram, 2009), in terms of its political and cultural nature. However, different researchers, according to their experiences, view prison in different ways. Sidney and Beatrice Webb knew prison houses dangerous populations but according to the popular media representation, it is presented as "holiday camps" in the UK (Cited in Jupp et al., 2000: 216), while in the United States, it is considered a place of "rights and wrongs of capital punishment" (King and Wincup, 2008:308). By looking at these varying views, it can be said that prison may be a difficult and easy place for research. However, Roy D. King, who is regarded as a renowned expert on prison research, believes that all



experiences in prisons depend on the “luck and determination” of researchers and the prison research culture (Jupp, et al, 2000: 216; see also King and Wincup, 2008). Prison, therefore, may present different experiences to different researchers in different places. Prison houses dangerous criminals, so entering a prison may not be an easy task for researchers. Since prisoners are potentially dangerous, so prison administration does not easily allow outsiders to enter. In such conditions and prison rules, those interested in entering prison and meeting prisoners may face various administrative and ethical problems related to gaining approval. Ethics standards prescribed by social sciences and prison-based research, divide these issues into procedural and ethical domains (Creswell, 2003; Creswell and Clark 2007; Waldram, 2009). The prison-based research therefore sets procedural and ethical standards that every researcher has to follow.

There are certain rules and ethical standards that every researcher has to follow; these are given below. Literature related to prison and prisoners warns of many practical issues and ethical problems with methodological consequences (Wright and Decker, 1994; Jacobs, 2000). Prison research stresses meeting all necessary procedural requirements including gaining approval from permitting authorities (gatekeepers) and following ethical measures such as motivating and bringing in confidence the inmates to talk (Wilson, J. Z, 2008: 416; see also Roberts and Indermaur, 2008; Roberts and Indermaur, 2008; Earle, 2014). Gatekeepers may be many; they are concerned with prison administration and include directors of a prison, inspector general of prisons and many others who can play a role in allowing a researcher to meet prisoners (Kanwar, 1989; Roberts and Indermaur, 2008; Quraishi, 2008). A prison researcher is ethically, practically and methodologically bound to cooperate with these permitting agencies. Therefore, they are ethically and morally required to inform the permitting authorities about their research objectives, questions and research participants. If these formalities are not fulfilled, there is a strong possibility that the research may be rejected or suffer from inevitable difficulties (Stalker, 1998:8; Roberts and Indermaur, 2008; Roberts and Indermaur, 2008). Gaining permission from a prison authority to enter prison does not mean that prisoners would comply with the researcher (Stalker, 1998). Prisoners are free in their choice of talking and withdrawal, so they should

be treated honestly and ethically according to the set principles. When prisoners are free and ethically motivated to talk to prison researcher, they reveal their lived experiences, past committed criminal and violent activities and the social conditions they went through. A prison researcher has a good opportunity to collect their explanations about prisoners lived experiences. Prisoner participants provide various narratives on violence through they explain their social and violent life.

### **Interview methods and violent offenders' accounts of violence**

In a qualitative inquiry, interviewing is a highly appreciated method and is used for data collection. Interviewing method collects actions, perceptions and viewpoints of the people being interviewed. Narratives Information from violent offenders can be gained through asking them about their life experiences. In social research, this method of asking questions and receiving answers is commonly known as an interview (Marvasti, 2003). In recent qualitative research, the interview method is widely popular and used for qualitative data collection (Polkinghorne, 1988; Brookman, 2000; Elliott, 2005; Patton, 2005; Legard, et al., 2003; Maruna and Matravers, 2007; Wood, 2007; Seidman, 2013). Qualitative interview elicits narratives, however, the process of interviewing is a revolutionary development which can elicit both detailed and broad informative statements, experiences and the viewpoints of research participants (see Denzin and Lincoln, 1998; Brookman, 2000; Elliott, 2005; Maruna and Matravers, 2007; Wood, 2007). Narratives gained through interviews provide massive ideas about the interviewee and their actions and perceptions.

Narrative information collected through interview stores the retrospective expression of human behaviour-both, actions and thinking patterns. Individuals explain themselves through the careful selection of words describing potentially significant events and actions in their life. Narrative accounts are a careful “depiction of a sequence of past events as they appear in present time to the narrator, after they have been processed, analysed and constructed into stories. This notion of depiction *is of vital importance; narratives are not*

*records of events, they are representation of series of events.*” (Matthews and Ross, 2010: 387. *Italic in original*). Richardson believes that “if we wish to use our privileges and skills to empower the people we study, then we should value the narrative” (Richardson, 1997, p. 35), and many others, for example, Hollway and Jefferson (1997) hold the same ideas. Narrative information from violent offenders discloses the building blocks of their violent life and opens the window of understanding their life activities. Factually, by examining the potentiality of narratives of violent offenders, a criminologist may be able to locate the offenders’ position as victim or offender and their perspective on their criminal activity and criminal responsibility.

From the narratives of violent offenders, we can learn their explanations about their committed crimes and we can also learn whether they blame themselves and/or others for their acts. However, there seems to have been a shift in narratives of violent offenders in Western culture. Possibly because of the change in criminal justice practices that in the past some prisoners did not blame themselves for their criminal acts so they resented being in prison. In contrast, in more recent research, prisoners blame themselves and also society for their criminal acts and feel they deserve punishment. For instance, a prisoner researcher, Robert C. Sorensen, a long time ago claimed, that, “the vast majority of inmates are convinced that they need not be in prison” (Sorensen, 1950:180). According to this claim, prisoners did not find their punishment justified and blamed the justice system as unfair. Sorensen further believed that a “prisoner has the greatest inclination to blame some other thing or person for his present position” (Sorensen, 1950:180). When the justice system is believed to be unfair, blame is often put on others.

Contrary to this narrative, recent research reveals different results. Lois Presser (2008:88) found that prisoners convicted of violent crimes often feel safe in prison but blame society (“Oh yeah, there’s a lot of weirdos out there! (Laughing). Between all the weirdos and all of the diseases going around, I feel safe in prison!”). Some researchers, for example Thomas Ugelvik (2012), while examining prisoners’ experiences of imprisonment found that some inmates accept their criminal responsibility and feel regret, or they feel they

deserve worse (“I deserve much worse”). In Ugelvik’s study, prisoners are not convicted but are suspected, they are sure to be released soon, so their narrative of acceptance of crime and punishment may not be a serious result. However, it is clear from the narratives of other offenders that they have faith in criminal justice, while they blame society and blame themselves for their actions. Narratives of offenders are affected by different times, locations and social problems, and the performances of social institutions.

Violent offenders present different reasons as justifications of their committed violent acts. They usually make others accountable and responsible of their culpability and criminality. Such attributions and blaming strategies are “modes of reasoning” through which the offenders justify their actions (Fraser, 2004:180). Ugelvik (2010) attribute such reasoning patterns to social conditions and culture. Offenders come from the same culture as others, so their sharing of experiences represents others views too, Gubrium and Holstein (2002:4) call this common sharing of experiences "the democratization of opinions." Marvasti (2003:15) further explains this point by arguing that social researchers "use random respondents for their research because they assume every person's opinion of the world is valid and that the sum of these views paints a reasonably complete picture of social reality." Selection of random or purposive samples depends on research objectives. But importantly, qualitative criminologists rely on informants “with insiders’ knowledge about the topic” (Marvasti, 2003:16), as incarcerated violent offenders, rather than collecting information from other sources.

Narratives represent a variety of influences which include social, cultural, political legal structural factors in a given society. Criminologists attempt to understand the narratives of offenders to understand such factors. Traditionally and currently, criminologists are interested in offender’s narratives as a means to find out the “pathways” of their offending behaviour (Bennett, 1988:82): however, the paths of their criminality are located in their lived social problems (See Presser, 2004). Prison-based researchers examine narratives of prisoners to gain access to understanding why prisoners became involved in various criminal and violent activities. Various social researchers including criminologists have

collected the divergent and diverse kind of information about violent offenders. For example, Thomas Ugelvik, a Norwegian criminologist, studies prisoners and their narratives, and believes narrations display a “certain social-cultural context” (Ugelvik, 2012: 261). It means, from his perspective, that narratives reflect the relative social and cultural context. For this reason many criminologists, psychologists and narrative researchers pay attention to how offenders portray their violent life and narrate crime stories, and how they construct meanings through their speaking styles. Dan P. McAdams, an American psychologist (McAdams, 1999), interested in ‘the psychology of life stories,’ believes, as Maruna and Copes comment that selection of the life events and incidents talk much about the psychology, personality and identity or self of people equally in the same way these reveal about the experienced and perceived structural conditions (Maruna and Copes, 2004:222; see McAdams, 1999). In other words, selected narrative sentences and life stories express personal characteristics, and the social and cultural conditions in which individuals live. It means the narrative expression presented by an individual is not only a representation of his or her-self but also of his or her society, culture and the structural conditions, he or she lives in.

Many scholars believe that narrative is a projection of self and others as well. For instance, an autobiographer’s potential experiences are mainly related with their and other’s life histories and events (Bruner, 2001). In this sense, autobiographical accounts are a revelation of self and of others too, and those others can be people and their activities and the social conditions which emerge in conflict with offenders. An individual places and sees his experiences, observations and arguments from his own perspective and at the same time in conflict with others; this is how an individual in a certain conflicting position explains his status. Therefore, the identity and perspective of a speaker can be seen in cultural forces of conflict, opposition and resistance.

Narratives of violence are generated from conflicting situations- situations of being victim and offender, situations of being marginalised and privileged and situations of being powerless and powerful. The narratives generated from such conflicting and contradicting

conditions are a challenge for a criminologist when he examines the position of the offender, either as a victim or as an offender. Some scholars present a conflicting situation that depicts the positions of two individuals and their resultant behaviour. Gerald Prince (Prince, 1982, cited in O'Connor, 2000:4) presents a conflicting example. "The cat sat on the dog's mat", "Thus, the dog attacked the cat". These two narrative sentences explain a victim and offender relationship and exploitation of one's (dog's) social rights and its resultant violent behaviour against the other (cat). However, physically, a dog is more powerful than a cat, so, in this situation, a dog could respond violently by attacking the cat. That is natural. Nevertheless, the conflict can be more powerful and expressive when a cat attacks a dog. This is a reverse situation from the previous one. A proposed narrative may be, 'a dog sits on the mat of a cat. Thus the cat attacks the dog'. This situation and narrative describes conflict and resultant behaviour more clearly, and this situation may be understood in relation to a society and culture where structural conditions and powerful classes encroach upon the social rights of the poor/powerless, with the result that the poor/powerless attack the rich/powerful individuals by reacting violently. Different experiences and social situations influence individuals; therefore, the construction of narratives may not be the same across cultures but differ in construction and the way meanings are constructed through them. Meaning making is an art of careful selection of words and phrases, through which cultural and distinctive senses can be constructed. Offenders use distinctive language styles to explain violent offenders' experiences, identity and position.

### **Violent offenders' neutralisation of violence**

Violent offenders make sense of their violence by narrating their social life practices and experiences of committed violent activities and victimisations. However, for their committed violent acts, they provide various justifications by presenting various social problems and victimisations. Justifications and rationalisations for morally offensive behaviour by offenders are presented through methods and techniques of language. Offenders though come from same culture and social background as non-offenders, but

they separate themselves from the conventional social order and rules by being unconventional and breaking the norms and rules of society and community. Sykes and Matza (1957), who investigated the problem of delinquency, believe delinquents and non-delinquents have same conventional values, and beliefs. Nevertheless, the delinquents significantly opt to neutralise and rationalise their morally wrong behaviour as compare to non-delinquents. Justifications and rationalisations that Sykes and Matza claim, are the 'techniques of neutralisation' which an offender or delinquent uses to facilitate or justify their offensive conduct. According to Ugelvik, violent offenders are "morally conscious individuals" (Ugelvik, 2012: 272), they use certain means of satisfying their ego which can protect them from the pinch of guilty feelings arising as result of their dangerous and violent activities. Further to say, Sykes and Matza, in their breakthrough article, "Techniques of neutralisation," argue that deviants and criminals hold "more or less" the same norms and moral values as of other people belonging to the mainstream cultural norms. However, deviants and criminals formulate justifications for their criminal acts. More or less conformative values psychologically disturb criminals, thus they swing from one way to another, creating justifications and excuse making techniques, which altogether serve to blame 'others'.

The techniques of neutralisation is believed to serve social and psychological purposes for the wrong doers or criminals. As, Sykes and Matza believe, "much delinquency is based on what is essentially an unrecognised extension of defenses to crimes, in the form of justifications for deviance that are seen as valid by the delinquent but not by the legal system or society at large" (1957, p. 666). Maruna and Copes (2004:10) also argue that by developing and constructing the techniques, the criminals protect their "self-image." Criminals' arguments and acts may not necessarily represent the collective social norms of society and the legal system. However, still being committed to conformist norms and social conditions, they temporarily define and justify them as unimportant, inappropriate and wrong. Therefore, morally wrong and violent behaviour, resulting from the "combination of opportunity and neutralisation" and "without requiring an antisocial

personality or the existence of psychological problems” seem to be justified for the criminal and violent offenders (Froggio et, al., 2009: 77).

The theory of neutralisation developed by Sykes and Matza is based on five techniques: 1) denial of responsibility ("I didn't mean it"), 2) denial of injury ("I didn't really hurt anybody"), 3) denial of the victim ("they had it coming to them"), 4) condemnation of the condemners ("everybody's picking on me"), 5) and appeal to higher loyalties ("I didn't do it for myself") (Agnew, 1994:556, also see Maruna and Copes, 2004). This theory of five components dealing with five linguistic devices is widely used in understanding deviant, criminal and violent human behaviour.

Each technique is explained as follows.

1. Denial of responsibility: “the delinquent will declare that he/she is a victim of circumstances (‘It wasn’t my fault!’) (Froggio, et al., 2009: 77). This technique is used by the offenders, though they believe they have involved in criminal and violent acts but the reasons which they motivated them to involve in crime are beyond of their control and for their acts they do not consider themselves as responsible and guilty (Stadler and Benson, 2012). However, the reasons as justifications of their criminal acts they provide may include their social conditions or their being as victim of social and criminal conditions (Froggio, et al, 2009; Stadler and Benson, 2012) and subcultural conditions (Matza and Sykes, 1961). This technique relates to a denial of “extent of harm or injury caused” by an offender (Maruna and Copes, 2004). The seriousness of a crime can be ascertained and evaluated by the intentions of the actor or the physical appearance of the victim, but if an offender believes that the criminal act or victim deserved it to happen like this or deserved to be treated like this, the sensitivity of the act or victim is reduced to zero. They may believe that their act could be wrong, but in some conditions, for instance honour killing situations- where the wife of a person was found or seen in a questionable situation with another person- it was appropriate to act on killing the woman. Offenders can “define their own actions as a form of rightful retaliation or punishment; thereby claiming the victim does not deserve victim status” (Maruna and Copes, 2005: 12). In addition, another



example, some robbers construct their attack on drug dealers as “righteous retribution for the destruction dealers wrought on persons and entire communities by hawking their evil wares” (Jacobs, 2000, p. 33). Thus, the offenders are not responsible, as they present, for their acts but the social conditions and the persons who motivated them to involve in their offending behaviour.

2. Denial of the injury: “the delinquent believes that his/her acts do not really cause any harm, or that the victim can afford the loss or damage (‘Why is everyone making a big deal about it? They have enough money!’) (Froggio, et al, 2009: 77). This technique, on the other hand, indicates that though an offender believes his engagement in criminal act but justifies his act did not produce any harm to others or the harm was less serious or significant. The offender may deny the victim of his act and may present his narratives that no one was truly harmed or he may assume that victim deserved whatever he has experienced in the criminal act of the offender. This technique is used by offenders in some crimes in which victim is absent, unknown, or abstract” (Maruna and Copes, 2004:13). The offenders involved in property crimes, for instance, theft, where the victim is not present (according to the offenders), usually use this kind of technique. This shows an absence of moral code among property offenders, who do not necessarily feel their theft act can harmful for anyone so they claim their act as “victimless” and deflect their sense of criminal association. For example, Ugelvik (2012) collected observations and narratives of prisoners in Norwegian prisons. He concluded that many of the prisoners, especially those involved in drug dealing and stealing, narrated their crimes as a “victimless kind” though they had imaginary victims but did not necessarily feel they had hurt or damaged anyone anyway, not even on moral grounds. On the other hand, Presser (2004) believes that violent offenders describe themselves as “morally conscious individuals” (Ugelvik, 2012: 272). It means various different offenders exercise different qualities of neutralisation techniques to suggest that a violent offender may or may not be a morally conscious individual.

3. Denial of victim: “the delinquent considers the act as not wrong, since the victim deserves the injury, or affirms that there is no real victim (‘They had it coming to them!’) (Froggio, et al, 2009: 77). The denial of injury and denial of victim are almost similar and are used in similar manner by offenders (Maruna and Copes, 2005). When offenders deny their victims they also deny the injury caused by acts, Maruna and Copes (2005) explain some criminals such as involved in auto theft only steal things from rich people because they believe the rich people will not suffer from significant loss from their stolen things. Understanding of this technique may be gained from the findings given by some researchers who describe that minor offenders exercise this technique. Robert G Morris and Heith Copes “culled from one cohort of respondents to the Denver Youth Survey,” the data which were analysed through means and standard deviation, and the youths were interviewed at different times of interviews (Morris and Copes, 2012). They found techniques of neutralisation strongly related to minor offenders involved in lying and truancy but not violence. Other researchers such as Mitchel and Dodder (1980) also found similar results. It can be concluded that as “the seriousness of the crime increases, the effectiveness of neutralisation acceptance at explaining crime decreases” (Morris and Copes, 2012: 13). In addition, some researchers such as Morris and Copes (2012:13) found the denial of the victim and the appeal to higher loyalties were used as techniques by the minor offenders. They further observed that neutralizing attitudes remain modestly stable across ages from 13 through to 18. However, denial of the victim can also be understood as implying that offenders do not recognise their victims.
4. The condemnation of the condemner: This is a technique used by offenders to accuse others of being an instigator of crime. The instigators can further be distinguished as hypocrites or individuals who disapprove or label others as criminal, and who are “deviants in disguise” and who are “impelled by personal spite” (Sykes and Matza 1957: p. 668). These kinds of individuals are condemned; in addition, offenders may accuse the police, criminal justice system, rich or feudal lords or any authority as being influential. That authority may be real or perceived. For example, Presser (2004:87) collected the narratives of convicted violent offenders, and one of the violent offenders in her study

explained his violence was instigated by a devil (“Um, I guess—ya know—like the devil was tempting me”). In a similar vein, serial killers possess that quality of attributing their violent act to being tempted and instigated by the devil, Satan, or some other supernatural power.

5. Appeal to higher loyalties: This is fifth and final technique that is used to deal with neutralise “internal and external control” (Maruna and Copes, 2005: 13; Copes and Williams, 2007) by claiming that the behaviour of the offenders is morally right and is consistent with the mainstream social and cultural values. By using this technique, offenders value others’ actions and make them a precedent and example for their own crimes. This technique also provides justification for crime that offenders claim to have committed for the “benefit of their stockholders and for the financial stability of their families” (Maruna and Copes, 2005: 13). It seems justifications given for the involvement in criminal acts will serve as defense against the social, economic and legal losses. Offenders therefore rationalise and neutralise their internal and external influences, and construct justification of their offences by claiming their behaviour as in agreement with moral values and obligations of a particular social groups or community or culture (Maruna and Copes, 2005). Without rejecting conventional norms and values in society, offenders give more values and importance to their conduct norms and group behaviour, Maruna and Copes (2005) explain that such belief system and justifications are usually constructed by the members of gangs whose loyalty and faithfulness remain with the groups of gangs. For example, corporate offenders justify their criminal embezzlement by narrating their actions as being for achieving “higher” goals for the benefit of the stockholders and monetary improvement of their family (Maruna and Copes, 2005).

However, such arguments, arguably, can be generated from the cultural values that criminals may submit their killings and murder they conducted were for the sake of their safety and honour for of their family and community, for example, killing one’s wife in the name of honour may gain lost honour to him and his family (Kanwar, 1989). But if we believe that criminals are equally part of mainstream culture and share the same cultural values and beliefs; then what makes them develop and construct criminal justifications?

The theory comprising of five techniques of neutralisation has been widely seen as relevant to understanding justifications and rationalisations given by various criminal and violent offenders for their committed wrong acts. Therefore, this has been studied by many researchers including prisoner-based researchers, sociologists and criminologists (e.g, Minor, 1981; Conklin, 1992; Akers, 1985; Agnew, 1994; Brookman, 2000; Maruna and Copes, 2005; Ugelvik, 2010; Presser, 2002). Many researchers find this theory of neutralisation as a way whereby individuals talk about their criminal acts. For example, after analysing the psychological utility of the techniques of neutralisation and believing them as “psychological techniques,” Curt R. Bartol and Anne M. Bartol (2014) describe these techniques as basically representative of “different levels of moral rationalisations” for the people who involve misconduct and illegal acts (2014: 425). The psychologist scholars further (Bartol and Bartol, 2014: 427) believe that people use such techniques as to neutralise their conscience or “inner protest” to suppress their guilt which arise from their committed deviant, wrong and illegal acts.

In the course of justification of commission of property offences, criminals construct vocabularies as helping them rationalise their wrong and illegal acts. Some other researchers, for example, Tonglet (2001) find a majority of the criminals involved in shoplifting does not consider their shoplifting crime as morally wrong and many of them do not generally have much guilt about their committed criminal act. And other researchers such as Cromwell and Thurman (2003) found many of the shoplifters used nine such techniques. They (Cromwell and Thurman, 2003) observed that 132 out of 137 shoplifters used these techniques to justify their theft conduct, which they (the researchers) believed the criminals used them to reduce the guilty feelings while justifying their conducted criminal activities to others. Some other researchers found criminals, such as involved in white-collar criminality, refused their responsibility of involvement in criminal act and denied any victim suffered from their criminal acts. For example, Cressey (1953) found embezzlers used various “vocabularies of adjustment” to nullify and rationalise their involvement in theft and fraud acts. By using techniques of justification

about criminal and wrong act, the criminals present themselves as honourable and justified persons, as Bartol and Bartol, (2014: 427) contend, that, “what is culpable is made honorable through moral justifications and euphemistic jargon. In other words, a normally reprehensible act becomes personally and socially acceptable when it is associated with beneficial or moral ends”.

The theory of neutralisation has been viewed differently by different researchers, which possibly, arguably, is because of the different cultural make-up and social conditions. Some researchers find it more applicable with minor criminal activities while some connect it with more serious acts like delinquency and violent offending behaviour. Some researchers, such as Australians, Cechaviciute et al, (2007) believe the theory of neutralisation is more applicable to the offenders involved in less serious criminal acts than the delinquent and violent acts. They argue former group of low-involvement criminals exercise “stronger moral inhibitions against certain antisocial behaviours (2007: 819), since they have higher sense of their moral responsibility against society and social groups. While serious violent offenders have been seen as using fewer techniques of neutralisations, it is found by some researchers, such as Cechaviciute et al, (2007) that, continued and longer involvement in serious acts like delinquency and violence of offenders does not necessarily let them neutralise their behaviour since they do not see and view themselves as delinquents and violent offenders. However, some recidivist and repeated violent offenders may need neutralisations only when they have to justify their behaviour to others and when they are caught or convicted of their criminal violent crimes (Cechaviciute et al, 2007). It seems however there is low literature on neutralisations and violent offending behaviour that may provide significant understanding how violent offenders justify and neutralise their offensive conduct.

Despite low literature on neutralisations and violence, much research is conducted by criminologists to examine how different violent offenders use different moral values and techniques to rationalise their committed violent crimes. The prisoner-based criminologists and narrative researchers believe moral techniques of neutralisation are

closely associated with violent offending behaviour. For example, Agnew (1994) examined neutralisations with violent fighting behaviour; he conducted a cross-sectional analysis based on the National Youth Survey, which involved quantitative interviewing methods with 1,725 delinquents between ages of 11 and 17. The delinquents, who were involved in fighting behaviour, were asked various questions like, 'if the other persons started fighting, called you names, did something to make you really mad, or walked all over you, how did they justify their behaviour'. He found that a small proportion of his sample "generally approve of violence or are indifferent to violence," but "a large percentage of respondents, however, accept one or more neutralisations for violence" (Agnew, 1994: 573). He found neutralisations played a significant part in justifying violent offending behaviour. Furthermore, he found that neutralisation is commonly used among delinquent groups (Agnew, 1985). However, his study is limited to one act of violence, i.e., violent fighting, not other forms like murder, kidnapping and assault.

Techniques of neutralisation are socially and culturally constructed which motivate and encourage criminals and violent offenders to involve in offending behaviour. Assuming verbal and physical assault as commonly carried out by juvenile gangs, Matza and Sykes (1961) believe that delinquents coming from slum areas of larger cities and disadvantaged communities become readily aggressive, hostile and angry and gladly involve in violent acts like injuring and destructive activities. They further believe that delinquent's cultural value of masculinity provide them neutralizing effects for their misconduct and aggressive behaviour like kicking and destroying things which however serve for them as a proof of their masculinity. Such values and beliefs "whether as pathological expressions of a distorted personality or the traits of delinquent sub-culture" but more or less are representation of the criminal deviation from the dominant society (Matza and Sykes, 1961). Lois Presser (2004) examined neutralisation techniques used by men involved in various violent offending activities. She found that violent offenders constructed "themselves as morally decent persons" (98). However some of the offenders fluctuated between views of decency and indecency. Her participants blamed social conditions as being "corrupting influences" for motivating life to be violent (Presser, 2004:98). Having

different beliefs and views about them and blaming external forces as corrupting elements are signatory parts of the identity of violent offenders. Likewise, many prisoner-based researchers have used this theory, but it is widely suggested that the theory needs to be examined in a broader perspective with multiple violent offenders and with wide socio-cultural perspectives (see Agnew, 1985; Agnew, 1994; Presser, 2004). Lois Presser suggests that researchers use qualitative methods to examine this theory with violent offending behaviour and further suggests that offenders' "own" stories, such as the narratives of violent offenders, should be evaluated to understand their role in the construction of violent identities (Presser, 2004).

From the arguments and findings above, it may be concluded that neutralisation theory has the potential to be explored in relation to violence but requires that we ask how different violent offenders involved in different violent activities use different techniques. Moreover, Agnew's conclusions were drawn from a delinquent population who may have less experiences of violence as compared to adults. Furthermore, it is not certain why some violent offenders tend to be decent and others do not, nor which corrupting influences play a significant part in shaping their violent identities. However, this theory has been widely criticised. Some criminologists describe it as a range of linguistic devices used by criminals to rationalise the crimes they have committed. Several scholars disagree with Sykes and Matza and conclude that justifications and beliefs are not the causes of crime, but rather they are a means of "identity construction" (Maruna and Copes, 2005: 282). Criminals construct their identity by presenting various techniques of neutralisation for their crimes. Thus the theory is believed to help criminals explain their past criminal acts in the present time. Many narrative criminologists, for example, Ugelvik (2010) and Scully and Marolla (1984) agree with this stand that the theory of neutralisation should not necessarily be seen as causal links to crime but rather as "linguistic devices" or a narrative vocabulary, through which criminals explain and describe their past crimes.

## **Narratives of justification and denial of violence**

Violent criminals actually know they are criminals and they have committed violent crimes, this belief continuously serves to damage their consciousness feelings. Therefore, in order to repair their damaged consciousness they come up with various moral-based linguistic techniques which can help them feel comfortable, respected and innocent. Narratives of violent offenders are social constructs which represent certain social environmental and cultural conflicts. As violent offenders are influenced by a corrupt social environment, they construct their moral values and beliefs in a form to denounce that environment. Robert Agnew, a leading and prominent American criminologist rightly supports the notion that “social environment leads many individuals to develop beliefs that are conducive to crime” (Agnew, 1994: 555). He further suggests that social environment offers multiple strains produced from social conditions to which individuals are vulnerable. However, it is also believed that, different social conditions affect individuals differently, thus one person's actions and beliefs are different from others. Individuals are social beings; they learn and model their behaviour and thinking patterns according to the social environment. Nevertheless, some individuals who become involved in dangerous and antisocial conditions distinguish themselves from the general population by breaking the norms and values of society. It means, their constant experiences of violent criminality distinguish them from non-criminal population.

Human behaviour and its rationalisations are culturally motivated, John Galtung, a structural cultural scholar adds almost every social structural and cultural condition to culture. However, he believes that there are certain sections or communities in society which represent certain “aspects of culture” or a subculture of the mainstream culture which possess certain tendencies and motivations to be involved more or less in violent and criminal acts and adopt thinking patterns which rationalise or defend those acts (Galtung, 2008:291). It means certain individuals in certain communities are vulnerable to certain social structural and cultural conditions; with the result that their actions and ideas



are modelled accordingly. Those certain individuals and communities adopt various modes of reasoning and rationalisations for their criminal and violent acts.

Techniques of neutralisation or linguistic devices have been widely seen as divided into two main categories: justification and excuse making (see Scott and Lyman 1968; Scully and Marolla, 1984; Maruna and Copes, 2005). Scott and Lyman believe that denial of injury, denial of victims, condemnation of condemners, and appeal to higher loyalties can be viewed as a “tentative list” of justifications (Scott and Lyman 1968, p. 52). The remaining (and probably most central) technique, “denial of responsibility,” is included in their schema under “appeal to defeasibility,” which, Scott and Lyman consider, indicate excuse making sense and technique.

Justifications are the "accounts in which one accepts responsibility, but denies the pejorative quality associated with it" and excuse making includes the "accounts in which one admits that the act in question is bad, wrong, or inappropriate but denies full responsibility" (Scott and Lyman, 1968:47, see others also, like Agnew, 1994; Presser, 2004; Maruna and Copes, 2005). Many researchers have used such techniques, associating them with different violent offenders; for example, Scully and Marolla (1984:541) used terms such as “admitters” and “deniers” for those who justify/admit their action and for those who make excuses for their crime or deny their criminal responsibility.

On the other hand, the excuse making technique serves a purpose for criminals. It is one of the techniques of violent offenders to neutralise and minimise the feelings of guilt, pain or stress. Snyder and Higgins (1988: 25) conclude, that, "excuse making is a highly adaptive mechanism for coping with stress, relieving anxiety, and maintaining self-esteem. Individuals who make excuses for their negative actions tend to have better psychological adjustment and even better health than those who assumed full responsibility for their shortcomings." Excuse making technique is a cultural construction. Psychologists believe that by using them a violent offender aligns his identity with mainstream culture and

social order and this alignment helps reduce the stress, conflict and relieves one from negative sanctioning (e.g., McLaughun et, al., 1983; Kleinke et, al., 1992).

In addition, these mitigating or excuse making accounts can help create a sense of satisfaction for punishment which is why convicted violent offenders can survive in the frustrating conditions of prison. Marguerite Schinkel in her article, "Punishment as moral communication: The experiences of long-term prisoners," concludes that prisoners, in order to cope the frustrating conditions in prison, "shrunk their world down to the prison walls and accepted their sentence" (2014: 592). The prisoners in her study accept their sentence, "I think my sentence at the time did achieve its purpose, they just wanted me off the street at the time, cause AT THE TIME I was very dangerous" (Schinkel, 2014:591, capital is original). By admitting the act is bad and "dangerous" and accepting the sentence, violent offenders may feel relieved of their sufferings, of the pains of imprisonment and the guilt (Kleinke, Wallis, and Stalder 1992; Rumgay 1998; Schinkel, 2014).

It means various techniques serve criminals in different ways. This also means different criminals use different techniques in order to satisfy their ego and prepare themselves for more crime. Social researchers believe that these means of justifications and denying are externally constructed formulas. Galtung argued that culture determines justifications and likewise, many other researchers confidently believe that social structural conditions like poverty, relative deprivation, unemployment and many other forms of social disorganisation significantly influence individuals when they adopt violent behaviour and mitigating attitudes and perceptions (Galtung, 1990; also see Pogrebin et al., 2009). Pogrebin, et, al (2009) in their qualitative study examining factors related to gun violence, found that many individuals in the U.S who experienced diminished citizenship rights, high unemployment and received fewer economic resources, were increasingly involved in assaults and possession of a gun. It means that social structural and cultural conditions influence individuals and those influenced by 'different' social and cultural conditions adapt their behaviour and thinking patterns accordingly. However, it is uncertain and yet

unknown which social and cultural conditions affect individuals more or less in a way that enables them to develop certain linguistic devices to rationalise violent behaviour. The absence of agreement on theoretical and methodological approaches to examining neutralisation leaves this theory open to criticism.

### **Evaluating significance of neutralisation theory**

Many criminologists and narrative researchers argue that different criminal offenders use different techniques to neutralise their crimes. For example, Maruna and Copes (2004) believe that violent offenders commonly come up with extensive justifications for their crimes but property offenders commonly provide excuses or denials for their committed crimes. Agnew strongly believes in the idea of the social environment creating social strains which influence the adoption of criminal behaviour and developing antisocial cultural beliefs, but his quantitative research does not relate them to violent fighting (see Agnew, 1994). So, poverty, unemployment, political and legal structural characteristics and many other factors are not given enough importance in relation to understanding violent offending behaviour. These unexplored yet influential and significant areas ignored by many criminologists require, in the words of Agnew (1994: 573), “future research” that “should focus on other types of” violence.

Many researchers suggest that techniques of neutralisation are adopted according to the social situations and cultural or subcultural conditions (Ugelvik, 2012). Making a similar point, Andy Hochstetler and colleagues (2010) believe that particular narratives of neutralisations emerge from various social circumstances such as poverty, unemployment, lack of social control, and cultural values like masculinity and many others, and these that shape the way that violent offenders describe their human subjectivity. It means the specific experiences of criminals will generate specific narratives of neutralisations. Despite emphasis on the social environment, neutralisation devices used by multiple violent offenders are rarely empirically tested in relation to social structural and cultural conditions (see, Sykes and Matza, 1957; Agnew, 1994; Maruna and Copes, et al, 2004;

Copes, et al, 2014; Presser, 2004). Therefore, this theory does not provide sufficient explanation of differences between violent criminals in relation to neutralisations (Maruna and Copes, 2004). In the same vein, criminology has been unable to decide “how to classify” criminals and their use of neutralisations, so it requires a cross-cultural examination of narratives to ascertain how and why different violent offenders use different neutralisations. There is a significant question of why some violent offenders more or less frequently, as compared to others, use such techniques (Maruna and Copes, 2005). These arguments imply that neutralisation techniques are still under-researched, need to be explored in relation to multiple violent crimes and a variety of social variables. Similarly, many narrative and prison-based researchers, for example, Ugelvik (2012), Maruna and Copes (2004), Presser (2004), Brookman et al (2011), Copes, et al, (2014) suggest a re-examination of the theory of neutralisation with reference to violent offenders.

## **Conclusions**

At the beginning of this chapter, I described how incarcerated violent offenders offer the most useful information on violence and violent acts, and I suggested that violent offenders have distinctive social and violent experiences, because of which their narratives are distinctive. This chapter concludes that incarcerated violent offenders are the best source of information on violent crimes. Narratives of violent offenders provide distinctive information about the crimes they commit. Distinctiveness and particularity of the narratives are associated with distinctive social and cultural conditions. Prisoners convicted of violent crimes provide narratives of their life; by examining those narratives, we can collect a huge body of information to help us understand which social and cultural factors influence them to be violent. Therefore, in order to develop understanding of violent crime and its narrative constructing ways, examination and evaluation of violent offenders’ narratives of their social and violent life provide rich data.

This chapter highlights that violent offenders experience distinctive social problems, which affect their life in such a way, that they adopt criminal violent behaviour to deal with their social problems. Socioeconomic conditions, unemployment, disorganised social and legal structures have a major effect on the life structure of individuals. In the course of social and cultural conflicts and violent criminal life, violent offenders develop certain moral and cultural values which help them rationalise their acts. By use of such moral beliefs and cultural practices, they satisfy themselves and associate themselves with normal and mainstream culture. However, their violent practices and adoption of criminal codes make them distinctive, and their distinctive criminal life represents them as part of a subcultural life structure. Some violent offenders accept their violence, while some deny their violent acts and blame other structural agents such as powerful individuals, politicians, police behaviour and corrupt court systems as responsible and the motivating agent for their violent life. These are techniques of neutralisation that violent offenders use to rationalise and neutralise their violent acts. Different violent offenders use different moral and linguistic devices to protect them from the pain of guilt and remorse.

However, concern is expressed that prison research in some other cultural and social conditions may produce different results on violence, since different prisoner-based researchers find different social and cultural problems associated with violent offending, and many researchers have different experiences in prison research. Additionally, it is still not very clear why certain violent offenders in certain cultural conditions use certain narratives, linguistic devices and techniques to rationalise their crimes and deflect themselves from criminal responsibility.

## **Chapter Four**

### **The Research Process**

The previous chapter highlighted the importance of prisoner-based research which gains valuable narrative information from incarcerated violent offenders. The chapter also underlined that prisoners provide valuable information which helps understand violent criminality in a proper manner. Prisoners make sense of their violence by presenting their social conditions they lived and the cultural explanations of their committed violent activities. Their narrative descriptions open windows to their violent life. It is learnt from the Chapter that prisoners speak up a variety of problems which they have suffered and gone through, moreover, some prisoners justify their violence while some deny their involvement in their acted violent actions. Prisoner-based research is highly appreciated and currently frequently used in Western criminological research. In contrast, as seen in the Chapter Two, there is no established theory which can explicitly define and explain violent behaviour and there is no proper use of research strategies and approaches which may have properly investigated the problem of violence in Pakistani context. Such inappropriateness in explanations and analysis make criminologists think how such serious problem of violence can be understood and analysed.

Over all the aim of this research is to understand violence and violent crime in Pakistani context. This current study based on prisoner-based research aims to understand violent crime by analysing and examining lived experiences, biographical accounts and narratives of violence gained from prisoners convicted of violent offences and also by analysing explanations and viewpoints collected from professionals. The researcher is confident that data collected from triangulation sources will properly explain the problem in hand. This chapter therefore will provide details how data were collected, what procedural and ethical problems this researcher encountered and how data were analysed.

#### **Data collection**

I wanted to understand violence by analysing how prisoners convicted of violent offences define, explain and present their experiences of social and violent life. I knew violent

offenders may exaggerate their ideas about violence which may impact my understanding therefore I also decided to gain other sources to better comprehend the concept of violence. I opted to talk to the professionals who have good and expert understanding of social problems and violence in Sindh. I knew by collecting information from multiple sources, I would be able to comprehend fully about the problem. I learnt by reviewing extensive literature on theoretical and methodological grounds on violence in Chapters One, Two and Three that incarcerated violent offenders are suitable and valuable source of data on violence. So being equipped with such knowledge and methodological planning I wanted to meet violent offenders in prisons. I visited prisons in Sindh, which is my native province.

I collected interviews from the prisoners housed in different prisons in Sindh, Pakistan. Gaining entry into prison and meeting prisoners was not an easy task; what problems would emerge like whether prison authorities would allow me to meet prisoners and whether prisoners would talk to me (an outsider) were all in mind. I knew through experiences of prison researchers that prisons are difficult institutions and an unpredictable research setting. As described in the Chapter Three a prison is a highly controlled environment and difficult for research, and prisoners are dangerous and unpredictable population in terms of whether they will cooperate or not. I also knew that every prison researcher has to gain approval from prison authorities to obtain access to prisons. My limited familiarity with police officials during my teaching career in the Department of Criminology convinced me to believe that I would be able to gain access to prisons.

I discussed this problem of visiting prison with my friend, Dr. Nabi Bakhsh Narejo, now Associate Professor in that department, where I am a lecturer. He had previous experience of meeting police officers for interviewing them for his PhD which involved research on dacoits/robbers. He suggested that I contact the superintendents of prisons. Like him (Narejo), a number of other Pakistani scholars and researchers (e.g., Qureshi and Iqbal, 2012; Khan, 2010; Fasihuddin, 2010) believe that a superintendent of any prison is a powerful and significant gatekeeper, someone who can or cannot allow any

person to visit prison. The process of gaining approval though varies country to country and according to research culture. For example, in America, researchers need to submit their proposals to the Home Office to review and grant permission. They have to justify their research programme and provide satisfactory consideration of ethical issues before the committee agrees to give access to participants (Presser, 2002) and the same procedure is applied in the UK (Brookman, 2000).

I already knew for visiting prisons, I was required to gain approval from the proving authority, so initially I wanted to gain approval from the Inspector General of Prison (IGP, Sindh), who was responsible and the official authority on prisons in Sindh. My friend told me that this process of seeking a letter of permission from the IGP might take much more time than I had, five months, to collect my data. I was also concerned that in Sindh province, conditions of social disorder like terrorism and other political problems which were always a daily phenomenon might hinder my travelling to Karachi to meet the officer. Keeping in mind all these concerns, I relied on contacting the superintendents of the prisons in Sindh (see Waldram, 2009), and this worked well. Meanwhile I submitted my application, which described my aims of meeting prisoners and the purpose of my PhD research to the office of IGP, Sindh (Appendix. VII).

In the following section, I will describe when and where I met prisoners and how I collected information them, and what procedural and ethical problems I faced during the field visits.

### **Research settings and sampling frame**

Accessing the fieldwork area or research site and participants has continuously been challenging tasks for the researchers and methodological literature is widely devoted to discuss them. It is the familiarity of the researcher with the research site and research participants that help him collect relevant data (Feldman, et al, 2003; Quraishi, 2008; Gill, et al, 2008). However, acquaintance or strangeness of a researcher is of much concern in sociological and social sciences debates (Feldman et al., 2003; Quraishi, 2008). Familiarity and strangeness with research settings or area of research has been



discussed in the sociological and criminological circles and has been polarised in some literature (Fossey et al., 2002; Burgess, 2006; Quraishi, 2008). On the other hand, both of them are equally found negotiated in social research (Burgess, 2006) and prisoner-based research (Beckford, 2005; Quraishi, 2008). Having each of them has its own value and merits and demerits, each one influences the process and outcome of the social inquiry. Unfamiliarity or strangeness to the research fieldwork area and respondents, it is argued, has its merits, for example, will help researchers develop ‘self-enlightenment’ and ‘personal growth’ (Lofland and Lofland, 1995; Quraishi, 2008: 103).

On the other hand, it is largely agreed in the qualitative research that familiarity or acquaintance of the researchers with the research field area and respondents, positively influences the qualitative and quality of prison research product (Horsburgh, 2003; Snow, et al, 2003; Quraishi, 2008). A variety of factors have been identified and recognised that influence relationship between researchers and participants and the product of theoretical and methodological inquiry, for example, age, social class, appearance, ‘inequalities of knowledge and power’, culture, environment and gender (Hewitt, 2007: 1150). Furthermore, it is believed and seen that becoming familiar and sharing same language, ethnic and cultural identities, there creates good rapport between an interviewer and interviewee and interviewee shares his or her narratives of life freely and culturally undisturbed way (Horsburgh, 2003; Marvasti, 2004; Quraishi, 2008). Qualitative research such prison-based research, therefore, has its own decision making processes; such as, subjective influences on the decision of selection of the research field and its research respondents, decisions of following ethical measures and quality of producing research material. In other words, as put in the words of Hewitt (2007), “the capacity for intimacy and the personal qualities projected by the researcher,” all contributes to the development of theoretical and methodological artifact of research (p. 1150).

My familiarity with the Sindh province made me confident of collecting interviews from the prisoners housed in different prisons in Sindh. I collected interviews from prisoners in a High Court and in four prisons during the five months between December 2012 and April 2013. This included testing a pilot interview and conducting further main

interviews with prisoners and professionals. I collected forty interviews in total from prisoners- 5 from the High Court and 35 from the four prisons in Sindh; in addition, I collected forty interviews with different professionals. All the interviewed prisoners were male, majority (35) of them came from rural areas in Sindh, while only a small number (5) belonged to the urban areas of Sindh and other parts of provinces such as Peshawar and Lahore (see below Table 2). Though out of 35 prisoners, a few had urban life experiences but, because they, as they told, spent significant part of their life in the villages, I have counted and included them as rural prisoners. Among all the prisoners, two were under-trial prisoners (UTPs) but had violent lifestyles while the other 38 were convicted prisoners of violent offences. Before asking participants about their social life experiences and their committed violent crimes, I collected their demographic information. The prisoners I interviewed were all were male. According to the collected profile information of age, the present age of the participants at the time of interview ranged from 22 to 65 (see Table. 1).

**Table 1. Prisoners' age**

<b>Present Age group</b>	<b>No of prisoners</b>		<b>Percentage</b>
22- 30	13		32.5 %
31- 40	15		37.5 %
41- 50	4		10 %
51- 65	8		20 %
<b>Total</b>	<b>40</b>		<b>100 %</b>

The average age of all the prisoner participants was 37.97 as above Table 1 shows. The above table also shows the age range of the forty convicted violent offenders I interviewed. According to the above table, the majority of male prisoners (15) I spoke to fall in the category of 31 to 40 years, however second category falls in 22 to 30 years, third in 51 to 65 and fourth in 41 to 50 years. More information about demographic features, ethnic/language, professions and length of sentence details about the prisoners

are given in the tables and appendices and details about the professionals will be given in Chapter Seven.

**Table. 2. Demographic characteristics and criminal convictions for violence of the prisoners**

S. No	Code Name	Present age	Location	Convicted of violent offence
1	SGH	29	Urban	Felonious assault, attempt to murder
2	MA	24	Rural	Murder
3	J	58	Rural	Kidnapping with intention to kill
4	F	34	Rural	Murder
5	KB	39	Rural	Murder
6	AB	25	Urban	Assault
7	RB	52	Rural	Murder, robbery, attempt to murder, police encounter, possession of illegal arms
8	AS	22	Rural	Murder
9	SK	40	Rural	Kidnapping with intention to kill
10	NMJ	25	Rural	Kidnapping with intention to kill
11	AH	36	Rural	Murder, assault, violent rioting
12	FH	27	Rural	Murder, police encounter, possession of illegal arms
13	MIB	23	Urban	Assault, Narcotics
14	DS	23	Rural	Kidnapping with intention to kill, kidnapping for ransom
15	A	25	Rural	Kidnapping with intention to kill, kidnapping for ransom
16	H	65	Rural	Kidnapping with intention to kill, kidnapping for ransom
17	B	38	Rural	Kidnapping with intention to kill, kidnapping for ransom
18	AJ	33	Rural	Murder, kidnapping with intention to kill, assault
19	KMB	28	Rural	Murder, kidnapping with intention to kill, assault
20	ABJ	65	Rural	Murder, police encounter, possession of illegal arms
21	BJ	34	Rural	Murder, police encounter, possession of illegal arms
22	GSB	44	Rural	Honour Killing (murder)
23	AR	64	Rural	Honour Killing (murder)
24	RBM	35	Rural	Murder
25	IM	22	Rural	Murder
26	UAJ	35	Rural	Murder
27	NMM	55	Rural	Murder
28	KHK	35	Rural	Murder
29	BAJ	28	Rural	Murder, Felonious assault, police encounter
30	AAJ	35	Rural	Murder, Assault, police encounter
31	RJ	54	Rural	Murder, attempt to murder, possession of illegal arms
32	K	29	Rural	Murder
33	S	36	Urban	Robbery, Felonious assault
34	A	41	Urban	Murder
35	IP	48	Urban	Murder
36	SQ	42	Urban	Murder, possession of illegal arms
37	ZS	36	Rural	Honour Killing (murder)
38	NS	40	Rural	Police encounter, narcotics
39	Z	31	Rural	Robbery, Felonious assault
40	MJ	65	Rural	Murder

The above Table. 1 explains the present age at the time of interviewing participants and their location/area they belonged to and their violent crimes they committed. The Table indicates that the majority of the cases of convicts were murder related including murder and murder in honour killings, the second largest number involved robbery, the third, kidnapping for ransom, and assault, and fourth assault. Many of the convicted men belonged to rural areas and were involved in and convicted of more than one violent offences at the same time, such as murder, kidnapping and violent assault; murder, attempt to murder and robbery; and robbery and assault (see Table 2). The period of sentences they served at the point of interviewing them ranged from 2 to 19 years, while many were sentenced to life imprisonment (25 years) and two were on death row (see Appendix.1II). A majority of the prisoners had no education, were illiterate, while a few had primary education (see below Table 3), a small number had a masters degree (see Table 3), while a few had military and police jobs before going to prison (see Appendix IV), and many were married (see Appendix IV). A small number had also already been in different prisons for felonies, as they told. One young prisoner of 28 years, who recognised me as his teacher during his school years, was happy to see me engaged in research. He spoke English fluently and told me that he had studied crime and criminology during his masters in sociology.

**Table. 3 Education levels of the prisoners**

<b>Education standard</b>	<b>Education level</b>	<b>No. of prisoners</b>
0 Year	No education	21
1 to 5 years	Primary	8
6 to 8 years	Secondary	5
9 to 10 years	Higher Secondary	1
11 to 12 years	Intermediate	3
15 to 16 years	Masters	2
<b>Total</b>		<b>40</b>

## **Pilot interviews**

Initially, I wanted to test my interview questions, so I conducted a number of pilot interviews from the court official in the High Court which was located in the Hyderabad city where I lived. I knew prisoners come to trial at the High Court in Hyderabad, so I requested that a friend of mine, a lawyer help by introducing me to some prisoners that I might be able to interview. He had his schedule of court trials and agreed to my request; so he called me on a particular day to meet prisoners. I had open-ended questions with an *aide-mémoire* (Mason, 2002; Creswell and Clark, 2007). During the pilot study, I interviewed five criminals, three convicted of violent crimes and two on trial for murder and a case of robbery. Through these experiences, I learned much about interviewing techniques.

The criminals I interviewed during the pilot study came from urban areas. One interview, with a prisoner on trial for a murder, took place in two sittings; while interviewing him, he was called for trial in the court. I waited for nearly two hours and upon his reappearance, I continued interviewing him. The first session lasted for 15 minutes and second for more than 30 minutes. This prisoner, instead of answering my particular questions related to his childhood experiences and observations of crime, talked about his poor economic conditions in a very dramatic way. Sometimes I felt he played with my questions, he looked in a playful mood at that time. I do not know why. Slowly he took more interest and a good rapport developed between us; then he shared detailed information about himself. The other four interviews lasted from 20 to 30 minutes. Upon my request to a lawyer, he introduced all those criminals to me in the court. I sought approval from the lawyers and informed consent from each criminal in the court. I introduced myself to them and briefed them about my reasons for interviewing them about their previous life experiences. They agreed voluntarily to be interviewed. Three of them were handcuffed and two policemen were standing at some distance not too close to us (interviewee and interviewer). My learning of asking questions developed from pilot interviews which helped me refine my interviewing skills and strategies (Kvale and Brinkmann, 2009). From the pilot interviews, I learned much about interviewing

techniques including how to introduce oneself to the offenders, develop rapport with the offenders, formulate probing and prompting questions to be asked to the offenders in time and, also, become confident in motivating the offenders.

Fortunately, I felt all the questions worked well and I could collect enough of the information that I needed so there was no significant change in the actual pilot interview questions. After collecting the main interviews from further 35 prisoners, I found no significant differences in the data collected by using those interview questions, so I decided to include the interviews collected from pilot study and for the purposes of analysis, merge them with the main interview data.

### **Interviewing prisoners**

Apart from the pilot interviews, I collected 35 furthermore interviews from four different Central Prisons in the different districts in Sindh. The first some of the interviews took place in the main office of the senior clerk, the second, in a common room, the third, in open ground sitting on chairs and benches, and the fourth, in a room that was a rest room of a police officer, respectively; all within the prison premises. Each interview lasted for 18 to 23 minutes, except the interviews I collected from the fourth prison which lasted for 10 to 15 minutes. I come from Sindh province and I speak the language of my participants Sindhi and Urdu; I had therefore already translated the research questions from English (see Appendix. IV-A) into Sindhi (IV-B), participant information sheet (see Appendix. V-A, V-B and V-C) and participant consent form (see Appendix. VI) into the local Sindhi and Urdu languages. My visit to the first three prisons, which I name them for confidential and anonymity purposes as A, B and C, was comparatively easier and relaxed; I was offered tea and cigarettes.

However, the fourth prison was quite obstructive, despite having my official permission letter from the IGP, Sindh. In this prison, I had trouble with a number of gatekeepers who almost prevented the interviews from taking place. I arrived at 10A.M. at the prison and after a security check I was allowed to go to the superintendent office but he had not arrived yet. Upon showing my permission letter of interviewing prisoners to the deputy

superintendent present that time in the office, he said he had no authority to allow me to do so. He instructed to wait for the superintendent of the prison. The wait lasted for about two hours. On arrival of the superintendent, I presented him with the official letter of permission, which he did not receive with good grace. I briefed him about my intentions of interviewing prisoners and recording their voices but he paid a very little attention to my request and gruffly refused me for doing so. Feeling myself at loss, I repeated my request to him but again he refused abruptly. However, then, he sent me to a clerk, who selected some 'under-trial' prisoners for me but I asked him for the convicted violent offenders. He then sent me to another prison officer who made me wait for about an hour because it was lunchtime. After lunch and listening to my request, he refused to allow me to interview any prisoners. It was a shock for me. I told him that I had a letter of permission and also that the superintendent had agreed; he then contacted the superintendent who told the prison officer to take me to meet the prisoners. I was taken to a room where another prison officer was asleep.

Only six prisoners were brought in. Among them, two were convicted of theft crimes who were not relevant to the study; (as a result they were not included among the interviews) while the other four were prisoners convicted of violent crimes. The prison officer brought those prisoners to me and told me to send them back in hurry because soon there was their lunchtime. When I was interviewing the sixth prisoner, he cautioned me, firmly, "Sir, it is done, let's go". Here I had the lowest number of prisoners, six (and for my purpose only four of out of the six).

In this Central Prison, D, prison staff like a clerk who possessed information about the prisoners, a prison officer where I was sent helped me meeting prisoners and other prison officer who escorted me to a room; each one of them turned to be a gatekeeper for me. Each one had power to block my interview process and, most important was the superintendent of the prison who was reluctant for my interviewing prisoners and recording the voices of the prisoners. The crucial gatekeeper was the prison officer who stopped me from interviewing as many prisoners I had hoped to. Here I took notes of the interviews and finished each interview within 10 to 15 minutes, as I was allowed only.

All the three superintendents from previous prisons, A, B and C, and a lawyer and police officers in the court proved to be dominant and influential gatekeepers; because of their support, I was able to interview prisoners. In contrast, the superintendent of the fourth prison, D, who also proved to be an influential, did not help me allowing collecting interviews from the number of prisoners I wanted to. I was interrupted by a prison officer during interviewing the sixth prisoner and was not allowed to interview more prisoners. I realised our decision to contact superintendents and request their approval was the right approach. Thanks to the suggestions of my friend, all the superintendents, and other people involved in my research who responded positively to my request.

I had tape recorded all 36 interviews (Hollway and Jefferson, 2000), except those in the fourth prison. I took field notes of the appearance, activities and behaviour of the prisoners with me. I also took observation notes in prisons and concerning the behaviour of superintendents and prison staff. These notes and observations helped me to understand prison settings and prison staff behaviour.

I collected interviews from the prisoners who shared with me the detailed experiences of their personal lives. Before the start of the interviews, I collected participants' demographic information including details of age, education, location and crime. Narratives of violence were collected by asking participants about their life experiences related to childhood days, employment, social and violent relations with peer and community members, and about the violent crimes they were convicted of. I had a set of interview questions which were designed to gain all those experiences of the prisoners. Interviewing as a qualitative method is widely used to collect broad and a detailed interview data; in addition, this method is appreciated as reliable and valid in the social sciences. Qualitative interview collects distinctive biographical narratives and the 'objective features of subject's life with the subjective meanings attached to life experiences' (Schutze, 1984; also see Denzin, 1989; 55; Hollway and Jefferson, 2000). I was keenly interested in listening to the narrative stories of my participants (Connelly and Clandinin, 1990; Webster and Mertova, 2007), follow-up questions emerged from their narrative answers about their social and violent experiences, which however helped me



prompt them to probe their stories (Marvasti, 2003; Hollway and Jefferson, 2000). My interest in their stories and my nodding strategy helped me establish a good and an effective working relationship with my participants (Marvasti, 2003; Hollway and Jefferson, 2000).

Many narrative researchers believe that human stories are biographical and portray particular events which are significant in individuals' lives, describing their "thinking, perception, imagination and moral decision-making" (Johnson, 1993, cited in Hollway and Jefferson, 2000:303; see also Polkinghorne, 1988; Ugelvik, 2010; Copes, et al, 2014). Moreover, as McAdams (1999) and Rubin (2005:79) suggest, "life stories mirror the culture" or "cultural knowledge" of the "life course". These different scholars widen the scope of narratives and argue that individuals describe certain events and life stories in a distinctive way; those distinctive ways are related closely to the particular social and cultural settings. Research participants in my study told their stories with their own agenda and purpose. Their communication was what Goffman (1969:76) called the 'art of impression management', a 'dramatic effect' (Bennett and Frow, 2008:512). This dramatic or fake impression was constructed by many of the prisoners by presenting themselves as 'innocent' and 'aggressive'. I would call this 'impression management' as a 'cultural violent impression' constructed by the violent offenders in Pakistani context.

In this research, the prisoners I met to collect their information on their social and violent lives were unpredictable and serious about their life experiences. They provided sensitive information about their social and violent experiences, and while sharing some of them behaved cooperatively while some aggressively. The interview flow with some prisoner participants was sometimes disturbed somehow, when I asked them about their observations of violent incidents. They could not comprehend the sense of violent incidents and violence, so I provided them with the example of murder and assault. Then they responded well "Yes. Like this there are many." Their "yes" reply helped me to ask them more questions, and then their stories poured out. Therefore, I asked them direct questions such as 'were you involved in murder or assault?' This questioning strategy worked well. However, some of them did not like my direct questions. For example,

offenders convicted of honour killing did not like my direct question about why they killed a woman who they saw with other men (in an illicit relationship, not said in interview). This question however made one participant who also was convicted of honour killing aggressive, for that I used a strategy of keeping silence as to sooth his aggression- the strategy worked well and he went on sharing more information about his life and violent acts without being further more aggressive or angry with me.

Some inmates shared the violent acts which they were not convicted of, for example, one prisoner told that he had extended sexual relations with some girls in his community but he was not arrested or convicted for those acts. He told a leader in his community had intervened to resolve them by imposing some fine on him, but legally he was not arrested by police and convicted. For the ethical point of view, this confidentiality of keeling previously committed violent acts of the prisoner as a researcher, I knew I had to inform to the concerned authority in the prison. When later on I contacted some prison officers, they did not take interest in that information and instructed me that such acts are resolved within community and families, so such acts are not usually brought to the notice of police, why then police should bother to involve in settled disputes.

Another important thing, which also disturbed my flow of interviewing, was my use of some English words. During interviewing them, I frequently used English words and terms. My friend, Narejo, felt it and suggested me that participants were uneasy with those words, I felt it also. Most of the rural participants were illiterate and unfamiliar with those words. After this, I tried to avoid the use of such words and phrases. Some prisoners were not very vocal in their telling and their simple, one word answers were problematic to understand. For instance, I asked a prisoner convicted of honour killing, “What crime are you convicted of?” He replied “*gherat*” (honour). I did not understand it at first and asked him again what he meant by “*gherat*” (honour). Then he replied, “I acted on honour” (*maan gherat kae*). Still it was unclear to me; I thought a little and then understood, he meant he had killed a female who had a sexual relationship with another person. Such aggressive and short answers were part of the narratives of prisoners. Such emotional and cultural indications taking place during interacting with

prisoners (Scully, 1988; Liebling, 1999; Burman et al, 2001; Bosworth, et al., 2005; Jewkes, 2012) are cultural description and constructions. As I was familiar with the language and culture of the participants, I could and can understand the depth of their ideas, emotions and cultural sense (Swidler, 1986).

There were different reactions of the convicted prisoners. Some prisoners were sad, angry and cooperative during interviewing them. For example, a prisoner who was nominated to be released on parole recently knew the parole board had cancelled all the parolee cases, including his, so was sad and embarrassed by the justice system. Likewise, many prisoners had several complaints against society, rich, feudal lords, politicians and the judiciary system in Pakistan. All the emotions and expectations linked to these possibly influenced the narrative construction of the violent offenders (see Presser, 2004). We laughed, shared jokes and felt sorry about many serious issues. The prisoners cooperated with me, possibly because they were called upon by the prison staff to do so (Bosworth, et al., 2005). However, on their arrival and meeting me, they were frank and polite with me all the time. It seemed as if I was talking, not to a dangerous criminal but to simple and normal people, in the street. Some expected me to advocate their cases to the prison authority and court administration (Dermott and Liebling, 1999; Roberts and Indermaur, 2008). Some of the prisoners told very serious and pathetic conditions of their family members especially of their daughters and events of physical victimisations of their mothers and young girls, which when telling not only made them sad but also me as well. Some prisoners were unhappy in the prisons and did not want to live in the prison except for the some old people who accepted their sentences as their fate (Crewe, et al., 2011; Schlosser, 2008). Some were confident that elders outside the prison would settle their criminal issues with the victim's party with the result that they would be released soon.

### **Interviewing professionals**

After interviewing prisoners, I needed to collect viewpoints of professionals, as it was the second main objective of this research to learn the concept of violence also from professionals. Collection of ideas and explanation from professionals was also necessary that I felt the prisoners might have exaggerated their explanations and descriptions about

violence, which might affect my understanding about the phenomenon of violent behaviour and violent criminality. In this respect, the qualitative prisoner-based researcher employ strategies to collect first-person accounts of prisoners and professionals' experiences and explanations to analyse social practices and violent conduct (Patenaude, 2005). Prisoners as potential individuals and professionals as potential focus groups interviews provide effective tools for the prisoner-based researchers to analyse information collected from prisons (Patenaude, 2005). Viewpoints collected from professionals in groups refer to focus group interview.

Focus group interview is supplementary tool to see and analyse the interview information collected from individuals. Morgan (cited in Patenaude, 2005) explains focus group as "basically group interviews, although not in the sense of an alteration between the researcher's questions and the research participants' responses. . . . From a social science point of view, focus groups are useful either as a self-contained means of collecting data or as a supplement to both quantitative and other qualitative methods" (72). Morgan (1988) further emphasises group interview as hallmark method as to produce data including explanations and insights that otherwise would not be accessed without interacting with the group of potential members of society.

Helen Finch and Jane Lewis discuss the utility of focus group and write that "the group context of focus groups creates a process which is in some important respects very different from an in-depth interview. Data are generated by interaction between group participants. Participants present their own views and experience, but they also hear from other people. They listen, reflect on what is said, and in the light of this consider their own standpoint further. Additional material is thus triggered in response to what they hear" (Finch and Lewis, 2003: 171). The reflections and insights gained from professionals in focus groups would be supplementary tool to see and analyse the data already collected from individuals.

Primarily, I wanted to arrange focus groups of professionals to triangulate and validate the interview data collected from prisoners but I faced several problems which prevented me doing so. For triangulating and validating the various aspects of problem in hand, data

were collected from various sources and in different ways in qualitative research (see Coffey and Atkinson, 1996; Brookman, 2003; Noaks and Wincup, 2004; Silverman, 2010), see Chapter One). Additionally, it is also believed that the strategy of data collection and the number of participants can be a choice of a researcher (see Marczyk et al., 2005).

In order to supplement the data collected from prisoners convicted of violent offences, and better analyse their social practices and violent behaviour, I conducted interviews with professionals. Some were with superintendents just as with the Superintendent at the Prison, B and C, and one was with a senior police officer from the Prison, C. For interviews with other professionals, I used my personal sources. I knew some police officers and advocates, whom I interviewed and, with the help of these people, I was able to meet other police officers and advocates. While I was familiar with the academics who were in the University of Sindh, where I was lecturer, I also knew some politicians in Hyderabad where I lived and live. So through the help of my known friends and my personal familiarity with a number of professionals, I was able to meet a range of professionals included senior police officials, advocates, sociologists, criminologists, senior politicians, psychologists, psychiatrists, and medico legal officers and social workers.

I wanted to arrange a meeting of some professionals in a focus group to discuss violence and social problems in society. Nevertheless, because of their busy schedule I was unable to do so. When I first met advocates in their office and asked them to discuss the problem, I found some of them were busy while others avoided sitting together. Some examples may be of interests. During my early attempts to arrange three advocates in a group, I observed that only one advocate actively spoke whereas the others remained silent. On two other occasions, with a group of three police officers, two went out one by one and did not come back and on the other occasion, with the two advocates, one went to toilet but did not return. In total, more than five events did not work for me when I attempted to gain views from a combined group of professionals. These conditions and situations were not conducive to group conversation; rather it spoiled the tempo of

discussion because so much time was spent waiting for people to return. As a result, I decided to discontinue group discussions and tried to interview single professionals one at a time. The Pakistani professionals I encountered were moody and avoided working in a group and discussing sensitive topics. Some professionals refused to give their points of view, while others did not want their voice to be recorded. However, many accepted my request to talk to me; and consequently, I was able to interview 40 professionals and record their views (Marvasti, 2003; Hollway and Jefferson, 2000). I obtained informed consent from each of them. Discussion with each professional lasted for 50 minutes and more than an hour. Professionals understood my research domain and accepted my request to talk to them. The discussions were informative and took place in a healthy and friendly environment, though there were differences, sometimes in arguments between them and me, but there was no verbal or physical conflict between us.

When meeting each professional participant, I briefed him about my research problem that I wanted to collect his views and understandings about violence. For collection of views from professionals, I had interview schedule along with all that in order to begin my discussion with each one I selected general points or incidents of violent acts reported in daily newspapers (see Jenkins, et al., 2010), for example, from the daily newspapers “Kawish” and “Dawn”. I used such general points as a vignette (Jenkins, et al., 2010), for instance, “A husband beat his wife because she poured a little sugar into a cup of tea. The two brothers of the woman happened to be there in the home and they became aggressive and shot the husband to death”, or “A man who climbed up a date-tree was brutally assaulted to death with axes by the owners of the tree”. This technique of using a vignette based on general and daily life incidents provided an effective way to start a discussion. The conversation arose from a simple argument about a specific issue of violent incident to its broader spectrum of problems and then went on discussing the social and cultural problems of the society. The ideas and views discussed touched the very core of the problem and I had enough material to think over the issues from a much broader and dynamic perspective. The discussions with professionals provided me massive understanding about the violence and its related social problems in society.

## **Procedural and ethical challenges in Pakistani prisons**

Primarily, I wanted to collect in-depth interviews from the prisoners, but as I described earlier that I could not get such chances of much time in any prison or High Court. In-depth interviews are essential for qualitative research, I knew this but circumstances worked against me. In every prison, the superintendent instructed me to limit my time with prisoners, to collect all the interviews in a day, and by the lunchtime. The superintendents had busy schedules, and even one superintendent, who happened to be friend of my friend, still did not provide me with much time to interview prisoners. He told us that prisoners would retire for their lunch. In prison research in Western countries, separate rooms are usually allocated to researchers (i.e., Abraham, 2011; Jaffe, 2012; Grosholz, 2014): I was not guided nor provided with any separate room for the interviewing prisoners in my study. All the rooms were in use by other prison staff; almost during every interview, one or more other persons were present. So, within the limited time available and meager resources at my disposal, I had to collect as many and as full interviews as I could. I felt we might not get any other chance to go to another prison; this fear was always with me.

### **Gaining informed consent**

Prisoners are not free individuals; therefore, motivating them to talk to outside researcher is a big challenge for the prisoner-based researchers. Being incarcerated in prison, they already know they are “stigmatized” as dangerous criminals (Goffmann, 1968). As a result, it is not always easy to persuade them to cooperate and participate in a study. In other words, there is no certainty how prisoners will behave with an outside researcher. They may be reluctant to speak, may not speak at length or they may avoid revealing information about their criminal life itself (Bernasco, 2010). Many ethical issues therefore arise when interviewing prisoners especially because criminologists interested in knowing about violent activities of prisoners will ask about “sensitive topics” (Goffmann, 1968; Schlosser, 2008:1501) such as their involvement in violent crimes and their social and violent background. In this case, it is essential for a researcher to ask for participants’ willingness to participate in the process of interviewing them.

Requesting participants agree to interview means gaining their confidence. This can be achieved by asking for their voluntary participation, usually by obtaining written or verbal consent from them (Hollway and Jefferson, 2000; Marvasti, 2003; Liebling, 2004; Crew, 2006). Informed consent develops a mutual and cooperative relationship between interviewer and interviewee; it actually means discussing with participants why a researcher is interested in talking to them and what kinds of information he wants to know from the participants and what he will do with the information gained from them. He also informs them of their right to withdraw, at any time, from the on-going interview process (Yin, 2010:97). It is the ethical and moral duty of researcher to follow such rules and inspire confidence in his participants.

My entry into prisons became possible due to gaining approval from superintendents of each prison, except the superintendent of the fourth prison to whom I presented my permission letter from IGP. When meeting the superintendents or a deputy superintendent, I described to them my aim for the visit and showed my Anglia Ruskin University ID card (England), interview questions, participants' consent form and information sheet. I requested that they to allow me to interview prisoners convicted of violent offences and to record their voices. I described to them my position as a lecturer in criminology and PhD researcher on the topic of violence. After discussing with them and gaining their approval, and achieving their trust that I was not in any way a security problem to their routine activities, the prison management or to prisoners' identity (Roberts and Indermaur, 2008; Waldram, 2009), I was allowed to talk to prisoners. Narejo accompanied me to three prisons, but I personally conducted all the interviews (pilot, main and with the professionals).

Following ethical measures is an essential requirement in prison research. Gaining approval from gatekeepers, approaching prisoners, gaining their informed consent and keeping their shared information as confidential, are all equally important ethical considerations in prison research (Roberts and Indermaur, 2008:309; Waldram, 2009; Brookman, 2000). Researchers around the world use various strategies to approach their participants; possibly this is because of the particular prison rules and research culture.



To me, the prisoners were introduced by prison police staff, including a superintendent in one prison, a senior clerk who at the same time was a police officer, and a lawyer. I felt, this approach might make my participants feel obliged to talk to me, as has been found by many researchers across different countries, for example, James B Waldram (2009) in US and Coomber (2002) in the UK. Nevertheless, before the start of an interview, I requested that each prisoner should participate as a volunteer and briefed him about my interest in asking him about his experiences during childhood and the life ending in prison (information sheet). I assured them all that their shared information was secret and confidential with me, and I informed them that they could withdraw from interview at any time (Davidson and Layder, 1994; Brookman, 2000). By being honest and ensuring the participants' rights, integrity and confidentiality in communication, I was able securing their engagement with the study. Certainly, no participant was forced to talk to me and no participant refused talking to me.

Moreover, unlike many western prison researchers (e.g., Brookman, 2000; Presser, 2002; Abraham, 2011; Grosholz, 2014), who briefed their participants in groups, circulated or emailed their research materials including research questions, consent forms and information sheets, I felt it my ethical responsibility to read the material of the consent form and information sheet to them as most of them were uneducated. They then agreed with a positive gesture or word like "Yes" ("*Theek aa*, -Okay), this made me sure of their 'informed consent' (Roberts and Indermaur, 2008; Earle, 2014; Waldram, 2009). Only when this process was complete, I started interviewing them. No one declined to be interviewed, and no one withdrew at any time from an interview, neither prisoners nor professionals. A small number of prisoners (3) asked me what I would do with the interview data. I replied that I was a lecturer and, as a researcher, I would analyse their stories to understand crime as a part of my study/research. They were satisfied so they shared multiple experiences of their life including both the social and the criminal.

### **Confidentiality of the interview data and anonymity of the participants**

Maintaining anonymity of the participants' names and their information is also an ethical issue (Schlosser, 2008). Interviewing violent offenders obtains information about

sensitive issues like violent criminal activities and their personal life problems, which may be about them, about their families and friends. In this case, prisoners may be unwilling to talk about their life; they may fear their information may be revealed to other persons and perhaps lead to further criminalisation for the acts they are not presently convicted of. On ethical grounds, a “researcher is honour-bound to protect the confidentiality” of the information revealed by participants (Palys and Lowman, 2000:43). However, in some countries for example, in the UK, if certain information about a criminal or his harmful act is revealed, researchers may be duty bound to disclose it. For example, in the UK it is a crime to withhold information about child sexual abuse (Liebling, 2004). Nevertheless, it is a moral, ethical and practical duty of a researcher to inform participants that the information they disclose would be safe with the researcher and no one will have access to it. Confidentiality of disclosed information and anonymity of the participants are equally important in standard prison-based research. Marvasti (2003:138) explains that “confidentiality implies that, except for the researcher, no one else will know the identity of the participants,” and the information they have provided. He further explains that “anonymity means that even the researcher does not know the identity of the respondents” (Marvasti, 2003:138). For the protection and confidentiality of data and anonymity of the participants, many options are available to researchers. For example as already said participants’ information must be kept secret by the researcher whether it is in written or tape recorded material. To disguise identity, pseudonyms may be given to the participants instead of their real names when the interviews are analysed (see Palys and Lowman, 2000; Marvasti, 2003). Therefore, all steps must be taken to keep recorded interviews as confidential property.

Prisoners’ privacy of their information shared is serious issue in the ethical levels. Privacy and confidentiality in prison-based research is much debated on the accounts to what extent both can be maintained. In the prison research, prisoners are considered as a ‘vulnerable group’ thereby by all methodological and ethical means they should be prevented from self-incrimination and their privacy and sensitivity of their shared information should be protected and anonymity and confidentiality of their personal identities should be ensured (Quraishi, 2008). Yet, there is a problem always faced by the

social researchers particularly studying prison and prisoners of whether to breach confidentiality, in this concern it is believed by several researchers that confidentiality and privacy not always absolute but conditional (Martin, 2002; Noaks and Wincup, 2004; Burgess, 2006). Though, generally, a statutory duty does not bind researchers to release previously unrevealed criminal actions and information of prisoners to the prison authority or police, however researchers must pass on such information if asked by the police (Quraishi, 2008).

On the other hand, some researchers, for example, Muzammil Quraishi (2008), suggest that revelation of information of prisoners by researchers to the police or prison administration may provide moral and legal dilemmas to them in which they may be taken as a party in the criminal trial if such information is processed for the legal formalities. In other words, the researchers who listen to such information which can criminalise prisoners may choose appropriate strategy whether to hide it or reveal it to the concerned authorities. Some other researchers also present their suggestions drawing from their experiences in the fieldwork. Martin (2002) learning from her experiences in prison research, contents maintaining confidentiality is a 'grey area' and decision should be taken seriously, yet the decision taking should be the discretion of the researcher.

However, confidentiality in terms of keeping all and every information provided by prisoner participants as secret is not absolute but partly conditional and negotiated between interviewer and interviewee and may be dealt according to the prison prescriptions or as the researcher feels to deal it. For example, in certain situations during interview, like when prisoners reveal their intentions of acting on serious violent acts like suicide (Liebling, 2004), or admit the past committed serious offences for which they were not convicted of, or a researcher feels to be harmed by any means by the prisoners; the researcher may be tend to become liable to pass on such informations to the prison management or authority, as to take legal actions against those acts (Liebling, 2004; Crew, 2006). In the UK prisons, some prison researchers, for instance, Giordano et al (2007: 269) assume disclosing identity and information about the prisoners and their acts circumstantially is ethically justifiable role of prison researcher. Nevertheless, dealing

with prisoner information and prison experiences may be different in different cultures or in countries, which may be treated according to the suitable way or legal formalities by the researcher interviewer.

I protected the identity of prisoners and professionals by allocating each a pseudo name in the form of code. If there was a name Waheed Abbasi, for example, I protected it as 'WA'. The prisoners shared much sensitive information including the criminal acts they had committed in their life course; some of them, as they disclosed, had served minor sentences for their criminal violent acts and, while, some of their criminal acts were resolved by tribal leaders in Jirga system (tribal judgment). They also disclosed their areas or places they lived in and a number of the names of some politicians and the feudal lords who they described were directly or indirectly engaged in criminal activities and their carrying out, and more, they unveiled the peers they jointly became involved in violent criminal doings. Some of the prisoners disclosed that they were involved in sexual and criminal activities which they were not convicted of. When I contacted some prison officials and told them that I heard such information from some prisoners. The prison officials did not pay any attention to it rather they said it was not their business to process such information for legal purposes. I then opted not to disclose any such information shared by some of the prisoners to the prison officials, I thought it might affect my data collection process and put me in legal problematic situations.

All those sensitive information which might incriminate prisoners and their peers and put them in legal problems, I kept confidential and secret (Palys and Lowman, 2001:23; Schlosser, 2008) and excluded from data analysis. There was other issue that I countered, and which was not in my control, that some prison police officers in some prisons were standing near to the place where I was interviewing the prisoners. They were standing to deal with any problems of insecurity if arose and for the safety of the researcher and research participants, as security threats are always present in prison research. Interruption during interview process by the prison police was not in my control since I had no power to say them to move away from the site. In addition, most importantly, I was seriously warned by some of the superintendents about possible physical threats and

criminal mishaps. Therefore, the presence of the police officers was the highly purposeful and official requirement, against which I had no other option but to comply. The prisoners provided me sensitive information, when listening to them I pretended to have no knowledge of their shared information and experiences (Schlosser, 2008), which gave them a sense of security and confidence during talking to me. In addition, my computer was stored safely, never corrupted and was not used by any other person. It was always with me, which also kept the data secure and confidential.

However, in order to maintain anonymity of the names of the professionals, I have revealed them with their profession. For instance, if a professional belonged to police department, he is mentioned as ‘policeman’ and a person from the court is given as ‘advocate’.

### **Establishing rapport with the prisoners**

When interviewing prisoners, it is essential to maintain good rapport with them to help them feel easy talking and disclosing their social and criminal background. To maintain rapport, it is essential that interviewee and interviewer should be comfortable in their sharing. The use of the same language and cultural terms help establish an important communicational relationship between interviewee and interviewer (Noaks and Wincup, 2004). To enable the interview process to proceed, a researcher has to be conversant with the culture and language of the prisoners. Many qualitative researchers have suggested that becoming familiar with the culture and language of the prisoners will establish good rapport in interviewing participants. For example, Noaks and Wincup (2004) and Schlosser (2008) suggest that an interview is a delicate process; a researcher should be careful in using fair and clear language with the participants. This also implies that a researcher has to know the words, terms and language techniques of his participants, otherwise the interview process may not be smooth and the interviewee may feel embarrassed or aggressive, and may withdraw from the study.

Copes and Hoshstetler (2010) suggest that offenders may, for various reasons, become aggressive during an interview. Prisoners may think their life has ended and they can no

longer meet or see their family members (Copes and Hoschstetler, 2010). Furthermore, while asking sensitive questions, participants may feel their ego hurt, they may withdraw from the interview and show their anger or display aggression during the interview (Maruna, 2001; Maruna and Copes, 2005). There may be many other reasons for a prisoner to be aggressive, such as the pain of recalling experiences of acutely stressful economic conditions or their experiences of being victimised by others and they may not want to disclose certain information about their homes. There may be variety of reasons which may affect their mood and willingness to talk. These various factors indicate that there can be multiple issues which can complicate the interview process.

Interviewing prisoners is not an easy task; a researcher may not be able to collect the desired information due to strict prison rules, a lack of cooperation from prison staff and the reluctance and cultural behaviour of inmates. However, all depends on luck, planning and the skill of making the most of the interview in a given time and in the context of prison requirements. What a researcher can learn from prisoners and what prisoners can share are all unpredictable but it has been shown that many researchers interested in talking to criminals in prisons do not have similar experiences, either of accessing prisons, or meeting prisoners and facing prisoners' reactions (King, 2000). With considerable effort, the researcher can acquire as much as information from inmates as possible. In summary, some problems and risks may occur as discussed above within prison settings like prisoners may be aggressive during interview, prisoners may not reveal in-depth information about their past criminal and violent experiences, gatekeepers may be difficult in getting permission to meet prisoners and such others are part of prison-based research. However, because of the different cultures, prison management and behaviour of prisoners across nations, there may take place unpredictable conditions and situations for prison researcher which may be dealt according to the suitable way. Yet planning, preparation and taking care of all possible practical and ethical measures are essential prerequisite for prison-based research.

### **Translation of interview transcripts from Sindhi/Urdu to English**

All my participants, including prisoners and professionals, were Sindhi and Urdu speaking groups. The majority of them spoke Sindhi while five of them spoke Urdu. I had tape-recorded interviews of the both groups of participants. Now the issue arose of translating the interviews from the local language into English. This issue of translation of interviews from one language to another creates problem of reliability and validity at both analytical and epistemological levels in qualitative prison research (Larkin, et al., 2007; Temple and Edwards, 2008). However, in this process of translation, the “researcher’s position,” is important (Temple and Young, 2004:163). I have already described that I knew the language of the participants and belonged to their culture.

I collected interviews and translated them personally from the source language, local, into target language, English. Therefore, the “proficiency” and reliability of the translated text or language is maintained (Larkin, et al., 2007: 471; Temple and Edwards, 2008) by my translating the collected interviews into English. Though the narrative text data were subjected to multiple translating processes (Larkin, et al., 2007; Kvale and Brinkmann, 2009) during the period of analysis and final submission, the integrity and meaningfulness of the sentences of the local language and sense was preserved (Larkin, et al., 2007; Kvale and Brinkmann, 2009). Moreover, by following the ‘backward and forward’ technique (Lopez, et al., 2008), I tried to keep the language in an accurate, natural and understandable form (Young, 2004:1729).

### **Analysis of the interview data**

After collection and translating the interviews, there arose the challenge of analyzing them. Social researchers are much concerned with ‘*how*’ exactly interview data text should be analysed. There are various methods and strategies to analyse and interpret interview data, but for particularly qualitative interviews, the qualitative researchers agree that qualitative data can be analysed by following coding or selection of theming procedure (Riessman, 1993; Attride-Stirling, 2001; Joffe and Yardley, 2004; Elliott, 2005; Thomas, 2006; Braun and Clarke, 2006). Certainly, the strategies of data analysis

and discovery of codes depend on the research objectives and questions, and critical mind of a researcher (Marshall and Rossman, 1999; Miles and Huberman, 1994; Creswell, 2012). In relation to this concern, all these procedural elements are important to follow, for example paying appropriate attention to discovering themes and presenting them in a sensible way by being guided by research objectives and questions, and being critical of data in order to present it in a logical and sensible way.

My research objectives and questions guided me to process my data in a systematic way. I wanted to understand violence from the experiences and viewpoints of the prisoners and professional alike. To understand how and why individuals committed violent crimes, I was focused on the “content” of the thematic narrative stories of the prisoners; “what” was said in their stories was important to me rather than “how” it was said (see Riessman, 1993:2). The themes in their told stories provided me ideas for understanding violence. In other words, what particular explanations and views regarding their violent crimes were described by my participants, were my focus. Therefore, I performed this “analytic focus” extensively, with an “open mind and flexibility” (Noaks and Wincup, 2004:131), being critical of all sentences and paragraphs in the interviews. I searched for themes in the interviews which made sense of violence.

Almost every book on qualitative research writes about the importance of analysis of qualitative interviews. Coding is essentially applied in a qualitative research especially for the reduction of the vast data and analyzing the interview texts. This process involves searching basic themes or codes in the whole narrative text (Marvasti, 2003; Denzin and Lincoln, 2009). For data reduction and discovering meaningful chunks, various terms are used, for example, concept, category, code and theme, however, the terms such as code or theme is frequently and interchangeably used (Riessman, 1993; Thomas, 2006; Braun and Clarke, 2006; Attride-Stirling, 2001; Auerbach and Silverstein, 2003; Denzin and Lincoln, 2009). These, and many other terms, are frequently used in a range of qualitative approaches and researches, especially, in ethnography, grounded theory, phenomenology, and narrative research; additionally, such terms are widely used in social sciences disciplines like sociology, health sciences, psychology and criminology (Crittenden and



Hill, 1971; Kanwar, 1989; Denzin and Lincoln, 2009; Attride-Stirling, 2001; Auerbach and Silverstein, 2003; Silverman, 2003; Presser, 2009; Maruna, 2010). I prefer 'theme' as a basic selected unit or piece to be discovered in the interviews, which is widely and preferably used by many researchers such as Attride-Stirling (2001).

There are important considerations and concerns in the process of qualitative analysis that a researcher has to pay attention to when locating themes in the collected qualitative interviews, just as what is the concept of them, what size of theme it should and how it can be located in the interviews. However, there are varying arguments given by social researchers but many of them agree on the point that a theme is substantial chunk of text that provides meaningful idea to the researchers regarding the research objectives.

Utility and discovery of theme in qualitative research including criminological qualitative research is equally important research methodological procedure in analysis of qualitative interviews. For showing importance of the 'theme' in a qualitative inquiry, Helene Joffe and Lucy Yardley (2004: 57) in their chapter of "content and thematic analysis" in a text book, "Research Methods for Clinical and Health Psychology," edited by David F. Marks and Lucy Yardley (2004), write, that, "a theme refers to a specific pattern found in the data in which one is interested" (Joffe and Yardley (2004). Joffe and Yardley (2004) believe a theme in qualitative analytical procedures, such as content and thematic analysis, refers to an observable content of data found implicitly and objectively in the interview text, and a theme in the data text may be an idea of cause of particular violent act shared by an interviewee with an interviewer. More importantly, the concept or idea of theme may be "drawn from existing theoretical ideas that the researcher brings to the data (deductive coding) or from the raw information itself (inductive coding)" (Joffe and Yardley (2004: 57). A qualitative theme, therefore, is "anything" as meaningful narrative piece of text or a paragraph or a non-verbal expression in interview texts and field notes (Marks and Yardley, 2004:60). While some researchers (e.g, Silverman, 2003; Braun and Clarke, 2006) hold that, a whole interview text can be used as a theme (a protocol, a case).

Qualitative interviews are the narrative explanations about of the social problem which an investigator or researcher wants to understand. Interviews, therefore, are collected in order to understand the problem in hand. A huge body of collected interviews contains ideas and themes about the problem. However, it is equally challenge for the qualitative researchers to discover some ideas, themes or contents in the interviews as to better understand the problem. Discovered and collected together the themes make sense of the social problem. In a qualitative analysis, a theme or thematic idea or sentence is so much important that various researchers use technique of discovering themes according to their methodological strategies and objectives. For example, John McKendy (2006) undertook theming line by line while Thomas and Znaniecki (1918), criminologists from the Chicago School of Criminology, found themes in their personal documents and field notes (see Thomas and Znaniecki, 1918). However, thematic researchers believe that there is no hard and fast rule in the coding process (Braun and Clarke, 2006).

The collected interviews spread over 120 pages of a 'word' document. My inductive approach helped me collect themes by closely reading and re-reading all the interviews more than 15 times; by this process of reading I identified various “surprising, unusual or conceptually interesting” themes in sentence/line or a paragraph regarding understanding violence (see Creswell and Clark, 2007; cited in Liamputtong, 2009:134, see also Attride-Stirling, 2001; Thomas, 2006). I found many themes which recurred again and again and the most frequent themes in the interview data were given priority and were selected and labeled as “basic theme” (Attride-Stirling, 2001, also see Patton, 2002; Marks and Yardley, 2004). Basic themes provided initial concepts of the problem in hand.

Not every line in my interviews texts was meaningful (Thomas, 2006) but certain pieces made concrete and logical sense of the problem. For example, the narrative piece, “On land. We had purchased land near to our home. They did not let us purchase the land”. I counted it as ‘cause of violence’ and included it in a ‘basic theme’ category. And, a narrative piece, “if I had money and I killed ten people, I would not stay here even for a year.” I counted it as ‘thinking style, patterns and belief system’ and included in ‘basic theme’ category. This way, I was able to collect 64 basic themes, which were later

reduced to 54. Many basic themes of ‘cause of violence’ were joined together to make a broader category, an “organizing theme” (Attride-Stirling, 2001). I did the same with others too. I took care that each basic theme should not be too broad or overlap with another.

Interestingly, while reading the interviews I could visualise myself talking to my participants and found myself in a better position to understand the text and its meanings. The theming process involved thinking critically, so wherever I found any theme and had a critical idea about its interpretation, I wrote it on the margins of paper, as a “research memo” (see Elliot, 2005:90). Later on, those ‘research memos’ as indicative/suggestive ideas, were used to interpret and discuss the themes. In addition, the field notes and observations I collected during visiting prisons, talking to prisoners and police officials, were of great help in understanding and interpreting the narratives of violent offenders. I used the same method of analysis with interview data collected from professionals. Out of which many basic themes were similar as I selected from the narratives of violent offenders, but some themes were comparatively different.

I did all this theming/coding manually in an open axial pattern (see Neuman and Robson, 2004; Liamputtong, 2009; Saldana, 2012) without the help of any computer software such as NVivo or NUDIST or ATLAS/ti, because computers only detect words or frequency of words, but not the sense embedded within the words (Morley, 2007). There were many lines or paragraphs in my interviews which did not contain specific words, for example, aggression, but the context and tenor of line or paragraph created an impression or feeling of aggression. So, the theming process used in my interviews was a logical and workable strategy. Like me, many other researchers such as Sharon Morley (2007), Braun and Clarke (2006) agree that researchers can miss many important narrative pieces, because many pieces in interviews do not contain the exact words for the meaning they convey. Systematic selection of properly discovered themes however needs to be arranged properly as to have a cohesive and connected sense out of the body of the interview data.

## **Organisation of the discovered themes**

Organised themes make a clear sense of the social problem that a researcher wants to understand. After discovering basic themes in the raw collected interviews, I thought to organise them. Clusters of basic themes were sorted out based on logical links, contradictions, cohesiveness, and sense making (Patton, 2002; Hsieh and Shannon, 2005). Ideally some researchers, for example Morse and Field (1995) prefer 10 to 15 clusters to merge, to make a broad category of the themes, but the selection and clustering depends on how many relevant or corresponding themes are found and how many themes can possibly merged together to make sense of a broader theme. In this pattern of organizing themes, I found Jennifer Attride-Stirling's style of organizing basic themes helpful. Her method is user friendly and reasonable to follow.

Jennifer Attride-Stirling in her article, "Thematic networks: an analytical tool for qualitative research," provides the most useful way of structuring themes. She has provided a procedure or method which explains very effectively and understandably a style of structuring themes. I categorised the themes into "basic", "organizing" and "global", terms which indicate both their sense and positions. I had a total of 54 "basic themes." The "basic theme" is an initial theme, an idea or a concept derived from or discovered in the interview texts. The "organizing theme" served to contain several "basic themes" to present a coherent and connected body of several selected basic themes; the organizing theme was used as a sub-heading. While the "global theme" contained several "organizing themes," used as main heading in the empirical chapter(s) (see Attride-Stirling, 2001). By merging basic themes into organizing themes and organizing themes into global themes, I had a complete tree of the significant narrative themes. This process of incorporating, deleting and structuring themes continued throughout the data interpretation and writing or, and up to the final submission of the thesis.

## Conclusions

Interviews collected from the prisoners convicted of violent offences provide narratives on distinctive social and cultural information about violence. Prisoner-based research in Pakistan is unpredictable, although, while prisoners cooperate with outside researchers, however, there is no guarantee of compliance from prison administration with researchers. Because of the low cooperation of some prison authorities, I could not always collect in-depth interviews. Almost every person related to the prison including each superintendent, clerks and prison police staff was a gatekeeper for me and had an impact on my research process. Because of the help of some superintendents, I was able to undertake interviews with inmates from three prisons but because of the lack of cooperation from a superintendent and staff members in the fourth prison, I was not able to undertake satisfactory interviews there. At the outset, though I was aware of possible methodological and ethical problems in prisons but prisons in Sindh provided me somehow similar and different experiences that I shared in this chapter. On that basis, I can say prison research in Pakistan particularly in Sindh is difficult experience but not impossible. Knowledge about possible prison problems gained from Western literature and experiences shared by my friend helped me becoming confident and successful in collection of data from prisoners and professionals.

Finally, for the first objective of my study, I was able to collect interviews from prisoners in four prisons but because the interviews from the prisoners were not as in-depth I had hoped, therefore, I had to collect good information from the professionals, which finally provided me with a deep and broad understanding of violence and its associated problems. In addition, the collection of interviews from the professionals was my second objective in this study. Prisoners provided narratives of poverty, disorganised and biased political and feudal structures and a subjective criminal justice system. Prisoners' narratives of violence were constructed as justified and rationalised; moreover, their experiences of cultural conflicts were a major influence which made them proud of their violent actions and encouraged them to become aggressive and assert a culturally appropriate masculine cultural identity. Professionals provided enough information about

violence which suggested that the State and its structural agents create unavoidable and frustrating conditions that entangle individuals in criminal and violent activities without having criminal intentions. In extremely uncertain social, political and legal conditions, poor social groups are always in the search of economic resources. For them, to react violently is not a serious issue if it provides hope of, or enables them to secure financial resources.

The interviews of participants were analysed thematically. Many 'basic themes' were identified and discovered in the interview texts which made sense of the problem. Several 'basic themes' were merged under an 'organizing theme' as a broader category of concept or thematic idea about the problem, and similarly several 'organizing themes' were then collected together to creating the sense of a 'global theme', which served as sub-headings and headings respectively. All of these themes are given and analysed across the analytical chapters, five, six and seven. This structuring scheme of basic themes into organizing themes and organizing themes into global themes helped me present data from interviews in a logical, comprehensive and cohesive way, making selected narrative themes understandable, presentable and interpretable.

In the following Chapters, five, six and seven, I will analyse and discuss the narratives I collected from the prisoners.

## **Chapter Five**

### **Violent offenders' accounts of their social background and past life experiences**

In the previous chapter, I described the research methods used for data collection and their analysis. The qualitative interview data collected from forty prisoners and forty professionals respondents were analysed through a thematic analytical process. The recurrent and dominant themes found in the all interview data are organised in three chapters, fifth, sixth and seventh. This chapter is dedicated to explaining and describing the background information of the prisoners interviewed for this study, their socioeconomic conditions and the experiences of their life in both rural and urban settings. The information about age, occupation, marital status, and education level was sought before asking them the questions about their life experiences and violent crimes they committed. All the prisoners I spoke to were male and whose age range was 22 to 65 at the time of interviewing them. The average age of the male participants was 37.97. The majority of the prisoners (35) belonged to rural areas, while a few (5) belonged to urban areas in Sindh and other parts of the country (see Table 2). Majority of the prisoners were illiterate (see Table 3) and majority of them spoke Sindhi language (see Appendix IV).

### **Poverty and violence**

Poverty and poor socioeconomic conditions were significant underlying factors behind violent activities of the convicted violent offenders. Many participants started their violent life from their early age while some observed violent incidents in their early life arising from petty issues like fights of children on cricket grounds which led to violent conflicts in killing and injuring the people. Some participants observed their relatives having sexual relations with their female members, while some witnessed bomb blasts in their early life. Many of the participants involved in various criminal and violent activities in their early. Some participants shot their relatives to death with a gun, while some engaged in ethnic and politically violent activities like shooting, injuring and assaulting their opponents in violent encounters. All these and many more were the early observations of and involvements in violent activities of the prisoners.

Many prisoners began to be concerned with earning livelihood and also began involving in violent activities from their early age. For example, a prisoner told me:

A: I worked on the agricultural land. When I was 14, I came to prison (IM).

Another prisoner narrated:

A: When I came here in prison, I was 17 and half years old. I worked at the electrical that time (AJ).

Another prisoner also shared that he was involved in violent activities at an early age and for this same violent act, a First Information Report (FIR) was registered against him in a police station.

A: I was 15 at that time of this incident. Two times, FIRs were issued to me. There took place an incident (crime), because I was young at that time, the other adults were arrested and sent to jail because of me (MA).

Many participants began their violent criminal activities from early life, some began from at the age of 14, some at 15 while some at 17 and later on at different stages of age. However most of them were poor and had economically responsible life to take care of their family members. Becoming responsible for their family members made them engage in various earning fields. The profile information describes that many of the participants belonged to poor families, had big family members and were unemployed. Some were peasants, some worked as helpers to a mason on daily wages, some worked in shops engaged in bangles and iron box making, a few were rickshaw, taxi and truck drivers, a very small number were cooks and body guards to politicians, while a few had had government jobs (see Appendix 4).

Most of the participants spoke in detail about their vulnerable economic conditions, poor social and economic backgrounds. The rural participants were very concerned and obsessed with their poor conditions such that in response to my question, “can you tell me about you and your family?” they shared nothing but that they said they had “no land, no money.” Some participants shared that they were responsible of taking care of their family which consisted of many members. A prisoner who was convicted of murder reported:



A: I have 20-25 family members; No land no money. We earned 200-250 rupees (1.56 Pounds, at 2015 exchange rates) as a daily wage for labour (AS).

Another participant shared how he was compelled because of the poor economic and social conditions to work for his family. He narrated:

A: I was raised in an area in [urban area], when I was of 8 years, my father made me work on a book shop. I worked there for 15 years till I was 23 years old. My father worked as paint master and when my younger brother grew young, I also took him to work with me on the same book shop. Because it was not good for him to roam around and involve in trivial activities, it was better for him to sit at a place and work (GHS).

Many participants shared experiences of serious poor conditions including being unemployed, being orphan and having no good sources of feeding their families from their early age. They did not get education, did not spend their time in healthy activities, moreover, low economic sources of their families demanded them to earn for them from an early age. A prisoner could not get education because there was no proper system of education, he reported:

A: I lived in [a rural place] I, spent all my age there. In our village there were schools, teachers came for one week and remained absent for two weeks. When teacher did not come we took animals to nearby fields. We did some work on others land and of land lords' on daily wages. We were poor, sometimes went to work as a helper to mason (FS).

Poverty was so impressive and demanding for the people that they were highly frustrated and concerned to earn for their families. Another prisoner convicted of dacoity (armed robbery) stated:

A: My early life was to earn and look after my family, my two sisters and one brother; they were all younger than me (Z).

Some prisoners had no hope of escaping their poor economic conditions. A prisoner who was on trial of murder, recounted that he had been working as a white-washer before coming to prison and had witnessed criminogenic conditions like a drugs trade including heroin and local '*Pan*' and '*Gutka*' (types of drug) criminals and criminal activities in his

neighbourhood. He himself was a drug addict. During his whole interview repeatedly talked about his poverty.

Q: Can you tell me about you and your family?

A: Born in [an urban area], grew up there and spent all my life there. Got birth in poverty and will die in poverty, poverty emits from my face (A).

Though, he was of 41 years of age he looked much older. His voice and way of talking was very slow, sometimes too slow to understand. But he showed and narrated much concerns and worries of his life he had endured. He did not show any hope to rise from the poor conditions of life, rather he believed he has no any source or way to lead a better and prosperous life. Participants described many vulnerable and serious issues of life which not only had made them struggle for prosperous life but also had impacted them to be pessimistic. One prisoner suggested that there were problems everywhere in society, people were too poor to afford school fees and different systems of school further frustrated people. He commented:

A: If you go to government school there is no education, if you go to private school there is much financial burden for one to get education and buy books. God may create a man who should be sincere with nation (AH).

Poverty not only affected people in their early life but also their present life in prison. Some prisoners' period of sentence could be relaxed and reduced if they could pay a little amount of money which was fixed for them as fine. Having not enough money to pay for the fine which was awarded in the form of money to court to get their sentence relaxed, some prisoners seemed and were very much concerned and frustrated with the thoughts how would they have that much amount. One 55-year-old prisoner convicted of murder, said:

A: My sentence could be less now, but they (judges) have also awarded a fine of two lacs (two hundred thousand Pakistani rupees/1250 Pounds, UK). How can I pay that? It means, because I have no money, I will be here for two more years (NMM).

People from rural areas were not alone in being concerned about the poor economic conditions, so too were those from urban areas. The participants from urban areas were worried about their poor economic status and needs of their families. An offender, who was on criminal trial for mobile phone snatching came from an urban area and had a shop of bangles which was previously owned by his father. He narrated he had to struggle hard for his family to lead a stable life. When he was introduced to me in a court by his advocate and a police officer, the police officer told me, “Sir, he is a rich person; he can buy cars and rents out houses. But it is his fate which has brought him here.” Likewise, prisoners also belonging to urban areas told me that some of them made iron boxes and some had book binding jobs.

A prisoner, who earned money by driving a taxi, truck and horse carriage, blamed the government and social structure of society for not being as supportive of poor people. He was convicted of kidnapping a child, but he denied to have committed the offence. He was very critical of how poor economic conditions impacted on the social life of people. He declared:

A: Sir, it is their city (city of rich and powerful people). Pakistan means (a little pause); if you have money, everything is yours. Advocates are yours, friends are yours (a little pause), but if you do not have money, no one is yours, your own relatives will not own you. They begged and borrowed money of 20 thousands, we have given it to an advocate for registering our case of appeal with the court, and still we owe 15 thousand to him (J).

Participants suffered significantly from the poor economic conditions. Their economic life was so affected that they could not feed their families, get education and lead a sound and stable life. Poor and low levels of economic resources not only affected their life structure but their thinking patterns also. They did not consider the social and legal system as just. People not only suffered from limited economic resources but also experienced violent conditions in their life. Yet, analytically speaking, most of the participants had environmental experiences which included observations of criminal and violent incidents and involvement in them. They not only observed violent events in their homes but also on streets. Early observations of violent and criminal activities affected them so much that they unknowingly involved in such violent acts and led a violent and

criminal life. On the other hand, almost most of the participants suffered from poor economic conditions, which affected their attainment of education and positive development. Because of the loss of their parents, many participants were deprived of their parental supervision and led a wayward life.

In the following section, I will describe how participants narrated their early life experiences and lived criminal and violent styles.

### **Normalisation of violence in rural communities**

Participants interviewed for this study belonged to rural and urban areas and different provinces like Sindh, Punjab and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. Yet a majority of them belonged to Sindh province. They shared their ethnic compositions, occupations and marital status. A majority of them were Sindh, a few were Urdu speaking, and a very few Punjabi speaking (the people belonging to Punjab spoke in Urdu with me). A majority of the participants belonged to rural areas while a few belonged to urban areas. There were significant differences in terms of living styles, causes and motivations behind involvement in violent activities and early life experiences of both groups of the participants.

However, there were similarities in social and economic life standards. Both had serious economic poor life styles from their early age.

The rural life revolved around facing poor economic conditions, becoming involved in conflicts arising over agricultural related issues, encountering violent interactions with community members and being violently victimised by rural community leaders. Rural people were hostile and reacted angrily when they failed to receive water on their agricultural land. They also reacted violently to people who sexually abused their female family members. People avoided reporting their crimes and victimisations to police; rather they relied on local community leaders who penalised the criminals with large fines and sometimes by incarcerating them in private prisons. Prisoners and professionals described how feudal lords held huge areas of agricultural land and property which earned them power and dominant status in the villages. Moreover, the professionals

suggested that feudal lords being part of the bureaucracy and national politics contributed to criminal elements in rural communities and victimisation of the community members. Villagers, being uneducated, politically unaware and economically poor had no choice but to surrender to these community feudal leaders. Moreover, as some prisoners related, the feudal lords organised criminal gangs of robbers not only to carry out criminal activities against local people but also to protect them from local people. The rural community was structured around extremes; some were highly poor and powerless while others were extremely rich and powerful.

The prisoners belonging to rural communities were simple and innocent in the explanations of their lived subjective experiences. They did not understand the concept of violence and crime; the question, “Have you ever observed any incident of violence in your life?” was not clear to them. They did not reveal very much in their answers. However, when they were given examples such as murder, killing and assault, they responded “Yes, like this thousands”, “such incidents take place regularly.” Moreover, they believed that these incidents go from generation to generation. Many of the prisoners viewed criminal and violent acts as part of their normal life (“In the village, I had fought many times and seen many incidents of disputes”).

Some prisoners presented serious information of their early life, their deprivations and their observations about community structure. However, some were fearful of giving serious and sensitive information which was mainly related to conflicts between different castes and rural communities, but slowly they shared them. They shared how people and different social groups engaged in violent life and how physical, psychological and violent victimisation took place in their communities. Village communities were, as many of these men narrated their experiences, violent and subculturally deviant and violent.

Q: Did you observe violent incidents or disputes in your childhood?

A: No, no, nothing happened with me. Nothing like that I saw, but I heard (AS).

His “nothing” and “no” probably indicate his fear of telling stories about others. Nevertheless, my probing questions elicited more information from him. He was convicted of murder along with his four uncles. The interview continued:

Q: What have you heard?

A: Heard that there were murders, killings and such kinds of incidents (AS).

Like him, who denied having witnessed violent incidents, but later he shared some serious information related to his village, another prisoner also denied his observations about violent activities in his village, but then shared. A participant, who shared sensitive evidence of his village about violent conflicts between different castes and violent interpersonal actions, initially was reluctant in telling, he shared:

Q: Did you observe violent incidents or disputes in your childhood?

A: No. There were not. The two other castes, [a caste] and [a caste] were living there in our village; all were in harmony with each other. We have spent a huge life, spent there 40 to 45 years; there had not been any disagreement or conflict with anyone. Many years have passed [a caste] and we, [a caste] have not fought. In the city and other near [a village], there are many tribal conflicts, these [a caste] and [a caste]. Recently [a caste] and [a caste] fought with each other also, many people killed. Except these there are other castes, [a caste], [a caste], [a caste], there are continuous conflicts between them (RB).

The participants also shared community structure and interpersonal relations, and how criminal cases and incidents were resolved. A prisoner commented:

Q: If there is any conflict between two castes, how is it solved?

A: Yes, there are community leaders, also of our [his caste]. For all the communities, there are their leaders, landlords. Everyone is concerned with their own. We are poor; we do labour on daily basis. The community, from which man was murdered, had a conflict with our community. He (the murdered man) usually come to our community and had blackened our community (had sexual relations with two girls from the prisoner's community). Our relatives [a caste] have told me about this case of murder (AS).

He told the man who was his relative that the other man was killed and placed before the door of his home. So he, along with some other people, took the dead body to the deceased man's family. Subsequently, he was convicted of this murder along with his

four uncles. However, before this, upon visiting his sister's home, he was seriously beaten and held hostage for four days by the husband of his sister. He described that before that particular violent crime that he was convicted of, though denied of having committed it, he narrated he had shot to death two people but was not arrested. His observations of the various kinds of violent incidents in his life, including injuring, fighting, conflicts and killings, and multiple experiences of victimisation and criminal involvements portray how criminal and violent life structure is of the rural communities and individuals. The interview data also describe that individuals kept arms in their homes for various reasons for example for protecting themselves from other criminal robbers and animals from theft.

However, some participants had experiences of physical and emotional victimisation when they worked in the homes of feudal lords where they were insulted. For example, a person who had worked on agricultural land, also worked in the home of a feudal lord had experience of being insulted which affected his thinking patterns. He stated:

A: I remained just like a slave or servant (KB).

Victimisation was common in rural areas. Not only males were victims of violence but females were subjected to victimisation also. As the following narrative describes, male people did not respect or value women. It is not only that males are involved in violent criminal activities but also become victims of violence

A prisoner explained the behaviour of men with women:

A: There are tribal conflicts, some are because of a piece of land, some are because of a boy, about why a boy retains a friendship with someone so why not with me. Or in the case of a woman, why she meets another person? Innocent women are killed without any apparent reason, perhaps because she is divorced. It is all because of one's enmity. As there are conflicts with one another, people know how to take revenge against someone; one's wife is killed, or it becomes easier to kill one's wife and kill other men. This is happening. A woman is in the hands of man, she cannot do anything. When a man gets married, he does not do justice to her on marital basis, but becomes involved in other sexual and illegal activities (AS).

Rural women not only suffered bad treatment from their family members but also male members especially young ones including boys and girls were also subjected to sexual violence within the community. A prisoner described how twice he had sexually abused some of the girls of his relative families. The prisoner described how he was found involved in sexual acts.

A: They found me in sexual relations (with a girl). For that act of guilt, I had paid enough money; it was in 1996, I remember that (RBS).

The life of rural people revolved around experiencing poor economic conditions and being victims of the feudal lords. Moreover, as many police officers, advocates and politicians pointed out, people could be aggressive about minor issues, for example, they could be jealous if they saw some young boys with some other males, they could be hostile if someone spat in front of them and some people could be frustrated seeing other people with more money. Such violent, angry and frustrating conditions were part of rural life. Deviance, violence, victimisation and the instability of life of the rural community, made many people so frustrated that they left home to look for a more economically rewarding and peaceful life. Some of the participants said that they migrated to urban areas or other nearby places because of the criminal problems and low chances of social survival in their village. A prisoner described how his family suffered from economic problems so went to urban areas to earn money. He stated:

A: Early days we spent here (rural Sindh) with friends. We were poor. My father was employed in the irrigation department. We could not get education more than 5<sup>th</sup> class, we could not afford to buy books and other things. I have one younger brother and four sisters. Salary of my father was low; we had to look for labour (work) (RB).

So, to earn money and find better economic opportunities, he moved to urban areas. Not only rural people migrated to urban areas, but many other urban people migrated to other places, other provinces, because of extreme insecurity and political violence. A few prisoners described that they observed violent incidents between political parties and there were many violent incidents in their neighbours which made them frustrated and



fearful. A prisoner stated that he came from another province of Pakistan, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa to Sindh province in order to search for employment. He related that when he came to new the place, along with his wife he started working in someone's home of cleaning dishes and washing clothes.

On the other hand, life in the urban areas was not safe for the rural and other people who had migrated internally. Some prisoners said that criminal gangs, operated by political parties, used them for criminal purposes. They stated that many people who came to urban areas and failed to find jobs or any work often joined criminal gangs. A prisoner convicted of violent assault and attempted to murder shared:

A: Yes, poor people in Karachi often wander on streets. And, most often they are trapped by a gang member or leader or influential person and they are given arms and are misused in several activities (RB).

This prisoner had come to an urban area and became the diehard bodyguard of a politician. People migrated from one place to another for better economic benefits, but finding no immediate source of income became involved in violent assaults, killings and encounters with the police. Rural life was full of socioeconomic problems and violent activities. They observed murder and sexual activities and violent conflicts between community members. Rural people because of the anger and jealousy could be involved in killing others and taking revenge from people against their personal enmity and biases. For some, rural life was so violent and criminal that many of the people migrated to urban areas to live a better life and change their living styles. In contrast to the experiences of the rural community who faced violent conflicts on agricultural land, experience high levels of poverty and violent victimisation by feudal lords, the life experiences of urban people rotated around ethnic and political conflicts and struggles to gain better economic opportunities.

### **Violence in urban settings**

The shared experiences of the participants from urban areas were mainly related to poor economic conditions, ethnic and political conflicts. The participants shared that they had no sufficient sources of income and no social life. Some men sold milk, some drove

rickshaws and sold bangles to earn money. One participant narrated his life story saying that his wife was involved in the sex trade and provided girls to people and political party members. His wife did not live with him, so he had to carry his infant daughter with him on a rickshaw the whole day to earn a livelihood. He further described that, when his daughter grew up as a young woman, his wife came to ask for possession of the daughter. But he did not want to give his daughter to his wife because he knew she would involve her in the sex trade. A dispute arose from this and became violent when he injured his wife and shot and killed one of her relatives. Some participants described that they injured and killed persons from opposing ethnic groups. A number of them said that they used weapons such as pistols, Kalashnikovs and guns in their violent activities. However, some considered such violent acts as “not major” incidents. People from urban areas stated that their political parties gave them their identity and they were optimistic of the party leaders of providing them employment and better economic benefits. However, another prisoner, whose life was spent in violent activities, and who was recently arrested for mobile phone snatching, wanted to quit his violent life and just live peacefully with his family. The participants who came from the urban areas shared many experiences of poor economic and social conditions and disorderly conditions of politics and violent structure. The life of the urban participants was mainly related to political and ethnic activities. A prisoner convicted of violent assault and theft shared his observations:

Q: Did you observe any incident of violence in your early life?

A: Yes, I saw many people fighting. There were many such incidents; I observed people fighting and many others similar. Twice, there were bomb blasts. Once there was a political procession, when the procession ended there was a bomb blast. There is a bazaar; I went there to buy vegetables. As I was standing there, there was a blast. I saw many people injured and some were dead; and women were injured also (AB).

Another participant, convicted of injuring a person, talked about the violent structure of political life in urban areas:

A: There are not many, but I remember only one; that there was a strike in [an urban area] for 7 to 8 days continuously, there was continuous firing around the city; it was [a political party]. I was in my shop, before my eyes, they shot a person and then shot two other persons, and then they ran away. During the time

of assassination of (a leader of a political party), there was complete disorder, my family did not let me go out; the police arrested whoever they found (SGH).

These extensive experiences and the observations of participants explain the chaotic, anarchic and disorderly conditions in urban communities; they further indicate the weak control of the criminal justice system. Another participant shared his violent experiences. To him, violence was not a serious act, but conventional and normal behaviour. He and his close friends were regular consumer of alcohol. Beating with sticks, injuring with fists, getting seriously injured and hospitalised as a result, along with shooting someone to death were part of his life. He was proud of a violent life. He had been in prison several times before.

Q: Did you ever use any kind of weapons?

A: Yes many. We used pistols, guns and knives, and even used them on people (S).

He spoke with a confidence. He was arrested for mobile phone snatching robbery, but he did not like being in prison for only the minor act of mobile snatching. He felt it an insult to his violent status. He commented, “Getting released is no matter, I will be stigmatised because I have committed it.” The same prisoner further shared his experiences about the nature of disputes and violent activities he had observed and committed during his life course.

Q: What kinds of incidents and disputes did you get involved in?

A: Not major. There were no major incidents, but there were many incidences of disputes like when we used pistols, we exchanged bullets, even I received bullets (shots), I shot other people also, it was normal, part of life that time in my youth. For serious injuries, I was hospitalised. It was the area of [a political party], that gave us weapons. We needed pistols when hanging posters, doing chalking. Any party would not like that the other opposite party may do such acts, even chalking in its area (S).

Q: Did you ever injure anyone or someone injured you?

A: Yes. I remember I had received a burst of Kalashnikov in the right side of my belly. They shot me deceitfully. In one major incident, one leader, in-charge of [a political party] was killed in [an area in a city]. In that incident, I received that burst. I was seriously injured (S).

Each of his words was serious and well pronounced. He knew those who caused him harm were also in the jail. He asserted that he would deal (fight) with them in the jail. He declared that he wanted to quit his criminal and political life but his party did not like it so he was blamed for this case of robbery case to punish him.

These accounts describe how the urban structure is mainly operated by a political network system which creates threats to the people. People know that without having political affiliation, they would not be safe. During their involvement in politics, people are involved in various violent activities like kidnapping, robbery, killing and extortion. Because of their deep and serious experience of violence, they are not afraid of becoming involved in any violent act; violence becomes part of their life.

In the disorganised social order, weak social control and corrupt police enforcement, individuals take it upon themselves to safeguard themselves. Rural and urban communities were so insecure and social order was so disorganised that people needed to protect themselves by all means of violence possible. Keeping and using weapons was one of the means of their self-protection.

### **The availability of weapons and violence**

Violent acts were carried out with different weapons. Weapons, such as, guns, pistols, Kalashnikov, knives, axes and sticks were commonly kept by many individuals in rural and urban areas. There were many reasons, according to the views of professionals and prisoners, why it was necessary to keep weapons, for instance, to safeguard cattle and livestock from criminals and theft, particularly in villages, and to protect themselves from political and ethnic opponents in urban areas. A prisoner said it is a tradition in Sindh to keep arms in their homes in villages, “to protect their animals from theft; there is much theft in villages.” However, there are many other events where shots of guns and pistols were fired in the air as sign of happiness, as in marriages and the winning of elections polls. Several participants told various reasons of having and using weapons. For example, a prisoner said about the weapons, which he meant that weapons are commonly used in some particular activities.

A: See in a marriage ceremony, a minimum of one thousand shots will be fired in a marriage ceremony (K).

Some described that political party leaders provide weapons to their workers, for example one prisoner narrated:

A: It was the area of [a political party]; they gave us weapons (S).

Another prisoner described that weapons were mainly used in violent conflicts.

A: Yes, this political leader whose one of the party workers had died supported these people morally, physically and through weapons. Before this incident of the fight, we had already fought with them and now they thought that [a caste] has injured someone of them so it was their insult. So they came back with 30-35 people having weapons. In that incident, two of their people were injured, while three of our people (BAJ).

Many reasons were revealed from interviews with professionals and prisoners. A senior police officer suggested that having a pistol or gun makes a man feel powerful, however, then he looks for a chance to use it. He further argued that if a pistol is with you, you will feel like you are flying in the air. A man will search for a chance to use it, when a person has crossed you or abused you; it is a good chance to use a gun. Weapons accelerate the chances of violence. Violence becomes more violence in nature and act if it is carried out with a weapon. Some local researchers, for example, the quantitative research of Chotani et al, (2002) based on data collected from hospitals about medical injury cases, examined reasons for injuries and death. They found guns, pistols, axes and knives were major factors related to violent deaths in Sindh. Weapons are openly carried, sold and bought, especially in tribal and rural areas. From the interviews with prisoners and professional, it was also learnt that buying a gun or any weapon, like Kalashnikov, was not difficult. There are shops selling firearms, but to a shocking level, I learned from the interviews, that police were also involved in selling guns, pistols and other lethal weapons to individuals. In addition, politicians and feudal lords, and rich businesspersons carry armed bodyguards for their protection.

Keeping arms was not only a fashion of rich people but of the poor also. A prisoner expressed that keeping weapons was a fashion; even people who did not earn much also wanted to keep them.

A: Nowadays, there is a social trend. A person who does not have any grains to eat, he has a bullet in his home. This kind of social environment is here nowadays. This may not be with an educated man but it is with an un-educated man (RJ).

Use of weapons is so common that family members, including young children, are taught to use them (see Chapter Six). Prisoners at an early age stated they had used weapons. In a violent event, a prisoner, at the age of 15, used rifle to kill two persons approaching his home.

A: It was a kartoos (cartridge/bullet), that two people were killed at a time. For this action, there was no report or FIR against me (MA).

Other prisoners talked of their use of weapons proudly, for instance, a prisoner from a rural community who was seventeen year of age, the age of his criminal conviction, said in his interview:

A: Bullets of *Kilashan* (Kalashnikov) were fired into him (AS).

In honour killing/murder cases examined in this study, an axe was frequently used.

Q: How was man killed?

A: With an axe.

Q: Did you ever use any kind of weapon, gun or axe?

A: Not gun, never. Only an axe, I have used, it is our custom to carry it on agricultural land and use it to cut trees. It is a culture of Sindhi people, using it (KHK).

In urban areas, as I learned from interviews, mostly guns, pistols and Kalashnikovs were used. A prisoner belonging to urban areas was proud of his own violent experiences, he had used pistols, sticks and Kalashnikovs in violent political events to injure and kill members of the opposing political party. He explained why and how weapons were used in urban settings.

A: Yes. I remember I had received a burst of Kalashnikov in the right side of belly. They shot me in deceit. In one major incident, one leader, in-charge of [name of political party] was killed in [a name of urban city] in Sindh. In that incident, I received that burst. I was seriously injured (S).

Weapons were frequently used in assault and murder/honour killing by many of the participant prisoners. Excessive use of weapons in both rural and urban areas was a common, traditional and cultural act for self-protection and reactive aggression. Observations of and involvement in violent activities from early life were significant part of the rural and urban communities. Both of the communities observed poor economic concisions like having no financial resources to get education, low or no chances for unemployment and insufficient opportunities to earn enough to feed their families. Moreover, structural problems like criminal and violent activities in both communities affected lifestyle of the people that they involved in them also. Murder, shooting and getting injured were part of the life of the participants. To them, crime and violence were not serious events in society, but were normal and routine activities. In addition, use of weapons was highly appreciated by many participants for the reasons of safeguarding their livestock and their life. Corrupt criminal justice and criminal behaviour of local community leaders influenced violent behaviour of the participants.

## **Conclusions**

The narratives of violent offenders reveal significant themes. The themes of violence indicate that respondents experienced a great deal of suffering in their social and economic life. Poverty and low social opportunities were the significant problems in the life of these participants. From their early age, the participants were highly obsessed with low social and economic facilities in their life. The respondents described how they could not obtain an education because of the poor economic conditions; so from their early life they had to struggle hard to earn money for their big families. All of the respondents led a poor life and most of them were illiterate and unemployed. Some of the rural people, because of the meagre earning possibilities and poor job facilities, migrated to urban areas. On the other hand, the life of rural people was not peaceful. From the early age of 14, they became involved in violent activities like fighting and violent disputes with other

people and community members. Killing and kidnapping were part of their normal life. However, because of the fear that they would be arrested and sent to prison for their acts, they looked for the help of their local community leaders, the feudal lords. These community leaders and feudal lords, knowing the vulnerability of the poor people, subjected them to various forms of victimisation such as making them servants in their homes, insulting them and beating them physically.

Many of the participants were from rural areas and worked as peasants on the agricultural lands of others including feudal lords, some worked for intermittent jobs, some had no jobs at all, while some earned their livelihood by driving rickshaws and taxis. Though, they were poor and had no jobs, but they had high esteem for themselves. They did not accept any social and psychological insulting behaviour or act against them, rather they resented and resisted against such acts. However, these physical and psychological acts and behaviour against them created anger and aggressive attitude and feelings in them which resulted they became violent in their interpersonal relations. Violence thus became the routine behaviour for these people, killing, assaulting, kidnapping, robbing and injuring were part of the life of these people. They showed high aggression and disapproval for the social conditions which they claimed created social gaps and problems for them. They equally blamed and accused police and court for not resolving criminal issues between different social groups. In the result, as they described, feudal lords who were community leaders took benefits of such vulnerable conditions of these people and began victimising them on social, economic and physical levels in the rural communities. However, because of the risky and vulnerable conditions in the rural areas, poor people migrated to urban areas for the search of their livelihood. There, having no education and social skills, they joined criminal gangs and became involved in criminal and violent activities. Being frustrated and disappointed with low economic conditions, the participants, as they described, developed pathology of violence against their oppressors. They were violent not only in their communities but also within their homes. Their violence against women and girls became part of their social life in their domestic life.



On the other hand, urban people also had a poor life. They also struggled to earn money from their early life by working in shops of bangles and book binding. They observed various violent political activities in their life. The urban population was divided along different ethnic lines with groups speaking different languages. Political parties based on ethnic groups became involved in various conflicts with each other. Injuring and fatal shooting were part of the life of the urban people. In most of the cases of violent activities, ethnic and political party workers used lethal weapons. Suffering from impoverished conditions, violent victimisation, early involvement in violent crimes and having no faith in the criminal justice system all affected their life and thinking patterns so that they did not consider their violent acts to be wrong or criminal. To them killing and injuring others was not a major violent act. Killing others and getting injured themselves was part of their normal life. Many were proud of their violent background.

In the following chapter, I will analyse how violent offenders made sense of their violent acts and how they described their journey ending up in prison. I will explain how prisoner perceive their violent acts, describe their social problems and explain their committed violent acts.

## **Chapter Six**

### **Making sense of violent crime**

The previous chapter described background information of the prisoner participants and their life experiences from their premature stage of life. The chapter presented the participants' sociodemographic characteristics and early life activities. The Chapter found that people from their premature age suffered from low or no economic sources and social incentives, which affected them so much that they could not obtain education and learn essential skills for their social life development. The prisoner violent offenders had various stressful experiences from their early age. Parents of the participants who struggled hard for collecting financial sources and worked on intermittent jobs like working on shop of bangles, making iron boxes and working on agricultural lands also did not earn much money, died during the early of the participants. Left alone without parents, financial sources and education, the young men found themselves as responsible of their families' social survival, so began engaged in earning livelihood for them. Along with their involvements in earning livelihood from their untimely age and being vulnerable to various social and violent conditions, they also became involved in various violent activities like violent disputes within families and with friends. Being socially, politically and ethnically motivated, they engaged in injuring and killing activities, kidnapping and violently assaulting habits from their early age. The extensive experiences of the disorganised social and economic conditions and involvement in various violent acts in rural and urban settings affected the structure of life of the prisoners so seriously that they took their life was meant to be earning and criminal and violent acts they engaged in were part of their life. They did not perceive their violent acts as morally wrong or criminally violent, did not differentiate between right and wrong behaviour and did not know the consequences of their criminal and violent activities.

The analytical understanding developed from the narrative explanations and biographical accounts of their social and violent life makes sense how men convicted of violent crimes were affected by disorganised and limited social, economic and educational opportunities. Not having proper guidance and supervision of their parents, the

participants began to involve in searching for social and economic prospects and observed and involved in criminal and violent activities in their communities from their primary age. In this chapter, I will analyse interview data collected from both sets of participants, prisoners and professionals. I collected interview information from the prisoners as first so I will analyse and describe them first and then I will deal with the data information of professionals under different themes of violence. The purpose of this chapter is to develop understanding about how and why of violence and how prisoners and professional made sense of violence and violent crime in Sindh and Pakistan.

### **Accounts of violence**

This study collected the narratives of violent offenders through which they made sense of their actions. The narratives reflected their cultural identity and sense of responsibility towards their homes. For example, some their behaviours in terms of their masculine responsibility of taking care of their families (“I was alone to look after my family”). Others saw their violent responsibility in terms of defence of their families (“suppose, if we had compromised with them and not fought back, they could have destroyed all of us”). The first narrative describes a masculine capability that offender felt to take care of his family, while the second narrative describes the sense of responsibility for defending home through use of masculine power and intentional capacity.

However, some violent offenders who perceived their social, political and economic circumstances as unequal and unjust constructed their narratives of social conflicts and recklessness of actions. Their poor and deprived ‘self’ was in conflict with ‘richness’ and powerfulness of others. For example, a prisoner stated, “If my children are hungry, why are their children eating. If I am not safe, why are they safe?” These narratives of violence and social conflicts speak a lot about their sufferings, victimisations and conceptual development. Yet, some prisoners provided situations of conflicts as “ifs” and “supposes” which were the conditional situations of poverty and conflict that if such situations really took place could lead to dangerous and violent results. Some violent offenders presented their violent self by constructing hostile narratives, for example, a violent offender constructed his narrative, “see, if a poor man has anything, the powerful

man will try to deprive him of that thing” and other constructed as, “suppose, if we had behaved as compromised and not fought with them, they could have destroyed all of us”

The violent offenders shared almost same cultural values and language styles. Construction of narratives according to their social backgrounds and experiences of life though were somehow different, yet they shared some common characteristics of culture and language. The narratives of violence and cultural identity of violent offenders intercepted at one cultural language that was that their narrative structure was of a collective nature, a collective cultural identity. For example, some offenders frequently used the plural pronouns as words like “we” instead of using “I”. This form of narrative description was common among almost all of the prisoners; it was their collective habit and cultural identity. Of course, this might be a technique of neutralisation deployed to satisfy them that they were only not the people who had such experiences but that majority of people had the same as well. This way they could satisfy or vindicate themselves.

On the other hand, the violent offenders derived the meanings of their committed violence from their observations of life, daily conflicting interactions with other people, victimisations on economic, physical and psychological levels, and the social surroundings they lived in. All these and many more observations and experiences influenced their construction of narratives and meanings of violence. There were several conditions, situations and conflicting experiences the prisoner participants presented as to explain their cultural and violent identities. Some prisoners derived the source of aggression out of their poor economic conditions. A prisoner suggested:

A: There are high prices; a man earns one hundred rupees (approx.. ₹ 0.666) a day what he would do with that limited amount? Would he buy things for home or other things he require? Now for one hundred rupees, one cannot buy a kilo of ghee. What will the poor do? (F).

The poor social and economic conditions were viewed and seen as the sources of motivations for aggression and hostility. Therefore, the meaning and source of violence was seen in poor economic conditions and economic deprivations. On the other hand, the

disputes and conflicts over limited economic and financial means created occasions and situations of violent conflicts.

A: Sir, we were standing there, it was a time of cultivation of cotton crop, and we had a lot of cotton this time. We were filling the cotton in Mazda, we were happy and we wanted to have more money. Other people because of jealousy got us arrested in a murder case. We were poor we wanted that we should cultivate our land by our own. But some people did not like this (FH).

Aggressive violence and its justifying meanings arose from the situations of conflicts and the only which economic and life sources which were challenged by other people. Having meagre and no proper ways of economic survival, violence like murder seemed to be the only way of safeguarding life. Violent murder was in this way a necessary revengeful and required behaviour to deal with the conflicting and victimising people. In other challenging, conflicting and victimising condition, violent reaction was acted on as to safeguard their rights of survival and protecting physical property.

A: It was a matter of a plot. It was a civil matter and I had filed a case with the civil court. I told to the judge that they had built a house near to my home and illegally encroached upon my land. I am educated and have served in army (GSB).

Likewise a prisoner narrated:

A: There was no matter of dispute. The actual dispute was on land. They were not giving us back our land that is why I was working in Karachi to earn. Our land was adjacent to their land; our land is sixty acres. They were strong people.

Violence and violent action and reaction, according to these narratives, though seemed justified but its meaning and source was driven from the conflicting and situations of violence and victimisations. Meanwhile some other prisoners developed their understanding of anger and aggression from the unfair criminal justice system.

A prisoner shared:

A: There is no crime, the innocent are being dragged in (*prison*). Is this called a crime that we have been brought in here? (A).

Another prisoner stated:

A: If I had money and I killed ten people, I would not stay here (prison) even a year. It is true of the law here (J).

Prisoners derived their sense of the causes of violence from the unequal distribution of economic resources and unfair criminal justice system, and viewed stigmatisation of criminality as a label against them.

Some prisoners described their anger and violence as necessary for self-defence in situations of conflict. One prisoner stated that a robber who had killed two young boys from his family was a continuous threat for all his family members, so in that situation he described his violent act as necessary to defend them. He, along, with his nephew killed the robber. However, he viewed himself as a law-abiding and peace loving person he suggested that killing was necessary in such situations of conflicts (“No, no, it [his caste] is peace-loving. But if there is any conflict between two castes, it [his caste] will retaliate in its favour”). Here, the act of murder arose from a situation which threatened his family, however, is a justified and a necessary act of self-defence for him.

In some cases, violence was intentional and there were some situations which created factors of violent actions. For example, some prisoners had been psychologically motivated by some situations which prepared them to act on killing and murdering their spouse. A prisoner who was convicted of honour killing derived his meaning of killing his wife from the behaviour of his spouse. His act of murder seemed intentional and justified.

A: There were many mistakes even then I did not ask her anything about...what are you doing or why are you doing this (AR).

On the other hand, violence was not a personal responsibility- it was an accidental result, as some prisoners viewed. A young prisoner convicted of murder, showed no remorse for his act of killing. He had shot two people, and explained it as an act of fate:

A: Their death was written in this way, they died (MA).

Meanings and perceptions of some of the prisoners about killing other people carried no remorse, while some associated the results of their acts of killing with religious factor. They believed death was the fate of the victims of murder or violence. Individuals whose life experiences revolved around extreme poor economic conditions, conflict with powerful and victimising groups and unfair criminal justice viewed their violent acts not as their responsibility but as a necessary act.

Some prisoners involved in group acts of violence were proud of what they had done. Many prisoners disclosed that they were not alone in their violent activities, their family members, including brothers and uncles, close friends and community members were often involved in a single and series of violent activities. For example, a prisoner stated:

A: My four uncles are here in this prison also. It is alleged that I, with my uncles went to fight with them (MA).

Criminal violence was frequently carried out by groups of individuals, for example, two, three and four, and in some cases, thirty or more people were involved. A young prisoner of 28 years was proud of his family and young children who took part in violent fighting with others and laughingly said, “some of our younger children brought us some sticks to strike them with”. He further stated that:

A: Before this incident of the fight, we had already fought with them, so they came to know that these people had injured them, and felt it as an insult. So they came back with 30-35 people with weapons and injured two, three of our people (BAJ).

Violence including injury and assault was a joint venture carried out by more than 30 people including children and adult members of the community. Moreover, interviews with three groups of prisoners, two with two prisoners and one with three prisoners, bear evidence that criminals were often involved in violent groups. A number of cases involved co-convictions, one was of two brothers in a murder case and assault cases, another, a nephew and uncle in a murder, while three close friends were convicted of kidnapping.

Characteristics of those who committed acts of violence included being young, being poor and/or identifying with a particular group. Violent behaviour was frequently seen as

conventional, not morally wrong but necessary in many situations of seemingly unavoidable conflict. However, the narratives recorded offered a range of explanations for the causes of violence. In the following section, I will explore these.

### **Making sense of violence**

The convicted men made sense of their committed violent crimes by narrating their life stories and lived experiences of social and violent problems. Their narrative explanations actually opened windows to understanding social and violent structure of Pakistani society. Understanding of violence developed through narrative themes of violence explained and put forward by the convicted prisoners was collected through interviews with them. The two main questions, “can you tell me about you and your previous life” and “what brought you here to prison?” elicited a detailed accounts of social and violent problems the prisoners had encountered in their life. The first question worked well in discovering the social problems they faced and, which, worked as pathways for them to the violent life. While the second particularly revealed the details of their particular committed violent crimes and their related motivating factors including social structural, cultural and situational. The prisoners’ subjective narrative life stories and personal experiences explained a variety of social, economic, feudal and political related issues. For example, rural prisoners recounted how they were pressured to sell their food products by threats to block water supplies coming to their fields. They were forced to sell their agricultural lands, their female family members were subjected to rape and sex, and much more, which caused them to become frustrated and angry towards their opponents were the experiences of victimisations.

However, to resolve such problems, they found no other choice but violence. The reaction to such conditions and situations became part of their violent and cultural identity. Thematic causes of violent offending were subjectively explanations and were fashioned out of social experiences by the prisoners. The experiences of the participants revolved around facing poor economic conditions at home in early life, agricultural land related disputes, the search of financial resources, conflicts with feudal lords, conflicts with political party members, experiences of victimisation by feudal lords and more.



The prisoners provided significant ideas about social problems which had a major impact on their lifestyles. They believed that poor socioeconomic conditions were a significant problem of violent actions and reactions. Individuals were highly frustrated by their low socioeconomic position. The views further suggested that for an act of violence, for example murder, there was not a single factor, there might be past rivalry, tribal conflicts, reasons relating to personal ego and various other reasons. Among other things, they associated violence with intolerance while a senior police officer attributed such problems to the attitudes of poor people, who are not afraid of the punishments meted out by the criminal justice system.

The prisoners themselves described various social problems they faced from their early life. Their narratives about their social problems revealed a number of dominant and significant themes about the causes of their violence. They were very concerned about the low level of economic resources available to them. Some described their poor status as saying “no land, no money,” while some others showed their aggression by linking poverty with open battle with world, “hunger is that thing which can make you fight with the world” or some attributed poverty as a source of anger and violence, “when anger comes, you know, no one will know what to do”. So they believed, in such extremely poor conditions and situations of having no social and economic power, “what will poor men do?” People will turn to be violent and angry, and their violent behaviour, as they believed, was a justified act under unequal social conditions.

These causal narratives reveal the journey to acts of violent crimes. Prisoners were highly frustrated with their social conditions and situations. Moreover, these causes are both visible (no money, no land) and invisible (hunger, anger) but both motivated individuals to react violently. It means causes can stem from the material situation and the perceptions of several of certain situations, but both of these precede the actual act of violence. Many explanations were shared by prisoners; these are categorised and discussed below.

### **Rural violence: land problems and the dominance of feudal system**

The narrative stories of the violent offenders were replete with explanations of problems related to agricultural issues, dominant and criminal behaviour of feudal lords, community leaders and biased and corrupt behaviour of criminal justice institutions. Problems and experiences of almost all of the participants from rural areas were significantly concerned with agricultural land, owning or working on the land and disputes either between the same class or between poor peasants and feudal lords. The prisoners reported numerous cases of suffering from social, economic, feudal and political inequalities. The stories shared were about problems associated with agricultural land (“We purchased land near our home... on this issue, there arose a dispute”). Some individual peasants had a little piece of agricultural land, while others worked on the fields. For some, owning land was necessary because it was the only source of the economic survival and power. A prisoner shared the reason for his conviction for murder:

A: This is because of the landlord. There was some dispute between us (feudal lord and these peasants). Our lands joined together, and there were disputes sometimes (KB).

There were many other stories describing land as the sources of aggression, violence and hostility, but despite being injured, many peasants could not afford to wave their rights to ownership of their pieces of agricultural land. In some disputes, the consequences for the prisoners, according to them, were physical assaults and false criminal cases brought against them. A group of two prisoners convicted of kidnapping (SK and NMJ) recounted:

A: They wanted us to sell our land and go away from there. They wanted us even to sell our homes to them. They wanted be dominant and be in charge. This we did not tolerate. So, they involved us in false cases of kidnapping; they had no evidence, nothing, they have (NMJ).

These accounts of prisoners described how land became a source of dispute within families. Some family members within the family did not like other family members to have more agricultural lands, because having more agricultural source or wealth could demean their position and status within the family and community.

Another issue relating to agricultural land arose from not receiving water on time to irrigate fields. This led to killing of persons in opposing groups. One prisoner described this:

A: As our case is, we needed water for our land. They did not release water in time, and our lands dried which affected our crops. This was jealousy; they did not want our crops to grow. We did this out of compulsion; it was our desperate need (FH).

In this case of conflict, which led to murder, jealousy arose between two groups of individuals over economic resources linked to agricultural land. Violence broke out over the issue of not releasing water into the field. The group which was denied the water retaliated against the other group and killed one of them. It was economic competition that caused groups to become aggressive and angry; however, it also shows weak social control that individuals did not consider their criminal issues could be resolved through legal ways but by reactive violent means (see Cohen and Felson, 1979).

In another case, in order to get back a piece of occupied agricultural land, some prisoners killed a person who happened to be a known robber supported by a feudal lord who was a political leader in that community. In this case, many individuals took part in the murder (or murders) including the prisoners interviewed, their relatives, and a group of robbers. According to the participants, some were convicted, some released on bail, while others were found innocent. These two prisoners convicted of the murder of the robber talked about the number of people involved in this case.

One of them said: The dispute was over land. The robber had illegally occupied our land; we were innocent and good people. We owned a threshing machine which he grabbed illegally (ABJ).

The murder in this act was enacted on for taking revenge because this offender had been victim of violence of a robber. Further experiences of victimisation at the hands of a robber made this offender aggressive and revengeful that resulted in killing the robber. The robber who had tried to illegally occupy the agricultural land and rob the agricultural tools of this offender which was the only source of earning and livelihood made this prisoner violent. The prisoners who belonged to rural areas highly depended on their

agricultural products readily reacted violently against their oppressors and usurpers. Likewise, the majority of the prisoners discussed the problems and conflicts arising from agricultural land disputes between different, same caste, social groups and between peasants and feudal lords and their supported criminals. Moreover, feudal lords who had economic and political power did not resolve the problems but rather fueled them, as many prisoners told. These ultimately resulted in killing and kidnapping. Any piece of agricultural or other piece of dry land is dear to individuals. A small area in front of a house caused violent conflict which resulted in the killing of an 18 year old boy.

A prisoner, who was an early retired army man, was convicted of murder. He also did not want his piece of dry land to be occupied by his nephews. His nephews, according to this participant, involved him in the fake murder case. He requested me to “please write my arguments and do some genuine help for me if you can. I am innocent (GSB)”. During the interview with him, he told me his story in minute detail as if he had rehearsed it carefully, remembered well every detail about the dates of his court hearings and the names and number of the people who attended his trial. He told me that his brothers and nephews called him a “psychological patient.”

Agricultural land and physical property were the source of economic and social survival of the rural people; any move against these resources was dealt with by revengeful violent actions. Killing and assaulting were the main reactions offered by the rural people against their opponents. Whereas some prisoners described those feudal lords, community leaders played tricks on peasants which caused violent reactions within the peasants. Sometimes, with the help of criminal gangs and robbers, the feudal lords tried to occupy the land of other people because they were fearful that their position and power would be lessened and limited if other people became equal to them by increasing their agricultural lands and economy from agricultural products. Rural structural problems especially on agricultural lands, low sources of other earning and intolerance and jealousy among the community members became the reasons of violent actions. Moreover, criminal and ineffective role of community leaders further increased the chances of violent conflicts and risks of violence.

## **Vulnerability to victimisation**

Poverty served to be criminogenic conditions which generated several opportunities to vulnerabilities and victimisations. Poor economic conditions not only created frustration and strains for the people but also made them vulnerable to many others like powerful people and their victimisations. As almost all of the participants were poor and their poor social conditions opened ways to frustrations and victimisations. Some prisoners described that poor people were not free to do any business, if they did so, powerful people and criminals tried everything to create problems for them. They were threatened physically and psychologically for doing their jobs. One prisoner shared his concerns about how he was prevented by powerful groups for not selling edible items. A prisoner presented his arguments that poor people face problems in doing their business. He opined:

A: See, if a person poor sells something, this powerful caste tries to snatch (rob) the things (the saleable commodities) from him and when he argues with them, they beat him. There is injustice. Who can do all that? (AH).

Some prisoners argued that ordinary or poor people could not do their business on their own because they did not have enough sources to initiate their business. Such people were highly frustrated and reacted readily and violently to any conflict arising on any trivial issues.

The poor participants showed a strong sense of self-respect; some shared they were mistreated badly by the police, politicians, feudal lords and community leaders. A prisoner reported that he was often insulted whenever he visited a feudal lord, a community leader. He said:

A: Going there was like being a dog in his home; those rich people did not treat us humanely. They treated us as if we were their dogs. A man should have his self-respect (NMM).

Prisoners felt unfair treatment by rich people as an insult to their self-esteem. Emotional victimisation was a significant part of the experiences of prisoners, which affected not only their behaviour but their thoughts also. A number of prisoners experienced such acts

of humiliation. Insulting and abusive behaviour from a homeowner against his cook (a prisoner) caused a violent reaction and revenge. Though the prisoner (cook) forcefully denied his involvement in killing the homeowner (a police man), some questions which he asked me at the end of the interview reflected his attitude of anger and feelings of revenge. He worked as a tea maker in the office of senior clerk where I interviewed him. He looked gentle. He was Urdu speaking and the police officer where he worked in his home was Sindhi speaking. He did not speak directly of how he had misbehaved, but stated:

A: If one behaves in an unjust way (indiscriminately) with you, your heart will be fed up with him. You will feel that injustice is done to you, you will be arrogant then (F).

The prisoner said, pointing at my friend who was sitting next to me: “the person who has come with you I don’t know whether he is your senior or not?” He seemed very concerned with differences in ethnic relationships.

I replied: Yes. He is my senior.

The prisoner said: If he calls you bad name or abuses you, you will feel bad. You will think I am human like him, why he is abusing me, keep away from him. If injustice is there, you will be arrogant (F).

According to him, his family was brought to the police station and was insulted, his mother was seriously insulted; consequently he confessed the killing of the homeowner, the policeman. But his feelings of being seriously insulted, abused and mistreated indicated his anger against the police officer where he worked.

However there were extreme cases in which the participants were subjected to physical victimisation. A prisoner who had a scar on his face, upon my asking him about the reason of scar on his face he replied:

A: When I had run away from a prison, the landlord [name] sent some people with weapons and assaulted me, to kill me. We were sleeping in our home. Everyone in the family was injured, my brothers, my father and my children. I was brought to the emergency casualty ward in a serious condition. I was in

hospital for about three months. Then, from there, the police arrested me again (UAJ).

Such experiences of being insulted and victimised, physically demonstrate the structural problems of the community and social system, where some individuals are helpless and powerless while others are advantaged and powerful. Thus violent revenge results from an attempt to repair people's strains and sense of deprivation. The prisoners derived their vengeful potential from the confrontational and conflicting situations which initially motivated them to engage in aggressive behaviour. Anger and violent reactions also developed from situations of uncertainties in which individuals actually did not know how to act or react especially in the situations when they came to know their family members were psychologically and physically victimised and abused. An act of injuring a person with a dagger took place as a result of finding out about the sexual molestation against the younger brother. A young brother of this prisoner was sexually abused or molested by the owner of the shop. The prisoner, in order to take revenge injured a son of this shop owner; but he did not expect himself to be violent. He reported:

A: I don't know what happened, something happened. I injured someone in the dispute; someone got injured in a dispute (GHS).

Q: Did you not think what you were going to do?

A: It was one or one and half hours, it was sudden, that ruined my life, completely.

Q: How did you do it?

A: I used a dagger to injure a person, I came to jail and none of my friends ever came to see me.

Q: How did you get the dagger?

A: They gave me a dagger and they themselves stepped aside and let me do it.

The accounts of this prisoner "I don't know what happened" and "I injured someone" showed his violent reaction was unplanned; however, he had guilty feelings for his act. His violent assault cannot be taken as a pre-planned act but rather, a sudden or provocative response to a particular situation where other individuals who provided him

with a dagger helped him in acting on that violence. He developed angry feelings, aggressive behaviour and a vengeful attitude from an act of molestation against his brother; however, in carrying out his violent revenge against the owner of the shop, he was helped and motivated by other individuals.

Some prisoners witnessed their family members being subjected to violence. A prisoner who continuously faced economic problems at home and drug problems on the street was obsessed with the drug dealing business in his neighbour. The family problems between his and his cousins family led to violent conflicts between them. He reported:

A: Anyway, I found out that my home was attacked and beaten (a deep sigh). My mother was severely injured, my sister-in-law was violently beaten and my adopted daughter, a very young, just a year and half, was thrown into a nearby gutter (A).

These accounts by poor prisoners refer to physical and psychological victimisation by powerful agents including feudal lords and the police, and by the same poor class. Poor individuals were “helpless” when doing business, working on and occupying agricultural lands and forcibly agreeing to crime. Such diverse and multiple experiences of victimisation have significantly and seriously affected the social behaviour of individuals. In such a disorganised social and legal structure, individuals and pockets of society develop a sense of insecurity and injustice because of their extensive and continuous experiences of social, economic and political victimisation. All these affect their narrative construction. The participants from rural areas experienced physical, economic and violent victimisation in their life from the powerful, police and feudal lords.

Agricultural land and its associated problems were the main cause of the rural violence. People whose life depended on agricultural products did not tolerate any victimizing and depriving move against their economic life, moreover, finding no other solution to deal with such problems reacted violently by killing and assaulting those who caused their risks of deprivations of the sources. No response from community leaders and ineffective interventions of police further created chances for people to resolve their issues by criminal and violent means. Poor people found no means of social and economic survival



and thought themselves helpless. These experiences and ideas made them aggressive and violent.

### **The urban context: political and ethnic factors**

Many prisoners including rural but particularly those from urban areas shared several experiences related to political and ethnic differences existing between different social groups. They narrated ethnic based violence arose from various issues like differences in language inequal distribution of social and economic resources between different communities and social populations. The issues between social ethnic groups resulted from hanging political posters, violent encounters with members of opposing political parties, engaging in violent activities using guns, pistols and sticks, being seriously injured and injuring others, and operating political gangs and their activities in the communities and within prison. No participants in this study were convicted of violent religious or terrorist acts of crimes.

Political and ethnic differences in Sindh and Pakistan have existed for a long time. Historically, there have been continuous conflicts between different political parties in Sindh and other parts of Pakistan, especially during 1980s and these continue today. Each political party tries to control their communities and maintain their monopoly of power in their respective areas. In the Pakistani context, politics is a desire to dominate and hold power over vulnerable and poor communities through criminal and physical force (Singh, 1976; Tilly, 2003; Verkaaik, 2004). The experiences and accounts of prisoners bear evidence that their life seriously and extensively revolved around physical conflicts with other party members. They showed strong affiliations with their political parties and ethnic groups and were proud of their actions. They were proud that they could do all those activities which were entrusted to them. Their affiliations started at an early age, however, at a later age now (at age of 40s and 50s) most wanted to live a peaceful life with their children. Unfortunately political conditions were such that they could not do so and escape was difficult or almost impossible for the political workers.

Almost all of the participants from urban areas were poor and had a miserable life from their early age; some participants after the death of their parents had to struggle hard to meet their economic needs. Some prisoners described that they were very much concerned about the poor conditions of their family and education of their children.

A: I had a shop of bangles. I have a younger brother, who has passed secondary school and is working with me on the shop. I was brought up in [an urban area] and I am not educated not even of a single class I received education. As I came to conscience, I found myself on the shop of bangles of my father. I have three sisters and two brothers; my eldest brother is in not living with us, but even then I financially support him. After death of my mother, I took care of my sisters and brothers. My father wanted us to get education, but we were wayward, did not listen to him and were involved in mischievous activities on streets (S).

Some participants from their early life were seriously affected by the poor economic conditions and death of their parents in early life additionally affected them that they had to begin their economic life from their early age.

Other prisoner described that because of not having money he could not get education so soon he engaged in earning to feed his family.

Q: Can you tell me about your childhood days and about your education?

A: I got education till primary class and then because of poverty I could not continue my education. I engaged myself in business of selling milk. I continued this business till I got married (K).

Q: What about your father, what he was doing that time?

A: My father did work of contract of mango trees, he would get the mango trees cultivated and earned much from this business (K).

Q: I think your father could earn much money?

A: No, even I supported my father. I had younger brothers; I would bear the expenses of their school fees. I tried to get them educated; one continued education while the other left the school soon and did not like to go to school (K).

Urban individuals experienced poor life. Not having enough money and sources of earning, they had to quit their education and engage in manual kinds of jobs to earn not only for them but also for their family members. The urban people also observed violent

activities and were involved in various violent life events. They observed that dispute between young children rose to the level that adults involved in assaulting, killing and shooting their aggrieved opponents. One prisoner told that his younger brother had a fight with other young boy of their relatives which resulted in killing one person from each and injuring of an old person. A prisoner shared:

A: There was a fight between my brother and a boy of my relatives on a cricket ground. After some time, 15 to 20 persons from our relatives came with to fight with us. The adults with beard were beating my brother, I said to them ‘you are beating my younger brother they did not feel any shame. They also assaulted us with heavy sticks and they broke the skull of my father. We took my father to hospital. The issue became very serious. When we took our father to hospital and behind us; our relatives again came and assaulted our family members. On next day, there was a dispute that one of them was shot to death and my brother-in-law was also killed in it. It was very painful (K).

Violent fights, assaulting and killing were part of life observations of the urban participants. However, some participants observed ethnic and political violence and were also involved in them. A prisoner, who told that he had a shop of bangles, was involved in ethnic and political violent activities from his early life. He with his friends used alcohol and was proud of his violent behaviour. One prisoner whose party members were badly beaten and injured by opposing party workers reported the reaction of his own party; he emphatically repeated, “We beat them with solid sticks.” To carry out political activities such as hanging posters and protecting themselves from prospective violent encounters, individuals needed to be vigilant and carried weapons. A prisoner explained the political structure and agenda of a political party:

A: We needed pistols during the hanging of posters and doing chalking on walls. No party would like that any opposite party would do such acts, even chalking in its area (S).

He explained that his party members went to hang posters and write on walls in the areas which were not politically administered by them, for their safety they needed weapons and the support of additional people. The political activities were not limited to violent encounters resulting from violent clashes about hanging posters and writing on walls in others areas, but also extreme forms of violence such as terrorism and violent battles

between different groups. Shooting and bomb blasts were part of their experiences. One prisoner stated.

A: There were many such incidents, I observed people fighting together, observed bomb blasts and other such things. Twice there were bomb blasts (AB).

Another prisoner shared his observations about violent clashes taking place between different ethnic groups. He had observed the historical blood-shed that took place between different ethnic groups in Sindh and the continuous conflict of his ethnic community with other rival communities. He emphasised the reality of what was happening, though he confessed to have been involved in ethnic violent acts. He denied his own involvement of killing the person he was convicted of. He reported:

A: This case is a real. As everyone says I am innocent; I will not say that. Our dispute was with a group of people and one of them received a bullet shot, we did not fire. The dead man was a political worker. There was a violent clash between us and them, but the fire; we did not shoot (IP).

Q: Any other incident that you want to share?

A: Like this, there were many. Which one to tell you (He might have recalled many events, paused for a while and then said)? In [urban area], an incident comes to my mind that there was a conflict between [an ethnic group] and [another ethnic group]. A group, community, has historically been living here...(IP).

He recalled some castes of Sindh who had ethnic violent conflicts with other ethnic groups but kept silent not to reveal much about the incidents. He probably thought of some incidents but kept silence; did not say more. He remembered events that took place during 1980s when there were violent clashes between two different ethno-linguistic groups and many of the people from both sides were killed, slaughtered and mutilated (see also Chapter three).

However, these political parties not only caused much violence but also other crimes such as organised sex crime, *Bhatta Khori* (extortion) and robbery. A prisoner related that his wife was involved in the sex trade; she had married different political leaders or strong members in the party in different areas to carry out the trade. She worked as a prostitute and sold other young girls for sex. She wanted her daughter to be used in the sex trade

but her first husband (interviewee), who was old and drove a rickshaw did not approve. Her husband carried his very young daughter all the time while driving the rickshaw and earning money. The interviewee related some information about the sexual relations his wife of with male. He commented in a slow voice:

A: It is about my wife. She had close connection with criminal party workers of [a political party] even before our marriage (SQ).

During my fieldwork, I watched a policeman sitting on the front seat with a driver in the vehicle which was carrying items. I asked a shopkeeper why the price of items in his shop was so high. He replied that many items were stolen and he frequently had to pay extortion to political party workers, so, in order to keep balance and earn a living, the price was high.

However, politics was so embedded in the society that prison is also affected and political activities were also carried out in there. A prisoner who had been a bodyguard (belonged to rural area, but had much experience of earning a living in urban areas) of a politician managed the daily activities of different political parties in prison, shared:

A: Some parties were not happy and did not tolerate all that. There were many conflicts, fights and skirmishes in prison. There were people of political parties and there were conflicts between them. Inside the prison, many people of our party and other's party were injured. Some were treated inside the prison and some were taken outside (RB).

Political party leaders, according to him, had influential role in prisons. He further described that many political party leaders had been in prisons who were given facilities in the prisons and experienced more privileges than ordinary prisoners. The prisoner further described that there were party units in the prisons which were managed and monitored by some selected party members. Though he was frustrated that no party leader did any help to get him out the prison, he showed his strong sense of affiliation with the party. Political parties, as he described, were managed by those people who had criminal records or were involved in political violent activities.

The differences between political parties caused workers to behave aggressively in prison, though prison is controlled and a strict environment but political power has much

influence over it. Urban individuals also experienced poor economic conditions. From their early age, they struggled hard, they worked on shops, sold milk and drove rickshaw to earn their livelihood. One prisoner told that he did not have enough money to buy food for his family; another told that he had to wait for the neighbours to provide them food. On the other hand, they observed and were involved in various violent activities. Life of urban people revolved around experiencing ethnic and political tensions. Urban participants observed violent and terrorist incidents in their early life. Involvement of urban people in many ethnic and political activities against their counterparts made them insensitive to moral values of thinking that such violent acts had no serious meaning to them; rather they believed these were routine activities of people. The incidents like shooting to death, killing, injuring and getting seriously injured were part of the life of some of them. Moreover, some political parties, as some professionals described, were involved in many other criminal and violent activities like obtaining money through force, robbing individuals of their valuables things, spreading threat in their relevant areas and using women for sex purposes.

These various and numerous rural and urban experiences related to disorganised community structure, a corrupt legal system and political criminal activities were part of stories of the interviewees. Prisoner participants suffered from weak social control, the power and dominance of powerful, and rich politicians and biased and criminal behaviour of the police against them and their family members (Tariq, 1986). The informants may have exaggerated about their experiences and victimisation, to some extent (Maruna, 2001), as some professionals like senior police officials and advocates believed. For example, they believed that it is not always true that innocent people are arrested and convicted; there are many serious offenders that have committed various heinous criminal and violent activities. However, my aim is not to prove or disprove the conviction of the prisoners through their personal accounts and life experiences, to understand violent crime and its underlying factors from their perspective.

### **Corruption and discrimination in the criminal justice institutions**

Many prisoners viewed the police and court institutions lacked proper way of dealing with criminal cases of people and did not perform their duties on justice criteria. They further commented that these organisations did not have proper system of investigation of crimes, justice-based dealings with people irrespective of their class and castes, and mutual-cooperation between police and court. Some respondents narrated their experiences about the corrupt behaviour of police and they were highly convinced that police did not perform their duties well. Many prisoners were critical of the behaviour of the police and the police system. One prisoner opined that the police service did not have a proper system for the appointment of police officers. Corrupt police officers, according to him, were appointed to support rich and powerful people. He claimed with exclamation:

A: If a junior ASI (Assistant Sub-inspector) is appointed as a SHO (Station House Officer) in a police station, what he will do? (AH).

He meant if a corrupt police officer was appointed without examining his employment record and capability, he would be loyal to the people who arranged for him to be appointed to the post.

The participant individuals observed and suffered at the hands of criminal groups, powerful agents including the State and criminal justice officials who misused their power against them. Thus, they (participants) developed attitudes of aggression and violence towards others. Some prisoners took the view that poor people were always victims of the cruel behaviour of the police. The police could arrest anyone they wanted to without proper and real evidence against them. A prisoner stated that if a crime took place, as a result many close members of the family, and friends of the person suspected were arrested.

A: May I tell you one thing, when murder takes place, if one has killed someone, then what the police do, is arrest many people, brothers, cousins, uncles, friends; lock them up, send them to prison (AJ).

Related to this cruel and corrupt behaviour of the police, another prisoner shared his story about his family, which became a serious victim of police corruption. He reported that his mother was physically assaulted by police.

A: Police forced me to confess to the killing of the ASI (Assistant Sub Inspector); I did not accept it in the court. Then, police arrested my three brothers, beat them up, beat them very violently. They (police) arrested my mother, told me that they would release cats in the trousers of my mother. I had no money (F).

Physical victimisation of close family members including brothers and mother was a serious matter for this prisoner. He confessed to the killing of which he was subsequently convicted of murder. Like him, many other similar incidents were reported by several other participants, where family members were subjected to serious physical harm. In addition, the police not only physically assaulted individuals but did not register the complaints of poor individuals.

One prisoner reported that his complaint against rich and powerful people was not registered by the police. The complaint was about the prisoner continuously receiving threats from a neighbouring house; as a result he did not stay with his family members, but moved around to different places. An incident took place when a neighbouring house, according to him, received a miscall on their mobile phone; they believed that this had come from a member of his household. As a result, a conflict developed, leading to the killing of three persons from both sides. In his interview, he repeatedly used words like, '*lawaris qom*' (helpless nation) to explain his position. He said that he went to the police station to register his case against the threats of those people, but the officer in the police station, replied, "I am helpless; there is a lot of pressure from above, high officers." In defining the difference between powerless and powerful groups, he suggested:

A: A powerful caste does not consider any other caste as of any worth, makes false accusations and entangles others in some criminal cases or traps them and tries to bring them under control (AH).

To him, powerless individuals are those who are vulnerable and victims of social injustice, while the powerful are those who dominate and control powerless individuals. Weak control of the criminal justice system created risks of the poor becoming victims of



class systems. Corruption was considered by several participants as one of the main elements for disturbing the exact and just performance of police and court which on the other hand created problem for doing justice to poor people. The disorganised structure of the criminal justice system impacted on them so much that they found themselves helpless and vulnerable. Some prisoners claimed that if there was no social justice or proper distribution of social and economic opportunities in society, then people would be aggressive and hostile. One prisoner declared:

A: We are a helpless nation, ignorant nation, we cannot think about anything. We are very much concerned with our future and with our food and shelter. You see a dog when he is hungry, he will not ask you for food, he will snatch it from you (AH).

Prisoners were not only frustrated with the corrupt system of police and inadequate resources for their life, but they were also equally disturbed by the criminal and cruel behaviour of their community feudal lords and community leaders. They suggested that feudal lords created criminal and vulnerable conditions for people in the community. A prisoner argued that feudal lords created opportunities for individuals to be criminal or to be victims.

A: I am telling you truth, sir, about the heinous crime. Feudal lords want to keep their superiority and dominance by all means. What they do, they create criminal situations whereby people are compelled to become involved in them. They get some people arrested while they support others. People become aggressive against each other. So, people always look to him and ask him for his help to resolve their problems (BAJ).

Apart from criminal behaviour of police and feudal lords, some prisoners criticised the family structure. According to this prisoner, the absence of effective role of criminal justice caused widespread criminal animosity between people and within families. The same prisoner added more factors which affected the life of poor people. Another accused the class system and family system based on dominance and power. According to him, some families were powerful, having more money and political power while others were powerless, having no money. The prisoner stated:

A: The main reasons for crime here are the institutions of the state that do not work properly. Suppose here is [a caste] family, if it has aggravated someone, now the aggrieved party will always be thinking and trying to find all possible means to humiliate every person related to that family, his brothers, uncles, cousins and all others, and especially those who are powerful in that family (BAJ).

In the absence and ineffective role of the criminal justice system, people found it easy to trap other people in criminal networks and by doing so they could assert their dominance over others. Weak social control created unfairness and criminal opportunities for powerful people which they used to exert their dominance over weaker social groups.

Some prisoners presented their experiences with court officials and described that court officials did not do their legal duties but wanted to have money for trying cases of the prisoners in the courts. So they believed that this corrupt and criminal behaviour of court officials did not let them have due justice they were to be given. Some prisoners found the court system corrupt; they believed that their cases were not properly tried and some advocates took considerable bribes from them. A prisoner remarked:

A: The judge told us to change the advocate. We discussed our case with another advocate, who wanted more money from us. We agreed to pay him and he said to us 'you would be free on this coming date.' He took money from us, but did not appear again, another advocate also charged much money from us, once he tried our case but after that did not appear. Our case was not conducted by any other advocate, so the judge finally announced us the sentence of kidnapping and killing the man. We, both cousins, were awarded a sentence of 25 years imprisonment (RJ).

The corrupt and disorganised systems of the police and courts impacted on people so much that they lost all hope and faith in them. Consequently, many people did not go to police or courts to get their problems resolved; rather they relied on local community leaders. A prisoner, peasant, related that he went to the village *Sardars* (community leader/feudal lord/politician) to get a murder case resolved. He reported:

A: Our landlord in our village called upon both of us, the one who killed my cousin and other, us. The landlord found them guilty and penalised them with two lacs (two hundred thousand rupees equal to 1250 Pounds). But, they could not pay the amount, so they left the village. By chance after some time, they came to visit their fields in our village. Our landlord leader sent his people to them and imprisoned all of them in his personal jail (RJ).

Corrupt and criminal behaviour of police and court officials, the disorganised and unsystematic organisations of police and court and the feudal system had highly negative influences over the life behaviour of prisoners. Poor prisoners were highly affected by all these corrupt elements of systems; resultantly they did not have faith in them and so resolved their criminal and social issues by directly confronting their opponents by assaulting and killing them. When all these desired legal and social institutions were of no use and their practicality were not required, the prisoners described, they had no other way out to deal with their criminal and social issues but end them with violent means.

Some prisoners were highly frustrated with the class system which discriminated between rich and poor, and with the biased nature of police and court systems. Some prisoners and professionals described that the criminal justice and feudal system were victimisers of poor people in many ways, which affected the behaviour and thinking styles of the poor people.

### **Class disadvantage**

The prisoners explained various experiences from the lives which portrayed the existence of the class differences on the basis of financial and political status and justice system was unfair and discriminator to different social groups. The participant prisoners did not claim that they had any faith in the justice system institutions rather they were highly contemptuous about their dealings and performances. The prisoners suggested that there is a class system; some are extremely rich while others are extremely poor. Corruption was part of the police system. Prisoners admitted that they provided bribe money to both police and advocates. One prisoner said that he could not give any money to police

officers so he was arrested; otherwise there were good chances of him not being involved in a criminal case. The prisoner stated:

A: Police wanted me to give them ten thousand rupees (approx. £62.50), but I am poor; how could I afford to give them money. I am poor and innocent. For meeting me here in this prison, my younger brother, do not know how he collected money, gave some money to police officers then he could meet me here after two months (MIB).

Corruption was not only viewed by some prisoners as only receiving the bribe money but also not acting on a proper, ethical and legal manner. The prisoners provided various experiences of their contacts with the police and court. A prisoner stated that his request of reporting of criminal complaint against an influential and powerful person was refused to register by some police officer. Upon my asking him why his complaint was rejected to register; he asked me, “Who writes complaints?” I replied: “SHO (Station House officer)”. The prisoner only laughed satirically, but he did not say a word. I laughed with him. I inferred the SHO did not dare and want to record his criminal complaint against the rich and powerful man. Like these there were many other practical observations and experiences of the contacts with the police and court officials given by the prisoners which demonstrated that the police and court officials behaved on discriminatory behaviour and were afraid of the influential and powerful individuals.

On the other hand, some participants presented their experiences that for very minor incidents like of missing a goat, breaking of line of watercourse and not behaving ethically with other people; they were mostly accused of and arrested for. There was no one to help them. A prisoner shared:

A: We went to [a political leader], told him about this case to resolve it. If there is any case of missing of a goat, we are always blamed as robbers. We do not know why it is so, God knows (SK).

However, there were other accounts from prisoners that described how feudal lords and politicians helped criminals. One prisoner described:

A: A servant is dear to everyone; these eleven people were the landlord's servants, worked in his home. These people took care of his business of agricultural lands and everything, so the landlord had to take care of them. The landlord offered a huge sum of money to police (RJ).

Many of the prisoners mostly acted on their own in committing violent acts; however, police and the feudal system also encouraged individuals to be violent. Poor individuals could not directly physically harm powerful, feudal lords, politicians and rich people, but killed and kidnapped other individuals from the same poorer class. Violent crime was not only an individual reactive choice but was also the result of encouragement by the powerful and agents of the state.

The narrative descriptions of prisoners highlight that poor people largely have bad experiences with criminal justice institutions. Some poor prisoners described that they were refused the right to register criminal complaints against some rich and powerful people, while some describe how court officials took bribes from them to try their cases in the relevant courts. Police and court officials described how the police service is not adequately trained and taught morally or practically to deal with the criminal problems of people with efficiency and honesty. Police and court officials also suggested that corruption has long been part of police and judicial systems. Police officials believe that the court is unfair when dealing with criminal cases of the poor, whereas court officials describe how the police arrest poor people and support rich and powerful people. The unfair dealings of police and court systems frustrate poor people so that they do not have faith in them; consequently, they look to their local community members for their help.

Community leaders, feudal lords, especially in rural areas, further intensify the problems of poor people. They resolve the social and criminal issues of poor people by penalising them and incarcerating them in private jails. However, local community leaders support their own people but violate the rights of other poor people. Such disorganised conditions at institutional and local levels disturb the life of the people. On the other hand, urban people look to their political leaders who use them in political and ethnic conflicts. The failure of state institutions and local organisations create opportunities for violence. Some people, finding no alternative to resolve their social and criminal issues, resort to that

violence as a solution of their social and criminal grievances. Prisoners emphatically accuse the disorganised and unsystematic conditions created by the police, court and patriarchal systems of feudalism influencing poor people to adopt violent means for their social survival. All these disorganised conditions contributed to creating a culture of violence.

In the following section, I will analyse how prisoner participants presented their narrative descriptions.

### **Neutralisation of violence**

The poor economic conditions and social differences highly affected thinking patterns of the prisoners. Violent offenders distinguished themselves by providing different and distinctive thinking patterns, some justified by taking the view that their act of violence was necessary to save the honour of their home while some denied their involvement in the acts. Most of the violent offenders did not show guilt, rather they were proud of their violent acts and considered them essential in certain situations of conflict; otherwise, they believed, they could be killed or ‘destroyed’. These justifying and denying processes are the techniques of neutralisation used by violent offenders (Sykes and Matza, 1957) to make sense of their actions.

Violent offenders are social beings, their social relations within their social environment cause them adopt particular patterns of thinking and cultural beliefs. Prison narratives are wide in their explanation and context. The life stories of the prisoners convicted of violent crimes are a mix of feelings like innocence and aggression, justification and guilt, of blaming oneself and blaming others. However, ideas of “otherness” are important features of social context including social, cultural and religious symbols and are characteristics of the given explanations of the violent offenders. The explanations and justifications of violent acts developed from the conflicting positions and situations. The offenders distinguished their positions and constructed situations of violence, for example, some constructed their narratives, “If had not responded in a sudden” or “if someone sees his female family member in this situation, (he) will not tolerate it

anyway”, or “when anger comes, you know, no one will be able to control (himself).” These narratives of positions, situations and conflicts describe the critical inevitable conditions, which they believed motivated them to become involved in responsive and reactive violent act, and these situations compelled them to act on violence for their self-defence and safety of cultural honour. Therefore, certain unavoidable situations, according to these individuals, required them to act violently. These and many other patterns and modes of thinking are explored in the following section.

### **The justification and denial of violent acts**

Prisoners convicted of violent offences presented various arguments about their committed violent crimes. Some denied their violent actions, while some justified their acts. Almost none of the prisoners took personal responsibility for their violent crimes, rather they blamed social, economic and political structural conditions and cultural values as being motivational forces behind their actions. Moreover, they did not see themselves as violent but innocent and deflected from their violent responsibility. Yet, not all violent offenders had the same patterns of thinking and explanations for their crime; some accepted their acts while others denied. Many violent offenders viewed themselves as ‘innocent,’ however they derived their views of innocence from others’ ideas about them. For example, a prisoner stated:

A: I was not like that to be involved in such activities, I was calm and cool. Never was I involved in violent activities, if you still ask anyone in my neighbourhood, mention my name, they will tell you how good I was. My headmaster and teacher liked me (SGH).

His advocacy of his innocence is derived from the views of other people. He had positive ideas related to his self-respect and the respect of others. He was not ready to accept his murder crime; rather his “calm and cool” was justification and proof of his innocence. Likewise another prisoner quoted people, including elders, saying about him that “he is not involved, why you have included him in the FIR.” By reviewing others views regarding them they are able to assuage their guilty feelings. It seems that criminals have a tendency to see themselves through the eyes of others and justify their behaviour by assuming themselves as innocent and law abiding.

Another prisoner justified his act of murder by believing the victim deserved to be punished since the victim was an offender and had killed two young boys of his family. The prisoner described his victim as wanted criminal who already deserved to be arrested by the police and had already caused much threat and insecurity in the rural areas. Moreover, the prisoner also described his victim was a robber who was supported by a feudal lord in many criminal activities, so his killing of the victim/ robber was a justified act since by doing so he not only avenged from him but also provided him deserved punishment.

Some violent offenders justified their innocence by blaming the power or guilt of other. This prisoner blamed a robber who had killed two young boys from his family, so his action against the robber was justified. On the other hand, there were accounts of some criminals who still proclaimed they had aggression for the future actions. They suggested that they did not commit crime but in future would do and for that they would have no guilt. For example, one prisoner said:

A: We have not committed any crime, we are innocent and we have been awarded 25 years, if we get released then we will think of committing it and get real punishment of our actions. Man will be aggressive then (H).

Here the prisoner denied his criminal involvement and justified his innocence by being aggressive that he was falsely implicated in the case. Here, denial and justification are both present in his accounts. Moreover, his use of word, 'man will be aggressive then' is generalised concept of justification. The prisoners used many ways of proving their innocence by recounting that others viewed them as calm, by blaming other powerful groups like robbers or condemning their present status of imprisonment as unjust. Innocence can also be proved in other ways and justification can be linked to something supernatural. For example, one prisoner reported:

A: I myself have fought three or four times. Satan suggested to me to do this and that. Finish him (*kill*) because he has abused you, you have become a man without honour (*begaratt*). There are people who want to settle disputes of other people and there are people who tell others that someone has abused your mother, sister, go to fight with him (AS).



This prisoner convicted of murder blamed Satan for instigating him to “kill.” On the other hand, he had a good and clear sense of someone if he did not react to certain situations: it would be against the principles of honour and masculine character. Killing, according to this prisoner, can be associated with religious ideas and cultural values of honour and masculinity. But it should be noted that this criminal was turning into a religious man during his time in prison. According to him, he had learned reading Holy Quran (a Holy Book of Muslims) and Namaz (Prayer) in the prison. So possibly, his recent interest and inclination to religious thoughts might have influenced the way he viewed his violent act. He eased his guilt through the religious ideas, by believing that death comes from the decree of Allah.

On the other hand, there were some prisoners who admitted their violent murders. These were the criminals whose violent act resulted from sexual behaviour or acts against their family members. For example, the prisoners who were convicted of honour killing (murder) proudly accepted their killing of women. Their admission of killing reflected a cultural pattern of acceptance, of being proud of their masculinity and restoring honour. A prisoner convicted of killing of his wife in the name of honour commented when was asked about what crime he was convicted of:

A: Yes, Honour.

However, acceptance of violence is not only characteristic of offenders who commit honour killing but also those whose family member was sexually abused by another person. A prisoner recalled that his younger brother was sexually molested by person whose shop the prisoner was working in. However, the prisoner did not injure the real culprit, the owner of the shop, but his son. The prisoner accepted his act:

A: Sir, he was very close to me. The man whose shop I was working, I injured the boy (*son*) of my shop owner (GHS).

Not admitting to a violent act was a common pattern of violent offenders convicted of murder, robbery and kidnapping. However, admission or acceptance of the violent act was the more likely response pattern of those offenders whose family members, including

females and young males (brother) were subjected to sexual abuse. So killing or assaulting the perpetrator who caused damage to honour and family member was like restoring their disfigured and lost honour and satisfying their consciousness that they were the real men who acted in line with masculine power and cultural requirements.

### **Honour-based accounts of violence**

Honour is an element of cultural identity and a value highly cherished by some offenders convicted of honour killing and violent assault. Honour was associated with female and male members of the home. The integrity of the home or family members were not something to be surrendered to the violation caused by others. The prisoners convicted of honour killing and violent assault assumed themselves to have acted on '*gherat*' (honour), and because of their acts, they were unlikely to feel guilty. Honour killers and some others convicted of murder (a young age of 22) viewed women as "chickens" who can be slaughtered at an appropriate time, and considered a "woman is in the hand of man. Woman is nothing. She cannot do anything. She is empty-handed".

Many prisoners, especially those convicted of honour killing (murder), violent assault and murder had a serious sense of honour. A prisoner convicted of honour killing showed his strong sense and value of honour.

Q: Can you tell me for what case/crime you are here?

A: Yes, Honour.

Q: Honour?

A: I performed honour (AR).

His abrupt answer of 'honour' indicates his deep feelings and set standard for honour. He killed his wife because she had romantic or sexual relations with other person. A woman was considered as a private property which could not be approached by any means, by others. He put much value on a woman, and explained how honour can be violated by other men.

A: If anyone only talks to someone's female member in a rough (*romantic*) manner, not even kiss her or touch her, see, would he control himself? If a man only talks to a female...(AR).

Q: Do you feel you were right in your decision?

A: If there is a chicken in your home and if guests are not coming, will you slaughter it? No. Man cannot do this with his family member, until... (AR).

He had an embedded and culturally accepted idea of honour. Honour as a contributing force to violence did not work in a sudden provocative situation here, in this case. This prisoner had been a clergyman. He had observed his wife for a long time involved in sexual acts with other person(s), "there were many mistakes even then I did not say anything to her...what are you doing or why are you doing this." He seemed to have suppressed his honour feelings probably because of his religious tolerance. Now, for him, teaching her about her made "mistakes" and not tolerating her any more was a challenge to his honour, which however motivated him to act against her. Though he was satisfied with his act of killing his wife still he had a certain level of remorse, "Sometimes, I think I would have divorced (her), it would have been better...mmm."

Likewise another prisoner convicted of honour killing, viewed his act of killing as personal and private, and he also had strong sense of honour. However, the woman he killed was the wife of his cousin. It means any close family female member could be a source of honour (or shame) and a close male family member could act in honour. This man who killed a female in the name of honour was 16 years at the time of killing her. To him, also honour and reaction to its violation is same.

Q: Do you mean to say you have done this?

A: It is a matter of home, a matter of honour (KHK).

Q: What do you mean by honour, something happened in home?

A: No, we were sitting in the home and he was a stranger, outsider; by chance it happened. It is matter of home, so it happened. So no one can tolerate it.

Q: I understand now, you mean a matter of honour?

A: Ye...mmm.

Q: I remember you said you had only father and mother, so how it did it happen?

A: She was wife of my cousin (wife of son of his uncle).

Q: Did your cousin not complain why you did that?

A: No, why would they say anything to me? (KHK).

Any close male person can or could exercise the right of honour and kill any close female family member. For that act of honour, there was no reaction within family or from the husband of the dead wife against the killer. It means honour killing was accepted and widely prevailing as a cultural practice in a broader population. It is a cultural value that a woman is considered as a 'chicken' that can be slaughtered at any time. This is a masculine sense that every male individual possesses in relation to another female family member. This also indicates that every female is equally at risk of being vulnerable to violence, and there will be no reaction which might protect her.

There is another factor which contributes to the vulnerability and helplessness of women; that is, in all of these cases of honour killings in the study, women are killed but men escaped.

Q: The man you found with (I did not say 'her') did you kill him?

A: (*A little thinking*) He by chance escaped; we followed him to kill him. That man paid us our right (*head money*) in fifteen days. He offered us a girl for marriage and one lac (*one hundred thousand*) (AR).

It means damaged-honour can be repaired or reconstructed by accepting a girl (an alternative of for the restoration of honour), receiving handsome amount of money against the sexually abused woman/girl and the killing of the woman involved in the sexual act. Accepting a girl means the girl will be married into the family. It is part of the culture of Sindh and Pakistan, that, especially for some act of killing, a girl is offered to be married by the victim party or sometimes a group of females are taken as to present one's "honour" to the aggrieved party and request for forgiveness.

The prisoners convicted of honour killing knew that they would be released soon because it was in their observation that people were released within a couple of years.

Q: Did you not know the punishment for this action was 25 years imprisonment?

A: If I had known, I would not have been here. I did not know about it.

Q: Mmmm

A: Many people get released within two years. This business (*honour killing*) was from long time ago. As I saw this world (the world of incidences of sexual relations and honour killing), Pakistan has honour. Now it (*Pakistan*) has reduced-honour. Long punishments have been awarded, so we will control ourselves, divorce or (*a little thinking*) do something else.

Honour killing seems widespread and a culturally established practice; in addition, criminal law not well implemented could contribute to letting this violent practice go on. The prisoners, violent offenders, whose family members such as wife, wife of cousin and brother were abused for physical and sexual purposes, admitted their violent reaction of killing, murdering and assaulting these perpetrators. The admission was justification of their violent actions based on the concept of restoring honour to their family and satisfying their guilt and the challenge to their ego (Maruna, 2001; Maruna and Copes, 2005; Dobash and Dobash, 2011). Contrary to actual involvement in the violent crime, of honour killing, one prisoner had confessed to honour killing on behalf of his criminal cousin. The accounts of this prisoner describe the case that there was/is no proper criminal investigation, but mere confession was taken as substantial evidence to prove guilt. The interview follows:

Q: So what brought you here to prison?

A: It was my cousin, son of my aunty (*son of mother's sister*) (ZS).

Q: Can you please explain more, what do you mean cousin and what happened?

A: No. It was confession in the case of honour killing.

Q: Sorry, what do you mean by confession?

A: Actually, he had committed (*honour killing*) but I confessed it.

Q: May I ask you why did you confess?

A: It was to save him.

Q: May I ask you why you wanted to save him?

A: Yes. He had 11 children, he could earn more than me, he could manage his family to live, but I could not. I have 3 children; now he can also do for my family (ZS).

Though this was a sacrifice, he knew confidently that his confession was not merely to save the honour of a cousin but it was an agreement at the economic level between him and his cousin. Honour here may be considered in two ways: first that he saved a person who had a big family of 11 children and wife otherwise the family could suffer from social problems, and second, by confessing he entered into an agreement that will provide financial support to his family. As seen, some prisoners did not blame themselves for their violent actions but rather believed that killing women were cultural practices that many people acted on. By assuming their acts as cultural practices they decreased their guilty feelings and became satisfied that they were not the only people who acted on such acts but many other also did the same. Some prisoners did not receive any reaction of criticism from their family members against their violent reactions of killing women in the name of honour. A male person who killed his female cousin in the name of honour was not scolded and even asked about by the husband of the killed woman. This cultural practice widely seemed widely accepted by male population in rural areas. Moreover, some prisoners did not know there could be punishment for their acts of killing women in the name of honour. They knew that after killing women in the name of honour, they would be punished for a couple of years and then would be released.

The prisoners convicted of honour killing and some who had reacted violently by injuring and killing other people showed no guilt or remorse. Such injuring and killing practices were culturally and socially accepted behaviour not only by the perpetrators of violence but also by the general population. However, there was a clear difference in his narrative structure and that of others. He did not or could not have much to share about his feelings, experiences and violent lived experiences; there was no depth and seriousness in his expressions. He could not share the sensitivity of acts of honour killing and cultural knowledge about what an offender feels for acting in such a way. So, little serious information could be obtained from his interview and I personally, did not enjoy the tempo of conversation and asking him questions. He did not talk much about the concept

of honour killing and about the serious situations which could lead to this act of killing. He did not show the depth of his understandings and emotions about how one feels against a women who is involved in sexual relations with other person than her husband. It seemed the people involved in violent activities may have different perceptions and experiences than those who really experience disorderly conditions of society and involve in violent activities.

### **Guilt, pride and expectations of future violence**

Violence emerging from social inequality and weak social control was justified by some by believing in it as an act of defending the honour of family members. On the other hand, offenders eliminated their sense of guilt or moral judgment by refusing to accept the criminal act as wrong or indeed, criminal in its nature. This is why many prisoners said they had no feelings of guilt or regret. In contrast, a few prisoners admitted to feelings of guilt and penitence and said that they should not have acted by assaulting and killing their victim, they felt it their responsibility not to act in such a way. Guilt is a remorseful feeling developed by perceiving responsibility for wrong doing (Easterling, 2012). However, some prisoners had mixed feelings of being both proud and guilty (Maruna and Copes, 2005). Development of feelings is a process of thinking. Prison is a place where the incarcerated population has enough time to reflect on their past criminals acts; they think how and why they acted in such ways. Prisoners thought, “Mmm... yes this happened; sometimes I think, if I would have divorced (*her*), it was better...mmm. Sometimes I think, I am here...now what can happen. What's done is done”).

Some prisoners thought and weighed their emotions, sufferings and experiences in reference to the loss they suffered at the hands of their victimisers. Furthermore, for some prisoners, prison was not a happy or recreational place (King, 2000), rather it was deemed as, unwanted and a lonely place, “no one turns up here in prison to visit. This place is like a grave”. Such feelings and helplessness provided prisoners with a great deal of time to reflect on their acts. Arguably, their narrative composition was affected by the time to reflect on what had happened. They were not happy in prison and made requests to the interviewer to “do something for us”. However, some prisoners usually thought

about their acts in a manner which allowed them to construct various techniques to satisfy and offset their guilty feelings. For example, one prisoner remarked:

Q: Do you think these incidents leave any impact on the mind of people?

A: There is much for a human (*to learn*), he feels much. Yes surely, when done, people feel, why did I do that, man repents after doing that. Before his blood pressure was high, but after then he thinks about what he did (KB).

Thinking about past violent behaviour might lead inmates to suffer serious traumatic responses. A prisoner seemed to have thought much about his act of killing his wife in the name of honour. He reported his regretful feelings after a pause of a couple of moments:

A: .... because whatever has happened I cannot forget and forgive myself (SGH).

And:

Q: Yes, you are right to say, what can happen now.

A: Sometimes I think ... if I kill myself or commit suicide; it is not accepted by Allah. That is why I feel Allah may forgive (*me*). Once I get out of here then I would see what to do (AR).

Although thinking or acting on suicide is *haram* (forbidden) in Islam, this prisoner being *Pesh Imam* (clergyman) possessed such feelings and thoughts. It means suicidal remorseful thoughts are characteristics of violent offenders, irrespective of religion.

In contrast some prisoners were proud of their past violent actions. They showed no signs of penitence; rather they were proud of their acts. A prisoner co-convicted with his brother who engaged in an open gun battle and assault with an opposing group of individuals with sticks and stones, was proud of his violent actions and was sure he would be released soon.

Q: What do you say about your case, do you mean to say you have not committed this crime?

A: Sir, to me there is no repentance, but to be here shows I am involved. I have no regrets about that act. I don't have any kind of regretful feelings about why I was involved in this case (BAJ).

Q: Don't you admit you have done it?



A: Yes, this is very clear. I am not involved in it.

Q: I think you could have avoided it (violent dispute between him and others).

A: Sir, in sudden acute circumstances there are sudden actions which may later be proved dangerous. We had no other option. Suppose, if we had behaved as compromising and not fought with them, they could have destroyed all of us (BAJ).

He said he was not involved in the crime; he had no “penitence.” He had, he said, no other option but to engage in a reactive violent fighting. On other hand, the police officers in that prison told me that some officers went on the scene of the dispute and those prisoners had opened fired on them also. In this violent fighting, children were also involved: this prisoner was proud of those children who helped him.

Q: So you both fought with so many people?

A: Yes, yes. Even, our some younger children brought us some sticks to strike them (BAJ).

This prisoner, with his brother and children, fought with another opposing group of 30-35 people, this made the sense that he was proud he was with one group pitted against another. His and others' violent action or reaction was demanded of the situation. His sense of collaboration and joint venture could be another reason for his proud feelings about what happened. However, the similar accounts and views of criminal capacity and confidence were offered by some another prisoner, who thought if he had been more aggressive he could have killed many of the people of the opposing party during a violent clash between them, “if I had become aggressive (*jazbaat me aata tu*) I could have killed many of them” (A). His tone was clear, aggressive and confident. The prisoner who spoke slowly during earlier in his interview was speaking faster now.

Despite having served more than seven years in prison, some of the prisoners still felt aggression towards those with whom they had already been in violent conflict. Some said they would continue the work they did before coming into the prison, while some had strong feelings of aggression and said that when they got out of the prison they would “deal” with and “fight” their opponents. Several prisoners whose life experiences were full of social and economic frustrations and strains, inappropriate and unjust responses of

criminal justice system and economic and physical victimisations suffered from feudal lords and political party leaders still had aggression against their perceived oppressors.

For example in response to a question, “what you will do when released?” one said:

A: Then I will deal with him, if he compromises then OK, otherwise the problem will twist. If he comes on the track, it’s OK, otherwise what can I do, I am already poor (AB).

And:

A: I know what I will do. Injustice is done to me (RBM).

And:

Q: Don’t you think people from the side of a man who was killed will show aggression against you?

A: If they do so, we will fight with them, this is not like that. If he moves (*attacks*) we will surely fight back (KHK).

These prisoners were confident in what they said. They still possessed aggressive and vengeful feelings towards their opponents, this suggested that their period of imprisonment and punishment had not affected their behaviour or made them more law abiding.

As seen above, almost all of the prisoners did not take responsibility of their violent acts but blamed social conditions and experiences of victimisations they suffered as reasons for their violent actions. They claimed if all these poor conditions and their sufferings were not there they would not have acted violently. Those who were involved in murder, robbery, kidnapping and violent assault blamed poverty and experiences of victimisations for the violent actions and reactions. Some of them denied their involvement in such acts and did not make themselves accountable and responsible for their violent actions rather they blamed external conditions which according to them highly motivated them. So they were not responsible of their acts but social conditions. While some who acted on honour killing and violent assault presented their justification that their acts were because of the safety and protection of honour of their family. The majority of the prisoners denied their criminal responsibility while some justified their violent acts. Some prisoners assumed

their actions were not wrong but they were cultural practices, while a few had guilty feelings of their actions.

## **Conclusions**

The prisoner's accounts are core analytical foundations for understanding violent crimes. Life accounts of the sample of prisoners examined, evaluated and analysed here in this study present various themes. The narratives of the violent offenders show that people extract favourable meanings, definitions and explanations from the social conditions they have lived through, the social conditions which they find in conflict with their social, economic and political needs and opportunities. The social and economic deprivations become a major source for constructing narratives of definitions of violence.

Different communities experience different disorganised social structures and cultural environments in Pakistan. Communities based on rural structures are typically different from urban communities; each one has its own typical characteristics at the social and cultural levels. Life in rural communities revolves around the problems associated with agricultural land and the criminal and victimizing structure of the feudal system. These people are regularly denied their right of equal access to water to irrigate their agricultural fields; they face improper systems of distributing land and settling disputes and inadequate or corrupt mechanisms of social control. People in rural areas do not necessarily act violently because of poverty but because of the unequal distribution of economic resources and poor opportunities for social development. Having no chance of education, employment or working in agricultural fields, people become frustrated and hostile. Moreover, the unfair dealings of the police and feudal system make them more vulnerable to various reactive forms of violent behaviour. Consequently, they take it upon themselves to resolve their issues through violent means. They do not necessarily rise against the police and feudal system but cause physical harm to their fellow poor members of the community.

On the other hand, finding again no hope in the criminal justice system, they turn for the help of local community leaders, feudal lords and political leaders who resolve their

social and criminal difficulties by penalizing them. Being poor already, people have no other option but to surrender to feudal lords and work as their slaves and servants in their home, and to become further victimised. Murder and violent assault become a group activity to resolve their social and criminal conflicts; kidnapping becomes a choice to alleviate their economic wounds. Male and patriarchal culture becomes the dominant source of lifestyle in rural communities. Honour and masculine values and beliefs determine their life style and shape the violent activities they engage in. Any situation of conflict or deviant behaviour on the part of female family members is considered a challenge to family honour and masculine power.

On the other hand, urban areas in Pakistan are different in their structure. People often find, from an early age, their life is in conflict with other ethnic groups. People are politically and ethnically motivated to react to every insult or conflict they encounter as an attack on their political and ethnic identity. Murder, violent assault and injury are the common experiences of urban communities. There are many similarities in both communities. Both, rural and urban communities are poor and are involved in struggling to search for better opportunities of social development. However, disorganised social, economic, political and legal arrangements hinder their struggle for social survival, and also affect their lifestyle and patterns of thinking in such a way that they are able to rationalise and justify the violent acts they commit against others.

The findings suggest that disorganised social and poor economic conditions become the source of cultural values and violent interactions. Exposure to extremely deprived, underprivileged and inequitable social, economic, political and legal conditions, and victimisations on social, psychological and criminal bases, highly affect actions and reactions and thought process of people. The participants lost their moral grounds to differentiate between right and wrong act. Being highly victimise, they do not see their violent and criminal action as wrong, rather they justify them in reference to their social sufferings and accept their violent killing and injuring as necessary for them. Rejection from agencies of justice for providing them justice, victimisations from local community leaders and bitter experiences of social life influence their behaviour and thinking

patterns in a manner that they become prepared to involve in violent criminal career without being thoughtful that their actions are violent and they will face severe consequences for their acts.

Honour killing and injuring other people in the name of honour is highly and broadly justified act, for they the men convicted of violent crimes have no guilt and remorse, rather they are satisfied, content and proud of their violent acts. These men accept their violent behaviour as necessary and justify it as it was acted on saving the honour of oneself and family. Other men convicted of violent crimes like murder, kidnapping and robbery, do not accept but deny their criminal involvement. However, both groups of the men blame others like social conditions, their victimisations and unfair criminal justice institutions as being responsible of their criminal involvement. Violent act is justified cultural behaviour and approved by wider subcultural communities. It was reaction against the discriminatory class system and justice system and was masculine action.

## **Chapter Seven**

### **Professional perspectives**

In the previous chapters, five and six, I analysed the narrative explanations, biographical accounts and lived experiences of the prisoner participants convicted of multiple violent crimes, and I learned much about how and why they committed violent crimes in Sindh and Pakistan. The reported experiences and accounts of life by the prisoner participants described violent acts which were enacted in their earlier years. The convicted men reported that they suffered from deprived, limited and inadequate social, economic, political and legal benefits from their early age in both rural and urban areas. They faced poor economic conditions, minimal chances of obtaining education, no opportunities for employment and discriminatory attitudes from the agencies of the criminal justice system and feudal structure. Rural people worked on agricultural lands and had problems getting water onto their fields. They worked in the homes of feudal lords where they were treated inhumanely and were victimised physically. On the other hand, the poor people encountered with several criminal victimisations, about which when they wanted to register complaints with police stations, their complaints were refused to register. However, the feudal lords who took responsibility as agents of justice penalised the poor people with large fines and imprisoned them in personal jails. The poor rural people, being already frustrated by poor socioeconomic conditions, reacted violently, not against their true victimisers, the feudal lords and police, but against their equally poor fellow human beings.

The urban people were also poor, illiterate and unemployed; however, their life experiences and activities were mainly related to social, political and ethnic conflicts. They became involved in politics to defend their political and ethnic identities; moreover, they were optimistic from the political leaders that the leaders would provide them with better opportunities of employment and a career. They used violent means and weapons when carrying out political activities, which resulted in injuring, shooting and killing people of opposing political groups. The constant experience of witnessing and being involved in violent activities shaped their lifestyle and patterns of thinking.

For both rural and urban people, acts of violence were viewed as neither wrong nor significant; rather, they considered them as routine activity and part of their life. Such moral values and patterns affected them so much that they did not consider their killing and injuring of people as their responsibility, but instead blamed others for their actions. A majority of the prisoner participants firmly held the view that they were overwhelmingly deprived of the equal social benefits and opportunities due to them, and of proper treatment from the agencies of justice, and this made them aggressive and react violently. They were not responsible of their violent crimes and behaviour and held the view that the social environment, social discrimination and victimisation by powerful groups and officials from the criminal justice system were to blame. On the other hand, some participants assumed Satan (evil force) instigated them to act on criminal and violent action. Some others justified their actions as necessary to save the honour of the family while many completely denied their involvement in violent acts. Rural people did not consider female members of society to be of any value, so violence against them was considered not to matter. Violence against women in the form of honour killing was accepted culturally; the convicted men thus believed sexually deviant women deserved to be killed since they violated the honour codes of family. Most people showed no guilt or remorse for their acts of violence; rather they were proud of them.

The men convicted of violent crimes such as honour killing or injuring people in the name of honour and saving the reputation of their family members strongly believed their action were justified and necessary. These individual offenders accepted their involvement in violent acts but still blamed social conditions and violent conditions for initiating their violence. For example, the sexual acts committed against their family members motivated the offenders to be reactively violent against their oppressors and perpetrators of violence. Those who were involved in kidnapping, killing and robbery denied their criminal involvement and believed their social conditions and ineffective and corrupt dealings of the criminal justice institutions were responsible for motivating their violent reactions. The violent offenders suggested that they developed the potential for their thoughts and actions from the disorganised social conditions and cultural structure they inhabited.

My learning from the narratives of the prisoners convicted of violent offences has met the first objective of my study and provided me with an understanding of the violence and violent crimes in Sindh and Pakistan from the perspective of the perpetrators. I was also curious to know, from the other set of interview data, the views of professionals; this was the second objective of my study and together, these two dimensions could offer me a fuller understanding of the overall picture of violence and violent crimes in the Pakistani context. The understanding and analytical underpinnings drawn from the explanations and views of the professionals provided me with enough help to scrutinise and evaluate the social conditions, cultural background and violent social structure in Sindh and Pakistan. Therefore, this chapter focuses on the analysis of the expert explanations and discussions I collected from the interviews with professionals. Narratives of violence constructed by professionals on the basis of their first-hand knowledge of social problems and experience of dealing with crimes and criminals opened additional windows to understanding violence. They shared detailed 'expert' information, which provided me with a deep understanding of social problems, violent structural conditions and culturally values which encourage violence within Sindh and Pakistani society. The professionals who voluntarily participated in this study came from various backgrounds and fields of practice, including police, court, politics, medical, academics, social work and medico-legal professions. The narratives of the professionals gained through vignettes and individual discussions highlighted various societal problems, political and institutional failures, attitudes of people towards interpersonal relations and characteristics of the social structure. Most participant specialists were critical of the unfavourable social conditions, structural injustice, corrupt systems of law enforcement agencies and institutions. A majority of them argued that disorganised structural conditions including unemployment, corrupt politics and confused social systems, and a pathologically deviant cultural mind-set had a major effect on the violent behaviour of people.

Some professionals did not lay criminal responsibility onto the individuals but rather they blamed and made social and political conditions accountable for the violent behaviour of people. They justified violent behaviour of people in reference to the muddled and messy social conditions. Some argued, 'people are right' in their criminal and violent actions



since the social environment in which they lived was created systematically in such a frustrating and negative way that they succumbed to it, responded mechanically and did not know of any legitimate and civil means to pursue their life. Rather, as they argued, people were ‘out of control and mind;’ professionals strongly believed that ‘people are insecure’ and that the ‘police have failed to protect them’. In such insecure and vulnerable conditions, the reaction of people was nothing but violent and hostile.

The professionals described various situations and conditions, which they believed triggered people into committing violent criminal activities. In addition, the favourable meanings and definitions of violence and violent behaviour, the professionals constructed from the disorganised structural and justice conditions in the society. The social conditions, the professional believed not only elicited physical reactions but also psychological and emotional. They argued that social situations, family conditions and various economic and political conditions had a major impact on the minds and behaviour of people, so much so, that they did not know their acts were criminal and violent. According to them, people in general were deprived of the capacity to differentiate between what was wrong and right; peoples’ differentiating and analytical capacity was diffused by the complex and insecure conditions in society which were a part of their daily life. “They are right on their own;” many professionals believed that being unemployed and having no source of income and social recreation, heavily influenced people and led them to become deviant and violent in their life against any and every person who caused emotional irritation, physical and psychological threat and challenge to their masculine identity and patriarchal nature.

### **Rationalisations and justifications of violence**

The social conditions created physical and physiological motivations for people to become aggressive and react with violence in interpersonal relations. Continuous exposure to social inequalities, deviant and violent structures in society shaped cultural behaviour and the moral values of people. The social meanings and sources of violence, analysed and described by some of the professionals, were derived from the socioeconomic conditions and cultural values, trivial types of deviant and violent events,

and incidents and events. The violent criminal behaviour, as many professionals including police officers, politicians, psychologists and advocates, reported based on their experiences, observations and first-hand knowledge with crimes and criminals arose from the negligible and deviant situations, and conflicting conditions. The violence discussed by some of the professionals seemed physical and emotional reactions to the threats and the challenges posed by other social groups and events. Many professionals calculated the meaning of violence out of the social conditions, economic situations and disordered political environment. A policeman who had experience of 25 years in police dealing with different criminals and investigating criminal cases, provided various accounts of the development of the perceptions and actions of people and how people reacted violently to minor situations in their life. To the police officer, violence generated from social strains, poor and risky circumstances. He commented:

It is like that, a person after driving his rickshaw for the whole day does not earn enough money to feed his family. A person who has five children cannot afford to pay their fees of school. If someone in his family is in hospital or his home is on rent, all these things make him irritated all the time. When he buys anything it is too expensive for him, and whatever he earns he spends more than that (Policeman).

Being socially and emotionally driven by the deprived and unfortunate conditions, people reacted to minor teasing conditions with aggression and deviance. A policeman analysed the conditions of society and explained that economic strains, low education and disturbed interpersonal relationships contributed to aggressive attitudes and actions in people. He explained:

There is no proper education; most of the people are illiterate and uneducated. People commit crimes on minor provocations (*taano*), that you are like this and like that, we people cannot afford to tolerate others and become aggressive. People say to others, 'your home is like this and your wife has done like that', on such information people become rash and commit crime. They accept all those rumours without knowing the realities (Policeman).

Talking about the attitudes and responses of people to petty affairs in domestic life, professionals argued that aggressive and violent behaviour was common in most of the

poor communities and families. Domestic life could be disturbed and a violent reaction could result from any deviant or inappropriateness in handling family affairs; for example, some psychologists and psychiatrists shared their medical experiences of dealing with patients and their problems. They commented that people in general had no patience and tolerance for their women if they did any mishandled daily chores or were not obedient to their husbands or male family members. A psychologist commented:

People are so aggressive and respond violently if a woman does not work properly at home or does not behave well (Psychologist).

Violent reactions and attitudes to daily relational affairs, which were deemed as not proper, appeared as cultural behaviours in the broader environment. Being frustrated with social conditions and being not being able to contribute to economic life, people showed their emotional and cultural reaction to minor affairs and dealings in their domestic and private life through violence. The attitudes and behavioural characteristics shared in the narratives of professionals presented the cultural or subcultural environment, violent community cultural structure and 1 pathological reactions to regular interactions and dealings. Some policemen also reported that disturbed family issues elicited hostile and aggressive behaviour in people. For example, a senior policeman described the conditions of rural people, and attitudes of people and their approaches in dealing with life affairs. The policeman commented:

Violent disputes, especially in rural areas, are due to many minor and trivial issues. For example, I have seen many times, sometimes because of the issues of children fighting at home or on playgrounds, violent conflicts and killings between their families. In addition, sometimes, intermarriages and exchange of marriages also become one of the main reasons of disputes in rural areas; not getting the desired response from the family of a girl, it becomes part of their ego to get the girl from that family anyhow. Sometimes, there is a very beautiful girl, a boy wants to marry her by any means, in this way, he develops relationship with that girl and when such activities become known to the family of the girl, it becomes a major reason for disputes and conflicts within those families. People do not tolerate the small issues in their homes and within their communities; they do not have self-control (Policeman).

Similar to the views of the policeman, an advocate also put forward the same arguments and reported that the family environment was a crucial element in the life and behaviour of rural people. He commented that family issues played a significant role in shaping the perception and actions of people, and creating the possibility of domestic, street and community disputes. He described a how, in one case, the conditions of the disrupted and broken families frustrated people and caused them to react violently:

Mostly, marriage and intermarriages are some of the reasons which lead to violent conflicts and murder, and in many situations more than one person is killed. Seeing family life involved in disordered conditions, people are often aggressive and so react violently without controlling them. Otherwise, murder is not mostly planned (Advocate).

Family and community issues like intermarriage and disputes within the domestic environment became a matter of major importance and honour that necessitated resolution, most often with violence. The existence of rural disputes on the matters of women and their marriages seemed to be a cultural problem, and as these accounts of professionals suggested, had a significant influence on the lives of the rural poor. Some professionals presented various minor situations and events, which according to them, provoked people into becoming hostile, aggressive and argumentative. Another policeman described an event which, though according to him was minor, nevertheless caused violence among people:

There is no specific age in assault and crime young, adults and old are involved in. People take up arms, fight and kill each other over the issues like their cocks fought with others' cocks, their dogs fought with others' dogs. What the result is then? Some are in the graveyard and some are in prisons; their children become homeless (Policeman).

An advocate who dealt with and tried criminal cases in both rural and urban communities in courts, described how people were so mean and aggressive in their dealings that they took the simple behaviour of other people as an insult and challenge to their personal life and honour. According to him, some people reacted violently to quite normal behaviour. He described:

A few days ago, there was a dispute between two young people on a matter that, one had urinated in front of other's home; this created a reason for dispute, 'why have you done so?' Both of them had weapons, pistols, one asked, 'your mind is not working, you are out of mind.' One shot the other and as a result the other was killed (Advocate).

Violence was spontaneous, mechanical and justified routine activity that was acted upon as a reaction to unimportant and minor situations. People constructed favourable and supportive perceptions and meanings of their violence in conflicting and challenging situations; however, their violent reactions became part of their sub-cultural behaviour and honour. In addition, as some participants reported and argued, people were unaware and unmindful about the influences of social conflicts and the consequences of their behaviour. Likewise, they did not have a clear understanding of the law and its punitive consequences. Being driven psychologically and determined by the social strains and constant social problems in their life, people lost their capacity for rational and logical thought, and developed supportive justifications for violent quarrels and disputes, and for actions and reactions involving violence. While discussing the lack of awareness of people about impact of social strains and problematic conditions, and the reaction of law to their life, a politician explained:

People do not know about their future, they are not conscious and not worried about their future, if they were they would not have acted out such criminal and violent acts. Killing another person is very common; they want to do away with others (Politician).

It means that, being obsessed with social strains and conditions, people, in the broader context and environment, developed pathological and compulsive behaviours for which they did not know the repercussions of their actions and what legal consequences they would face for them.

On the other hand, some advocates pointed out that there were many castes, which had strong value systems and a cultural propensity for disputes and violent interactions. Their life survived by making troubles and becoming involved in violent conflicts within and outside their castes.

In many communities in Sindh, people become involved in violent conflicts because of the disputes within families and between different castes. These castes usually do not have big issues as causes of their violent murder, killing and assaulting. But, it may be that why a cup of tea was given to this man why not him, or at a hotel some people will be aggressive with a tea shopkeeper that why he charged a greater amount while the actual price was low. Such issues become cause of daily violent assaults some of which lead to killings and murders, to the extent that families become involved in killing each other for years (Advocate).

The discussions of the advocate on various issues of society and the cultural nature of castes suggested that some communities had criminal and violent propensities and tendencies to see their minor affairs as point of disputes and to react violently to minor and petty issues in their life.

On the other hand, some professionals did not lay criminal liability and responsibility on the individuals involved in criminal and violent crimes; rather, they believed social, political and criminal conditions instigated people becoming criminals. The participants quoted a number of real examples from their life and argued that people had no fear of police officers and had no obedience to the law. For example, a policeman discussing the reactions of the public to the policemen on roads and streets, stated:

They feel they are insecure because police do not protect their life and property. They are right on their own. Look there is one policeman in the area, how can he control all the huge population? Today people are out of control and mind, if a policeman is standing at a certain place people ask him 'why you are standing here', they do not speak with policeman with polite words (Policeman).

Like the views of the policeman about insecure and vulnerable conditions, a politician also described that rural areas were highly at risk of becoming victims of crimes like theft and violent conflicts and there could be violent interactions between criminals such as robbers and kidnappers. Precarious and insecure conditions became the motivating factors for many people to safeguard themselves by becoming reactive, criminal and hostile. The politician, who had major experience of social and criminal life of people in rural and urban areas, described the rural areas as nursery of violence. He argued:

It is that, in the tribal areas, I mean in villages, where there are continuous conflicts between the two or three castes, tribes, communities; they do not feel themselves safe so they carry weapons with them most of the time (Politician).

Several professionals, including police, advocates, social workers and politicians, emphatically reported that some castes and families, and communities were mainly and mostly pathologically unfriendly and hostile, and became involved in criminal and violent activities. Many castes, according to these professionals, had tribal and patriarchal lifestyles- they liked to marry more than one time with the purpose of having more male children to generate male masculine power and exert dominance over other castes and communities. An advocate, who talked much in detail about the nature and behaviour of some castes, tribes and communities, reported:

Many castes in Sindh like to marry more than once. They want that they should have more children because they think that a huge number of their children is their physical and militia force. They mostly become involved in violent conflicts within families so they need male power. I would say murder and robbery are because of the over population, some castes have nothing to do to live peacefully, their nature is to fight and create problems. These people once involved in criminal and violent life, have no way out but are continuously involved in such activities. They need money; therefore, robbery and kidnapping become their part of economic life (Advocate).

Socially supportive meanings and justifications of violence resided within the disorganised social conditions, cultural characteristics and situations of violent interactions within social groups and communities. Violence and violent behaviour in the view of many professionals arose from the trivial and insignificant issues in daily routines. However, the minor issues, which could be avoided, were the main part of the life of people and communities. Therefore, violence, disputes and conflicts were normal and routine behaviour. At the same time, poor economic conditions, unemployment and a weak criminal justice system provided the conditions which would encourage people in to be violent and become involved in criminal and violent activities.

### **Unequal socioeconomic conditions and violent behaviour**

Disorganised and unequal conditions, low social opportunities and weak social control, and corrupt justice system were some of the gruesome features of the Pakistani society. However, all the feature and factors significantly influenced behaviour and social definitions of social groups. People, as the professionals strongly believed, were highly frustrated with unequal social conditions, and they were pathologically violent in their nature and habits. In addition, their cultural behaviour indicated that they were stubborn and had a propensity to become involved in violent disputes and ferocious crimes. The social character of the Pakistani people, as some police officers, psychologists and advocates held, had features of violent criminality and violent cultural inclinations. Widespread inefficiencies and inadequacies in the social structure and community affected people so much that rather than adopting conventional and morally appropriate ways of life, they chose deviant, criminal and violent means. Moreover, these problems not only affected physical behaviour of people but also their thinking patterns and the development of definitions of the situation which justified violent acts.

Professionals including police, advocates, academics and social workers reported several socioeconomic and societal problems, and cultural issues which provided opportunities for people becoming involved in various violent activities. Some of them held the violent individuals as partially responsible of their violent acts, while some strongly believed that social structural conditions and cultural structure were responsible for violence and the violent activities of people. In addition, these professionals mostly, were contemptuous about the dealings and conduct of the criminal justice institutions. They discussed various social issues in society and the problems within the justice systems which encouraged or led people to become violent and aggressive. Some professionals suggested that various minor issues, which usually, could be avoided, became the causes of violent conflicts between social groups, castes, families and communities. They further argued that people were highly frustrated, dissatisfied and discouraged by their unstable social conditions, which made them react to trifling situations, including minor interpersonal conflicts, with aggression and hostility. The professionals believed being influenced and affected by



social conditions and experiencing no response from criminal justice organisations, people unknowingly, routinely and justifiably became involved in various violent activities.

The practitioners provided an analytical perspective about society, societal conditions and violence. According to them, poverty, disorganised and unequal social benefits led to people becoming angry and becoming involved in different types of violent and criminal acts. Uneducated, poor and underprivileged people in both rural and urban communities were vulnerable to deviant social conditions and criminal political structures. Some advocates, who dealt with criminal cases from rural areas, described how rural people had inadequate means of social progress and life enrichment. According to them, agricultural land, physical property and paltry assets were the only means of their social and economic stability. The rural people placed much importance onto their present and future economic assets, which they collected only by cultivating and harvesting crops on theirs' and others' agricultural lands. Having no education and social skills which could be used for earning, the rural people could not afford to see their resources placed at risk. For them, any risk to their finances and investments was threat to their life, and to deal with threat, they reacted by becoming directly involved in violent conflicts and disputes.

Some advocates, in relating their experiences with rural people were emphatically of the opinion that rural people were simple and did not know how to deal with their social affairs or manage their dealings with court officials and court hearings. Yet, their crimes and conflicts with other people were serious and dangerously violent. It was the structure and culture of the communities, which shaped the behaviour of people. In this context, violence, to some advocates, was a routine activity, widely practiced, and an accepted cultural exercise. One advocate commented:

Rural people do not know about the criminal and legal formalities. Criminal cases are dealt with in their own communities. Even the mother supports her sons in killing her daughter. A woman is not even supportive to another woman. In many cases of honour killings, offenders and victims compromise by exchanging of money. On the other hand, if anyone, including a woman, tries to raise their voice against honour killing, they are subjected to threats or killed. More, it is widely

accepted that if a male person kills his wife or even the wife of his cousin, there is no reaction or protest from the family members and the community members (Advocate).

The advocate further commented by referring to his experiences and knowledge that men and women surely engaged in sexual relations and sex deviant events. Commenting on what motivated rural people to become involved in violent, deviant behaviour and pathological violent reactions in their regular interactions, another advocate stated:

Some violent acts, for example, honour killing, murder and kidnapping may have many different causes in some areas, but, what makes the rural areas different from other areas is the continuous and frequent disputes over land issues. Agricultural land and quarrels over property distribution causes division among family members and makes them violent against each other. Most of the domestic violence and murder, kidnapping and robbery take place because of the excessive desire to have money and property. It is true that in rural areas, people find no other source of economic support and guarantee, land is the only hope for them. This makes them frustrated and always preoccupied, so they start quarrelling on petty issues (Advocate).

To some professionals, most of the problems within families and communities arose over the issues of agricultural land, low financial power, intolerance, low levels of education, and corrupt feudal and criminal systems in rural areas. Some forms of violence such as violence against women in rural areas was also caused by disputes over criminal occupation of agricultural land and differences in social status on the basis of low and high wealth. Men were widely unfair, aggressive and violent towards women in their domestic life. A policeman highlighted improper and injudicious behaviour of community leaders such as feudal lords who victimised people and made people react violently. However, violent and psychological victimisation by community leaders made rural people aggressive and ferocious against their women. One policeman shared his experience:

It has been observed that the killing of woman is actually on the pretext of land disputes, problematic marriages within families, a woman is considered as a hen at home; she is killed without any mercy. The man who is the real instigator of sexual relations with an accused woman is not killed, is free and turns his moustache with pride. Both parties compromise, get lands; I think it is the landlord and the feudal system. The landlords manage crimes among people,

support criminals as they can then maintain their landlord-ship within their communities (Policeman).

Not having proper social justice, an educated awareness or appropriate means of dealing with social, criminal and economic problems, some other powerful and criminal groups victimise the poor people and encourage them to become aggressive against other people, family members and women. Disorganised social justice, weak enforcement of laws writ of the law and underprivileged communities created a culture of violence in rural areas. People became socially, physically and psychologically motivated to respond to disputes by becoming hostile and violent against other vulnerable people. One advocate discussed several problems in rural society but in his overall analysis, he was clear that the existence of widespread poverty within village communities greatly troubled and alarmed people. He commented:

We have seen that many criminals who get arrested and convicted come from poor families, who do not have enough money to eat and feed their family members properly for three times a day (Advocate).

His analysis indicated that mainly poor people came into contact with criminal justice officials and that most of them were arrested and consequently were convicted of their criminal actions. The observations of others confirmed that people faced serious problems of poverty in their lives. A journalist argued that social and economic conditions and strains highly affected psychological wellbeing of people and disturbed emotional balance of people. He was of the opinion that people confronted serious issues in their lives which in most cases, were not in their control to resolve and reduce. He described the life of poor people in the following way:

His mind does not work, the whole day he works to earn. Today, it is a time of frustration; people think, 'he is ahead of me; why I am behind him.' All these questions constantly whirl in his mind. If anyone makes a statement about you, you will feel it as a slur against you; it has become the trend in our society. Man is psychologically ill (Journalist).

Like the journalist, some other professionals reported that people were so frustrated because of their low economic status that they could not tolerate even minor deviant

behaviour in other people, so they interpreted every deviant act of others as an insult to them. An advocate, explaining a number of incidents and experiences of court dealings with criminals and crimes commented:

An issue between two people about one hundred rupees rose to the level that people from both sides became involved in beating and killing each other. This resulted in the death and injury of many people from both sides. People are extremely frustrated with their social conditions. They do not know the difference between right and right (Advocate).

Some professionals suggested that people in general did not have enough income, so usually, they were confused about how to earn and collect; such thoughts and ideas usually frustrated them and made them psychologically ill. A policeman explained that people always thought about how to earn money and lead a better life. He described how people always saw their income and economic sources at risk and were fearful that they might be deprived of such meagre sources as they had, so they always behaved antagonistically towards others. Describing poor people and their behaviour, a policeman suggested that criminal violence was mostly committed by poor and uneducated people. The poor always carried a sense that they were already a deprived group, so every move against them was considered another attempt to deprive them and add insult to their injuries. The policeman stated that:

The areas which experience the poorest economic conditions react most violently to minor issues which lead to violent conflicts and disputes between people; the conflicts in many cases lead to murder. Those who are extremely poor are also involved in armed robbery with the purpose of gaining money. Kidnapping is organised violence, people who do not have anything to eat look for sources of money, so they kidnap people (Policeman).

Poverty was widespread and the major issue and problem of huge number of people. The narratives of the professionals indicated that low levels of economic resources and insufficient facilities caused people to develop pathological criminal and violent behaviour, and patterns of thinking. In contrast, wealthy people had relatively fewer problems even though they were involved in criminal activities; comparatively, they were not troubled by any fear and contacts with police officials. Some advocates, however, presented the opposite argument that not only poor people but also educated and

prosperous people became involved in various violent criminal actions. Their involvement in the violent crimes created no serious problem for them because by using their political position and influence, many of them were neither arrested nor convicted. Some advocates highlighted and commented on the crimes, criminality and violent behaviour of well-to-do families and cultured persons. An advocate explained:

There is some real issue in the act of honour killing. For the time being we see from the perspective of the person who actually observes his woman in a sexual relation with other person; what options he is left with then? In honour killing cases, it is not that only uneducated people act violently but educated people also. There was a case tried in a court where an advocate killed his wife in the name of honour. Where is education then, here in this case? We commonly say education can do wonders; I say being educated is something different and having degree is something else (Advocate).

Poverty and the perceptions, attitudes and values generated from the poverty highly created chances and opportunities for violence and violent behaviour within interpersonal relations and poor communities. However, it was not only poverty that caused violent and criminal behaviour of people but also there were many other issues and problems as many professionals suggested and argued. According to their arguments and descriptions, the media also had a considerable impact on the life and behaviour of people. A police officer, who was angry at the deviant culture of media and TV programs, explained that people learned criminal behaviour and techniques of crimes from movies. He commented:

New methods of robbery are shown. Nowadays the movies and the films are made on the purpose on how to commit crime. When we have no any job, no work to do, then then, we try to get weapons. Getting weapon is not a difficult task; government has issued a number of weapons that every other person keeps. People even borrow weapons from their friends and try to use them (Policeman).

As the policeman quoted above, some other members of the police force offered analyses about the deviance, weakened norms and media, and their influence on the behaviour of people. One argued:

TV channels and the mobile have deteriorated our culture. If they are used in a proper way there is much benefit but we don't use them properly. This has helped increased immorality; almost every second home is a brothel. We do not follow the proper norms and customs of our society but follow evil deeds. The poor are busy with looking for his sources of food while rich are busy in evil jobs (Policeman).

Deteriorating social norms, the negative influence of the media and weak control of governance has made a significant impact on the behaviour of people. The social abnormalities, deviant social conditions and disorganised structural conditions provided the social and psychological motivation for people to become deviant and violent.

### **Social disorganisation and culture of violence**

Community and its structure and cultural features served to be motivating factors for violence and encouraging people to be violent and hostile against each other. The poor economic and social conditions, no proper facilities for education and recreation, no true social bond between family members and community members; in addition, no positive role of police and community leaders, all produced criminal opportunities for people. Violence in poor communities remained a normal behaviour of people and for the solution of minor social and violent issues, violence was the first response and remedy available to people. Some incidents of social and violent nature were resolved and compromised within the community members, while some were brought before the community leaders. Some advocates reported that most of the violent conflicts and crimes were resolved within communities; offending and victim parties, who had no faith the law enforcement agencies, would resolve matters themselves, either using their own discretion or by looking to community leaders. One advocate argued:

Surely, crime is common and such crimes like murder, kidnapping and robbery are increasing, but people in such cases do not like to report to the police. They want to compromise and they settle such issues between themselves by getting or giving money. For murder, the victim party demands money and remains silent (Advocate).

The community system, or 'Jirga,' which usually dealt with criminal cases, was reported and discussed by several of the professionals interviewed in this study. A female social

worker who had a considerable experience of dealing with acts of violence against women and children in both urban and rural areas, and was a social activist engaged in protesting against unfair justice and police behaviour in the community, was very vocal about the unjust circumstances in Pakistani society. She argued that forced intermarriages, exchange of marriages, marriage of minor girls with older males and violent and victimising treatment of women, by men, were the common features of the society. She commented:

Honour killing, in many cases, is not really an incident of sex or honour in which a woman is alleged to have seen with other man. Nevertheless, in announcement of this act of honour killing, there are many benefits a male wants to gain. For example, some people want to resolve disputes of agricultural land, or old enmity with some people, or want to grab or occupy land of others. Keeping all this in mind, then, a girl of his own family is killed. However, then, it is announced that someone had sexual relations with that girl. In this manner, someone who is accused with the girl and who is rich enough becomes a target and source of gaining property from him or gaining some financial benefits or agricultural land. In this way, there are many other issues such as property, money and family issues linked to this honour killing case. In other cases, such acts of honour killing are brought before the 'Jiga' (a community court system), where community leader will penalise the accused man with a heavy amount to be paid to the party whose girl was killed. On the other hand, there is hegemony of the politicians, so called feudal lords, and agents of state, who play with the lives and future of people (Female social worker).

For not reporting cases of violence against to the police, the female social worker further pointed out that people do not go to police stations or court to resolve their criminal problems but in most of the cases they rely on community leaders. The female social worker and academic commented:

In rural areas, people kill their daughters and wives for minor issues; they know if the police are called to investigate the case, they will be sent to prison forever. Therefore, they prefer getting help of the feudal lord or community leader to determine their issues, because they know their community leader will support them (Female social worker).

Talking about encouragement of violence, including honour killing and murders, some other advocates put forward the view that people had no faith in the police and courts; they preferred going to the community leaders. However, police and advocates identified many reasons for people not going to police and courts. For example, one advocate suggested:

People are uneducated; some criminals are so extremely poor that they do not know how to carry out the criminal cases in court. We try a lot to tell them the ways of carrying out their criminal cases, but they are in hurry, they want their cases tried and announced promptly in their favour (Advocate).

It seemed poverty and no education made rural people unaware of their human and legal rights, with the result that they did not know how to pursue their complaints against the person, who had offended against them. Thus, victimisation became the part of rural communities and defined a supportive culture of violence and victimisation for people living there. The advocate commented further on his experiences and observations about crimes in rural areas:

I have seen, in the most of the cases like murder and honour killing, there is mutual agreement. In honour killing if a girl is killed, usually a family or a victim's family does not like to register a complaint with police but rather bring their problems to the community leader. In this way, after taking much money, the accused person is set free and he lives in the same community without any remorse and guilt. Rather, as commonly seen, he is encouraged and appreciated for his crime by his family members and his circles of friends (Advocate).

People themselves by injuring and killing their opposing groups resolved many of their social and violent issues within families and communities. However, there were several incidents of such nature which were brought for the resolution to the community leaders who were feudal lords and were rich people in area having huge agricultural lands. Some police officials argued that insecurity in the areas and no influential role of police encouraged and motivated common people to become hostile and aggressive while making sure of their security and safety. According to some of the police officers, the police were inefficient and incapable of investigating crimes properly which resulted in the public losing faith in criminal justice institutions. As a policeman commented:



It is true that a landlord falsely implicated a few people in one case; and it should be that the criminal investigation is properly conducted. It is not possible for all those people arrested have committed the same crime, it may be that one or two of them involved. But, if a proper investigation is carried out, other innocent people will be excluded from the list of the people given in the same case of crime (Policeman).

Because of the problems of properly addressing criminal cases and dealing with criminals within justice system, and, because of no mutual collaboration between agencies of justice such as the police and community justice system, the people were encouraged to be criminally violent, and the level of violent deviance increased in society. Some police officers discussed various issues of inefficacies, misappropriate behaviours and embezzlement within police and court dealings and described how actual criminals were not convicted for their committed crimes, even were not arrested for their criminal acts. For example, one policeman explained his experience:

Before his death, the young boy had sought money from some people and as a result of not paying back the money to its owner, a violent dispute took place in which he was killed. But I knew that this was not the real reason and the real killers were not arrested for the killing of the boy. I told the victim's party there is some hidden hand, these people are not killers but they are different people. Finally, we came to know about the real culprits but we could not arrest them because they were influential people (Policeman).

The policeman further described his experience of inappropriate court dealings:

By some means we took the accused men to the court and they were to confess to their crime of murder. But the judge asked me to leave the people there for two hours. When we came back after two hours, the judge scolded us and told me 'these people do not confess to their crimes, let them go free'. What could we do then...? (Policeman).

The professionals including police and court officials strongly argued that many cases of crimes were not properly investigated by police and tried promptly in court. Consequently, the victims of this justice system had no option but to look for alternative and traditional sources, which they believed could help them get out of their social and criminal problems. The corrupt and discriminatory role of criminal justice officials led

people to develop antagonistic thoughts and actions. On the other hand, the legal and traditional law agencies did no justice to the grievances of poor people but rather victimised them further. People looked to the community justice system, which, in local language, was called 'Jirga'. Some policemen acknowledged that the 'Jirga' justice system was an alternative way of resolving community problems including criminal activities. As one policeman explained:

It is because, more than courts, such kinds of cases are dealt with by the Jirga system. This kind of system has been popular; providing the prompt remedy people want to see and receive. Though the Chief Minister of Justice has formulated a policy to speed up the trial of cases, there is still no prompt impact. Many cases from 2000 and earlier are still being tried in the courts. Therefore, this is also a problem. In Sindhi society, people have come to realise that if a person commits more than two murders, he will be charged to pay money as a fine. So they do not feel hesitant about committing murders. Those who are wealthy have more resources and for them killing is not a problem, they know of murder there is a fine of 7 to 8 lacs (approx. 4516- 5161 British pounds), and they can easily afford to pay that. If a person kills three people this means he has to pay 21 lacs and he has plots, if he sells one of them can have access to a huge amount of money (Policeman).

In a similar way, some other professionals clearly blamed and accused police officials of being corrupt and partial in their legal duties. An advocate commented:

First Information Report (FIRs) or complaints of such criminal cases as honour killing are written in such a way that does not accuse any person, rather it is written as if it was an accident. Police and the victim party try to avoid naming any person as accused in such cases because in most of the cases, accused men belong to some powerful group. The police and even the victim's family do not like to go against them in court but, as the result, get huge money. In other cases, if someone tries to bring the case to the court against the powerful people, he is threatened by the powerful people or in some cases he is killed (Advocate).

Ineptitude, clumsiness and negligence of the agencies of justice has encouraged the traditional community mechanism of resolution for social and criminal issues, and contributed to the encouragement and prevalence of violent crimes. The poor, due to not

having enough money could not afford to pay bribe money to the police and court and subsequently were arrested and convicted while the rich, influential and powerful groups bypassed law and enjoyed a free life despite their involvement in violent crimes. Incompetence and corruption in the legal and traditional community justice systems have deprived people of their due social and criminal rights. Instead, these failings in criminal justice have made poor people victims of the justice system or created the possibility for the poor people of suffering from criminal victimisation. Not addressing criminal issues and not treating people equally, irrespective of their class and status, the social and criminal justice institutions have encouraged people to either resolve their issues on their own or seek help from other powerful alternatives in society. Many types of violent crime were encouraged by the inefficient and corrupt legal system and by the fraudulent and dishonest feudal and community justice system. Some professionals including police and advocates made various accusations about the police and courts, according to which, both departments failed to perform their legal duties. The narratives and descriptions of some court officials indicated that police discriminated between the rich and poor people. Rich and powerful people were not arrested for their criminal acts while the poor were arrested and convicted.

The discriminatory behaviour of the police against the poor people but in the support of powerful and dominant people was highlighted by several the professional participants. Most of the violent crimes, as the narratives of experts reveal, were not reported to the police where the dominant and influential people were involved. These influential and powerful people, in many cases, belonged to the political groups or feudal lords or criminal gangs, so the police were reluctant to register the criminal complaints against them and, rather, discouraged the poor people from doing so. In part this was because, as some policemen and advocates suggested, whoever tried to make criminal complaints against rich people either was threatened to assure their silence, or was killed. Poor people were subject to discriminatory experiences and criminal victimisation from the criminal justice officials and political community leaders. Having no faith and trust in criminal justice institutions, the poor people brought their grievances to the community leaders and feudal lords to resolve, who further behaving in an unfair and inequitable

way, also victimised the poor people and levelled huge criminal charges against them in terms of fine or private imprisonment.

In contrast, violence in urban communities was exacerbated because of the political culture and corrupt criminal justice. A police officer, while discussing the urban structure and political atmosphere, suggested it had a major impact on policemen and was responsible for the disturbance of smooth functioning of police performance. He argued that corruption and interference helped crime increase and maintained that the movement of the powerful criminal people was free of any fear of the police. He commented:

They have associations with politicians who they are able to approach and the FIRs registered against them mostly are cancelled, with the result that they are not arrested. There are people who we know have committed crimes but we cannot arrest them because of their contacts with high-ranking officials and influential people. We register cases and show absconders. We are helpless but when the time comes, we do our job (Policeman).

Not only rich, political people and court officials engaged in crimes of violence but also people from the law enforcement agencies themselves, such as the police, committed acts of crime and violence. Some comments indicated that police, also, had been involved in criminal actions. However, family issues were usually the cause of violent murder. A policeman narrated the following case:

There was a case that an FIR of murder was registered against a police officer and it was reported in it that, at the time of commission of the crime, the policeman was on duty in a bank. We presented our witness who told the court that the police officer was on duty. However, another witness presented by other party claimed that the police officer was present at the site of the crime and had killed a person. The court accepted their witness and rejected ours. What actually was happening was they had family dispute and old enmity with that police officer. They falsely implicated him in the murder case. The court helped them. Until the criminal and corrupt people are alive, police cannot do any justice to society (Politician).

Uneducated and educated, poor and rich people who were highly frustrated with family issues and economic problems equally became involved in violent activities. Moreover, the familial disturbances and problems existed in a broader environment where any

person of low social status and educational background was vulnerable and weak. The professionals' accounts of their observations, their experiences with crimes and criminals and their expert opinions indicated that, in broader context, people suffered from being underprivileged, neglected and living in impoverished conditions, and powerful agencies, including people and criminal justice institutions victimised the poor at the social, physical and psychological levels. Furthermore, the ineffective and corrupt political structure and community justice based on a corrupt and criminal feudal system further deprived the poor people of the equal rights and social benefits they need.

### **Corruption and bias in the criminal justice system**

Violence, as many of the professionals suggested, resulted from the weak and corrupt system of justice and its unfair and discriminatory public dealings. Most of the experts explained that almost all of the legal and social institutions including police, court and prisons, and educational had no proper or just approach to addressing the criminal problems of people or providing standard benefits to the public. Court officials criticised police as being corrupt, ineffective, old-fashioned and inequitable in their treatment of people. According to them, there was no systematic process of investigating criminal cases and uncovering the facts of crime to arrest the real culprits. They reported that the police had double standards, poor and helpless people were always at their mercy and there were more chances of their arrest and conviction when compared to those with more resources and political influence. In contrast, rich, powerful and influential people were at loggerheads and despite the commission of crimes of violence; they were dealt with leniency and were not arrested for their crimes, for they had the ability to approach high status people and politicians. Some police officials censured the court system as being supportive of rich and influential people. They commented that judges and advocates did not look properly into the criminal evidence found at a crime scene and did not value it, but rather they ignored it in order not to establish facts of crime against influential and powerful people.

Some professionals, such as the police and advocates described how the poor were not able to give bribe money to the police so they were arrested for petty crimes, while rich

and powerful people were able to give large sums and therefore able to avoid criminal charges. Apart from corruption in the police department, there were many other factors which affected the smooth provision of justice to poor people. Some professionals were cynical about the system of the police force and corrupt behaviour of officers. They were of the view that the police department did not have proper arrangement for the appointment of officers based on proper merits which highly had a greater impact on their performance and delivery of justice. One advocate commented on the improper system of appointment of police officers:

Police officers are appointed according to the choice and recommendations of the local political leaders and feudal lords. There are many police officers who, before joining police department were poor, but, after some time, they became rich and bought cars. Of course, the police officers who are recommended by some other will support them by every means possible (Advocate).

One advocate suggested that the police failed to investigate criminal cases properly; the (FIR), which was meant to be written based on the true and accurate information, was usually manipulated. Some professionals also presented the view that the police system was disorganised, that there were many problems within the system that they did not let the system work properly. Some policemen said that the public considered their presence unwelcome in certain areas and were impolite to them. Other members of the police force described some of the problems they faced such as a shortage of the required number of officers. They reported that due to insufficient personnel they could not monitor the criminal activities of the people in the areas they were posted to. Some of them were critical about the corrupt police system. A policeman declared:

Corruption is everywhere. A few corrupt policemen surely have corrupted the name of police and society. There needs to be a system. A policeman has to work according to a system. What do I do, I listen to my conscience and do justice accordingly. I cannot speak for others (Policeman).

Corruption was considered by several participants as one of the main factors disturbing the just and appropriate performance of the police and courts which, as a result, created problems for doing justice to poor people. The justice system, the professional believed was unjust and lacking proper and systematic ways of dealing with the criminal problems

of people, especially poor people. In addition, some experts, including academics, police, politicians, medicolegal officers and advocates firmly held the view that criminal justice professionals widely operated on the basis of class differences. According to their views, there was widespread segregation of poor and rich people and treatment of both of the groups on unequal basis. Some professionals, for instance police officers, criminologists and sociologists gave examples of the differences between the rich and poor people. According to them poor people faced many problems in their homes including shortage of gas, power cuts and dirty water which made them more disappointed and frustrated. On the hand other, the rich people enjoyed all the facilities and luxuries of life. Rich and powerful people had no fear of the police or that the police would be any problem to them. They were sure, after committing any crime, they would be not arrested; rather they were proud that someone from their families would help them to avoid from such situations. A police officer reported his experience that, even in their offices, rich people and criminals came to insult them.

Some people, the police officer reported, provided him with a phone saying, “talk to him,” “talk to your father”. He said he did not know who was on the phone but he had to talk to him and it turned out to be a politician. He further reported that sometimes there were senior police officers who wanted him to release certain criminals; he said that he felt this as an insult. The officer further described how many of the criminal activities were committed by young people from rich and powerful families. Their crimes were not reported and they were not even arrested. Another policeman described how criminals belonging to higher social class were always at free hand. He commented:

They have approaches to and contacts with powerful people and influential strong politicians; although criminal complaints may be reported against them, they do not get arrested. If arrested, the court releases them on bail. They are encouraged to commit crime (Policeman).

The discriminatory and biased nature of the agencies of criminal justice was seen and explained by some advocates and police officers as part of the police system. Police officers, in their interview, confessed they have taken bribes and they talked about their own economic problems which probably motivated them to gain extra money to bear the burden of their family costs. For example, one senior police officer said, despite serving

more than twenty years in the police department he was still living in the government quarters. He said that he could not buy his own home. He said, “I do confess I got some money (*bribe*), but I spent it, I did not store it”. His undiplomatic and humble accounts explained the corruption and inappropriate behaviour of police and at the same time, his early involvement in taking a bribe. His and many others’ accounts on society and violence indicated that justice system worked on a highly biased and corrupt basis and was responsible for creating pressures for the poor people becoming deviant and violent. Furthermore, the partial and fraudulent character of police and courts provided a free hand to powerful and dominant groups. In this context, people in general lost their moral values and adopted criminal value systems. They tended to behave criminally and violently by justifying their violent criminal behaviour.

### **Weak social control, criminal values, and justifications of violence**

Violence was a justified act which was adopted conventionally as routine behaviour within the broader population. Destabilised social justice, criminal victimisation and deviant cultural values were presented as justifications for violent crimes. Violence became the norm, the conventional and culturally approved behaviour for individuals and the wider society. According to some of the professionals interviewed, certain moral and ethical values were used criminally to neutralise the deviant and violent behaviour of people. In the presence of crimes of violence and criminal cultural values, some advocates suggested that police were reluctant to intervene into the social and criminal affairs of people, and at the same time, believed that personality characteristics, family background and moral values were responsible for someone becoming violent and deviant. One advocate argued that crime and violent acts were a source of fun for some people and its commission was a demonstration of masculine power and a reward for them. He emphasised the masculine and patriarchal culture, and culture of violence in the rural areas:

Honour killing and many other violent crimes are considered a trophy. People willingly and knowingly engage in such acts, they think they are capable enough and it is an expression of their masculine power (Advocate).



Many social problems identified by the professionals in the study, existed in the rural areas. Rural communities were described as disorganised on several levels. According to the views of some of the professionals, the weak social bond between communities and families, the inefficient and corrupt practices of the police and traditional feudal systems which permitted the victimisation of poor rural people by powerful groups significantly shaped the culture of violence in the rural areas. A culture of poverty, the negative influence of media and many other criminal values had a major impact on the behaviour and thinking patterns of people. A senior politician discussed the structure of rural communities and described how feudal lords caused social rifts and violent conflicts between rural families and members of the community:

Rural people are simple; they do not know who causes their problems. Whoever tells them that someone has entered their fields, they become aggressive, but they do not know that entry into their fields has been directed by someone else. The feudal lords play various tricks on innocent people. Problems on agricultural lands are created especially for those who are seen as developing their products and income; the feudal lords are fearful of others' economic development. They want only to preserve their rule in the areas, so they use all possible means of creating conflicts and resolving them when people look to them for a solution. As a result, people become slave to them (Politician).

The professionals suggested that people were highly frustrated with the community conditions and criminal circumstances. Rural communities were characterised by the existence of sexual and criminal deviance, and violent disputes, and widespread physical and psychological victimisation among the members of the communities. A policeman explained that people routinely experienced social and criminal conditions in their life, and were upset and discouraged with their income and capacity for earning resources. Social isolation and exclusion Social prevention and psychological strains made inroads into the minds of people and undermined the traditional moral and cultural values. A policeman suggested the behaviour of the poor people became pathologically, emotionally and culturally violent because they always carried a sense that they were already a deprived group. Therefore, every physical and verbal action against them was experienced as a threat and insult to their financial stability and power. The policeman stated:

The areas which experience extremely poor economic conditions react most violently to minor issues which lead to violent conflicts and disputes between people; the conflicts in many cases lead to murder. Those who are extremely poor are also involved in armed robbery with the purpose of gaining money. Kidnapping is organised violence, people who do not have anything to eat look for sources of money, so they kidnap people (Policeman).

Some professionals reported that people were so unhappy, disappointed and frustrated with their low economic status and absence of governance that they took every other person as their victimiser and did not tolerate any improper or impolite behaviour from other people. All improper behaviour and the misdemeanors of other persons were felt as an insult to their virility and maleness. One advocate commented on how people reacted violently to minor inappropriate behaviour:

An issue between two people about one hundred rupees rose to the level that people from both sides became involved in beating and killing each other. This resulted in the death and injury of many people from both sides. People are extremely frustrated with their social conditions. They do not know the differences between right and wrong (Advocate).

Social, economic and political deprivation moulded and shaped the actions and reactions of people and also sculpted their cultural and moral values. In addition, social conditions were readily and voluntarily blamed as the sources and causes of motivations for violent behaviour and the actions of people. Violence seemed to be justified and neutralised in the presence of unequal social benefits, and the chaotic and disorderly conditions of criminal justice system and political discrimination. In such confused and complex social and cultural situations, violent action was justified and seen as a masculine response, which, consequently, continued, as a cultural practice. All these corrupt structural performances in addressing the social and criminal grievances of people helped in construction of the structure of life behaviour in poor communities and influenced criminal cultural values and situations of violence.

## **Conclusions**

The narratives gained from the interviews with the professionals explained the core issues of the violence in Pakistani society. Violence, as was explained, seemed to be a routine

and conventional behaviour within wider Pakistani society and culture, and the lack of visible, logical differences between right and wrong in terms of criminal behaviour, further provided impetus and stimulus for acting out violent activities. Social and criminal insecurities were some of the pushing and determining factors for violence. Being dissatisfied and disappointed with the role of the agencies of justice, people in general reacted defiantly and violently against the physical and psychological threat of other people. The violent behaviour of people was a justified and legitimate action in the unequal, disordered and corrupt social, political and legal conditions. Social frustrations and strains, corrupt administration of politics, and weak social control defined and motivated the social character of the public as criminal and violent. Therefore, people in the wider context became physically, emotionally and culturally aggressive, hostile and violent.

A majority of the professionals firmly viewed the social and political structure as inefficient and lacking a systematic approach to providing equal and impartial benefits to people. The practitioners strongly criticised every agency of social, political and legal provision as corrupt and dishonest; people, especially poor people, did not have an appropriate response or gain any benefit from them. Being dissatisfied and discontent with the existing social and justice arrangements, people became aggressive and reacted in a destructive manner. Poor socioeconomic conditions were some of the most influential underlying factors that a majority of the experts believed triggered people towards violence. Having inadequate earning power, low levels of education and experiencing significant psychological strains in society, people lost their self-control and abandoned polite attitudes and peaceful practices in their interpersonal dealings. To people, particularly the poor, a violent response emerged as a first choice to deal with their social problems.

The society as a whole suffered from many social and political inequalities. The poor, as the professionals described, experienced many economic problems at home and domestic violence was widespread in many economically deprived homes. Violence against women and men was routine activity and a normal activity within the rural areas. Women

in rural areas were subjected to violence to conceal other economic motives and criminal behaviour. Agricultural land issues and property affairs were extremely serious matters for rural people which they often resolved by claiming large amounts of money from the men whom they accused of being sexually involved or having sexual relations with female family members. The rural people killed their women under the pretext of their involvement with the some men and claimed large sums of money from the accused men. Weak governance and the fragile system of justice created gaps for rural people to look to other, criminal, alternatives to resolve their social and economic issues. The local feudal justice system was only the source which was left for them to seek help. The feudal system and feudal lord levied a huge fine upon the accused criminal or penalised him by offering a girl to the victim party. Apart from the victimising role of the feudal lord and his unjust behaviour with poor people, there were several other problems which determined the violent behaviour of people.

Honour killing as violence against women, kidnapping and murdering were some of the violent activities which were widely practiced by rural people. The professionals expressed the view that the areas, urban and rural, which suffered from serious socioeconomic problems, became readily involved in killing, injuring and kidnapping actions, since they had no option to attain their social benefits. Violence and violent conflicts emerged as alternative and available remedy for addressing and ending their social and violent problems. For the people who suffered from serious economic and unemployment problems, engaging in violent acts and earning from criminal acts was a desired job. To some people, crime and violence was also fun- they willingly became involved. Urban communities, in order to solve their political and ethnic problems, reacted with practices which injured and killed people.

However, an equally important factor that helped and influenced violence was the corrupt, unjust and maladapted role of the criminal justice agencies. The advocates criticised the police as being corrupt, while the police slated the advocates as being corrupt and inefficient. Experiencing the corrupt and biased performance of the police and advocates, poor people resorted to solving their own criminal and social issues

through violent means or seeking help from the feudal lord or community leader. In this context, having no faith in the criminal justice system, violence emerged as a reactive force against the corrupt performance of the criminal justice system. The widespread presence of weapons and social and criminal anarchy in society encouraged people to become aggressive, deviant and violent as a way of resolving their interpersonal problems. Rich and powerful people, on the other hand, had a free hand from the police and court officials and were not arrested for their criminal acts since they were able to approach and draw on contacts with high-ranking officials and powerful politicians. However, the poor were vulnerable to the social conditions and justice system, and violence within their communities manifested itself as a pathological but nevertheless, conventional means of approaching life.

## **Chapter Eight**

### **Discussion and Conclusions**

The previous Chapters, Five, Six and Seven provide significant ideas and explanations about violence and violent crime in Pakistani context. The empirical analytical chapters highlighted that violence was predominantly carried out by the poor, illiterate and disadvantaged social groups who justified and neutralised their violent acts by blaming social, political and legal inequalities as motivations behind their actions. In addition, they by taking advantage of cultural values and beliefs emphasised their violent behaviour as justified and reactive under structurally disorganised conditions and weak criminal justice policies and performances.

This prisoner-based study aimed to understand violence and violent criminal activities by exploring lived experiences, narrative accounts and experiences of violence of the convicted men in Pakistani prisons and by evaluating explanations and scholarly views given by the professionals who had practical knowledge and observations about social problems and violence in Sindh and Pakistan. The narrative accounts analysed through thematic analysis procedures provide significant themes to understand violence and violent crime in a Pakistani context. This study is very much important on theoretical and methodological grounds since there is no prisoner-based research in Pakistan which has collected interviews from the prisoners convicted of multiple violent offences such as murder, kidnapping, robbery, violent assault and honour killing. In addition, there is no criminological research particularly in Pakistan which has examined violent crime from different theoretical approaches like structural, situational, subcultural and neutralisation theories. This qualitative research therefore by benefiting from theoretical and methodological insights drawn from the Western literature attempts to understand violence in Pakistani context.

The aim of the prisoner-based research was to analyse and understand life stories, experiences and explanations of the convicted prisoners and the professionals by evaluating how they both samples of participants described their experiences, social problems and structure of violence in Sindh and Pakistan. The discussions in this chapter

will explain the narratives of violence presented by the prisoners convicted of violent offences in prisons in Sindh, Pakistan and the explanations about social and violent structural conditions by the professionals. It will show how violent offenders situate themselves in their social context, present their social problems and explain their violent acts they committed. It will also describe how professionals describe the underlying social, political, cultural and legal conditions influence people becoming engaged in aggressive and violent activities. The comprehension of violence which is a core problem in this study is analyse from the given explanations and accounts by the prisoners and professionals. Violence as understood from the narratives of the prisoners and the professionals is a physical, emotional and cultural phenomenon, which is acted on justified, rationalised, emotional and cultural reasons in Sindh and Pakistan.

### **The justification of violent behaviour: comparative analysis**

The comparative analysis derived from the explanations of the prisoners and professional provides understanding about how violence is influenced by various social factors and how it becomes rationalised and justified in Pakistani society. There were similarities and dissimilarities in the accounts of the prisoners and professionals when talking about violence in Pakistan. The prisoners interviewed in this study openly and bluntly blamed social conditions as responsible of their violence. On the other hand, professionals partly blamed social conditions and partly individuals for engaging in violent crimes and harmful acts. However, both of them were highly critical about the inequal social and political conditions, and corrupt behaviour and response of criminal justice agents. To both of them, disorganised social structure and low opportunities available to people created antagonistic attitude and behaviour in society that people had no other choice but to be aggressive and violent against their oppressors. Because of these anomalies and abnormalities in society, people develop favourable definitions, values and attitudes towards violence.

Violence, as analysed from the narratives of the prisoners and professionals, arises from minor and trivial kinds of interpersonal conflicts. It is physical, emotional and cultural action and reaction to insignificant and petty conflicts and provocations within

interpersonal relations, for example, verbal accusation of bad behaviour of one's family female member, dispute between children on playground and urinating of someone in front of some other's home. Such kinds of, and many more of rifling nature, observations, information and behaviour of others cause people become aggressive and violent against others. On the hand, there were serious issues and problems like forcible occupation of agricultural land, economic, physical and psychological victimisation, and ethnic conflicts support violence and violent behaviour within interpersonal relations.

Violence and violent act does mean any serious issue for those people who become involved in such acts, since they have developed justifications out of inequal and disorganised social conditions and experiences of economic and social marginalisation. Experiences of social and economic deprivations and experiences of no response from the agents and institutions of justice, largely and significantly generate behavioural problems and antagonistic attitudes within the social groups. On the other hand, professionals who have first-hand knowledge about the social problems and unstructured role of social institutions believe people become frustrated with their social environment and resort to violence in order to gain some social and economic benefits. They also make individuals responsible of losing their temper and becoming aggressive upon not gaining justice-based response from society. They believe very minor issues in the life of individuals become or are considered as economic and social threat to people. People especially poor become physically aggressive when they find their goals are blocked, their criminal complaints are not dealt serious and their family members become victims of sex and physical assault.

### **Violence in social and cultural context of Pakistan**

This prisoner-based research has collected narrative accounts and themes of violence. Life stories, experiences and narrative accounts of the prisoners convicted of violent offences and expert explanations and viewpoints of the professionals actually opened windows to understanding social problems and violent composition in Pakistani society. Factually, carrying out prison research was not an easy task in disordered social conditions, political and personal monopoly, and unfavourable academic atmosphere in



Sindh, Pakistan. Consequently, there were several problems I faced not only from prisoners but also from prison authorities. Prisoner-based researchers, as described in the Chapter Three, have different experiences of prisons and they also find prisoners have different experiences and ideas about prisons. Some researchers find prison a difficult place for research while others do not. However, my experiences of fieldwork within prisons are that they can be a difficult but not impossible place to engage with. However, for a range of reasons, they provide limited time for meeting with and interviewing prisoners. In the limited time given to me in the prisons, as I explained in the Chapter Four, I collected interviews in the narrative forms from 40 prisoners from four prisons and detailed interviews from forty different professionals. The male prisoners I spoke were convicted of multiple violent crimes including murder, kidnapping, robbery, violent assault and honour killing.

The prisoners I spoke to were of the age range of 22 to 65; a majority of the convicted men belong to rural areas and spoke Sindhi language, while a small portion of the sample belong to urban areas who spoke Urdu, Pashtu and Sindhi languages. It was first time that they were interviewed about their social and violent life. Their conversation style with me was simple, not aggressive- some of them did not like to talk much about their life activities and share details about their violent life and violent victimisations, and about their female family members. Moreover, some of the prisoners were afraid to share information about their community leaders, feudal lords, who they said had physically victimised them and were responsible for their poor economic conditions, violent acts and the subsequent arrest. One prisoner who had been the bodyguard of a political leader revealed that the leader had caused his arrest, nevertheless, in the interview, he spoke well of him. Prisoners from rural areas did not understand the meanings of violence and crime; to them the idea of violence was difficult to conceptualise. My questions to them, “did you observe any incidents of violence in your childhood or life?” made them think long about their reply. I saw they paused for a while before saying anything in response. I felt they did not understand the word, violence, so I then provided them examples such as murder, assault and killing. They then replied abruptly, “Yes. Like this there are many” or “Yes, there are many, thousands.” Then some participants became confidently vocal.

However, despite providing examples of violence, some avoided speaking about their crimes (“No, no, nothing happened with me. I saw nothing like that, but I heard”). His “heard” provided me with an opportunity to ask him more about hearing about crimes. His “nothing” and “no” probably indicated his fear of telling stories about the criminal activities of others. In contrast, urban participants knew well about the concept of violence and violent activities.

I also encountered aggressive behaviour from some prisoners. The aggressive behaviour, on the one hand, was one way a justification for their committed violent act; on the other hand, it was a problem for me how to continue interviewing him. Keeping in view, the interviewee might be more aggressive or discontinue talking to me, I kept silence which provided him a chance to sooth his feelings and let him sigh and then talk. Such aggressive behaviours I encountered from the men convicted of kidnapping who showed they were wrongly implicated in the case, and most importantly from the men who were convicted of honour killing. Interviewing is sensitive process in which interviewee may behave unpredictably. On the other hand, there might take place some other problems offered by the gatekeepers who can influence data collection process. I faced a number of other problems which significantly impeded my data collection. Some prison authorities did not allow me much time to collect interviews from the prisoners which meant, as I described earlier and also in Chapter Four, that I collected interviews in a limited time. In the first three prisons, I was warned to be careful about time because after lunch prisoners return to their cells/barracks so I had to make the most of the time before their lunch talking to them. However, in the fourth prison, I was completely disrupted when I was about to finish interviewing a sixth prisoner. I was prevented from continuing my interview and I was requested to leave the place of interview. All the problems with prisoners and prison authorities, to some degree, affected my collection of data.

Though I do not claim this research has collected in-depth and detailed narrative accounts of the prisoner participants, however, the limited biographical data but from 40 participants offer me substantial information about violent and violence crime. Nonetheless, the detailed explanations from the professionals provide me additionally

sufficient knowledge about social conditions and violence in Pakistan. Therefore, this research, by exploring the lived experiences and accounts of the convicted men and detailed explanations of the professionals, has developed narrative themes on violence. The examination of the narratives of violent offenders is actually an understanding of their perceptions about violence and understanding of the causal factors they ascribe to their violent actions. The understanding of violence was further supplemented and triangulated by the professional and experienced explanations and views gathered from the professionals and learned people from various fields like academic, legal and political. As social and cultural contexts vary around the world, the prisoners' narrative explanations about social, cultural and violent conditions collected from the Pakistani prisons in this study vary from many other Western prisoners' narrative explanations on the same issues. However, within the same social context as in Pakistan, all prisoners do not experience the same social conditions thus being influenced by various and different social variables, their behaviour manifest in different forms and types like murder, kidnapping, robbery and violent assault.

Violence and violent crime is mainly a social problem in Pakistan. This study finds disorganised social structural conditions are prominent and dominant factors behind violence and violent criminal acts in Pakistan. Violence is physical, emotional and cultural action and reactive behaviour on one hand, however, on the other hand, it is necessary, rationalised and culturally accepted behaviour. It is justified response to social inequalities, unfair justice system and historically old-aged cultural norms. As understood in this research analysis, violent crime and criminality is a pathological problem. The pathology of violence is significantly shaped by disorganised structural conditions, which, then, is supported by cultural values and situational factors. Violence, in this concern, is not affected by a single factor but a variety of structurally disorganised and destitute social conditions. However, such impoverished and disadvantaged conditions influence social behaviour of people and shape their cultural and psychological conditions and actions. It is socially, situationally and culturally motivated and shaped. Various factors motivate violence, for example economic deprivation, ecological characteristics such as rural and urban settings, and cultural characteristics.

However, a limited understanding developed from analysis explains that violence is largely reactive and defensive. The narratives of violent offenders indicate that they feel and see themselves as victims of social conditions and of agents in the criminal justice and feudal system. Consequently, the violent offenders deprived of equal social opportunities and due processes of the justice system react in emotionally violent and culturally pathologically aggressive manner. Their violent acts are justified and obligatory reactions to all the unfair treatment, inequalities and victimisations. Violence as mostly accepted and neutralised act does not carry feelings of guilt, shame and remorse. Violence structurally motivated becomes cultural pattern. However, the poor, uneducated, and socially, economically and psychologically deprived population principally and generally respond to minor and serious conditions with violence. The findings in this study suggest that the poor people become pathologically and mechanically involved in violent conflicts and neutralise their violent behaviour by blaming confused and inequal social circumstances. To them, killing and injuring does not make serious issue but these are routine and normal patterns of life. The poor people are emotionally and cultural bound to resolve their social and criminal issues by violent means. Safeguarding of physical property and cultural property (honour, masculinity and self-image) are some of the inevitable and unavoidable elements of life, which, if are damaged, threatened and challenged, will be dealt with violent action and reaction. In this context, therefore, violent crime and behaviour such as killing, assaulting, kidnapping and robbing, is a reactive response in Pakistani society and culture.

The comparative criminological literature helps to gain analytical insights, understanding power and differentiating abilities for properly understanding violence in different regions and cultures. It also assists to know how different social and cultural factors in different nations can be conceptualised and comprehended, and how these become underlying sources for motivating people to become violent and hostile. Various theoretical perspectives discussed in Chapter One suggest that there are multiple factors in a given society which influence the violent behaviour of people. The most influential factors which significantly affect violence and violent behaviour are the problems designed, structured and operated by agents of commanding agencies and authoritative

agents: the social structural agents. As discussed in Chapter Two, the disadvantaged structural conditions like improper distribution of social opportunities including education facilities, employment prospects and political benefits; weak criminal justice policies and performances including of police, court and prisons; and biased and criminal role of traditional community justice, affect human behaviour. All these and many other structural conditions and situations determine that people may react and act violently in minor circumstances of insult and physical and psychological events of victimisations, and in the most violent conflicting environments. In additions, as discussed in the chapter, disorganised conditions and weak institutions of justice system affect belief system and values of poor communities, who do not find their violent actions as criminal but justified under those criminal and unequal conditions.

However, as violent crime is multivariate and complex human behaviour that cannot be seen and understood from a single theoretical perspective, many other factors also influence violence. One perspective suggests that poverty, inequality or poor social and economic opportunities and weak control of the criminal justice system influence aggressive behaviour in people. The second claims that situations where there is conflict between an offender and victim past experiences of deprivation and victimisation along with the availability of weapons influence violent behaviour. The third, cultural or subcultural, perspective argues that certain cultural values help individuals behave violently. Moreover, it is also suggested that increased rates of violence are influenced significantly by various factors, for example, chaotic and poorly organised social institutions, limited opportunities for education or employment, and other community level problems which inhibit social development including inadequate legal institutions and weak criminal justice systems. In addition, it is argued that poor economic conditions affect the lifestyle of people and the way they think about their life. All these factors can have a major influence on patterns of violent behaviour. However, all these factors are predominantly examined using quantitative research methods and in Western urban areas. They are not examined from the viewpoints of violent offenders and previous bodies of research have not evaluated how people personally describe their experiences and see violent acts.

The Pakistani literature discussed in the Chapter Two, argues that poor people become mostly involved in various violent acts like murder, homicide acts and violence against women; however the literature indicates nature of violent crime is significantly different in rural areas than urban areas. Rural areas characterised as socially and economically deprived and affected by particular cultural practices and values, increasingly and readily involve in violent acts. On the other hand, urban areas economically and politically disadvantaged and ethnically aggressive become involved in violent acts for the maintenance of their political and ethnic affiliation and monopoly. Notwithstanding, such explanations and understandings of violence are not examined by analysing the narrative ideas and perceptions of violent offenders. Prisoner-based research and narratives of violence debated in Chapter Three, suggests that prisoners construct their perception of their violent identity according to their social and cultural contexts.

The findings of this study suggest that violence results from social and economic deprivation and cultural influences. Though the theoretical sense of the main findings in this study indicate that violence is influenced by poor economic conditions and cultural values as discussed in Western literature, at the same time certain factors relating to violence in Pakistan differ from those in Western countries. There are significant differences in the structure of rural communities in the Western countries and Pakistan. Unlike the rural areas in Western countries which are thinly populated and witness violence mostly against women, as we saw in the Chapter One, the rural areas of Pakistan are highly populated and experience various social problems and many different types of violence. As some Western scholars believe that the structure of communities shapes the behaviour of people, in line with that view, this study finds that rural structure witnesses various problems which create the possibility of violent conflicts and violent interactions between people. Social structure of rural communities is distinctive in its nature and different from urban structure. Evidence in this study indicates that rural communities in Pakistan are traditional, disadvantaged and culturally violent. A feudal system and traditional justice system dominates over rural areas. Feudal lords, who own vast agricultural lands, play a criminal role in the community, depriving poor people of their social and economic benefits and exposing them to criminality. They impose their

economic and criminal power over the people and utilise 'divide and rule' strategies with them in order to maintain their position of authority. Moreover, the feudal lords, with the support of criminal gangs, corrupt police and courts regularly victimise poor families.

On the other hand, rural individuals encounter various problems within their communities. They experience considerable economic problems and are highly concerned with serious problems like “no land, no money.” Individuals face a diversity of problems such as being denied the right to buy land, not receiving water in time to release onto fields for irrigation and limited access to education due to poor management of schools, not finding business facilities. Moreover they encounter criminal gangs, are physically victimised by feudal lords and find police unwilling or unable to resolve the criminal problems they face. The rural population encounters a local informal system which creates many problems for them. The feudal system not only creates criminals and extreme economic conditions in rural areas but also physically and psychologically victimises people. Physical and psychological victimisation is also part of life of the participants in the study. Structural and cultural perspective scholars believe poor individuals are largely the victims of disorganised social conditions where they are deprived of the ability to meet their social needs, and strain theorists believe that the blocked and inadequate availability of economic resources creates a sense of suffering which leads to the development of aggression. Participants were subjected to various forms of physical and psychological victimisation, for example, violent beatings, insults, subjection of their family members to physical abuse and failing to get a positive response from police in addressing criminal complaints. Their victimisers were feudal lords, politicians, police officers and many others, such victimisers are powerful individuals. Many participants accused them as their victimisers (“This is because of the landlord,” “the landlord sent some people with weapons to attack and kill me,” “see, if a poor sells something, this powerful caste tries to snatch (rob) from him the things”). These narrative findings indicate that participants were highly aware of the criminal victimisation caused by powerful feudal lords, rich people, politicians and police. Moreover, some participants felt psychologically victimised “Going to there was like being a dog in his home; those rich people did not treat us humanely”).

On the other hand, this study finds differences in types of violence between the Western countries and Pakistani society. This study agrees with the findings of Grama (2000) and Logan and Molotch (2007) that male partners or individuals are involved in violence against women in rural areas more than urban areas because of social and cultural formation of the rural community (Chapter six). But there is a significant difference in violent crimes enacted in European/Western rural communities and Pakistani rural communities. Western studies find an increasing number of violent activities including stalking and symbolic violence against women and children (Lee and Ousey, 2011; Dobash and Dobash, 2011). In contrast, this study finds that women are subjected to multiple violent crimes in greater quantity, as some prisoners reveal their violent acts like violent assault, honour killing, rape, sexual act against them, but these criminal acts are not usually reported to police. Therefore, this study does not claim that incidents of violence against women are low in Sindh.

As discussed in Chapter One rural areas in the Western countries are smaller in population and violence there is predominantly against women and between different ethnic groups because of frustration and problems created by a lack of proper facilities of living and limited housing. On the other hand, as described in the Chapter One, violence in rural Brazil also is between landless people and landowners. The findings in this study suggest that violent crime such as murder, robbery, kidnapping, violent assault, physical and psychological victimisations of men and women are common. As the data further indicate that men's violence such as murder, kidnapping and violent assault against men are common and routine activities, moreover, men are subjected to physical, psychological and economic victimisations by influential, powerful and feudal lords in the urban areas and most importantly in the rural areas. On the other hand, women are also subjected to violence as murder in the name of honour killing and physical and psychological victimisations by their male family members. Murder and violent conflicts are the routine activities in the life of rural people, which is why they do not necessarily consider themselves as criminal or violent people.



Most of the violence and violent crimes in rural areas occur due to issues related to the agricultural land problems such as not receiving water in fields on time and not getting an equal share of agricultural produce. At the same time, the lack of educational and employment opportunities, violent disputes between rural people, sexual moves against women and physical victimisation by community leaders, feudal lords may all lead to violent conflict. Violence emerges as a reaction when one is not receiving water on a field, since land is the only source of economic and social welfare for rural families. Low opportunities of earning, violent disputes between community members and violent incidents within rural areas affect the life style and experiences of the people. Though many people are used to such conditions and do not necessarily become frustrated with them some people migrate to urban areas to seek a better life and greater economic benefits. Equally and more importantly, the feudal system and its economic and physical victimisation cause much violence in rural areas.

Rural violence is also related to cultural values like honour which are widely entertained by majority of the rural population to frame their actions. A subcultural perspective, as discussed, in the Chapter One argues that cultural values motivate people to engage in violence. Honour killing, as a form of murder and family violence, is a rural phenomenon and is carried out on the pretext of defending honour. This study like, some other rare local studies conducted by Narejo and Kharal (2010) in Sindh, finds that women are subjected to killing by males who believe that their murder of sexually deviant women is to save the honour of their family. Moreover, the patriarchal nature of rural areas largely works on a gender-based system, in which women are the majority of victims of violence especially of honour killing and family violence (Okey, 1986; Narejo and Syed, 2010). The findings reveal that in all of the honour killing cases in this study; it is women (not men) who are killed in the name of honour. In all of the cases, prisoners describe that they saw women in sexual relations with other persons. This study did not discover the factors behind what motivated those killers of women.

This study agrees with the findings of some of the local researchers such as Kanwar (1989), Narejo and Kharal (2010) and Bhanbhro, et al, (2013) that feudal lords resolve

these problems through a compromise arrangement where the offending party has to pay a huge amount of money in compensation, or has to surrender some portion of land or has to provide girl (s) to the victim party. One interviewee who killed his wife in an honour killing case said he was offered a girl to marry in return for not killing the accused person. In addition, another interviewee knew well about the agricultural assets and other properties of the male/accused victim. Prisoners, many professionals and local studies believe that feudal lords, by their strategies of trapping people, create such problems and 'settle' them in order to “maintain their landlord-ship” in the rural communities. However, prisoners, professionals and a number of local studies have offered various reasons as to why, in cases of honour, a male who is found in sexual relation with a female is not killed. It is known that in the result of not killing the accused male (*Karo*) found in the sexual relations with the female members of their families, the offenders were offered as huge amount. However some of the offenders still engaged in searching the accused male to kill but again they were offered more amount and girls to be married with. Such acts of honour killings or sexual violence against women are usually resolved by providing amount or girls to the male family member of the women or found women and men in sexual acts. The amount or penalty of girl to be married with is usually decided within the community by the community members and the feudal lord of the area.

The findings of this study contradict foreign research on certain points but support local research. My findings disagree with the findings of John L. Hammond (2008), who found that peasants or landless individuals' violence is predominantly focused against powerful or landowners. My findings suggest that poor peasants' violence is not directly against any powerful or feudal lord, but focused on criminals (robbers) or other (powerless) people as servants or close family members of the feudal lords. The findings support those of Sahito et, al (2009) in rural Sindh, who also find that feudal lords (*waderas*) do not necessarily extend personal contacts with the peasants but their contacts and businesses are usually carried out by their assigned persons as personal secretaries (*kamdars*). Moreover, the waders or feudal lords design networks run criminal gangs of local robbers who forcibly occupy the pieces of agricultural lands and areas and even rob rural people as to create criminal terror and fear in the areas. As this study found, the

participants (peasants) show their aggression against feudal lords but they do not find (feudal lord) an easy target because their movements are closely safeguarded and protected. Other people who run the business of feudal lords are mostly present on the scene and become easy targets of violent conflicts. Such findings support routine activity theory and supporters of this perspective (for example, Pease and Tseloni, 2014), who believe that opportunity makes criminals and that easy targets mainly become victims of aggression and crime.

The situational perspective discussed in Chapter One, presents the view that various factors like past experiences of insult, availability of weapons and the nature of circumstances may all trigger violent situations and interactions. This study agrees with this theoretical perspective but also finds that the threat of future conflict perceived by individuals, and cultural make-up of individuals, also shape violent interaction. Various factors motivate participants to become involved in reactive violence. For example, one participant killed a person who actually physically victimised him on many occasions (“If one behaves in an unjust way with you, your heart will be fed up with him. You will feel that injustice is done to you, you will be arrogant then”), past humiliation (“Going to there was like being dog of his home; those rich people did not treat us humanely”), future threat (“he was robber, wanted and proclaimed”) and availability of weapons (“They gave me a dagger and they themselves took a side and let me do it”). Such findings also indicate, like strain theory, that violent revenge results from experiences of victimisation, emotional disturbance and victimisation of family members.

My findings also confirm the benefits of a sub-cultural violence approach in that individuals derive vengeful and reactive values from the conflicting interactions facilitating them act on violent criminal acts, and, as routine activity theory describes, the offenders choose victims who are easy targets for their criminal routine activities. Vengeful and masculine attitudes still exist and social and criminal issues are still resolved within communities, by community leaders, through imposing large sums of head money on victims or imprisoning poor peasants in private jails and by poor individuals themselves through resorting to violent conflicts. Weapons and reactive acts

of violence are some of the instant and inseparable characteristics which trigger and help promote and maintain murder, assault, kidnapping, robbery and violent conflicts in both settings but particularly in rural settings.

In contrast, urban violence is ethnically and politically motivated. Chapter One describes a heterogeneous population that experiences poor socioeconomic conditions, unemployment and low education becomes politically and culturally motivated to be aggressive and violent against counterpart racial and ethnic groups. Distinctive moral and cultural values, which represent their subcultural moral value systems and thinking pattern styles, influence their homicide acts and violent conflicts between interpersonal relations. The findings in this study support such evidence of violence in urban areas. However, the findings also suggest that the ethnic and political structure in Pakistan are highly disorganised and unsystematic and, because of their hegemonic attitude and patriarchal nature, cause people to divide in groups which fight against one another. People who are already poor, unemployed and uneducated find no other option for their economic and social life; therefore, join political and ethnic gangs to gain social benefits through criminal and illegal means. Moreover, poor people are easily recruited into the political parties and are easily motivated to become involved in violent conflicts with other opponents. Violence in this context is not viewed as wrong but a manifestation of ethnic and political identity. Killing, assaulting and shooting are not serious issues for the people but viewed as a normal part of life and lifestyle. Moreover, violence in urban areas is largely carried out with weapons, which are provided by political and ethnic party leaders.

The findings in this study suggest that urban structure is highly socially and politically disorganised. Urban areas are characterised by multiple and diverse ethnic identities, a rapid increase in population because of migration from rural areas, economic uncertainty and political instability. Ethnic and political differences and conflicts are widely created by surreptitious political hegemony and patriarchal bureaucratic leadership (Chapter three, five and six). Urban individuals are also concerned with their poor economic conditions, ("got born in poverty and will die in poverty, poverty radiates from my

face”). They define their identity by showing their affiliation with political and ethnic groups, which they develop from an early age.

Urban areas are politically and ethnically disordered places which have a major influence on the behaviour of people. Violence begins from an early age, which revolves around causing injury, assault and killing members of their political opponent groups using weapons like Kalashnikovs, guns, pistols and sticks. They are proud of their criminal activities (“We beat them with solid sticks”), but at a certain age of their life, urban individuals seem to discontinue their criminal lifestyles. Some of the urban criminals interviewed had already quit their criminal activities; they wanted to leave their criminal life for the sake and safety of their families. As one of them, whose wife and son came to see him in the court, reported he had already left his party and wanted to move to another city to live a peaceful life. But, he was entangled in minor criminal cases like mobile phone snatching as a punishment for leaving his political party. He did not like to be criminalised for such a minor case; he displayed considerable aggression towards those who caused his arrest and his criminalisation. He planned to avenge them for the act of implicating him in the false case of mobile snatching. Violence levels are not low; murder, assault, kidnapping, robbery and injury and many other criminal and sexual offences are part of everyday urban life. Having wide experience of crime and violence in communities, not paying attention to, and not considering criminal activities as serious and dangerous, and sharing almost similar values all explain the disorganised subculture of violence. Being proud of telling violent criminal stories reflect interviewees' criminal masculinity. Violence and violent crime from this perspective is conventional and part of mainstream life, as subcultural theorists believe.

As we saw in Chapter Two that the weak criminal justice system and its performances encouraged people to become involved in criminal and violent activities. Moreover, in the absence of an effective police force people found no deterrence for their criminal and violent activities. In Chapter Three, we saw that there is widespread corruption within the social and legal institutions in Pakistan and people have neither trust nor faith in them; as a result they resolve issues by themselves usually through criminal and violent means. It

is the because of the absence of effective criminal justice policies that violence and use of weapons become common.

My overall experience of prison research was fruitful in Sindh prisons. All the inmates interviewed were friendly and cooperative. No one objected. No one withdrew from the interview. Only three participants asked me about the purpose of my research and the interview. I described to them in detail that my research was part of my PhD study to understand the experiences of inmates and to explore the reasons for violence and violent crimes in our society. They were satisfied. No harm was experienced, either physical or psychological, during entering or leaving the prisons or when interviewing prisoners. But, listening to participants' stories somehow made me sad and nervous, for they told very serious problems of their life like they were physically tortured and injured, their female family members were subjected to physical abuse including young girls and boys and they struggled hard to meet their both ends. Along with such narratives, there were some other descriptions which portrayed depraved behaviour of agencies of justice. The narrative descriptions of prisoners and professionals indicate that police and court systems are biased against poor people and much corruption in those institutions not only affects the performance of the institutions themselves but also affects the expectations of common people. People, especially the poor, have lost hope in the police and court. The experiences of both prisoners and professionals indicate that the police support rich and powerful people while neglect poor people.

Violence is encouraged by the disorganised structure of the criminal justice system. Prisoners and professionals describe police and court organisations as corrupt and not prepared to deal properly or justly with poor people. Though poor and rich people engage in criminal and violent activities, it is the poor who are most likely to be arrested and convicted. Rich people and their affiliations with political parties are often beyond the reach of criminal justice personnel. Police officers suggest that rich people are not afraid of the police even when they commit crimes. A police officer describes how, even if a rich person is arrested after his release, he returns to police and says, "You arrested me, found a weapon also. I have committed such and such crimes; what could you do to me,

the court released me on bail.” The professional further laments that the rich criminal “is encouraged to commit crimes.” On the other hand, police are highly supportive of urban criminals. During my interviews with urban professionals, a police officer commented on a prisoner, who had been a political worker and was involved in various violent conflicts, but recently was arrested for a mobile phone snatching, that “Sir, he is a rich person; he can buy cars and has houses on rent. But it is his fate which has brought him here.” The weak criminal justice system and its unequal dealings with people influence poor people and their behaviours.

Seeing powerful individuals free from the reach of the criminal justice systems has a negative impact on poor communities. As a result, poor people lose faith in the justice system and find help among their local leaders; as one prisoner narrates, his father advised him, “we are poor, it is not our strength to go behind these cases and deal with the police, leave all this. There is our *Sardar* (leader), let’s go to him, he may do some favour to us.” Some professionals explain that people usually do not go to the police to report crimes; as a result, not many criminal cases are dealt with by court but rather they are managed by local community leaders and the Jirga system (local jurists and members). Some prisoners are of the view that community leaders like feudal lords, get some people arrested and victimised and that consequently people who can find no other means look to the help of the local leaders. Conflict, strain, routine activity theorists and many criminologists believe that wide gap between the performance of social institutions and the expectations of people can create increased frustrations and reactive violent conflict between social classes.

Corruption is the main factor leading to social institutions becoming disorganised. Some of the police officers accept that they have taken bribe money but find ways to justify it (“I do confess I got some money (*bribe*), but I spent all, did not save. I stayed in government home quarters; I have not constructed my own home”). Other officers blame the police department as being corrupt, “a few corrupt police men surely have defamed and corrupted the name of police and society as well. There needs to be a system, a police man has to go by system. What I do, I listen to my conscience and do justice accordingly.

I cannot speak for others but, by my hand, no wrong work is done". The disorganised criminal justice system causes widespread crime and violence in society and further divides social groups into poor and rich divisions. As a result, there is no social norm and legal liability of individuals to be true to the justice system; instead, they resolve their social and criminal issues on their own. In a similar manner, the court system is highly ineffective and biased. Some police officers are highly critical of the poor and corrupt performances of the court system. Prisoners provide various accounts which suggest that they faced demands for extra money for trying their cases in the courts.

Inefficiency and a corrupt legal structure affect poor people so much that they look to local leaders to have their social and criminal problems resolved. Professionals including the police, advocates and social workers all state that feudal lords settle the problems of poor people in such a way that there is usually a compromise between offending and victim parties. The offending party is penalised with payment of a significant sum of money which, if not given, is replaced by physical property, women and agricultural lands that are surrendered to the victim parties. At the same time, the offending party is also liable to pay some amount to the feudal lords. Prisoners and professionals describe though, a system or feudal system that is maintained to permit domination over poor rural communities. These findings indicate, as Tariq (1989) argues, that the justice system is biased against the poor population.

Another important consequence of the socially disorganised legal structure is that weapons are easily available to people. As seen in Chapters Five, Six and Seven, weapons are commonly used by individuals, even by minor individuals. Weapons like guns, pistols, axes, knives and Kalashnikovs are in common use by people. Some professionals argue that because there is so much insecurity in society people like to have guns with them to safeguard themselves. Moreover, much theft and criminal activities in rural areas demand that people are able to protect themselves from criminal elements. Many professionals, including the police, academics, advocates and others also support the finding that today killing someone does not mean a serious issue for a person responsible; people have guns, so they want to use them. One police officer described



that “people borrow weapons from their friends and try to use them,” “it is not fault of us people, it is often from above”). Some police officers also described that politicians and bureaucrats have been given authority to issue licenses for weapon, with the result that most of the licenses are issued to the political party workers while many people, who are rich, do not need to have licenses for their weapons.

### **Rationalisation and neutralisation of violent behaviour**

Violent offenders, as we saw in the Chapter Three, use various moral values and semantic techniques in their narratives when talking about their social and violent life. This narrative-based research study on violent offenders finds techniques of neutralisation are moral and cultural representation. The examination of the use of their moral and cultural neutralisation techniques actually open windows to understanding about how violent offenders locate themselves in their experienced social world and see their committed violent acts. The deliberate, systematic and careful use of techniques are constructed in such a way that portray personal-violent self and cultural violent characteristics of the violent offenders. The use of neutralisations serves various purposes for the violent offenders. Some violent offenders justify their acts but refuse to accept the act is wrong or violent, while some deny their involvement in the act but admit the way they acted is bad or wrong. It means different violent offenders use different moral values to describe their position. This study believes, as Maruna and Copes (2005) contend that such means or vocabularies of descriptions are post-adhoc techniques used by violent offenders since it is believed that violent offenders derive their moral beliefs and actions from their social environment and cultural conventional value system (Sykes and Matza, 1957; Agnew, 1994). However, such moral beliefs are not extensively and explicitly studied in relation to what social variables affect violent offenders so that they develop certain techniques and definitions favourable to their violent identity.

On the other hand, importantly, the examination of neutralisation techniques is never found associated with violent offenders in the Pakistani context. This study attempts to show how Pakistani prisoners use various techniques to justify or deny acts. Moreover, and importantly, previous research has not identified that there is one common technique

used by all violent offenders by those who accept their violent acts or deny their violent responsibility. The other evidence of neutralisation is found in the construction of cultural narratives. As described earlier the prisoners in my study narrate their identity in collective form. This is a cultural identity and a way of disclosing and associating them with a collective-self and culture. By associating themselves with a larger group and culture, they neutralise their violent identity.

The prison environment does not affect all the prisoners in the same way. Some prisoners are satisfied with the prison environment and punishment while others are not. One prisoner convicted of murder does not want to live in prison and presented a request (“do something for us”) to help him get out of prison, while another prisoner convicted of kidnapping a child is not frustrated with the prison environment rather accepted it as his fate. On the other hand, some prisoners convicted of the same crime, honour killing, do not have same feelings about their acts. One prisoner expressed regret for his act (“sometimes I think, if I would have divorced”) while another is proud of what he did.

This current prisoner-based research as other prisoner-based research has identified two main techniques used by violent offenders, acceptance of criminal responsibility and denial of criminal responsibility. However, one common technique, which is not found by many researchers is the blame technique used by all types of violent offenders (murder, kidnappers, honour killers, violent assaulters) in this study. Prisoners in this study use two main techniques of neutralisations: Denial of violent responsibility and justification of the violent act.

### **The denial of violence responsibility: blame techniques**

There are certain kinds of prisoners who deny their criminal responsibility while some accept. However, the majority of the prisoners deny their involvement in their violent acts. When denying and refusing involvement in the violent act, the violent offenders blame others as motivation of their actions and present several other causative factors poor economic conditions, past victimisation and wrong conviction along with many other factors. The prisoners who are convicted of murder, robbery, kidnapping usually

refuse to admit that they committed their acts, though some prisoners, while describing the event, show that they were involved, but such descriptions are usually given by those who are younger. Older prisoners, above 24 or 30, are conscious in their narratives, they do not reveal much about the victim or about their involvement. Some prisoners, who deny their involvement (“we have not committed any crime”), often describe themselves as deprived and poor people. For example, a prisoner convicted of kidnapping refused to acknowledge his involvement in the act but feels that he was wrongly implicated and that his whole life has been a miserable struggle for the search of social and economic sources for his big family.

Prisoners who deny their act are not ready to accept that they committed any act; rather they present their poor conditions and concern about their family (“There are our innocent children, they cry for us”). They may assume that their acceptance of the act probably may make them responsible for their acts and they may then feel guilty. A prisoner convicted of murder refused to acknowledge his act of killing a robber but he describes how the robber was notorious and wanted by the police. He justifies his act of killing by blaming the victim as deserving such punishment. He assumes himself innocent. Like him, a number of other prisoners explained their violence as resulting from victimisation. A prisoner denies his act but claims that he was wrongly involved in the case.

Those who deny their criminal responsibility often blame others. Blame in various ways is found by many researchers. As we saw in the Chapter Three some violent rapists blame alcohol, drugs and their own ‘emotional problems’ as being instigators of their violent acts, while some prisoners blame their dangerousness as being behind their involvement but, at same time, they accept their punishment. Blame is a kind of excuse and an essential character that is used by those who deny their violent acts. However, in my study blame is not applied to one’s own personality or character as causing my participants to become involved in violent offences; rather it is other factors.

In this study, blame is usually thrown onto others including the State/government, feudal and political systems, religious icons (Satan), victims, the legal structure, and

unavoidable situations, but rarely is it applied to the self. Blaming technique deflects and neutralises their violent self (Maruna and Copes, 2005) and makes prisoners more comfortable talking about their criminal activities and makes their stay in prison comfortable. There is strong support for this argument in this study, that when individuals were asked what brought them to prison, their responses were, “It is landlord,” “he was a robber, wanted and proclaimed,” “honour,” “so no one can tolerate it,” “when anger comes, you know, no one will be able to know what to do”). Here anger is not a personality trait but a reactive feeling. As seen in the Chapter Three, the denial of criminal involvement and blaming others relieve inmates from suffering, the pinch of guilt feelings and stressful thoughts during their stay in prison.

There are wide differences in relation to specific types of techniques used by particular types of violent offender. This study found that those involved in murder, kidnapping, robbery and assault blame powerful agents, and those involved in shooting to death, violent conflicts including assaulting and honour killing blame religious values (“Satan suggested me to do this”), other individuals (“they gave me a dagger and they themselves took a side and let me do it”), unavoidable situations “We had no other option. Suppose, if we had behaved as compromising and not fought with them, they could have destroyed all of us”), and victims and cultural values (“there were many mistakes even then I did not say anything to her,” “honour”). The majority of the prisoners deny their criminal responsibility and by blaming others they deflect from themselves the pain of their acts, consequently their stay in prison becomes more comfortable and tolerable.

### **Justification of violence and involvement: blame techniques**

As described earlier, justification involves accepting responsibility for the violent act but not claiming it as being wrong or bad. Some prisoners convicted of honour killing directly accept their violence because it is a cultural practice and matter of pride which provides them with a sense that their act of killing is to save the honour of family. Justifying violence in this sense is a strong cultural technique, largely shared by rural people. The prisoners convicted of honour killing consider women as “chicken” and

“hen”; however, as seen in the Chapter Two such cultural values have historically been present in rural communities for many years.

Justification of violence by prisoners is often derived from the idea that their acts were necessary. They blame others as instigating them to act violently. Violent acts are justified by blaming and claiming their acts as culturally adopted and practiced. Those cultural practices are usually the situations and negative values attached to certain other factors. The situation of seeing a woman with another male in a sexual relationship is culturally intolerable (“no one can tolerate it”). Here the act of killing a woman is associated with home (“it is a matter of home, so it happened”). Associating an act of violence with the 'honour of home' helps violent offenders decrease their sense of the seriousness of their act and the pain of killing; as a result, the act is justified (Sykes and Matza, 1957). By blaming victims (woman/honour/robber) violent offenders denounce their victims as deserving the reaction and punishment meted out, violent offenders then return to their normal state of consciousness (see Ugelvik, 2012). From this perspective where ‘no one can tolerate it’, violence as a justified act serves to invoke a collective subcultural identity. Moreover, this act of honour killing elicits no reaction from the family members or community, rather the act is appreciated (“No, why would they say anything to me”). Honour killing as accepted and supported by community becomes part of cultural habits.

However, there are slight differences in acceptance, some accept directly while some indirectly. Individuals who are religious in their practice and ideas, and those act on cultural and masculine values, and spur of moment (anger) accept their violence directly. However, these prisoners sometimes blame other forces which they believe have instigated their acts. Some prisoners blame religious forces (“Satan suggested me to do that”) while some blame the victim/woman (“there were many mistakes even then I did not say anything to her”) or (“he was a robber, wanted and proclaimed”). Here blaming others such as Satan and victims as being instigators of violence are the forms of acceptance.

Prisoner participants in this study show mixed feelings such as being proud, guilty and content (Maruna and Copes, 2005). Development of feelings involves a process of thinking, especially in prison. Prison is a place where the incarcerated population has enough time to reflect on their past crimes; they often think“(Mmm... yes this happened; sometimes I think, if I would have divorced (*her*), it was better...mmm. Sometimes I think, I am here...now what can happen. Done is done”). Inmates often think and may repent for their violent acts (“sometimes I think ... if I kill myself”). The findings in this study suggest that prisoners use various techniques for making their survival in prison more comfortable.

As seen in chapter one, some scholars consider neutralisations as “thinking errors” associating with “blaming the victim, refusing to accept responsibility and grandiosity” (Mckendy, 2006: 474). Such thinking errors may be thought of in different ways. Since violent offenders show their double identities, as offender and victim, therefore, thinking errors are not hasty techniques but calculated rationalisations. Findings in my study show that a same violent offender cautiously plays with different techniques. He accepts his violence (“to be here shows I am involved”) and denies it as well (“Yes, this is very clear. I am not involved in”). Both techniques of acceptance and denial are present in a single violent offender. Here his techniques are not ‘thinking errors’ but deliberate tricks and planned speaking patterns. His position as being an offender demands him to switch from one technique to other, but his position as being victim requires him to blame the situation (“suppose, if we had behaved as compromising and not fought with them, they could have destroyed all of us”). The offender’s “victim stance” (Mckendy, 2006: 474) as having been wronged, therefore, wants him to justify his victim position by reacting to violence. This position of ‘victim stance’ is widely exercised by many violent offenders involved in various violent crimes, however. It means as Scully and Maroall, (1984) also content that violent offenders use various and overlapping techniques to portray themselves. But, the most important element in the use of various neutralisation techniques is the ‘blame technique’, commonly applied by all types of violent offenders, and rarely given attention by prison-based researchers.

“Some narratives and positions work in some situations, others in other situations. Knowing which form of neutralisation might fit what situation is part of what it means to be at home in a situation” (Ugelvik, 2012: 273). Foucault (1992) also believes that application of moral values may be used by different people in different ways for different purposes. In a similar vein, Ugelvik (2012) describes that morality is contextual and, likewise, violent offending can be seen in its own context where it has emerged. I suggest ‘techniques of neutralisation’ are actually a collection of vocabulary of blames: blames of the self, when an act is justified and blame on others when an act is denied and made excuse of.

### **Concluding remarks**

Violence, as understood from the life stories, narratives and descriptions of the violent offenders, and from the accounts of the professionals who had good knowledge about social problems and violent criminals in Pakistan society, is social, cultural, emotional and situational problem. Poverty and low socioeconomic conditions generate criminal opportunities for people and because of the continuous experiences of social and economic deprivations, no response from the justice agents to resolve social and criminal issues, people became emotional and reacted physically against their fellow oppressors. To poor people, acting on violence was a routine behaviour and practice of day since they observe such violent acts in their life from their early age. Violence in disorganised and inequal social conditions becomes justified and rationalised behaviour and it carries no guilt and remorse. It manifests on minor issues and leads to serious acts of violence like killing, kidnapping, assaulting and robbing.

Violence as a social problem has been the focus of criminologists around the world. Different theoretical and methodological approaches have been used to understand it. Some scholars understand violence as a structural problem; some see it as situational, while others again, find it cultural. All these perspectives are widely appreciated and I have also used them to understand violence in the Pakistan context. This thesis was conducted with the objective of seeking to understand violence in the Pakistani context supported and contested by theoretical and methodological help collected from European

and Western countries. Unlike the Western societies and cultures, Pakistan has different social structure and social problems which motivate people becoming violently aggressive and violently reactive. The comparative criminological analysis of violence in both Western/European and Pakistani societies suggests that violence is differently enacted and manifests in different forms. In Pakistan, structurally disorganised factors such as unequal social and economic opportunities, low chances for social and educational development and corrupt agencies of social justice highly motivate and support violence. Because of these abnormal performances and attitudes, the behaviour of people is shaped and constructed as violent and aggressive, and becomes pathological, mechanical and cultural. Violence becomes reactive force and response against the deprived, unequal and disadvantaged social conditions and depraved role of criminal justice system. On one hand, much of the violence resides in rural areas where multiple factors like high levels of poverty, no job or education facilities and a feudal system affect the life style of people. On the other hand, the urban structure which is highly political and ethnic based, influences people in a different way to engage in violence. Yet, this research output does not claim on the basis of limited collection of data from the urban areas about comparative differences of rural and urban violent structures and causal links behind violent criminal activities.

Violence in Pakistan is a serious social problem which should be understood from different theoretical understandings and methodological approaches. As this study finds violent offending behaviour is not motivated by a single factor but by various social factors, so this study does not claim any significant factor as more influential than others for violent crime in the country. Moreover, each violent crime has its own particular features and at same time varying factors; for example, honour killing and violent assault are not necessarily motivated by economic factors but cultural ones; likewise murder and violent assault are affected by still other variables; therefore, all these different factors of different violent crimes require exploration and explanation. More qualitative studies therefore need to be carried out to further our understanding of this serious issue.



The prisoners constructed their narratives according to their social and cultural context and, being influenced by different social and cultural variables, describe their actions and thoughts in different ways. All prisoners are not equally influenced by their low socioeconomic position, situational factors and cultural values. Some attribute their violent criminality to poverty and economic deprivations, while others emphasise cultural values as influential on their ideas and actions, and others still see their acts as arising from certain circumstances.

Almost all the theoretical approaches discussed in Chapter One and Two highlight poor socioeconomic conditions including poverty, unemployment, illiteracy, low age and cultural values as significant motivational factors of violence. This study also finds that most of the participants, including rural and urban are unemployed, illiterate, started their violent activities from an early age and are highly frustrated with their poor economic conditions. Moreover, they do not see their violent acts as wrong. Structural analysis including the social disorganisation theory of violence, as discussed in Chapter One, may be relevant to urban violence which examines how heterogeneous ethnic and political groups highly frustrated with poor economic conditions engage in homicide acts and violent conflicts. This study finds that violence is located predominantly within homogeneous social groups, especially in rural areas, not on ethnic and political based issues but on agricultural land issues, violent interactions within social groups and the physical victimisation of local feudal lords. However, on the basis of the ecological and social structure of rural areas, low opportunities of monetary gain and low chances of receiving an education may seem partly relevant to the approach.

The situational perspective, which focuses on the dynamics of situations combined with the violent interactions between offender and victim, characteristics of offender and availability of weapons seem relevant to rural violence because the findings in this study suggest that most of the violent activities like murder and robbery require the interaction of offender and victim. However, there is another significant factor which contributes to the situation of violence, cultural values. In the act of honour killing, as the findings show, offenders already have set ideas of honour which are violated by women and

consequently the killing of them takes place. Moreover, an equally important factor is the poor economic background and literacy of the offenders which also motivates them to engage in violent acts. As we see, an offender who commits violent assault could inflict injury because he was given a knife, but he is likely to have already vengeful feelings against the person who caused sexually victimisation of his brother. So I suggest that the situational perspective seems relevant to understanding violence in Pakistan but my limited data may not be enough to examine more cases relevant for such an understanding.

A subcultural perspective which emphasises that people tend to legitimise violence through the use of cultural values may be relevant to rural areas where the majority of the people, as found in this study, place high value on their honour and masculine attitudes. Vengefulness, honour, and masculine attitudes entertained by rural people motivate them to react violently against their counter parts. Moreover, the limited data collected from urban people involved in ethnic and political violent activities indicate that such people also have a strong sense of masculinity and honour. Therefore, violence is not essentially limited to, acted out and justified within certain areas, but by large sections of both rural and urban inhabitants. Violence is a cultural problem scattered all around the country. The subcultural approach of violence may further be examined separately to find differences and similarities within different communities and their influences on social, cultural and violent behaviour of social groups.

However, there were several problems which may have affected my theoretical understanding of violence that I want to share. One of the main handicaps that I encountered was the limited time of the interviews with the prisoners which resulted in not collection in length their narrative explanations. Not having in-depth narrative explanations from the prisoners convicted of violent offences for the analytical purposes may have not provided in-depth analytical understanding of the problem in hand. However supplementary ideas and explanations gained from the professionals explain well the problem providing good understanding of the issue. Despite, the researcher would suggest in-depth and detailed narrative explanations would proper analysis of

violence in the Pakistani context. More qualitative narrative-based studies benefiting from prisoner-based methodological approach should be conducted as to properly analyse the serious problem of violence. Moreover, the limited sharing of the participants about their social conditions, victims and the situations they responded violently to was not broad enough to establish a theoretical base explaining how victims and situations can be held responsible for triggering violence.

On the other hand, the methodological approach used in this study is highly workable and suitable for gaining an understanding of how prisoners, violent offenders, make sense of violence through presenting their life narratives. Life stories, lived experiences and narrative accounts collected through interviews can be beneficial to look into the ideas and perceptions of prisoners, at how they see their social problems and violent activities. This methodological approach, the research suggests, should be used widely around the country to gain detailed information about violent offenders. Moreover, more analytical distinction may be sketched within different violent crimes and their relevant factors and at the same time, a comparative perspective may be developed to look at how and why each violent crime is committed.

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## Appendices

### Appendix. 1 Violent crimes between 1996 and 2007 years in Pakistan

Year	Dacoity	Robbery	Burglary	Cattle Theft	Murder/ Attempted Murder	Kidnapping / Child Lifting	All Reported
1996	1188	6107	10526	5474	21499	7189	330493
1997	1428	7793	13803	7141	21744	7972	370350
1998	1533	7514	13771	6938	23326	7774	431854
1999	1316	6337	13586	6877	21374	7538	417846
2000	1297	7513	14433	6618	20130	7176	388909
2001	1372	7672	13057	5542	20961	6546	378301
2002	1631	8235	13318	5420	20341	6938	399568
2003	1821	8434	13049	6742	20908	8450	400680
2004	2338	11851	13647	7924	22397	9637	440578
2005	2395	12199	12067	11884	22494	9209	453264
2006	2895	14630	12872	13327	23777	10431	537866
2007	3260	16639	12067	9388	24396	10725	538048

Source: Pakistan Statistical Yearbook 2008.

### Appendix. II Violent crimes between 2000 and 2008 years in Pakistan

Year	All crimes	Murder	Kidnapping	Dacoity	Robbery	Others
2000	388,909	8906	7126	1297	7613	304081
2001	378301	9628	6546	1372	7612	304606
2002	399568	9396	6938	1631	8235	325822
2003	400680	9846	8450	1821	8434	321087
2004	440578	9719	9637	2338	11851	350760
2005	453264	9631	9209	2395	12199	368223
2006	537866	10048	10431	2895	14630	428768
2007	538048	10666	10725	3260	16639	432100
2008	592,608	12069	16135	4629	19943	465908
Increased % (2000 to 2008)	52%	35%	112%	249%	165%	53%

Source: National Police Bureau of Pakistan, 2008

### Appendix. III Punishment served and total punishment

S. No	Code	Punishment served	Total punishment
1	SGH	4	8
2	MA	9	25
3	J	13	25
4	F	9	25
5	KB	10	25
6	AB	5	7
7	RB	15	25
8	AS	5	25
9	SK	3	25
10	NMJ	3	25
11	AH	3	25
12	FH	6	25
13	MIB	2	9
14	DS	3	25
15	A	2	25
16	H	2	25
17	B	2	25
18	AJ	14	Death punishment (25)
19	KMB	14	Death punishment (25)
20	ABJ	15	25
21	BJ	15	25
22	GSB	9	25
23	AR	13	25
24	RBM	7	25
25	IM	6	25
26	UAJ	16	25
27	NMM	13	25
28	KHK	19	25
29	BAJ	Not known	25
30	AAJ	Not known	25
31	RJ	3	25
32	K	2	25
33	S	2	On Trial
34	A	3	On Trial
35	IP	4	25
36	SQ	5	25
37	ZS	5	25
38	NS	2	9
39	Z	5	12
40	MJ	3	25

**Appendix IV. Ethnic composition, occupation, and marital status of the convicted prisoners**

<b>S. No</b>	<b>Code</b>	<b>Ethnic/language</b>	<b>Occupation</b>	<b>Marital status</b>
1.	SGH	Urdu	Worked on bookshop	Married
2.	MA	Sindhi	No	Unmarried
3.	J	Sindhi	Taxi driver,	Married
4.	F	Sindhi	Cook	Married
5.	KB	Sindhi	Peasant	Married
6.	AB	Urdu	No	Married
7.	RB	Sindhi	Bodyguard	Married
8.	AS	Sindhi	Labour/peasant	Unmarried
9.	SK	Sindhi	Peasant	Married
10.	NMJ	Sindhi	Peasant	Married
11.	AH	Sindhi	Peasant	Married
12.	FH	Sindhi	Peasant	Unmarried
13.	MIB	Urdu	No	Unmarried
14.	DS	Sindhi	Electrician	Unmarried
15.	A	Sindhi	Peasant	Married
16.	H	Sindhi	Peasant	Married
17.	B	Sindhi	Peasant	Married
18.	AJ	Sindhi	Electrician	Married
19.	KMB	Sindhi	Electrician	Married
20.	ABJ	Sindhi	Milk dairy owner	Married
21.	BJ	Sindhi	No	Unmarried
22.	GSB	Sindhi	Ex-army man	Unmarried
23.	AR	Sindhi	Pesh Imam (clergy man)	Married
24.	RBM	Sindhi	Peasant/labour	Married
25.	IM	Sindhi	Peasant	Unmarried
26.	UAJ	Sindhi	Peasant	Unmarried
27.	NMM	Sindhi	Fisherman	Married
28.	KHK	Sindhi	No	Unmarried
29.	BAJ	Sindhi	Govt Job	Unmarried
30.	AAJ	Sindhi	Police man	Married
31.	RJ	Sindhi	Labour/helper to mason	Married
32.	K	Sindhi	Milk dairy owner	Married
33.	S	Urdu	Bangle shop owner	Married
34.	A	Urdu	White washer	Married
35.	IP	Urdu	Iron box maker	Married
36.	SQ	Urdu	Rickshaw driver	Married
37.	ZS	Sindhi	Peasant	Married
38.	NS	Sindhi	Truck driver	Married
39.	Z	Sindhi	Labour	Unmarried
40.	MJ	Sindhi	Peasant	Married

### **Appendix. V-A Interview Questions**

1. Can you tell me where did you grow up and how were early days of your life?
2. How would you describe your family, how many family members you were?
3. Did you go to school?
4. Do you remember of your neighbourhood (village)? What was it like?
5. Can you tell me about your friends, what sorts of activities you would do?
6. When you were young, did you have ambitions for your life to achieve?
7. Did you ever witness violence event in your life?
8. What brought you here to prison?
9. If you are given a chance to restart your life from very early again what things you would do?
10. Whatever we discussed now, would you like to add something to it?

## Appendix. V-B Interview Questions (Sindhi)

### انٽرويو

سوال 1: ڇا اوهان ٻڌائي سگهو ٿا ته اوهان ڪٿي وڏا ٿيا ۽ اوهان جا ابتدائي ڏينهن ڪيئن گذريا؟

سوال 2: اوهان پنهنجي خاندان کي اوهان ڪيئن ٿا ڏسو، اوهان جي خاندان ۾ ڪيترا ڀاتي هئا؟

سوال 3: ڇا اوهان اسڪول ويندا هئا؟

سوال 4: ڇا توهان کي پنهنجي پاڙي جي باري ۾ ڪجهه ياد آهي.

سوال 5: ڇا توهان پنهنجي دوستن جي باري ۾ ڪجهه ٻڌائي سگهندا؟

سوال 6: جڏهن توهان جوان ٿيا ته ڇا توهان وٽ ڪي خواب ۽ خواهشون هيون؟

سوال 7: ڇا اوهان ڪڏهن تشدد جو واقعو ڏٺو؟

سوال 8: اوهان هتي قيد ۾ ڪيئن آيا؟

سوال 9: جيڪڏهن اوهان کي نئين سر زندگي شروعات ڪرڻ جو موقعو ملي ته اوهان ڪيئن شروع ڪندا؟

سوال 10: جيڪو ڪجهه اسين هاڻي ڳالهايو سين، اوهان ان ۾ ڪجهه اضافو ڪرڻ چاهيندا؟



## **Appendix. VI-A. PARTICIPANT INFORMATION SHEET (English)**

Dear Brother

My name is Waheed Ahmed Abbasi, I am studying in Anglia Ruskin University, Cambridge, England, at present as a PhD student and I am lecturer in the department of Criminology, University of Sindh, Pakistan.

Why I am here? I am here to know about your life experiences and activities from your early age. This is part of my research and by doing so I will be able to understand what motivate people to engage in criminal and violent activities. I would request you to talk to me as a volunteer and share your experiences. There are free no to talk to me and free to ask me any questions you want to know about me and my research and you are completely free to withdraw any time of this conversation. Your participation in this conversation will be as a volunteer and this conversation may not last more than 30 minutes. In addition, you may not tell your real names and you can use pseudo names, or you may not share any information you like. But, make sure, your told information is highly confidential and will not be shared with any other person in prison or outside.

If you do decide to take part, I will give you this information sheet to keep and ask you to sign on it.

I will be grateful to you.

(Waheed Ahmed Abbasi)

Name of the participant and Signature: -----

Dated: -----

## Appendix. VI-B

### PARTICIPANT INFORMATION SHEET (SINDHI)

## **A study of prisoners convicted of violent offences** **PARTICIPANT INFORMATION SHEET**

السلام عليکم

منهنجا پاء

منهنجو نالو وحيد احمد عباسي آهي ۽ مان انگلينڊ ۾ اينگليا رسڪن يونيورسٽي ۾ پي ايڇ ڊي ڪريان پيو ۽  
ڊپارٽمنٽ آف ڪرمنيلاجي يونيورسٽي آف سنڌ ۾ ليڪچرر آهيان. هي ريسرچ ۽ انٽرويو منهنجي پي ايڇ  
ڊي جو حصو آهي.

مان سمجهان ٿو ته اها حقيقت آهي ته اسان زندگيءَ ۾ تشدد جا واقعا ڏٺا ۽ ٻڌا آهن. مان اهڙن ئي واقعن ۾  
دلچسپي رکڻ ٿو ۽ اهي واقعا مان اوهان جي وٽان ٻڌڻ چاهيان ٿو. چاڪاڻ جو مان ڪرمنيلاجي ۾ ليڪچرر  
آهيان ۽ ريسرچ ڪريان پيو انهي لاءِ مون کي انهن واقعن کي سمجهڻ ضروري آهي.

مان هن انٽرويو ۾ توهان سان ڳالهه ٻولهه ڪرڻ چاهيندس جيڪي تشدد جا واقعا اوهان پنهنجي زندگيءَ ۾ ٻڌا  
يا ڏٺا آهن. مان توهان کي گذارش ڪندس ته اهڙا واقعا جيڪي اوهان زندگيءَ ۾ ڏٺا ۽ ٻڌا آهن مون سان بيان  
ڪريو. اهي واقعا ٻڌڻ کان پوءِ مان ۽ اسين معاشري ۾ وڌندڙ تشدد کي سمجهي سگهنداسين.

اوهان جا ٻڌايل واقعا يا ڪهاڻيون منهنجي لاءِ تمام اهميت رکن ٿيون ۽ اهي مون وٽ تمام گهڻو محفوظ  
رهنديون ۽ مان اهي ڪنهن سان به نه ونڊيندس ۽ انهن ٻڌايل واقعن جي ڪري اوهان تي ڪنهن به قسم جو اثر  
نه پوندو. هن انٽرويو ۾ اها ڳالهه ٻولهه ڪرڻ جو وقت ڪلاڪ اندر ٿي سگهي ٿو ان دوران اوهان جي مرضي آهي  
۽ اهو توهان جو حق آهي ته توهين ڪهڙي به وقت واقعو ٻڌائڻ کان انڪار ڪري سگهو ٿا.

مان هي انٽرويو رڪارڊ ڪرڻ چاهيندس ۽ رڪارڊ ڪرڻ کانپوءِ انگلش ۾ ترجمو ڪري اڇلائي ڇڏيندس.

اوهان جي وڏي مهرباني

سنڌ يونيورسٽي مون کي انگلينڊ ۾ پي ايڇ ڊي ڪرڻ جي لاءِ ٽن سالن جي لاءِ موڪليو آهي.

رابطي لاءِ پاڪستان: 03337551451

انگلينڊ: 00447550214074

وحيد احمد عباسي

تاريخ

صحيح

PARTICIPANT INFORMATION SHEET (URDU)

**A study of prisoners convicted of violent offences**  
**PARTICIPANT INFORMATION SHEET**

السلام علیکم

میرے بھائی

میرا نام وحید احمد عباسی ہے اور میں انگلینڈ میں اینگلیا رسکن یونیورسٹی میں پی ایچ ڈی کا طالب علم ہوں اور یہاں پر ڈپارٹمنٹ آف کریمینالوجی یونیورسٹی آف سندھ میں لیکچرر ہوں۔ یہ ریسرچ میں پی ایچ ڈی کے لیے کر رہا ہوں۔

میں سمجھتا ہوں کہ ہم اپنی زندگی میں تشدد کے واقعات سنتے اور دیکھتے ہیں۔ میں ان ہی واقعات میں دلچسپی رکھتا ہوں اور یہ واقعات آپ کے زبانی سننا چاہتا ہوں کیونکہ میں پی ایچ ڈی کر رہا ہوں اس لئے مجھے ان کے سننے اور سمجھنے کی ضرورت ہے۔ میں اس انٹرویو میں آپ سے بات چیت کرنا چاہوں گا اور آپ سے گزارش کروں گا کہ آپ نے جو اپنی زندگی میں تشدد کے واقعات سننے ہیں یا دیکھے ہیں مجھے بتائیں۔ ان واقعات کو سننے کے بعد ہم یہ اندازہ کر سکتے ہیں کہ ہمارے معاشرے میں تشدد کیوں ہوتا ہے۔

آپ کے بتائے ہوئے یہ واقعات اور کہانیاں میرے لئے اہمیت رکھتے ہیں اور یہ میرے پاس ہی محفوظ رہیں گے ان کا آپ پر کوئی بھی اثر نہیں پڑے گا۔ یہ انٹرویو ایک گھنٹے کے اندر ختم ہو سکتا ہے اور اسی دوران اگر آپ کوئی واقعات بتانے سے انکار کریں یا کچھ نہ بتانا چاہیں تو یہ آپ کی مرضی اور آپ کا حق ہے۔ میں یہ انٹرویو ریکارڈ کرنا چاہتا ہوں اور انگلش میں ترجمہ کر کے پبلیک دوں گا۔

آپ کی بڑی نوازش

رابطے کیلئے: 03337551451

00447550214074

وحید احمد عباسی

تاریخ

دستخط

**Appendix. VII**

**PARTICIPANT CONSENT FORM**

**CONSENT STATEMENT**

1. I understand that my participation is voluntary and that I may withdraw from the research at any time, without giving any reason.
  
2. I am aware of what my participation will involve.
  
3. I understand that there are no risks involved in the participation of this study.
  
4. I feel satisfied and willing to be asked to answer all the questions that researcher wishes to ask.

I agree to participate in the research project titled, “A study of prisoners convicted of violent offences”.

Participant's signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Participant's name (or code): \_\_\_\_\_

## Appendix. VIII

### Permission letter from Inspector General of Prisons (IGP) Sindh

**OFFICE OF THE INSPECTOR GENERAL OF PRISONS SINDH  
CAMP OFFICE AT CENTRAL PRISON KARACHI**

NO.JB-1/ 966/71  
To,

DATED: - 14-01-2013

The Superintendent,

Prison A  
Prison B  
Prison C  
Prison D

**SUBJECT: PERMISSION TO VISIT THE CENTRAL PRISONS OF SINDH FOR  
PHD RESEARCH.**

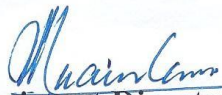
I am directed to enclose herewith a copy of application dated 09.01.2013 from Waheed A. Abbasi, Lecturer Department of Criminology University of Sindh Jamshoro, on the subject noted above and request you to please co-ordination with him.

It is further requested to ensure that no violation of PPR takes place during the visit.

**Assistant Director (Admn)**  
*to Inspector General of Prisons  
Camp Office at Central Prison Karachi.*

**Copy forwarded for information to: -**

- 1/- The Deputy Inspector General of Prisons Hyderabad & Sukkur Region.
- 2/- ✓ Mr. Waheed A. Abbasi, Lecturer Department of Criminology University of Sindh Jamshoro.

  
**Assistant Director (Admn)**  
*to Inspector General of Prisons  
Camp Office at Central Prison Karachi.*