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MOB JUSTICE

A qualitative research regarding vigilante justice in modern Uganda

Social Work Program
Bachelor Thesis
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Abstract

Title: MOB JUSTICE – A qualitative research regarding vigilante justice in modern Uganda.

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Key words: Mob justice, judicial system, social class, crowd violence

Mob justice can be explained as a situation where a crowd of people, sometimes several hundred, take the law into their own hands, act as accusers, jury and judge and punish an alleged criminal on the spot. This procedure often ends up with the victim being beaten to death or seriously injured. After a self witnessed mob justice situation we had a lot of questions that needed to be answered in order for us to understand this phenomenon.

Our purpose is to increase our knowledge and understanding of the mob justice phenomenon and also examine how it can be prevented.

The research questions are as follows:

1. What are the causes of mob justice?
2. What happens in a mob justice situation?
3. What changes in the Ugandan society and what work related methods are adequate in order to prevent mob justice?

In order to answer these questions two methods of collecting empirical data have been used; focus group discussions (six) and interviews (three). The focus group participants are social work- and law students near graduation and police trainers. The interviewees are one journalist and two professionals from two different human rights organizations.

The conclusions of the study shows that mob justice is a complex phenomenon and the major causes lies on a structural level in the Ugandan society. The judicial system plays an important role as well as structural issues (poverty, lack of education, unemployment) attached to a lower social class. The research illustrates that the judicial system is very fragile and not trustworthy which leads to that a major part of the population takes the law into their own hands. The study shows that citizens from lower social classes are less likely to use the judicial system which also shuts people out with its structure.

The group psychological mechanisms in a mob group, which describes what happens in a mob justice situation, are also connected to structural issues. All of these structural concerns create a tension that, under certain circumstances, results in mob justice.

The respondents discuss several structural changes, e.g. transparency within the judicial system and improvement of the educational system, as ways of preventing mob justice and increase awareness of this issue. They primarily suggest sensitization in collaboration with different professional and public actors. However, they reflect whether sensitization is a constructive way of addressing the issue of mob justice without considering the structural causes.

Acknowledgements

Prologue

An observation

The night had just fallen over Ntinda, a suburb to the Capital city of Uganda, Kampala. At the medical centre, to which we had brought a friend of ours who suffered from food poisoning, all was quiet and still. Suddenly we heard people shouting outside. After a quick glance through the doors we realized something was going on. People came running from everywhere and continued down the street. We went outside and asked a lady what the fuss was all about. "Oh, some boys tried to steal a motorbike or something and now the people are chasing them", she responded. We went inside again and told our friend what was going on outside. He smiled at our ignorance and began telling us how they deal with thieves in Uganda. We were stunned by the stories he told us about thieves being beaten to death by angry crowds. He told us they beat them with their fists or with different sorts of weapons such as sticks, hoes, pangas (which is a kind of machete), stones and whatever sorts of materials found at the spot. In other cases the crowd would put tires around the alleged criminal and set him or her on fire. Usually this happened to alleged thieves, murderers, child abusers or people causing car accidents.

We didn't really know what to make out of the stories. It sounded more like propaganda made to scare people from breaking the law than the reality. After a while, when our friend had got his medicine, we carried him between us out in the street to help him home. We went up to the taxi station and saw an enormous crowd that had gathered there. It was so many people that they caused the whole traffic to stop and no cars were getting through. There were a lot of cheering and screaming and the situation was alarming. In the middle of the crowd the two boys caught stealing were being tossed around and punched at. We were getting nervous because people were starting to cast suspicious glances at us. Two whites with an African hanging between them, it didn't look very good. And from what we had been told before we left Sweden we were supposed to get out as fast as possible if we ever found ourselves caught up in a mob. Eventually we managed to get two motorcycle taxis to take us through the crowd down to our friend's house. As we maneuvered through the crowd we could see the two boys being beaten with large sticks. Our imagination of what was going to be the result of this beating was not necessary. It was painfully obvious to us that these boys were not going to survive this ordeal.

As we finally reached our own house we sat down and stared at each other in silence. What was there to say? Our heads were spinning. What crime was so awful that the culprits deserved to be sentenced to death without trial? What made all these people choose to take the law into their own hands? This essay is a way to increase our knowledge in order to better understand this phenomenon.

Contents

Chapter 1

Introduction

This chapter will first provide the reader with a short overview of Uganda with both general and historical facts. Secondly the concept *mob justice* will be described and explained. Thirdly, the choice and significance of the study as well as the aims of the study and the research questions will be presented. The last section will explain the structure of the report.

The republic of Uganda

General facts

Uganda lies in East Africa with Kenya, Tanzania, Rwanda, Sudan and Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) as neighbouring countries. The population in Uganda was 31.9 millions in 2008 with most of the inhabitants living in the rural areas. The population is mainly concentrated to the fertile areas in Uganda such as the area around Lake Victoria. English is the official language but is spoken by approximately 15 – 20% of the population. There are over 33 languages in Uganda depending on tribes and areas. One of the most common languages is Luganda, which is spoken by the Bantu people who are the major ethnic group in Uganda, existing mostly in south, southwest and the central of Uganda. Luo is spoken mostly in the north and Sudanese languages are common in the northwest (www.landguiden.se). The majority of the population in Uganda is Christians (85 %) and the church plays a big part in peoples' lives. There are also Islam, Hindu, some Jewish and in some remote parts of Uganda animist faiths is still practiced (Briggs, 2007).

Poverty is a big issue in Uganda where 76 % of the population is living below 2 dollars a day. The numbers measuring literacy amongst the population is fairly high but when compared to the percentage of adults with low educational achievement levels it shows that 94 % of the population has a poor education (UN Human Development Report 2009). The educational system in Uganda is divided into primary and secondary school. It is not compulsory but the government strives to provide at least a primary education for every child in Uganda. The enrolment in primary is above 80 % but less than 25 % of the students continue to secondary school. It is mainly the female students which drop out of school (http://education.stateuniversity.com).

History

The Pearl of Africa, as Winston Churchill called Uganda did not exist the way we know it today before the British came. There were instead small communities with little or no sense of solidarity amongst each other. The closest to solidarity, in the ethnical sense, was seen in the south and west where the Bantu people lived (Hveem, 1971). The south, west and eastern parts of what would become Uganda were divided into five kingdoms. The largest of these kingdoms was Buganda who also was the most flourishing kingdom and had its own army which was equipped with firearms (Leggett, 2001).

When the British set up their protectorate in 1894 they built it around the Buganda kingdom and adapted their administration system since it was not too different from what the British were used to. However, the people in the north had not structured their communities, socially and

politically, as the Buganda kingdom and therefore did not understand the administration system which led to the British leaving those areas unattended (Leggett, 2001). Still today there is a big difference in the north and northeast areas compared to the rest of Uganda when it comes to development and integration (Briggs, 2007). A Legislative Council was created in 1920 but it took until 1945 until the first African member joined. In the 1950s the cry for independence started to rise and on the 9th of October 1962 Uganda became independent with the Kabaka Mutesa II as head of state and Milton Obote as prime minister (ibid.).[1] By this time, Uganda's subsistence sector was very strong and self-supporting, having both cash crops and food crops. Uganda also had a functional medical service, good infrastructure (at least in most parts of the country) and a high level of literacy (Kasozi, 1994). Uganda had every chance of being a prosperous country.

However, since Uganda gained independence in 1962 the people have suffered in many different ways. The government of Milton Obote (1966 – 1971) forced the head of state into exile and killed his supporters, abolished the kingdoms, made Uganda a republic and gave the army unlimited powers. He also banned other parties and many people arrested (Briggs, 2007). Idi Amin (1971 – 1979), who overthrew Obote, ruled his country with help of an army completely loyal to him and the State Research Bureau who tortured and killed several thousand people, throwing the bodies in lakes, mass graves or burning them. He killed ministers, prominent people, writers, opponents, prisoners and ordinary people, no one was safe. During Amins rein an estimated number of up to 300 000 people were killed (Kyemba, 1997). One of his biggest mistakes was the expulsion of the Asian population in Uganda. It caused a major impact on the economy in Uganda since the Asians were a trading middleclass and the trade gave the economic situation in Uganda a boost with the attraction of export and import. The burden of taxes was now only on the shoulders of the rural sector and they were already overtaxed. The industrial sector, which produced agricultural input, lost their highly skilled workers which in turn led to a downfall in the agricultural production (Kasozi, 1994). These two governments has together severely damaged the country and violated human rights by ordering executions without fair trials, letting the army loot and rape at will, arrest people without reasons and torture prisoners in the most unthinkable ways (Kyemba, 1997). The army and the police have long been used as a killing force along with secret service agencies.

The former guerrilla leader, Yoweri Museveni (1986 –) seized power in 1986 and quickly began to put the country together after its violent past. He installed a government that moved across all ethnic boundaries, re-established the rule of law and increased the freedom of the press. He also invited all the expelled Asians back to Uganda, and appointed the much needed Human Rights Commission (Briggs, 2007). Museveni has been prosperous in re-building the economy and Uganda is currently one of the most upcoming countries concerning development in Africa. Although Uganda still is a republic, Museveni restored the old kingdoms whereby kings in all the old kingdoms now exist except in one. Museveni has been reluctant to a multi-party system but in 2006 the first multi-party election in 25 years was held. Although, at the same time Museveni changed the presidential term limit to be a no-limit and he was once again elected for president (ibid.). One of the main challenges for Museveni has been to tackle the attacks on northern Uganda by the rebel group Lord's Resistant Army (LRA) and its leader Joseph Kony. Their aim is to overthrow Museveni and rule Uganda by the Ten Commandments written in the Bible. Thousands of people have been abducted, raped, mutilated and killed during the 20 years LRA have been in action but since a few years back LRA has moved into Sudan and the DR Congo and left Uganda in relative peace (De Temmerman, 2009).

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[1] Kabaka is the king of the Buganda kingdom.

The political and judicial structure in Uganda has long been permeated of insecurity and violence. A supposed lack of trust, from the public, in these systems would therefore not appear strange. To strengthen these structures and rebuild the populations' confidence in them is what Museveni now is facing. However, Uganda is now a relatively safe place (compared to previous historical eras in modern time) for its inhabitants with exceptions regarding the north. But even there the situation is stabilizing and people are reasonably safe. We believe that it is important to have knowledge about the history of Uganda in order to understand the publics' perception of a failing judicial system and why they use mob justice.

Mob justice in Uganda

This violent phenomenon of mob justice can be explained as when a group of people, sometimes several hundred, take the law into their own hands, act as accusers, jury and judge and punish an alleged wrongdoer on the spot. The person accused of a crime has no chance to defend him/her or claim innocence. This procedure often ends up with the victim being beaten to death or seriously injured. The victim of a mob is denied a fair trial and the right to life which violates the UN standards of human rights (www.un.org).

The Annual Crime Report of 2008 from the Ugandan Police Force claims that homicide in connection with mob justice counts 368 persons in 2008 compared with 184 cases in 2007, an increase with 100 %. Nothing suggests that this negative trend is about to turn around (www.upf.go.ug). These numbers can however have a discrepancy since these are only the cases reported. A reporter that we interviewed at one of the major daily newspapers in Uganda claims that a lot of cases of mob justice in Uganda happen in remote areas to which the police have difficulties reaching and the cases are never reported. According to the reporter, mob justice is a growing issue in Uganda. The most common reasons for a mob to take the law into their own hands is theft, murder, robbery, witchcraft and burglary which is shown in the following table.[2]

S/No.	Alleged Causes for Mob Action	No. of Cases
1	Theft	232
2	Murder	59
3	Robbery	29
4	Witch Craft	26
5	Burglary	22

Fig. 1 Table from *The Annual Crime Report of 2008*

In the Ugandan media there are articles almost daily regarding mob justice situations in different parts of the country and for different reasons. They often tell the same stories about victims beaten or burned to death on alleged accusations (Wendo et al, 2007; Kyalimpa, 2009; Mugagga & Gyezaho, 2009). There are also debates in the daily media on the subject of mob justice involving academics, police officers and civilians (Editorial, 2009; John, 2009; Ssekate, 2009; Abimanyi, 2009). The general opinion through these debates is that mob justice is not a desirable way of solving issues and that something has to be done. Usually the accusations regard failure of the

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[2] Believing in witchcraft is common in Uganda, especially in the rural areas. Witches and witchdoctors are sought to cure diseases, help the client gain prosperity (by e.g. human sacrifices, where witch doctors kill young children) or for throwing spells on people the client dislike. If someone perceives that they are subjected to a spell from a witch, this can cause him/her to feel both anger and a fear of dying.

judicial system and corruption within the police force (Bagala, 2009; Nabende, 2010). This shows that the phenomenon is something that should be addressed seriously.

Choice and significance of the study

The observation of a mob justice situation (prologue) was the reason why we decided to write about this topic. This observation was made by two of the authors during their field practice in Kampala (spring 2009). We had a lot of questions about mob justice after witnessing this incident that needed to be answered in order for us to understand this phenomenon. When asking our friends in Uganda about mob justice we have been given several reasons for the existence of this phenomenon. Most of the reasons are associated with the absence of a functional judiciary. However, our point of view when we began working with this essay was that there were other factors in the Ugandan society, except the dysfunctional judiciary, that makes people take the law into their own hands.

The mob justice phenomenon is not restricted to Uganda. On the contrary, it exists in several countries in Africa but also on other continents such as Asia and South America. In Europe the term mob justice is rarely known and reports of mob justice incidents in other parts of the world seldom find their way to the West. Knowledge of this phenomenon is relatively narrow in Europe, if at all existing. Our starting point when we started planning this essay was that the causes of mob justice most probably could be found on a structural level in the society. We had thoughts about the judicial system, corruption and how this might affect a country. Our perspective was that the system in some way must have failed and therefore the citizens engage in mob justice. Mob justice violates several articles in The Universal Declaration of Human Rights by the UN and for all countries striving towards a harmonic climate between their citizens; it should be in their best interest to address issues that violate human rights (www.un.org). We want to do this study because mob justice is a common phenomenon in many countries and an important phenomenon to understand and address.

Aims of the study and research questions

Our purpose is to increase our knowledge and understanding of the mob justice phenomenon and also examine how it can be prevented. Mob justice is, as we see it, a significant social and legal issue with many different perspectives and levels. We want to look at the phenomenon from these aspects, with help from social and legal professions, in order to understand why people engage in mob justice instead of letting the judicial system handle alleged culprits. This can, in turn, point out where changes have to be made in order to stop mob justice. Our sample of choice will be further described in the method chapter.

The research questions are as follows:

1. What are the causes of mob justice?

2. What happens in a mob justice situation?

3. What changes in the Ugandan society and what work related methods are adequate in order to prevent mob justice?

Structure of the report

This research report is divided into nine chapters. The first chapter introduces Uganda and the concept of mob justice. It also explains the choice and significance as well as aims of the study. Chapter two describes the methodology where the qualitative research is explained as well as our data collection methods. It also explains our data processing procedure and our analytical approach. Chapter two furthermore includes discussions about validity, reliability, generalizability and ethical concerns. Chapter three presents previous research regarding mob justice. Chapter four includes our choice of theories and concepts used when analyzing our empirical results. Chapter five, six and seven present our empirical results from different social and legal professions. Chapter eight presents a theoretical analysis of certain parts of our empirical results. The last chapter contains the conclusions and discussions of our research findings. Our epilogue includes our last reflections about the research, which refers back to our prologue and also connects the conclusions to a Swedish context.

Method

This chapter describes our selection of methods within the qualitative research area. It is structured in five different sections. First we explain our overall view of qualitative research. Secondly we explain our two different methods of data collection. Thirdly we describe how we have conducted our empirical analysis as well as our theoretical analysis. The fourth section is about the study's validity, reliability and generalizability. The final section is about the ethical concerns of the research.

Qualitative method

The purpose of this study is in the qualitative field of research. Our aim is to get a deeper understanding of the Ugandan society and a complex social phenomenon. With the qualitative method we have tried to understand our respondents' experience of the world with their own words, thoughts, descriptions, knowledge, memories, assessments and interpretations, as Larsson et al. (2005) explains. The choice of scientific approach was based on a belief that people have their own different subjective views of life and society (ibid.). The purpose with this study is to better understand a phenomenon and a context we have limited knowledge about. In order to do this we will need long and descriptive explanations, not short answers. As we look at this phenomenon, no short answers can be fulfilling. The answers given are meant to describe and explain a complex social phenomenon and the society that surrounds it.

Data collection

We have used two different qualitative methods in our research, where focus groups were our main method and interview our secondary method. Below we explain and comment each method as well as describe our sample and approach with each method.

Focus groups

Victoria Wibeck (2000) describes focus groups as a qualitative data collecting research method where the researcher collects information from respondents during interaction in groups. The fundamental idea of this method is to get the respondents collective perspective of a specific topic (Billinger, 2005). According to Kajsa Billinger (2005) this perspective cannot be collected in any other way. The focus group, as a method, is based upon social constructivism theory: the idea of every day social interaction as a foundation of constructing a common interpretation of intention, implications, values and how we understand connections (ibid.). The data received from a focus group represents the collective and cultural perspective regarding a topic, not individual opinions (ibid.). Since the aim of our study is to examine different social and legal professional perspectives of a specific topic, this method should be profitable.

According to Billinger (2005) this method of collecting information gives the respondents more space, it is their discussion amongst each other that is interesting. The researcher's role is to moderate the discussion, not to be a part of it. The focus group method is not as inflicted by the researcher as a qualitative interview. During an interview, the discussion is kept between re-

searcher and respondent, which is not the case with a focus group (Billinger, 2005). Another advantage with the focus group method is, according to Richard Krueger (1994), that almost everybody is familiar with a group situation. Therefore, it is a more natural social context compared to other qualitative methods such as an interview. Krueger (1994) suggests this creates a more relaxed situation, which gives more honest answers from the respondents.

One question that comes to mind concerning the discussion above is whether a group situation is such a natural social context for most people. People could have negative feelings about participating in a group discussion; they might be shy or feel that their opinion is not worth discussing. Krueger (1994) discusses different issues with focus groups and singles out *group pressure* as a factor that can mislead the researcher. He also suggests that respondents give answers that he/she think is best for the situation. Wibeck (2000) explains this further and mentions risks of exaggerated opinions in order to convince others. She also talks about socially accepted opinions and avoidance to express difference. Although we noticed some of these common group phenomenon, e.g. shyness and exaggerated opinions, we do not believe that it affected our results in a major way. Wibeck (2000) means that people normally want to be a part of a group and maybe adjust their opinions according to the general values expressed. The question is whether this is a negative thing since the purpose with a focus group, as we have mentioned above, is to collect the perspective of the group.

Sample

According to Billinger (2005), the respondents are supposed to have a connection to the subject and an understanding of the matter. We have conducted focus groups with students from different disciplines that might have knowledge of the mob justice phenomenon through their education and might get in contact with it in their later profession. We wanted students because they are the future of Uganda and important actors in the country's development. They were also chosen due to their strategic location (the university) which saved us time and efforts. Our first idea was to interview professionals in the field but we soon abandoned that idea in favor of students. To find professionals and hope that they had time to meet us would, according to both us and our supervisor, have been very time consuming. We were not sure if the study would have been feasible. Professionals were not chosen as our main sample, but we kept them as a secondary sample, which will be reported in the next section, key informant interviews.

Our first sample of choice was; law students, social work students, police students and theology students, although this did not remain our final sample. Our sample of students changed through the course of time in Uganda. Because of time consideration and new ideas of our sample, theology students had to be removed. Besides the time constraints, we felt that theology students maybe did not fit our sample. Our idea was to interview actors in society who have professions clearly connected to our topic. Future priests do not really fit this description. Their job does not have a very clear and obvious connection to the mob justice phenomenon even though, as will be shown in this study, they are probably important collaborators.

We also had some trouble finding the police students. Our contact person in Uganda, Dr. Narathius Asingwire (PhD, Head and Senior Lecturer of Department of Social Work and Social Administration at Makerere University) assisted us with contacts at the police training school outside the town of Masindi. We soon realized that our sample was to be distorted. At the police training school there were no students graduating soon (we wanted students close to graduation, the reason behind this is explained below) and apart for the other students in training, there were police officers (already graduated) that had returned for advanced training. Eventually we did not con-

duct focus groups with police students; we did it with police *trainers*. We could not really do much about the situation. The officers in advanced training were not available the two days we spent in Masindi and we did not have time to go back at a later stage of our research. During the somewhat confused situation in Masindi, one of the police trainer groups was not conducted with our questionnaire (which is described thoroughly in the section below, approach). At that time we were still under the impression that we would meet the police officers in advanced training at a later stage. We therefore saw the first police trainer group as a group interview and that we could use these respondents as key informants. Since we only brought a certain amount of questionnaires to Masindi, we read the questions out loud. We saved the questionnaires to the focus groups we thought we would later have with police officers in advanced training. This was not a good way of conducting a focus group (which we also not intend it to be) and as the results show, we do not have equal amount of material from the police trainers compared to social work- and law students. We discussed if we should use the two police trainer groups as key informants instead of focus groups since one of the groups was not conducted correctly. At last we decided that the material was of the approved quality and quantity for use in our main sample as focus groups. The social work- and law students' opinions are of course equal to the police trainers, even though they are not working professionals.

Our final compilation of focus group participants (two groups in each discipline):
Social work students, *law students* and *police trainers*.

In order to conduct our focus groups, we needed two homogeneous groups within each discipline. We wanted the respondents at the university to attend the same class and be close to graduation. Wibeck (2000) describes different views when using already existing groups. The main advantage, on which we based our decision, was that an already existing group is more probable to be open for discussion. Another big advantage is that it is easier to recruit existing groups, which was suitable considering our limited time. On the other hand, people in already existing groups tend to step into the roles they have in their every day social life when interacting in a focus group (Wibeck, 2000). We suspect this occurred in some of our groups. An example of this might be when a couple of group participants took over the entire discussion while other participants became quiet and had difficulties expressing their views. We wanted students closer to graduation because we figured they might have a deeper knowledge about social sciences and mob justice through their education. We explained our preferences to our contact person at the university and also that we wanted volunteers in order to make the discussion more lively (Billinger, 2005). We also prepared a short letter of information (see appendix 3) about our research to be handed out to the students. It is according to Billinger (2005) important that the respondents participating wants to discuss the topic and have insights or thoughts about it in order to increase the researcher's knowledge. We never had an insight in how the actual selection procedure was conducted. Our contact person got help from teachers from the social work- and law faculties who mobilized the students.

The police trainers in their turn were colleagues at the police training school. How the selection procedure was conducted at the police training school is beyond our knowledge. Unfortunately we do not think the trainers volunteered, the Head trainer probably assigned them to participate. Maybe that was the only solution considering the administration of the education for the police students.

Homogeneous groups, like the above mentioned, usually creates a more talkative environment since the group has a common experience and same interest (Wibeck, 2000). Each group consisted of five to seven respondents. Small groups are preferable if you want an in – depth discus-

sion (Krueger, 1994). But a group should not consist of less than four respondents because of triad relations where group psychological tensions easily occur (Wibeck, 2000). It is also important that the group is not larger than seven respondents. Larger groups can nourish the creation of sub – groups, where the respondents discuss between each sub – group instead of interacting with the rest of the focus group (Wibeck, 2000; Krueger, 1994).

One important issue considering our sample is that the groups were gender separated. In a Swedish context this might create a few questions. At first we were unsure what to think when our contact person suggested this conduct to us. But his advice was of course correct. Mob justice is, according to our contact person, almost exclusively carried out by men, which mean that the two gender groups (men and women) might have major differing opinions in this matter. A focus group is supposed to be as homogenous as possible to create a talkative environment where everyone feels urged to discuss (Wibeck, 2000). If two groups have very different positions, this will not happen. Instead, there might be a hostile discussion of what is wrong and right. This was not desirable. One other major point, according to our contact person, was also that women in the Ugandan society tend to have a somewhat withdrawn role when they are socializing with men. This was something we wanted to avoid. Women will be better heard amongst women. Our focus in this essay is not to have a gender discussion or analysis, which also made this decision easier. The empirical results show no major differences in opinions about mob justice between genders.

Approach

We used one moderator, one assistant moderator and one observer in almost every focus group. Inspired by Krueger (1994) and Wibeck (2000) we had different tasks to consider during each session. The moderator's main objective was to moderate the discussion and the group, to keep the discussion on track and follow up with questions. The assistant moderator took notes (in case of audio recorder failure) and also handled the audio recorder (digital Olympus recording device). His/her job was also to deal with interruptions and certain logistics; we offered the participants some soft drinks and biscuits. If there were any, the assistant moderator also asked additional questions at the end of each question as Krueger (1994) and Wibeck (2000) suggests. We also used one observer, who monitored the moderator and assistant moderator in order to give them feedback after the session. Since we had no experience of focus groups this was needed to develop the method. The observer mainly gave feedback about the moderating approach: How are questions asked? Which follow – up questions are important? How is the moderator communicating with words and body language? The observer also considered the structure of the session, such as seating and distribution of refreshments. Both referred authors above do not suggest being three researchers during a focus group session. We discussed what advantages and disadvantages that this conduct could lead to. The advantage is explained above concerning the feedback. The disadvantage we discussed was if a third person somehow would undermine the discussion. We considered if all the three of us participating somehow could affect the talkative climate. We also discussed whether the students would feel observed in a negative way, if they would think the observer had a hidden agenda they did not know about. Our experience is that it had no impact with the type of groups we had. In some groups we dismissed the observer due to time constraints.

We followed a structured focus group session plan so that we could remember everything important to inform the students about (see appendix 2). None of the authors suggest writing a plan of the actual session as we did but the content of it is inspired by Krueger (1994), Wibeck (2000) and Billinger (2005). The plan was also written to make the conditions of all focus groups as simi-

lar to each other as possible. We discovered that writing a session plan was also good when evaluating our methodological performance; it was easier to have a document to work with. As Krueger (1994) suggests, the moderator began the session with an introduction of the researchers followed by a presentation of the study. The moderator was also precise about his/her role in the focus group and also explained the other researchers' functions (Krueger, 1994). Furthermore the moderator emphasized, as Billinger (2005) suggests, that he/she is not an expert on the subject. The sole interest lies in the answers given by the respondent and no answers are wrong.

We were fortunate enough to be able to conduct three pilot groups (test groups) with social work students at Makerere University. We were not prepared for the necessity of pilot groups to get our sessions right. When two groups were done, we realized (in discussion with our contact person) that this was necessary and he helped us finding more social work students for two new groups. The decision was made that even one more pilot group was required. The pilot groups were invaluable for our research. These three pilot groups were conducted with a structured interview guide that we tried to update after each session. We tried to make as few questions as possible and also tried rephrasing questions to call for discussion. Our topic also had to be narrowed down and we emphasized what kind of mob justice situations we wanted the participants to discuss. It was favorable to emphasize that *the discussion* was the important thing, not individual answers.

What we learned from the pilot groups is foremost that stimulus materials are essential for a focus group. Krueger (1994) and Wibeck (2000) highlight this fact but initially we did not really understand how important it was to find a suitable stimulus material. Stimulus material is supposed to raise questions and discussion concerning the topic, it can be an article or a video as Wibeck (2000) recommends, or a questionnaire as Abrahamson (2005) suggests.

Our real breakthrough came with our questionnaire (see appendix 1). We did not believe a questionnaire was suited for our kind of questions, although we had to try something because the discussion was still close to absent. It made all the difference. We used our interview guide and made a questionnaire out of it, which none of the authors referred to in this chapter suggest, but they do not advise against it either. The questions were rephrased to a one – person perspective and we also divided the questionnaire in distinct sections with headlines: introduction, individual level, group level, society level, and working methods. We did this in order to emphasize that we wanted to do research about different levels. It was very important to be clear about this. Another important alteration was that we urged the participants to think of (and later discuss) the three most likely explanations of each question. We believe this alteration focused the discussions to the core of the questions. At the beginning of each focus group session the participants were given 20 minutes to individually read the questions through and write small notes. The questionnaire created constructive discussions in most of our groups. The reason behind this was probably that the participants now had time to consider each question before we initiated the discussion. This way, the participants had their own opinions clear to themselves before engaging in the discussion.

Another important detail we learned and implemented along the way was also that the environment is important. Wibeck (2000) mentions this but we realized along the way how important it is that the participants sit fairly close to each other and that it is not favorable to use a big table. However, Wibeck (2000) emphasize that the participants should not sit *too* close since some people might get territorial. It is also important to try and sit in a circle. We realized it was favorable, as a moderator, not to sit *in* the circle. It was better to be seated somewhat outside of it. This made the participants look at each other instead of at the moderator. For example, when we

were seated around a small square table, we placed the moderator in one of the corners, instead of on one side, as we almost automatically did since we were the ones who gathered the participants. We also discovered a good way of making all the participants involved in the discussion. When starting the discussion the moderator asked the person to the left to share his/her thoughts about question number one. On question number two the moderator asked the second person to the left and so on. This made everyone involved and the discussion more rewarding.

As we have explained earlier we used a questionnaire in our focus groups. The questionnaire contained six questions of value. The participants had time to read these through, take some notes, and later we discussed each question. The questionnaire was therefore also used as an interview guide. The participants' questionnaires were not used by us in any way. We did not collect them after the session. The questionnaires contained our contacts and they were for the participants to keep (see appendix 1).

The questions in the questionnaire are written with our purpose and research questions in mind. They are not complicated; our goal was to make short and simple questions that answered our overall research questions. We have tried to maximize the amount of information in each question and keep the number of question below ten, which Krueger (1994) suggests. Krueger (1994) describes how you can structure a focus group session with opening-, introductory-, transition-, key- and ending questions. We did not fully follow this concept, although we included an introductory question in order to explain what kind of mob justice situations we wanted to address (see appendix 1, question 1). Even though we informed the respondents about this when we presented our research, we realized this was important to emphasize. After this introductory question we went straight to our key questions, question number two to six. We always closed our sessions as Krueger (1994) suggests with ending questions (not included in the questionnaire). If anyone had something more to add to the discussion or if they felt we had missed a certain question, they were now given the opportunity to speak. We tried to write the key questions as open as possible as Krueger (1994) recommends. At the same time we wanted them to be very direct and concentrated on our research questions as Kvale & Brinkmann (2009) suggest. We asked about *causes*, *groups*, *mechanisms* and *working methods*. Question number two is the only somewhat indirect question, where we did not ask about the causes of mob justice. Instead we asked the participants to take an individual perspective of engaging in mob justice which led us to the causes (ibid.).

One important part during the session was to try to follow up and clarify the discussions considering our questions. It was important to keep track of the content of the discussions, if the participants had answered the question at hand. It was also important to keep track of the time for each question, which was the task of the assistant moderator. The discussions and arguments were always better and more constructive if we asked if something was not clear or if there was a word we did not understand. Since English is not our first language, there were some things we did not understand. We have realized that some of our material could have been better if we would have asked more questions and clarified certain expressions.

Method reflection

Our initial purpose with this study was to use focus groups in order to collect *discourses* from different professions concerning mob justice and conduct a discourse analysis. We believed that the different professions would have diverse discourses, within the profession but also between them. However, after collecting our empirical data we realized that we did not have enough "dis-

course material" to conduct such an analysis which made us choose to eliminate this analytical approach.

Even though the discourse analysis was eliminated, we still find that focus groups were an adequate method for our research. The discussions between the respondents enabled us to collect a large amount of empirical data, which we believe we would not have been able to find in any other way. We believe that discussions have a creative affect and that people in discussions develop ideas, perspectives and thoughts together.

Key informant interviews

The interviews have been the secondary method in our research and we have not put as much thought and reflection into this method as we did with our focus groups. This might also be an effect of our interview experience from earlier essays; this method was more known to us. Much of the work considering this method was also done when preparing for our focus groups.

The attempted purpose with a qualitative interview is, according to Kvale & Brinkmann (2009), to understand the respondent's subjective view of his/her world. "[…] to unfold the meaning of their experiences, to uncover their lived world prior to scientific explanations." (p. 1). Our purpose with the interviews was to have them as compliments to our focus groups. We realized that there were some facts the students did not possess, even though the discussions were very constructive and interesting. Inspired by our contact person at Makerere University, we called our interviewees *key informants* because they brought information and knowledge we probably could not have found in any other way.

An interview has the advantage of being easy to control (compared to a focus group) but at the same time it may lose some of the positive characteristics of a focus group. In an interview the researcher affects the conversation more. The advantage to control the situation was in our case rewarding because we knew what questions we wanted to delve deeper into. In an interview situation it is easier to follow up questions, which was not always the case in our focus group sessions, but not the main intention either. Therefore our interviews were a good compliment.

Sample

We found our key informants using different information channels. We found one human rights organization through student essays at Makerere University (presented in previous research) and one human rights organization through internet. We chose these human rights organizations because we had a feeling that they might have the most overall knowledge considering our topic and purpose, and also information considering the history of Uganda and the judicial system. We got in contact with one journalist respondent through friends. This journalist was from one of the larger daily newspapers in Uganda and we assumed this person also would have an overall view of the phenomenon. All of the interviews were conducted at each respondent's work place.

Approach

The interview guide we used was the questionnaire designed for the focus groups. We did not change anything other than maybe rephrasing the questions so it functioned grammatically correct for an interview situation. We had also often prepared specific questions concerning our topic for the specific key informant interviewed. For example: *How does your organization work in order to prevent mob justice? Do you know anything about the history of mob justice, how long has the phenomenon existed?*

We recorded the interviews with an Olympus digital recording device and we were two or three researchers present at each interview. We followed the focus group session plan when we met with our key informants as we did with our focus groups. That was important in order for us not to overlook any information that the respondents were supposed to receive.

Empirical and theoretical analysis

This section explains how we have conducted our empirical and theoretical analysis. The empirical analysis is the process of systematizing the empirical data material and the product of this process is our result chapters. The next paragraph, theoretical analysis, explains the process of choosing theories and concepts and later how we have analyzed our empirical results with these theories and concepts.

Empirical analysis

Our focus group discussions resulted in extensive amounts of recorded data material (approximately ten hours of recording) which had to be organized and systemized. There are different ways of structuring data material from focus group discussions. Wibeck (2000) says that the best way is to transcribe it. Transcriptions can be conducted in different ways, it can be verbatim or in written style (Kvale & Brinkmann, 2009; Wibeck, 2000). We decided to do it in the verbatim fashion to keep as close to our respondents' answers as possible.

The transcriptions were carefully conducted. It was of course important for us to write what the respondents actually said and we collectively discussed certain passages where it was difficult to hear because of bad audio recording. There was not always time for this so we decided that doubtful recording material was to be ignored. Transcribing the discussions was difficult and time consuming, obviously because English is not our first language. On top of that, the Ugandan English accent is sometimes hard to comprehend if one are not used to it. Discussions are also harder to transcribe than interviews. In passages where many people talk at the same time, it takes a lot of time to get it right. The transcriptions followed the structure of the questionnaire, meaning that we transcribed what the respondents said in each question.

Our first idea was to verbatim transcribe all the material but we soon realized it was not possible due to our time constraints. However, we decided to transcribe at least one group from each profession. We needed to organize the remaining focus group material in some other way. An alternate approach given by Wibeck (2000) is to listen to the tape recording and only transcribe certain important parts. We did this but in a more summarized way. From the transcribed focus groups we identified different *themes* in each question. We did what Kvale & Brinkmann (2009) refer to as a *meaning condensation* and structured the discussion topics and their meaning into shorter formulations. We compressed long statements and discussions into only a few words which became our themes. When we listened to the focus groups which were not transcribed, we tried to do this organization directly and also make notes of at what time each theme appeared in the recording. At this stage we did not transcribe any longer sentences from these last three focus group discussions.

Finally, we had all our focus group discussions in a somewhat organized material with themes structured under our specific questions from the questionnaire. At this stage we felt that we had to begin with the writing process. We started writing what would become our first drafts of the

result chapters in this report. With the transcribed discussions as platforms, we wrote one result presentation for each profession, structured on our questions from the questionnaire. In each question we tried to select quotes and summarize what both groups (male and female) within each profession discussed about specific themes. We also summarized themes that were only discussed in one group. This was a slow process where we had to listen to the tapes again in order to collect quotes from the groups we had not transcribed. In the end, we wondered if it would not have been more effective to transcribe everything.

After the process of organizing the material in themes and collecting quotes we realized that our respondents not always answered the question asked but one of the other questions. Due to this, we had to re – systemize the themes in order for them to end up below the question they belonged to. When this process was completed it was obvious that there were no causes of mob justice on the individual level but only on the structural level, just as we suspected.

Out of this material we identified three overall topics that followed our research questions: *causes of mob justice*, *the mob justice situation* and *prevention and working methods*. The themes mentioned above were systemized in different *theme groups* (e.g. judicial system, poverty, education) within these overall topics, many alike between groups and professions but also different. At this stage we abandoned the former structure based on the questionnaire in favor of the overall topics and theme groups. Out of this new structure we have written three result presentations, one from each profession, where we present quotes that highlight the respondents' discussions and arguments in each theme group.

The key informant interviews were verbatim transcribed in the same fashion as the first three focus groups. It was worth the time getting proper transcriptions considering how fast these, in most cases, could be conducted compared to the focus groups. We did not organize these in the same fashion as the focus group discussions because it was not necessary considering the purpose with our key informants. How we used the information retrieved from the key informants will be explained below, in the analysis section.

Theoretical analysis

Our aim has always been to be true to our respondents, we want to report and explain how they perceive their context and reality. It was important to let the respondents guide us on our path towards a fruitful theoretical analysis. We did not choose theories or concepts before we conducted our research. Our initial decision was to have a perspective with different levels: individual-, group- and society level. The only level where we had an idea of what kind of theories that might be useful was on the group level, where we figured that group psychological concepts should be helpful in our analysis. Moreover, we have let our respondents' discussions and arguments lead us to theories for our theoretical analysis. We do not have a theoretical framework for our entire research; instead we chose diverse theories and concepts for different sections in our empirical result. These theories will be presented in the theory chapter. We have not analyzed all the material collected with our focus group method. Instead we have chosen what seemed to be most important to our respondents but of course also considering our research questions. The theoretical analysis problematizes the empirical results, puts them in perspective and shows the complexity of our topic. The third topic, prevention and working methods, is not theoretically analyzed. We only want to present our respondents' suggested working methods to prevent mob justice.

The theoretical analysis chapter has different sections which are connected to specific themes in our result chapters of the focus group discussions. In our theoretical analysis we will specify exactly which themes we will analyze with each theory or concept. In this analysis we also bring forth our secondary data material, the key informants, which so far have been held back. We will not present them in a result chapter. Instead, we use certain parts of their arguments in our theoretical analysis in order to problematize the different perspectives.

Validity, reliability and generalizability

According to Kvale & Brinkmann (2009) "the trustworthiness, the strength, and the transferability of knowledge are in the social sciences commonly discussed in relation to the concepts of reliability, validity and generalization." (p. 241)

Validity

The validity of the research is not a philosophical abstract concept but a matter of craftsmanship and credibility of the researcher (Kvale & Brinkmann, 2009). "[…] validation does not belong to a separate stage of an investigation, but permeates the entire research process." (ibid., p. 248). The authors see seven stages of validation: thematizing, designing, interviewing, transcribing, analyzing, validating and reporting. Research is supposed to have a quality, a transparency and to be convincing so that questions of validity answer themselves (ibid.). The question is "[…] whether an investigation investigates what it seeks to investigate […]" (ibid., p. 251). These stages appear in this report where thematizing, which involves the theoretical approach linked to the research questions, is in introduction chapter and most of the following stages is explained in this chapter (though we are not always using the same concepts), but can also be seen as parts of the latter chapters. We have in this chapter tried to explain as detailed and transparent as possible how we have conducted our research and what choices we have made. We have tried to problematize our main method with focus groups and if our method of choice is rewarding considering our purpose. We have explained our transcriptions and our empirical analysis as well as our theoretical analysis of our empirical results. Krueger (1994) explains that focus groups have a high face of validity if they are used properly, according to established procedures, and for a problem suitable for a focus group discussion. It is our hope that we have communicated our accurate and reflective use of our main method through this chapter.

Reliability

The reliability of the research concerns the consistency and the trustworthiness of our study's findings. The question of reliability "[…] is often treated in relation to the issue of whether a finding is reproducible at other times and by other researchers." (Kvale & Brinkmann, 2009, p. 245). This methodological chapter is an attempt to explain exactly how we have conducted our methods so that other researchers can critically evaluate our methodology and also reproduce our research at need.

Generalizability

The question whether our results are only of local interest or transferable to other subjects and situations is of course interesting. Is it possible to generalize our results to a more extensive context? Can we say that our research has produced "[…] laws of human behavior that could be generalized universally" (Kvale & Brinkmann, 2009, p. 261)? The question answers itself. It is of course impossible to imply that our research has this quality. Our research only explains our respondents' view of mob justice in the Ugandan context. However, with this circumstance in mind,

our research could probably be useful for understanding mob justice in Uganda and other parts of Africa or the world, if read critically.

Ethics

When we started planning our research we almost immediately came across questions concerning ethics. How will our research be perceived of the Ugandan students and professionals? Will they see us as white Europeans that want to study an "African phenomenon"? Will they feel that we are trying to give them answers of what is right or wrong? After all, what are we doing in their country, studying their society? We felt that our research could be very difficult to accomplish if we were not very open and clear about ourselves and our purpose with the study. Ethics has therefore been a central concern to us during our entire research in different ways.

Kvale & Brinkmann (2009) mention four fields that are traditionally discussed in ethical guidelines: *informed consent, confidentiality, consequences* and *the role of the researcher.*

Informed consent

Informed consent entails informing the respondents about the purpose of the study, the overall design as well as if there are any risks or benefits from participating. From an ethical standpoint, it is also important that the respondents participate voluntarily and that they can withdraw from the research at any time (Kvale & Brinkmann, 2009). We informed our contact person and his university colleagues that it was important to find students that were interested in the topic and that they were to participate voluntarily. At the police training school we soon realized that voluntary participation was hard to confirm since there were not many trainers at the police training school. At each session we tried to be very clear about our purpose and how we intended to use the research. We emphasized that is was only for our academic studies. We ensured that the participants could withdraw by handing out our e-mail addresses. At the same time we wrote down the participants' e-mail addresses in each group so we could reconnect with them when the study was concluded. One issue we considered, especially concerning the police trainers, is a question Kvale & Brinkmann (2009) discusses concerning research at institutions, namely the influence of superiors. The police trainers' superior, the commander of the police training school, had approved our research at the police training school. Did the trainers under these circumstances have a choice to participate or not? This is a question we never asked and therefore it remains an unanswered query in this report. Most probably this has affected our study. This might be another explanation of the lesser quantity of material from the police trainer groups compared to the students (see discussion in section: data collection/focus groups/sample).

Confidentiality

Confidentiality in research implies that the identity of the participants shall not be revealed through private data given in the report, unless the participants want to (Kvale & Brinkmann, 2009). It also means that the participants should know who will have access to the collected material (ibid.). We explained that no names were to be used in our study and that the lists were to be erased when our research was concluded. We also informed that the recorded material was only accessible to us. It was very important to inform and be very clear about confidentiality and how we could ensure it. Many participants were inquisitive about our research and if we were working for an employer. To be clear about these issues was also important in order to create a talkative environment. We had to take every precaution possible in order to make the respondents feel they could speak their mind about the topic.

Consequences

Kvale & Brinkmann (2009) accentuates that the researcher needs to address the possibility of harm to the participants from their participation in the study. We did not identify any obvious risks from participating in our research but we were of course careful with the lists we wrote at each session (explained above in the informed consent paragraph). These lists will be erased when our research is concluded. Kvale & Brinkmann (2009) further discuss that the consequences are hard to predict in qualitative research. It is hard to forget Uganda's violent history (explained in the introduction chapter) where freedom of speech has not always been ensured. There might be a small risk that our research will be seen as criticism against the government and how they for example handle the legal certainty. Our respondents will then also be seen as critics. This is perhaps an improbable consequence but still an important reflection.

The role of the researcher

We introduced this section, ethics, with questions concerning our role as researchers. The role of the researcher "[…] involves the moral integrity of the researcher […]" (Kvale & Brinkmann, 2009, p. 74). By *moral integrity* the authors mean a sensitivity and dedication to moral action and concerns. It is also a question of adherence to the scientific quality, that for example the results are as accurate as possible. They further propose that the independence of the research is a question of moral integrity. Hopefully our moral integrity has been transparent through this methodology chapter. It is our belief that we have tried to live up to this standard during our entire research process. We strived to always have a reflective perspective, especially when we formulated our purpose, research questions and also our questions in our questionnaire. It was rewarding to put us on the participants' side; this procedure actually reshaped our purpose.

Previous research

In this chapter we will initially present the previous research and thereafter the procedure of collecting this information.

In the bachelor degree thesis: *The right to life – A case study of the mob justice "system" in Uganda* from 2001, Harriet A. Nalukenge examines the relationship between mob justice (or mob violence) and weaknesses in the judicial system alongside the police. The information is composed through literature research (in order to establish and present historical perspectives concerning violence and the criminal justice system in Uganda), qualitative interviews with both mob justice participants as well as general supporters of the phenomenon and questionnaires aimed towards public actors within the legal system of the Ugandan society. Nalukenge's (2001) conclusion is that the causes of mob justice are rooted in an insufficient legal structure where weak laws (and following punishment) do not match the impact of the crimes committed, whereby people take the law into their own hands. She also states that the mentality of punishing a person responsible for someone else's death by taking his/her life (an eye for an eye), is ingrained in the Ugandan culture and connected to a widely spread public illiteracy as well as inertia and delays in the judicial system.

Margaret Kanaabi also partly derives the causes of mob justice to a public perception of an ineffective judicial system in her master degree dissertation: *An assessment of the factors responsible for mob justice in the management of public affairs in Kampala District* from 2004. However, the main emphasis (throughout this essay) is put on the problematization of constraints such as corruption and insufficient funds within the judicial institutions (e.g. the Ugandan Police Force). According to Kanaabi (2004), this leads to public distrust against these institutions and mob justice becomes a vital alternative when it comes to solving judicial issues. In order to prevent the practice of mob justice in Kampala District, Kanaabi (2004) highlights civic education and legal sensitization of the public as crucial. Improved working conditions within the police force, increased salaries to police officers working on the field (and thereby an expected reduction of bribes) together with a more targeted work against mob justice by the government are also proclaimed by Kanaabi (2004). Notably though is that her findings mainly are based on interviews with members of the public.

In the quantitative master degree dissertation: *Mob justice as a violation of individual´s human rights: A case study of Kampala District* from 2006, Sam Stewart Mutabazi also tries to establish the causes of mob justice in Kampala District. Furthermore, his objectives are to investigate if there might be any general mob justice perpetrators within the district of Kampala, how the public are affected by the phenomenon and how it should be prevented. Throughout the research, Mutabazi (2006) finds that the members of the public derive the causes of mob justice to the incompetent and inefficient police and the legal system in Uganda. The main perpetrators of mob justice are the police force itself alongside with the unemployed, idle youth. It is also stated that the poor, uneducated people within the Ugandan society suffer the most from mob justice and that both the police and so called local council leaders must address the issue more directly to prevent its continuation. The maintenance of mob justice will only serve encouragement of murder and lawlessness among the public, according to Mutabazi (2006).

In the Tanzanian study: *Mob justice in Tanzania: a medico – social problem* from 2006, Paul M. Ng'walali and James N. Kitinya investigates the magnitude of mob justice and associated factors. The research is based upon mob justice cases in Dar es Salam during a period of five years (2000-2004) and includes a four-year autopsy study, case information given by the police and interviews with witnesses, family members and friends of the deceased. The study shows that a wide range of offences resulted in mob justice in Dar es Salam during this period, although theft tended to be most the most common one. To burn or stone the person to death were the most common ways to punish the mob victims in these cases. The researchers' conclusion is that mob justice is a social, legal and public health problem in Tanzania and needs immediate attention. A dysfunctional justice system (where corruption is not punished), unemployment of the youth and perceived economic inequalities are just a few areas that need attention according to the researchers.

In the scientific article: *Multi – choice Policing in Uganda* from 2005, Bruce Baker mentions that mob justice, as a way of punishing criminals, is present in Uganda. These actions are, according to Baker (2005), often motivated by a widely spread distrust or misunderstanding of the justice system among the public, especially concerning the procedure of police bail where suspected culprits are temporarily released before the court process. Mob justice incidents are mainly conducted by young men. According to members of the public, the Ugandan police and local leaders, mob justice is decreasing in Uganda. Reasons for that decrease is exemplified by one senior police officer who claims that an active pursuit of criminals and the sensitization of the public have reduced the incidents drastically in areas where mob justice previously occurred.[3]

In the *Tanzania Human Rights Report 2007* (THRR2007) which was published in 2008, researchers from the Legal and Human Rights Centre (LHRC) claim that the number of mob justice incidents is increasing in Tanzania. They support this statement with both statistics from the Tanzanian police as well as an increasing number of mob justice cases reported by the media during 2007. A survey conducted by LHRC during 2007 where 379 members of the public were interviewed and asked about the causes of mob justice is also referred to in THRR2007. The most common reason given by the respondents was a lack of trust in the police. A common view is that police officers receive bribes and release criminals instead of arresting them. Even though some police officers may receive bribes, the researchers also refer this opinion to public unawareness of the Tanzanian legal procedures where some offences are bailable. Another cause brought up by the respondents is the absence of adequate police posts in remote areas. People in some parts of the country have nowhere to report cases and, in the absence of a judiciary, mob justice becomes a method to punish criminals and wrongdoers. Lack of government funds in order to address this issue on various levels is also mentioned by some respondents. The final conclusion of this report is that many people are killed by mobs, wrongly accused of crimes and offences they never committed. LHRC urges the government to handle the above issues immediately in order to protect human rights in Tanzania.

The procedure of collecting previous research

Our first step in the process of finding literature and previous research concerning the topic of mob justice was to make an inventory of possible Swedish sources. A database search in GUNDA and LIBRIS was therefore initially conducted. GUNDA is an internet-based library catalogue covering information about literature provided by the libraries of the Gothenburg University. LIBRIS functions the same way but covers information from university libraries all over Sweden. The descriptors we used were: Lynchmob* [Lynch mob], Lynchning* [Lynching], Medborgar-

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[3] We present more recent statistics in the introduction chapter, which contradicts this information.

garde* [Vigilance committee] and Gruppvåld* [Group violence]. Unfortunately, we did not find any information useful to our study during this search.

A search through the Swedish homepage www.uppsatser.se and GUPEA (both databases containing dissertations from all over the country) was also made in order to find out if our topic was somehow previously covered by other Swedish students. This search was fruitless as well.

The next step was to search information through international databases connected to, and provided by, the Gothenburg university library. The databases we thought would be most useful to us were Social Services Abstracts and Sociological Abstracts which are assembled in the category of Social sciences – Sociology and social work. The descriptors we used throughout the search were as follows: Mob justice*, Mob violence*, Mob action*, Crowd violence*, Vigilante justice*, Vigilance*, Lynch mob*, Lynching* and Rough justice*. These descriptors were then collaborated with the following descriptors: Africa*, America*, Asia*, Europe*, South America* and Uganda*. These searches mainly gave us research connected to the ethnic violence that occurred in the United States of America during the 19th century and was, after careful consideration, not comparable or helpful to our study. We also found a study related to the African context, concerning vigilante groups in Uganda and their impact on societies where the police are absent. Even though it generated some insight in parts of the Ugandan society, it did not problematize the concept of mob justice and was therefore also dismissed.

Further on, we also conducted a search through the Google scholar- and Google search engines in order to find adequate previous research. Through Google we found the *Tanzania Human Rights Report 2007* and *Mob justice in Tanzania: a medico-social problem* from 2006. We were also suggested (by a representative from our scholarship association) to search for literature written by Bruce Baker on the internet and through Google we found his article *Multi-choice Policing in Uganda* from 2005.

The right to life – A case study of the mob justice "system" in Uganda from 2001, *An assessment of the factors responsible for mob justice in the management of public affairs in Kampala District* from 2004 and *Mob justice as a violation of individual's human rights: A case study of Kampala District* from 2006 are all written by former students at the Makerere University in Kampala, Uganda. With the help of our contact person, Dr Asingwire, we received access to the Makerere University library where we found these essays.

Theory

In this chapter we present the theory and concepts used when theoretically analyzing our empirical results. After the data collection and the organization of our empirical results, we saw in the overall topic – *causes of mob justice* – that two main explanations emerged: a failed judicial system and socio – economic structural issues. When looking at the topic – *the mob justice situation* – we found that it was not only about group psychology, it is also about how it is connected to the structural issues. These findings made us search for suitable theories within these areas.

Anomie theory

One of the leading Swedish sociologists, Sven-Åke Lindgren (1998), refers in his criminology book *Crime and punishment* [Swedish title: *Om brott och straff*] to Ralf Dahrendorf's interpretation of the *anomie theory*. Dahrendorf has modernized Durkheim's Anomie theory and applies it on the Western part of the world. However, we believe that some features are applicable on other contexts, such as Uganda. Dahrendorf has two general circumstances that indicate if a society is on its way towards a state of anomie. The first circumstance is a judicial system that leaves several crimes unnoticed. This leads to values and norms in society are undermined by the very institution that is supposed to uphold them. The second circumstance is the trust between individuals and groups are weakened, there are no common principles or values to follow (Lindgren, 1998).

In Ralf Dahrendorf's (1985) book *Law and order*, he describes anomie as chaos or dissolution of values and principles. It can occur when a society undergoes radical changes. It is a social condition where the validity of norms and behavior no longer are guarded by a government or other institutions, which brings uncertainty and unpredictability of individuals' way of behaving. What we find most interesting for our theoretical analysis is what Dahrendorf refers to as *no-go areas*, which are areas from where the judicial system more or less has withdrawn itself. Dahrendorf discusses four no-go areas. The first no-go area is that there is remission of sentence for some crimes. He argues that: "If violations of norms are not sanctioned, or no longer sanctioned systematically, they become themselves systematic." (p.19). The second no-go area is the retreats of the judicial system from geographical areas with reference to, for example, lack of resources which can make people insert their own sanctions and set up vigilante groups. The third no-go area Dahrendorf mentions are when actions become massive and of collective nature. This obstructs the judicial systems' possibilities to take action against those who are involved. The fourth no-go area concerns the younger population, especially those below 20 years of age. Dahrendorf claims, that most crimes in society are committed by youth. However, there is a tendency of reduction of sanctions towards this group (Dahrendorf, 1985). Our research will only relate to the first three no-go areas which are more applicable on our study.

Dahrendorf (1985) argues that a society needs valid norms to be functional and transgressions of those norms must be punished. We need to know what kind of behavior to expect from other people and that behaving differently, or violating norms, will be sanctioned. To this, Dahrendorf adds moral into the validity of norms. He claims that norms will be most valid when they are both effective and moral.

There is a possibility to live, as Dahrendorf (1985) puts it, "on the road to Anomia", without ever reaching it (p. 27). But a society with the above mentioned frailties is at risk of becoming a lawless state. People need structure and predictability created by authorities or else they will set their own structure, values and sanctions to create stability (Dahrendorf, 1985).

Our purpose with the anomie theory is not to show that the Ugandan society is on the way towards anomie or are in a state of anomie. We use the anomie theory to problematize the consequences of a failing judicial system.

The concept of stratification

Jan Svanberg (2008) uses the concept *stratification*, within the scientific discipline Sociology of Law, to problematize the efficiency of the judicial system. Svanberg explains the word stratification as the vertical difference between people, for example concerning social class, financial resources and education level. It is important to highlight that he talks of a modern Western society, not a modern African society. Nevertheless his concept of stratification is a good input and together with our empirical results, the concept of stratification is fruitful. We will not give a complete summary of Svanbergs argument but an attempt to present an overview. The most important part for our theoretical analysis is what we call Svanbergs *fourth step*, which is explained in the end of this section.

The way we understand Svanbergs (2008) concept of stratification is that the relationship between the judicial system and stratification can be seen in four different steps. His first step is that the judicial system grows with increasing stratification. "The legal rules depend on the extent to which a society is stratified" [own translation] (Svanberg, 2008, p.94). Secondly, he means that a more complex society is more stratified and therefore most often have an extensive judicial system. Thirdly, he argues that the judicial system can be unfair because judges tend to treat people from other social classes different than if the criminal was a member of their own social class. As a development of his third step he also means that the system is not fair between members of different social classes if they are in conflict with each other. Svanberg clarifies that it is not the legal rules that are inefficient; it is the system that is unfair. His fourth step concerns the difference between social classes in relation to how they use and relate to the judicial system. Svanberg explains that the citizens from a higher social class or status position are more likely to use the judicial system and are also stimulated to do so, compared to a person from a lower social class or status position. He also means that it is not only the citizens' usage of the judicial system that excludes certain groups. If a crime is committed by a person from a low social class against a person from the same social class, society's reaction will be less than if the crime was committed between persons from a high social class (Svanberg, 2008).

The most interesting for our analysis is Svanberg's (2008) fourth step, that the lower social classes are not using the judicial system in the same extent as the higher social classes. The important part in this discussion concerning the concept of stratification is why this relationship exists. Svanberg explains that economy has an important significance. He refers to that wealthy people often have properties or inheritance that makes them more probable to get in contact with the judicial system. But he is also saying that, regardless the legal issue, a wealthy person is always more likely to use the judicial system. According to Svanberg it is also a matter of how persons perceive themselves. Persons from lower social classes see themselves as people outside the community and they do not see themselves as members of the community, as citizens. They do not see themselves as persons worthy of being taken seriously by the judicial system. People from

the higher social classes on the other hand tend to see themselves as integrated, worthy citizens and consumers of the justice system. This difference in perception affects the usage of the judicial system. Svanberg explains that this perception cannot only be understood as an internal discrimination within each person but also in relation to establishment in society, or as he calls it, social identities. These social identities can be the individual's participation in the labor market, a profession, or involvement in different associations or clubs. It can also be that the individual has a family. These different social identities makes a person feel more as a part of society and more likely to participate in community activity through this universal citizenship, where usage of the judicial system is a major part, according to Svanberg.

The concept of forward panic

In his book *Violence: A micro – sociological theory* (2008), author Randall Collins develops a micro-sociological concept, called *forward panic*. This concept can be a guideline when analyzing psychological mechanisms at work within conflict situations evolving into extreme and sometimes lethal violence. Collins accentuates the importance of studying the interaction between people carrying out/being subjected to violence without connecting their personality or social background of the involvers to this phenomenon in order to find answers. To understand violent situations, according to this concept, are in other words to understand the events of the specific situation, which emotions that are at work and not whether the involved persons are violent by nature or not (Collins, 2008).

The build-up and release of a forward panic

According to Collins (2008), the start of any conflict (that has the potential of becoming physically violent) between individuals, involves the emotional collaboration of *tension* and *fear*. Most people try to avoid hostile situations since they are afraid of getting harmed or killed and therefore, the inside tension/fear increases when an actual physical confrontation is at hand (ibid.). The outcome of many conflict situations is therefore non-violent, especially if the combatants measure themselves and each other to be equally resourceful in the event of a potential fight (ibid.).

What specifies the build – up of a forward panic (compared to other violent conflicts), is that this collaboration of tension/fear is increasing towards a climax during a longer period of time (Collins, 2008). The emotional mixture (tension/fear) can also be accompanied by other feelings like, for example, frustration, revenge and/or excitement (ibid.). To give an example, Collins describes situations where police officers follow car thieves in high – speed chases. The overall feeling of tension a police officer experiences in such a situation is probably built up by fear, excitement and frustration. Fear, as in the danger of crashing his/her own car and get hurt, excitement since the whole situation involves adrenalin – rushing events (which probably not occur on a daily basis) and frustration since he/she has not yet caught the thief. When the chase is finally over, the eye – to – eye confrontation with the surrendering thief, who not only tried to steal a car but also the officers' control of the situation, can result in an arrest where an overload of violence is used even if the situation does not require such actions (ibid.).

The person (or persons) affected by this emotional build – up normally act relatively passive until an opportunity reveals itself where the tension and fear burst out in an emotional outbreak, just like in the above example with the police officer (Collins, 2008). The opponent is somehow cornered, outnumbered and weak which becomes an ignition factor where physical actions are re-

leased towards him/her. In most cases, these actions are carried out in the shape of extreme violence (ibid.). One might think that this unbalanced power between combatants would calm down the situation but Collins claims it is the other way around. Once someone has been caught up in the emotions characterizing the build – up of a forward panic, this inside tension searches for an opportunity to come out. Once the emotional outbreak is at hand and the person starts to act in frenzy, the violence is unstoppable. The inside tension has found a path of release and the violent actions does not stop until the victim is defeated. Collins accentuates that even though these actions of course looks very disturbing from a moral standpoint, they are not connected to certain people with certain violent ambitions. Instead, the emotional strike of a forward panic can affect anyone if the situation allows it to do so (ibid.).

Forward panic in the context of crowds

A larger crowd of people aroused by emotions that create tension are, just as individuals, highly capable of collectively releasing fury and violence towards a more or less helpless victim (Collins 2008). The emotional pattern of a crowd attack has the same characteristics as a small – scale forward panic although the build – up of background tension tends to be more extensive in time (ibid.). Collins exemplifies this by describing the initial stages of ethnic riots. An ethnic riot often starts with some kind of divergence that goes far back historically. When one ethnic group in present time is provoked by an incident or behavior initiated by the other group, the tension increases. During a period of days, rumors about the opposing group are spread and it is not unusual that small acts of violence and counter – attacks are performed by members on both sides. The rumors increase the tension/fear within the group and people are assembled and mobilized in order to spread the word of a dangerous enemy. When the enemy later on somehow shows weakness (e.g. a member of the enemy group is caught), the mob is quickly gathered to punish the person who at this point is clearly outnumbered (ibid.).

People located nearby the riot can also be affected and join this emotional bandwagon even if they are unaware of who the victim is or what he/she is accused of (Collins, 2008).
The emotional outbreak in these situations of mob violence is strengthened by cheering, hysterical laughter and screams from the crowd and sets an almost rhythmic vibe from which the violence is repeated over and over again (ibid.). According to Collins, this is typical for a collective forward panic and the situation creates a temporary, social arena where people who normally are against violence share the feeling of both enjoyment and uncontrolled rage. It is not unusual to find all kinds of people in the masses. Everyone, from young men to old women, is caught up in the fury, striving to get as close as possible to the center of attention in order to beat the victim themselves (ibid.). The direct aftermath of mob violence is normally characterized by a victorious rush where the crowd emotionally celebrates the defeat of their enemy (ibid.).

According to Collins (2008), it is important to understand that the background causes of mob violence/crowd violence vary between different situations and contexts and is not only subjected to ethnic dilemmas. Any situation creating a collective, emotional tension can result in these violent acts. Exactly how the tension is built – up is also varying between specific occasions (ibid.).

Results: Social work students

This chapter presents the empirical results from the focus group discussions with female and male students in social work. The results are divided into three different sections: causes of mob justice, the mob justice situation and finally prevention and working methods.

Causes of mob justice

When discussing the subject of mob justice, several different causes to why mob justice occurs are revealed. The most prominent ones are as follows:

The judicial system

When it comes to the judicial system a number of reasons why it does not work emerge.

Corruption

All of the students talk about corruption within the judicial system as a factor causing frustration.

> -When an individual has a certain economical power and commits a certain crime they go to the authorities and give them money and they'll be back. Knowing that someone has the ability to pay for him [the culprit] to be released, these ones [the public] feels unsatisfied that is not just, hence causing them to carry out mob justice. (Male)

> - Sometimes you get these people [the offenders], you turn them to the police and the next day you meet them on the road so people say: "anyway they are still going to come out so let's deal with them when we still have them". I think that's why they [the public] always carry out mob justice. Because the law, they are corrupt so they'll [the offenders] bribe them [the law enforcers] and they release that person so I think they [the public] prefer doing it their own way. (Female)

> - First of all you may find that when they [the public] decided to commit to mob justice its 'cause they think as when they go to the law, or they go to the police, the police will not do anything and even if they [the police] do something it's not going to be successful or they're going to use a lot of money […] they [the public] think it's better that we deal with that person at the moment and we finish him or her or whatever they are up to. Because the police […] won't concentrate so much on the crime (Female)

The students' notion is that it is easy to bribe your way out of custody or prison. The students also experience that the system only works for the rich people because they have the money to pay for the police to come to the crime scene and bribe the judicial officers in order to make them work faster. This conception makes people mistrust the judicial system and drive them to take the law into their own hands.

Weak law enforcement

This subject is another point connected to the judicial system. Delays in the judicial system are one of the factors that cause frustration and increase the risk of mob justice.

- They [the police] arrest someone, they don't work on that person as quick as possible in terms of giving him a punishment so he can go on enjoying and the people in the community say he has killed a person but he is still there, no action has been taken. So they [the public] tend to also work upon that person themselves because they know that justice is delayed and therefore denied. (Male)

All of the students emphasize that it can take years to convict a criminal. During this time, witnesses have to come to court and testify. This will cost them money for transport and it is not certain that the hearing will be carried out which means that the witnesses have to return back home and come next time they are summoned. A lot of people cannot afford to pay transport repeatedly which will lead to them missing out on testifying. In turn this can lead to the culprit is set free. "Delayed justice is denied justice", as one of the male students pointed out.

The police force is considered to be inefficient and often delays when called to a crime scene. The delays gives people time to gather and carry out mob justice. The female students point out the difficulties people has when calling the police to report a crime.

- […] the police usually delays to take its cause of action.
- So maybe they [the public] feel when they catch the thief and they call the police, what if it refuses to come? (Females)

Another problem with the police force is brought up by the male students. It is the lack of enough law enforcers, especially in remote areas. This causes the members of those remote communities not having a choice but to deal with culprits in their own way.

- In some areas there are not any police stations where you can seek assistance, so members turn against the victims or culprits and then give them…
- The police population is quite very low. In some parts there is not like a legal law enforcements officers who can protect such culprits or victims so members tend to mobilize and take the law in their hands. (Males)

Legislation

Lack of strict laws is mentioned by all students, both regarding law offenders and people involved in mob justice. Students from both groups believe that people get upset when they see an alleged culprit, who was caught the day before, out on the street again next morning.

- […] they [the courts] end up not giving appropriate punishments to the culprit, so people tend to use their own action to work on these people since they are not given what they are supposed to be given in terms of punishments. So they end up putting, taking the law in their hands to punish the what, the culprit, leading to mob justice. (Male)

There was an impression amongst both the female and the male students that the punishments distributed by the courts are not in proportion to the crimes. This leading to people being subjected to criminal acts believing that the culprits did not get punished at all or were punished too lightly and therefore would fall back into criminal activities soon again. The students also think that the Ugandan law not always is just.

- You have defiled a kid, you take the person to prison, then the person applies for bail and then the person is out. On bail, after wrecking, defiling a kid […] after they defile your kid it's better to just kill the person there and then. So I think the Ugandan law is sometimes not fair. (Female)

Education

All of the students mention illiteracy as a possible cause to mob justice because people who are not educated do not know the laws or how the legal system works. They also have difficulties reading and understanding the law and knowing where to find information about the law. This cover the issue of ignorance of the law, as the students also discussed as a reason to mob justice.

> - Most of the Ugandans are illiterate, [they] cannot read the constitution. They don't know their rights, don't know the consequences of carrying out mob justice so they end up committing it, maybe without knowing they are offending the law. (Male)

> - Ignorance of the law… people don't know how the law is working, most in a way when it comes to the peasants in the village. It causes them to carry out mob justice. They don't know what such kind of crimes they commit how they are suppose to be handle it. (Male)

According to both female and male students it is mostly the people from the rural areas that suffer from illiteracy and the difficulties that comes with it. They explain it in the way of these people not having developed their view on how to solve legal problems, to see other ways of dealing with alleged criminals.

> - […] they don't know the first step they're going to take when the person has committed that crime. They can't, okay, let me take this person to the police or we call the police to come in to deal with this person. They only think of dealing with this person then themselves, taking the law in their hands. (Female)

The law not being integrated in the educational system is another point the male students consider to be a factor to why mob justice occurs.

Crime prevention

All of the students emphasize that mob justice actually has a decreasing impact on the level of thieves in the Ugandan society. It is used as a method to decrease the amount of thieves and scare people from becoming thieves or doing illegal acts.

> - Mob justice can be seen as a lesson for people who actually have that intention of committing a certain crime. Like now, if I am a thief and I see my fellow thief being punished to death so I can also refrain from doing the same activity because I may feel that activity as a way to go to death myself also one point in time. So that is a lesson to other criminals. (Male)

Poverty

According to both groups of students, poverty is a major issue in Uganda. The students discuss the problem in terms of people having enough money to see justice carried out.

> - The other factor is that the poor don't have a backing for example when it comes to maybe a court session they don't have the money to hire the lawyers and in Uganda here generalizing I think it's becoming just a law, the poor just don't win cases. However much evidence you have but if you don't have the money to get the lawyer, bribe the judges and everything you can't win the case so like they just say instead of wasting time and spend the little we have, let's deal with the outbreak there and then. (Female)

Unemployment

According to both female and male students, unemployment is a big problem in Uganda and leads to idleness and poverty. The people engaging in mob justice are the people who are there, at the scene, when someone commits a crime and they are easily mobilized when someone is calling out the word "thief!". According to the students it is mainly the unemployed that reside along the roadsides where most mob justice situations take place. All of the students are of the same opinion; something has to be done about the employment issue. The students establish that, when people are busy they do not engage in mob justice.

- […] if people, they are too busy it is not easy for them to mobilize. (Male)

Socialization

Both the female- and the male group mention socialization as a factor worth considering when discussing mob justice. The students point out that mob justice has become a part of the way things are handled and people have become familiar with it. Another reason discussed is an up-bringing including domestic violence.

- When they got a married woman cheating on the husband they would stone her and drown her so I think growing up while seeing such things sometimes motivates and drives these people into doing that [mob justice]. (Female)

The subject brought up by the students in this paragraph is something we would identify not only as a socialization process but also a normalization process.

The mob justice situation

Participants

When discussing the topic of mob justice, both female and male students reach the conclusion that the people most often involved in these acts are part of the informal sector in society. This means the people hanging around or working on the streets such as idlers, market vendors, petty traders and boda – boda (motorcycle taxi) cyclists. These people are often poor and illiterate, according to the students. The reason, given by the students, to why these people more often engage in mob justice has to do with the fact that these people are always on the streets where mob justice situations usually occur.

- These days it's common that when they get a thief even if the mob group, even if those people are not having the solidarity, are not together, are not doing the same job, these days when they get a thief and they shout that "this is a thief!" you may not tell where people have come from, they just gather and kill that person. So a group forms there, within a short period of time but when you make the search further you find out that these workers, vendors, are likely to gather very fast then other groups of people. For them they have the ability to organize very fast to carry out mob justice. But it is true that these people are not always organized to carry out mob justice, they just come. (Male)

- […] because really they don't mind what they do from any place, as in they don't mind public opinion and as in they are easily driven by anything which looks interesting to them.
- Because really […] you can't expect a professional maybe to also come out of his car and get a stone or do something to a thief. So it's always especially carried out by the poor people or the ones who are idle.
- […] it's usually the illiterate and the poor. Because mostly these people are usually idle and I think mob justice is basically and usually carried out during daytime so most professionals are at work and these guys are… their businesses are usually on roadsides so they easily can see who's stealing 'cause stealing usually takes place there. (Female)

The people in the informal sector are available and can quickly mobilize when someone utters the word "thief!". The male students also believe that the participants in a mob justice situation have a common interest.

- In most cases they all have common interests. You have violated their rights, then they gather and then they act against the law. (Male)

Formal groups can also engage in mob justice as well but it is not very common, according to the students. Educated people are seldom on the streets because they are at work but when they get involved in mob justice the students believe that it is due to anger, provocation and that it happens in the spur of the moment. The reason why educated people more seldom involve themselves in mob justice is because they know how the system works and what to do when they get subjected to a crime.

- When an educated person gets someone who is offending him, he usually calls the police or takes the person there. (Female)

Victims

Both female and male students agree that there are no particular groups of people at risk of becoming victims of a mob except the ones who commit crimes. But it does not have to be poor people, idlers or any other group of people.

- You are subjected to mob justice in any case you commit a crime, meaning that you have violated the what, the rights of others. But there is no certain group that is subjected to mob justice. (Male)

Mechanisms

When questioned what kind of mechanisms that drives a mob group was discussed amongst the students, several different objectives came up.

The group as a shelter

The mob group gives the individuals protection (as regards to being invisible in the mass) and no one shares information with the police who the other participants in the mob were.

- […] the fact that after mob justice they [the police] rarely arrest people who have carried it out because they have no one to ask. Can this drive people to carry it out?
- Yeah, because they know they won't arrest anyone
- […] they [the police] rarely put up people for mob justice
- Because mob justice, you can just go because this person was killed here you [the police] can't come to this place, this shop or this one and ask and start arrest those people because you don't know.

- Usually mob justice, when someone is killed there's no one, there's no evidence, no one is going to as in stand in for that person.
- When police comes they usually run away and you can't get anyone and pin them down that you're the one, they tend to run away.
- They just take them to ask them […] still they don't keep them because there is no proof. (Females)

Rumors

Both the female and male students claim that rumors can drive the mob group, described as follows by one of the female students:

- I think also rumours drive it
Moderator: -Rumours?
- Some people haven't even witnessed anything but just finding people beating up people, another person, they also just join in and end up beating a person without even knowing what the person has done. They just ask later on "what did he do?" (Female)

The male students also talk about rumors, such as when someone calls out the word "thief", as a factor to why mob groups gather so quickly.

Bandwagon

Both the female and male students discuss whether *bandwagon* is a mechanism to mob justice. With bandwagon, the students mean when people are drawn into situations, carried away by the surrounding peoples' emotions and cannot really stop their own actions.

- I think it's the bandwagon.
- If it weren't so simple. 'Cause definitely, one person, one person… okay, when two people they start calling there and then definitely it will attract more and more people to come and then they decide to take action. (Females)

- They are not able in that particular moment to control themselves and wait for the law enforcers to take action. […] So inability to control emotions has led to mob justice. (Male)

Frustration

All of the students talk about frustration as a mechanism that drives a mob group and its connection with mistrust in the judicial system and the police force due to ineffectiveness and corruption.

- [A cause of mob justice is] frustration of the masses, as in even law enforcers connive with law breakers. This is common especially with our police. (Male)

Mob justice as a way to satisfy peoples own needs is another subject brought up by both the female and male students and it contains several different points. One of them is revenge on an alleged criminal for previous criminal acts done by another culprit. All of the students pointed out revenge as one of the prime factors that drives a mob group.

- In case someone has ever being robbed once and the person was really hurt and so when that person sees a thief being cained they also sometimes tend to come in and beat up the thief just to carry out revenge. (Female)

According to the students a lot of people involving in mob justice have been subjected to crimes in the past where the culprit never was caught. So they take out their depressed emotions on a different culprit.

- Some people carry out mob justice because of their last experience they experienced. For example someone who was robbed sometime back in any case if he gets a chance to land on someone who has robbed another one so he'll try to express his anger.
- People are always annoyed of what happened to them. When you stole my trousers, when a person has stole my trousers and I see another one who has stolen another person's trousers, I remember […] so I act! (Males)

Another view, which is brought up by one of the female students, is that a lot of people deal with stressful situations everyday and that engaging in mob justice situations is a way to relieve some of that stress.

- I think also the psychological bit of it like a desire to relieve stress. You know most people like every day we, some people undergo stressful situations. Maybe like they're working and not getting money, they're unemployed you know they like, they are really stressed, family problems… so when they see something happen they like, ah, they just join the bandwagon just to relieve their anger eh, on to someone who is in most cases are even innocent. (Female)

Prevention and working methods

Structural changes

Education

One point made by both groups of students regarded the education is that there is a need to integrate the law in the curriculum to make the children aware of their rights and obligations from the beginning.

Another approach that both male and female students suggests in order to reduce this problem is improvement of the educational system for youngsters. This would prevent school dropouts and in the long run avert unemployment, idleness and poverty.

- How about if education is beefed up in the country so that these people are really illiterate eh, so that more people are educated and they get something better to do. So I think education should be given priority.
- Even the adult literacy classes…
- If we start educating people now, in the future…
- […] improve the educational system.
- Yes, actually that's the thing. Improvement of the educational system so that more people are kept in school.
- Our education it encourages people to be job…
- Jobseekers.
- Job creators. (Females)

Employment

Creating employment opportunities as a way to prevent mob justice could work, according to the female students.

- If we say government should come up and provide some little money for the unemployed like how they do it in I think […] developed countries.
- I don't think Uganda has that capacity.
- No, if Uganda organizes it can get funders.

- […] Uganda always gets donors but due to corruption and other things it cannot work
- People start saying they all don't work.
- Yeah, yeah.
- I think employment opportunities should be created more than giving them money for free.
- You can give someone like a hundred thousand but that person won't even know how to use it. (Female)

The Police force

The female students stress that the police structure needs to be strengthened in order to prevent mob justice. They believe that if the police acts in time and arrests the alleged criminals it could save a lot of alleged culprits from getting killed in mob violence. The male students also discuss this matter and are of the same opinion, that a quick response to crime scenes is necessary in preventing mob justice. They also agree on that an increase in manpower within the police force could be a solution to the problem.

- I also noted that… increase manpower to cap down the crimes and mobs because where we don't have enough police men or enough police stations in the country people tend to take action because they don't have what, a solution. (Male)

The judicial system

Transparency between the government, the court system and the public regarding lawmaking and how the law is practiced is suggested in order to regain the confidence of the public but also because the people then can understand better how the system works.

- […] if there is transparency between the government and the local people as in.. maybe if a person, maybe say a thief has been taken to court, if there is real transparency and even the poor sees that the justice has really been exercised in the right way some people are encouraged to always report cases to them. Other cases whereby someone has committed a crime, they take him or her to court and yet after a few days because of things like corruption, that person is seen around again and yet there is really nothing that has been done about it. This will promote mob justice because the thieves will not fear to continue stealing because they know after going there after some time they will be released. (Female)

In addition to that they also point out that people engaging in mob justice escape justice or get punished too lightly. One of the female students points out that in order to prevent mob justice the laws have to be stricter regarding those engaging in mob justice.

- I think the first part that should be acted upon are the laws, like strict measures should be taken against those involved in mob justice and this includes things like imprisonment, heavy fines because yeah if you imprison someone to death, they've beaten a person to death and the next morning they are out on the streets they will do the same thing again, some other time. (Female)

A clear and fair trial for all criminals in a court that is not corrupt is an issue that needs to be addressed, according to both groups of students.

Working methods: Social workers

Sensitization

Sensitization of the people is something that all students agree on is needed. The sensitization should contain information on the law and how the legal system works, human rights, the act of

mob justice and the danger of taking the law into their own hands. The students suggest that a way to sensitize the public and promote people's rights is through workshops in the communities where mob justice can be discussed and where conflict resolution is taught. Counseling risk groups such as people who had a relative murdered and poor, illiterate people individually or in focus groups where the subject of mob justice can be discussed and inform the right way of justice, is another proposal. When using this approach the causes to mob justice can be revealed and action be taken against it.

> - When you are in a place where a person has been murdered, you can, if you have the ability to access, if you can access them, the people who have lost a relative you can counsel them, you can provide counseling to them, you can tell them that now the solution is not violence, a solution is not killing those people but a solution is to take the legal proceedings. (Male)

However, there are difficulties with this method, according to a female student. Most people fear counseling because they fear to disclose their problems. But it could be a start in how to increase awareness of peoples' rights and promotion of the notion of community as opposed to individualism in order to make the people feel as one.

> - For me first of all I would promote the respect for people's rights and dignity right from my standard as a social worker plus even those people out there who are social workers as if everyone is aware that we should respect peoples' rights and dignity. If I respect you there's no way I would come and steal from you and there's no way I lower my dignity by be called a thief and there's no way really you maybe beat up someone because you gotten him or her in a crime so ensuring respect for people's lives and dignity can really work. (Female)

The female students further propose empowering of the communities by creating encouraging activities that the people in the community can gather around. Vegetable groups, craft groups or construction of a community hall are examples which came up in the discussion. According to them it could be a way to promote togetherness opposed to individualism.

The male students believe that it is necessary for the police force to provide feedback, regarding what happened to a caught culprit, to a community where a crime has been committed. By taking this action mob justice will be prevented. In other words a closer collaboration between the police and the citizens in the communities is to wish for in order to increase the knowledge about the legal system, according to the students.

> - I call one of the solutions to be providing the feedback to the community affected by the crime about the charges of that person […] so I make sure that the charges that are put on that person, how the person is charged, the court proceedings come back to the community. Such and such charges has been carried out and he's going to serve for this in the prison, so that they know that they'll not carrying out a mob justice on that person, at least that person has been punished and charged fairly. (Male)

The male students also suggest that criminals should be followed up after served sentence and receive counseling. This is agreed upon by the female students as well. Advocating for human rights and the rights of criminals is also a proposed method of work. One of the male students point out that here is a need to make people aware of that rights and obligations also oblige to criminals.

Collaborations

All of the students talk about priests but there are contradictions regarding if their work are able to have any impact on society or not. One of the reasons given by one of the male students, why priests should involve in the work against mob justice, is because they can preach reconciliation and forgiveness to the people. This was also suggested in the female group but loudly voted down by one of the females.

> - They will not tell you how you will get money in case you're not employed, how to keep yourself busy. They'll just tell you "Jesus will provide. He will provide for you when you're seated." They don't tell you "go and work, go and do this", you know. (Female)

The female students propose a co – operation between social workers, police and teachers in order to start advocating for peoples' rights and obligations when the children are young. The male students also talk about collaboration between social workers, teachers and the law sector in order to implement the law into the children from an early age.

> - In the social sensitization sector, they should work in hand with the law section. Even the teachers themselves because […] there is need for integration of the educational curriculum in the education system, so that from the grass root right off from primary level up to the university. Though in the educational system of Uganda, most of them don't complete the university. But if it's integrated already from primary, people just grow in […] basics in law, how to handle situations. (Male)

Social workers have more access to people and whole communities and it is easier for them to reach out to people than it is for the police or lawyers. A co – operation between these authorities whereby the social workers do research to find out the root causes to mob justice and then give the results of their studies to the lawyers could be fruitful, according to both female and male students.

> - The lawyers then can see what should be included and how they can strengthen the laws. These facts should also be carried out to the police men because they are the ones who take action. (Male)

The collaborations between social workers and lawyers are on one hand wished for because they can make policies, help to implement the law and inform the police. On the other hand the lawyers are accused by the female group of only being interested in making money.

> - […] whether they killed or not they don't want to know what they need is money.
> - […] with a lawyer it's just the matter of telling him, you know what? "I killed someone but I have big money". (Female)

The students therefore believe that sensitization of the lawyers is a good idea and also turning to human rights activists when a criminal needs to be defended.

> - Everyone deserves to be defended whether you are a criminal or not.
> - But the lawyers, these lawyers, who work for money, don't waste your time…
> - […] instead of the lawyers we should talk to the human rights activists. Because lawyers have probably defended people that have carried out mob justice and they know that they have carried out mob justice and they are defending them in court.
> - But they are also lawyers.
> - So I think the human rights activists, yes they are lawyers but they are on the good side.
> - Talk to the human rights activists. They are good lawyers who advocating for human rights. (Females)

The female students also came up with the suggestion that the government and NGOs orientated towards human rights should cooperate or create a partnership and work together promoting human rights and preventing mob justice. But the government needs to give some relief in the taxation of the NGOs, according to the students, in order for them to be able to carry out their work in a larger scale.

The male students believe that co – operations between the police and Human Rights Commission would be a good idea.

> - […] to ensure that at least the Human Rights Commission carries out more sensitization to the people in the society about the rights of the people and how they are to observe these rights despite the crimes they commit in society. […] when respect for human rights then people won't go for mob justice. Despite the fact that so and so has done such and such a crime he still has the rights to appeal for the courts of laws or appeal for the authorities concerned for him to be charged. (Male)

> - […] protect people's rights as in if everyone knows everyone has a right to live despite how weird or evil that person is… (Female)

The male group agreed upon that the police also need to work more closely with the Local Councils (LCs) who are in charge of rural communities.[4] Since the police often have difficulties transporting themselves to these remote areas they need the assistance of the LCs to apprehend culprits and protect them from mob justice.

> - In the police sector, in the security sector they can also increase local police. Because we have now local police as… this local police would be very instrumental. They coming out and calming down a mob justice on a grass root level because we don't have enough professional policemen we can actually use this local policemen…
> - Local defense unit.
> - Yeah, the local defense unit… to coordinate with these other professional policemen to ease the problem of mob justice. (Males)

However, a problem with this is raised by the all of the students since nepotism is widely spread even in these LCs and they tend to protect the people committing mob justice because they can be family or friends of the chairman or the members in the LC.

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[4] A Local Council is a democratic elected council that helps the government to rule in remote areas

Results: Law students

This chapter presents the empirical results from the two focus group discussions with female and male law students. Their discussions and arguments are divided into three different sections: causes of mob justice, the mob justice situation and prevention and working methods.

Causes of mob justice

Judicial system

Both student groups' main discussion regarding the causes of mob justice is the Ugandan legal – and law enforcement system.

> - […] people have lost confidence in the law enforcement, that's the biggest thing […] (Male)
> - People have lost trust in our legal system and our law. (Female)

Both groups are referring to a frustration of the law and the legal system. The discussions regarding this issue are about why people do not trust and use the judicial system in Uganda. The discussions are very similar in each group, but the material also shows differences.

Corruption

One major concern for both groups are corruption and bribes or "commercialized justice", as one of the female students put it. Corruption is used in different ways, for example to open an investigation you need to pay the police a bribe, as the female student says.

> - Justice is for the rich, not the poor… (Female)
>
> - […] once you have a criminal case, you have to go to the police, to report the case […] when you reach the police he asks you for some money to facilitate the court or the police investigations, you have to pay them […] (Male)

Another issue regarding corruption is that criminals are released soon after being arrested by the police. Three of the male students explain that this is also a case of corruption, that you can pay your way out of custody. A small part of their conversation is given below.

> - If he [the thief] has more money than you do, he will give the policeman some money, and that is where it will stop […] (Female)
>
> - Yeah ok like now, the majority of the problem, why people do not have, why they do not have trust in the police and the judicial system it's because of corruption. It's, if I am a rich man, […] all I need to do is give the policeman or the judicial officer a hundred thousand shillings […] if I'm a rich man I get free even if what I did was wrong, now obviously people over time they get to know and the majority of the people in Uganda are the poor so it's like the system will favor the rich
> [-]
> - […] it's the same people always seen of doing the same things, again, and coming back […]
> - What brings about anger, is because, you are free aware that even when I wait, I will not get justice! […]

- […] you kill a kid, then two weeks later because you have much more money than the parents of that kid, you are out of jail […] (Males)

Three of the male students also give further insight to the corruption of the law enforcement and connects it to one of the major problems in the Ugandan society, poverty.

- And also poverty […] corruption, because people have nothing, […] bribing are high, these people who are poor they make sure that, if he gets anything, no matter how, I mean the fact that he's a policeman, he will still accept a bribe of one thousand shillings, so small money…
- Because the Government is not paying them enough, our Government pays them a hundred dollars […] that is basically […] what we spend in one month, now we are students and we spend that money, what about this man with a family, a wife and two kids. […]
- So that's poverty.
- Poverty. (Males)

This discussion above is a further reflection about corruption and why it exists. Poverty is in focus but from the policeman's point of view. He is probably taking bribes to support his family. Later during the session they continue this discussion:

- Now we are in our twenties, we are still students, we cannot change anything […] we are socialists, but when we get to our thirties, we shall think about our families and our […] we are capitalists. So this is the problem […] the ones who have the hearts of change have no ways of doing it, the ones who have the means of changing, they think about themselves…
- They have kids, they have young children and a wife, so if I offer them a bribe […] two hundred dollars per month, like offer you one thousand dollars…
- A day!
- A day! What would you think? (Males)

One issue is corruption in the courts as well as the police (as discussed above). Most of the female students seem to agree upon that the court, as well as the high court, is also corrupt like the police. Therefore people have no trust in the judicial system. One of the male students also mentions this corruption higher up in government:

- […] Because the tendency here is to always bring the first person you see […] the policeman is bad, for sure, but the problem stems from the fact that our government is not actually governing as people thinks […] it's a group of thieves who are not serious about a thing, they don't do anything for society, they do it for themselves […] (Male)

This is probably a very important observation of the corruption in Uganda. The male student point out that the corruption exists all the way up in the government.

Weak law enforcement

Both groups return many times during the session to the people's frustration of the legal system. The male students explain that they think people feel that the system has never helped them. Another explanation, except corruption, how to understand this frustration of the judicial system is that Uganda's legal system is too slow and ineffective. The female students see the slow and ineffective system partly as a result of the corruption but also give other examples:

- A petty thief, he has stolen your phone, it will take twelve hours, a whole day, for the police to come […]
- Court processes are very slow, you can't wait that long to get justice, also a fact that many people believe [is] that after court processes still many people walk away […] free.
(Females)

The law enforcement system is slow on many levels (e.g. police, court) and according to the female student people do not trust that they, if they use it, will receive any justice through the judicial system. The male students do not really discuss this matter, but one of them is referring to a lack of speediness:

> - Another thing would be lack of the speediness. The court process when a case starts the whole thing report to the police, by the time someone gets judgment, maybe seven years later, now someone figures, waiting […] seven years going through all that thing, he figures he cannot wait for all that period. So my point is, let's just get done with it, instead of postpone it. (Male)

If justice is postponed too long it is no justice to the people, according to this student.

The male students' continuing discussion about weak law enforcement concerns how the police treat criminals on the street and how that affects people in society. They describe it like this:

> - Poor law enforcement.
> - I think looking also to the law enforcement, ehm… when the police gets a thief, what they do to him is almost no different from [what a mob group would do to him]. Just for us, we are so many, that, when those beatings are put together, it's dangerous. Cause when the police get you as a thief, in front of everyone they kick you, they hit you with their guns, they slap you, […] so it's more like, they are giving an example to the people what to do with this guy, so even our law, it's more like they are showing us what to do to these guys, before handing them, or before putting them under the […] and unfortunately, when people are through with him, he's dead.
> […]
> - Law enforcement…
> - By the way, this is a very strong point, it's a strong one […] because as a matter of fact, when you arrest me, you are supposed to read me my case and whatever and take me away, but the moment you start beating me up, that means even the point of innocence is not there, even if I was […] a thief, now other people will see, what the guy has done is the right thing, what the policeman has done…[…] (Males)

The students explain that the police do not set any good examples for the public. What the police do is instead showing the public how to act even if it is prohibited according to the Ugandan law. That a person is innocent until proven guilty in a court of law is not something the police relate to, according to the students.

Legislation

Two of the female students also mention that suspected criminals are released fast and that it affects the trust in the law enforcement system. This might be the source of the mob justice mentality. The students suggest that the laws are weak. They do not, as the male students, connect this to corruption (as explained above). According to one of them, thieves are arrested but are soon released back into society, committing crimes again, which annoys people. The other female student mean that people might feel their matter is not properly addressed and that they do not feel compensated when people are released after only a couple of days in custody.

Education

Both groups also mention public ignorance of the Ugandan law as a cause of mob justice. The female students give one example and say that most people who engage in mob justice do not know that everyone has a right to a fair hearing, which the students see as a fundamental right. The level of education is very low, according to them.

The male students also see ignorance of the law as an issue but do not give any examples. They see the ignorance as a part of the weak law enforcement organ which should teach people about the law and that it is their duty to do so. But one of the male students refers to an interesting observation:

> - […] even if they know the law, because these are the same people who are educated, [who] also are in mob justice, when they know the law. (Male)

This is a peculiar contradiction which the male students later return to. Education is not always a reassurance that you will not be part of a mob. Mob justice situations are, according to the male students, quite common in student communities on university campus at Makerere University.

> - […] the reason in behind is I've been in student communities for long time, since my education, but as far as I remember, every time there is a thief or someone in school there is a beating, […] even when you expect that these people are the ones who are getting educated, and they are supposed to be knowing what to do, there is, I mean, I fail to understand why is it in the student communities, then for the low income earners we have said it, frustration, poverty. (Male)

The female students are close to the same subject but do not really put words to it. But one of them refers to a meeting with a fellow student who apparently had been part of a mob justice situation. The question the male student asks in the quote above is important because it puts things in perspective and shows what he sees as a contradiction he cannot explain.

Poverty

Another topic is poverty. The female students mention it when they talk about bribes and highlights that justice in Uganda is for the rich and not the poor. It seems like the male students are on the same track but also take the discussion one step further. They have two different views regarding poverty but not all of the students are involved in the discussion. One student mentions that (like the female group says) because of corruption, poor people simply cannot afford justice so they end up taking the law in their hands. Another male student has an interesting individual perspective about poverty:

> - People are very poor, so when you steal their goat or a duck, their frustration in life is brought out through mob justice. Because they have worked so hard to get these things and you deprive them of their enjoyment, their right of that thing, so they have to kill you […]
> [-]
> - […] it brings me to poverty, if I'm a teacher, a teacher earns one hundred dollars per month, […] if you earn a hundred dollars per month and you save for two months and buy a small TV – screen and a thief steals it, your first reaction is not taking that case to court, because you have suffered all your life, this is your only position that you treasure, due to poverty, you are going to call your neighbors and because your neighbors are as poor, or even worse than you, they will kill him. Because they don't want anyone to deprive them […] of their home. That's what they do. (Male)

The student's argumentation, which all the male students seem to agree upon, gives a deeper understanding of poverty in the Ugandan context.

The male student group returns to the topic of poverty and repeats some of their thoughts but also give some new perspectives.

- Of course poverty has a point there.
- Poverty?
Moderator: But how do you mean that causes mob justice?
- Yeah…
- Poverty?
Moderator: How does it cause mob justice?
- If I'm poor, most likely I don't know what [my] rights are, you get me? Then secondly, I don't know what happens in court and thirdly, I don't care what happens in court, cause I think […] I'm just surviving basically. So if you come and deprive me, you know we said one of the common causes of mob justice is theft [the student means that theft is a "trigger" to mob justice], why do you think theft is one of the major causes? Because people struggle so hard to get just, just a little items, a few items, then someone deprive them of those items, the basic […] act is to kill that person so that that person does not have a chance to deprive any other person, so the society come together and make out justice on this person because […] a similar thing has happened to them, so that's what I think…that's how poverty causes mob justice.
Moderator: Does everyone agree?
- And that poverty points to mob justice in a way that, I probably wouldn't mind about being arrested, because I have nothing, if I killed him, and then I go to jail, I was nothing, so I don't mind, about anything.
- I think more importantly, poverty blooms frustration, lack of hope, sometimes what we have is what we have and if someone make some small money he thinks that…the moment he's deprived of it and he knows that at the end of the day he [the culprit] is going to bribe and come back […] (Males)

Here we recognize the discussion of how poverty can result in mob justice. One student explains how extreme poverty results in violent acts against those who are stealing because everybody is working so hard for so little money. One simple thing means a lot if you have nothing. He also means that people are joined together because they have had a similar experience (a discussion we later return to in the section about mechanisms). The other student is pointing to another issue of poverty, meaning that it creates a feeling of resignation. If you have nothing and are nothing, as the student is saying, maybe you do not care about anything. You have nothing to lose. The third student more or less continues on the first student's argument that poverty blooms frustration and where small items becomes very valuable. What the first and the last student both have in common is also that they connect different explanations, it is not just about poverty but many things. The first student mentions education (knowing your rights) and the second student mentions bribes and corruption.

Unemployment

The unemployment rate is, according to the students, high in Kampala and a big concern when discussing mob justice. Many people are idle and reside on the streets. According to the students, the idlers are often seen in big groups in the city and activated when someone shouts "thief!".

- […] where there are unemployed people, that's where they are always in groups and they have nothing to do […] …because you are sitting there and you have nothing to do, when they say "thief!" […] "let's mess him up".
- It gives you an opportunity.
- Yeah exactly. […]
- […] the unemployed people are just walking around the streets and have nothing to do…
- People have nothing to do.
- They just sit there, doing nothing. (Males)

- They wake up, to go to the streets of Kampala, to do nothing! All sitting… (Female)

All of the students are in agreement that unemployment and big groups of idle people is an issue. The question that remains unanswered is why all this people react as soon as someone says "thief!". This is, however, a discussion we will return to in our later theoretical analysis about mechanisms.

Class

This section relates to the last three sections (education, poverty, unemployment) in the concept of what the female students refer to as *class*. A female student talks about that mob justice is used by those from a particular class and it is a matter of where a person comes from. If someone lives in the slum, they use mob justice as a way to uphold justice but if someone lives in a wealthier neighborhood they will call the police, according to this student. The male students also argue that it is a matter of where you live.

> -Because listen, a good example is, in your research, ask yourselves why Kololo, […] Ntinda […] those neighborhoods…
> - The posh neighborhoods, up hills societies.
> - The posh neighborhoods, up hills societies in Kampala, there is no mob justice, but go to Kamwokya, where the poor, the taxi drivers, the boda – boda men live, why is there more mob justice than in […] Kololo. It is simply a matter of economy. (Males)

The male students do not use the word class but we understand their statement above in the sense that it is a matter of which group of people somebody belongs to and that financial re-sources is an important issue. Mob justice is considered to be concentrated to specific areas where these identified groups live.

The female students also discuss other types of social classes in society:

> - It all starts from up there [government], when they say like; [with] this [tribe] accent you will get addressed, [with] this [tribe] accent you won't get addressed […] this country has stopped being a nation for all, it's a nation for particular groups of people. (Female)

This is an interesting discussion which relates to Uganda's population which is divided in tribes. What the students refer to is that certain groups or tribes receives affirmative action in the socie-ty.

Socialization

Another topic concerning the causes of mob justice is a discussion about violence. This discus-sion is only in the male student group. Below we have tried to sum up the discussion.

> - I think ehm, to top all our points, would be the way, you know like here in Africa, we… people are brought up like… there is violence around. At home, either this mum is hitting dad, in school…always fighting. So, as you grow up… growing up in violence. So, the first thing that comes into your mind when a thief robs another guy is the violent history, that bringing up violence…
> - They find nothing wrong…
> - Yeah…
> - In that kind of justice.
> [-]
> - I feel, ehm, like for mob justice, I feel the main point would have actually been this, this vi-olence, the way we are brought up.
> - Upbringing?

- Yeah, you know like it is general here in Africa, you can see out there it is mob justice, but everywhere you see this violence, the news, and ever, there has to be, where there is war, there is something like, in our homes our friends are beat up, all the brothers and sisters are fighting. When someone grows up with that violence, in the system, it becomes normal, for me, just, you know, one day to pick up a stone and hit that guy, at least, you know…
- How come the Chinese, who actually, from a young age are trained how to fight do not practice mob justice?
- Ok, it depends, now for Chinese, it's a bit, it's also part of their culture, in that fighting, and when they are teaching you that fight, it's the actually emphasized that you don't use it for bad. If in my home my father wakes up in the morning, I didn't do homework, "slam" *students laughing*, and then what? […] it's like the order of the day in the house. (Males)

This discussion is centered on two different themes. They talk about violence at home, domestic violence and that it can teach you that violence is a way of solving problems. The other issue is everyday violence in society and how that can make violence a normal ingredient in life. One student provides an observation that mob justice does not seem to affect many people.

- […] I mean… I saw a scenario in our school, where people used our stapling machines, stapling the thief, the alleged thief, and I saw people not worried about it, because they have seen it before, it was a common thing, now then came burning of the thieves, in the communities, there was a scenario in Entebbe [a town close to Kampala] […] (Male)

A conversation right after this observation regards that certain people is always mixed up in different violent activities.

- […] most of these people like they […] in town, I would look at violent related activities that usually takes place, let's say there is a demonstration, these are the same people who are rioting all over town. Let's say there is a…strike in school, if it's a school and there's a strike these are the very people who are leading it. So when it comes down to, a thief, you know […] in school, not everyone go first, but someone who has been exposed a lot to, he is in a strike, he's in the demonstration, he's in this, it's very hard for such a person […] there was a thief in school, ok he wasn't a thief, but ehm…he was seen climbing up some ladder somewhere, and you know everyone kept looking, and like this, "could he be the one?" "could he be the one?" until some guy out of the blue one of this […] that you hear about, they just went and pulled him down, that's when everyone began. […]
Moderator: Do you mean like that they are sort of addicted to this kind of situations, that they seek it themselves? Or?
- More like…ehm…it's like, it's part of them, such that, when something happens, for him it is, ehm…yeah, it's so, it means so much, that as soon as it happens there's no thinking, there's no assessment of the situation; "is there a policeman there?" it's just, let me show this guy… (Male)

These quotes above further exemplifies that violence is not uncommon in Uganda. It exists everywhere in the Ugandan society and people are used to it, according to the students. Violence is a common thing, although one student suggests that certain people are more mixed up in violence than others, that it has become a part of them.

Breakdown of cultural institutions

One discussion, which the female student group engaged in, is the historical breakdown of cultural institutions in Uganda. According to two students believe that mob justice has come out of western culture pushing aside the traditional Ugandan culture. They refer to how their judicial system was structured before the British came and one student refers to that the judicial system is entirely according to the British judicial model.

- We are still on the old laws of England! (Female)

The female student group is not explaining this issue more detailed but one of the key informants is discussing this topic further. We will return to this issue in our theoretical analysis.

The mob justice situation

Participants

This section is unequivocally connected to the previous section, causes of mob justice. The students see the poor, uneducated and unemployed as groups in society that is participating in mob justice situations. The male students discuss that it is the low income earners that usually carries out mob justice and the students connect mob justice to specific areas where these groups live. They also mention a contradiction above (in the education section) that student groups at the university frequently engage in mob justice. Furthermore, two of the male students mention that it is mostly the male youth population that is involved in mob justice situations. As we have explained above, the students are referring to mob justice as used by those from a particular class, or a particular group of people.

Victims

Both student groups have the same discussions regarding who gets subjected to mob justice. The essence is that it can happen to anyone. One male student says that it is the poor who are both victims and participants in mob justice situations. The poor commit theft, which the students explains is a common crime that initiates a mob justice situation. The male group first says that it can happen to anyone as long as you do a crime. But in the end, both groups express a great uncertainty regarding who gets punished. It is not necessarily even law breakers that get punished. Mob justice is arbitrary.

> - As soon as someone says "the thief", "he's where?", "there!" Everyone will […] so I'm not sure…
> […]
> - They are not necessarily law breakers. (Females)
>
> - […] I think mob justice […] is usually carried out by low income earners, the poor people usually carry it out, but target a specific group of people, I think that is not, it can target anyone, at any time, cause if you knock a child, whether you're the minister [-]
> - Because there are circumstances where a guy robs, he runs, and then he has a opportunity to accuse the guy chasing him, before he's accused, and then […] the other man, who is actually a innocent man, and by that time they […]
> - He's dead. He's burning up.
> - In fact, ah, the way things are […] for instance […] in Wandegeya [district in Kampala], if someone just said, "Here's the thief"… you will be lynched.
> - Even without questioning. […]
> - Without questioning. "What has happened?" […]
> - The moment someone says "thief", "thief"…
> - They beat you up.
> - They beat you up.
> - And they burn you with tires, pour petrol on you, that's…
> - Even here at the university […] thieves have been killed here. (Males)

The male students explain above that the whole concept of vigilante justice is being misused and innocent people get killed. They explain further that sometimes these kinds of misconceptions are used with intention to kill a specific person. They are misconceptions with a purpose.

Mechanisms

Common frustration

The female students say that the mob group is a group that assembles on the spot, with people who do not generally know each other. The mob group is not an organized vigilance committee as such.

> - First of all, I don't really think there is a mob group that is […] basically who will beat you up, as a mob group, usually it's just people […] but because they have this shared, a common frustration […]
> - By the time […] and say "thief!" …the boda – boda men, even the conductors [of a mini-van taxi], even a person […] (Females)

One of the female students is talking about that the people in the mob group have some kind of similar experience that connects them, a common frustration. We believe the male students have the same idea. Their discussion is initiated with the observation that they have seen scenarios where no one knows each other. Their idea of what connect these people is something the students call a common suffering. They also use the words common feeling.

> - I have seen scenarios where no one knows the other, but they come for a common cause.
> [-]
> - I think also a common suffering…
> - Shared hatred.
> - […] a shared hatred of things which are […] of society, I've told you about the poor people, so when a poor woman screams, "my handbag!" the people are not going to question where that handbag is taken, no, no, they will just say, "where is the thief?" […] they will just come, because they have a common suffering, and want a society without crime, so they will kill you.
> [-]
> - […] they have a common feeling that they don't want thieves and they don't want people who defile young children, they don't want rapists, they don't want murderers in society and the police and the judicial have failed to rid the system, the society, of these people […]
> [-]
> - Because it is common suffering, it is a common feeling that society has bad people and since the government has failed, let us remove them by ourselves.[…] (Males)

The feelings that connect people in mob groups, even though they do not know each other, are similar life experiences regarding the judicial system. They have no trust in the judicial system, according to the students.

Peer pressure

The male group discusses whether you can say there is peer pressure in a mob group. Their conclusion is that some groups may have some sort of peer pressure, for example at the university where people know each other. If a friend starts beating up a guy that has stolen something, it is hard not to participate because of peer pressure.

Adrenaline

The female students talk about adrenaline and excitement in a violent situation like mob justice, two students pick up on this subject.

- I think it's more the excitement, the fun, the boldness […]
- […] all of us have been part of these things, even you!
- I haven't stoned someone to death…
- You didn't stone, but you must have cheered! (Females)

The students compare a mob justice situation to a school fight. It is common that people just stand there watching and cheering because of the excitement. The male students also mention excitement as some kind of group mechanism but they do not develop their thoughts regarding that topic.

The group as a shelter

Another topic is about the mob group as a shelter. Mob justice participants cannot be identified and therefore cannot be punished for the crime they commit. Under these circumstances people have a tendency to break the law, according to the students. The people as a group gain a feeling of power.

- Remember that case […] this police officer who was trying to […] it was just like only two people but when people started screaming "whoa" " whoa" […] at the end of the day it became a big scene that aroused everyone's attention […] but just like two people started screaming, another one came to help, another one, then whoever cared! At the end of the day you have a big mob group that comes to beat up this policeman who […]
- Yeah band wagon effect, within a group you find, you find […] what should I say, not support, not solidarity, you feel like…
- Identity!
- Identity, if they cannot point me out, I won't be brought to justice, I can do anything! We are massive people! (Females)

The students mean that there is something that happens in a big group of people, a feeling of power that is hard to control.

Prevention and working methods

Structural changes

Corruption

Most of the students are in agreement that corruption is a major issue and one of the main causes of mob justice. One male student suggests that this matter must be addressed somehow in order to build trust in the system but he is not giving any concrete proposals on how to deal with this issue.

- […] now if we ruled out that corruption we are like telling the people we have trust in our system, our system will take care of you, […] ones the corruption is there the system is not taking care of the problem. […] (Male)

Flexibility and bureaucracy

One of the students initiates a discussion with the opinion that ignorance leads to that less people are inclined to use the judicial system because people fear anything that has to do with documentation. The student continues:

> - I think they should just make the system more flexible. Make it easy for people to deal with crime on a lower basis. (Female)

Another student picks up on this and directs the discussion on to the bureaucracy of the Ugandan judicial system, that it involves too many steps.

> - The idea is maybe to reduce on that bureaucracy, because you have to stop and file in so many places, wait for how many days before you get a hearing, and witnesses, so maybe the idea is that bureaucracy involved, probably. (Female)

Both students feel that changes are needed in the judicial system if the common Ugandan is supposed to use it. If the system is too complex people will not use it, according to the students.

Sensitization

A male student mentions sensitization of the people as an important part of making a change. What he means by sensitization is educating people of the law and each person's rights within it, that you are innocent until you are proven guilty in a court of law. He means that the people need to be informed that the system and the law relate to them. As it is now, the law is detached from the people and basically useless.

Root causes

Two of the male students share a view which relates back to the causes presented earlier in this chapter.

> - I think for me, the best important thing is starting the whole program from the grassroots, from the actual causes. One, the law enforcement has to be checked, as we've said, that one… […] but the more important one, is the social structure, people have to get employed […] no matter [how] the laws may be […] it won't stop someone who is hungry from stealing, […] they are not addressing the basic problem. So people have to get employed, so that, I mean poverty, education basically [-]
> - […] So I think even if you enacted these laws, still mob justice actually would increase, unless what you said, the root causes; Why are policemen paid poorly? Why are teachers paid poorly? Why is society poor? Why can't the government work? […] Then mob justice, could actually be reduced. […] (Males)

The students see mob justice as a major structural problem and put things in perspective. To deal with it properly would demand great resources.

The female students also address this issue when they talk about that people need job opportunities. However, they are not in agreement that it will help, because many people that are in mobs, like the boda – boda men, actually have a job. This is an interesting contradiction. One of the student's retort on this statement is that boda – boda men are usually waiting at the stage (taxi stop) and rarely works.

At the end of the session with the female law students, one of them also discusses mob justice as the male students above. She sees mob justice as a very serious issue that will linger on until dras-

tic measures are taken. The student compares it to the HIV-virus and that similar awareness and education is needed in order to deal with it.

Working methods: Lawyers

Attitude

A male student says that lawyers' attitude against the poor is very important. His belief is that lawyers work harder for the rich people. He explains it like this:

> - […] when he [lawyer] goes to court and he gets me [rich man] out, you know there is that relationship, where you know he ensures that I am not, like, I don't get that severe, yet him, when that guy is taken to court and he knows he is the poor man, there is this thing of, there is this attitude which you have towards his case. Attitude as a lawyer, I think would be the first, because the attitude towards the case of a poor man and a rich man is really different, for this [rich] man I work more, to get him out […] (Male)

The student argues that every lawyer should work as hard for the poor people as for the rich. We see his suggestion as a part of an ethical code for lawyers.

Monitor the work of the police

One work method, which is connected to the ethical code we mention above, is that lawyers should check the way the police treat their suspects. A male student explains:

> - […] you know the police, come forth, […] he's not guilty, until you have actually proven he's guilty, you have no right to beat him up, and hit him with your guns, and fold him under the chair, until you actually, you know no one is supposed to be subjected […] so when that is done, you [the lawyer] can come up, check this police report, in the long run what you do […] (Male)

What the male student suggests is that lawyers should control that the police themselves follow the rule of law.

Sensitization

One male student gives his account on how to educate people as a lawyer. His suggestion is that lawyers should go to their home community where they grew up and teach people of the law. He means that these people more likely will listen because they know this specific lawyer and therefore have more confidence in him/her. They see him/her as one of them and not just as someone who works in an office somewhere.

Most of the female students have an opinion about educating the masses about the law and mob justice. They all think that organizing workshops is a good idea. Through workshops different themes, for example the dangers of mob justice, can be addressed. The most interesting in their discussion is one student's contribution that different groups need to be approached in different ways. She is also very clear that both youth and adults need education. Her opinion seems to be that the focus cannot lie only on the youth. Due to lack of education, many of the adults think that mob justice is not wrong, according to this student. She has different suggestions for different groups of adults. The working class with access to the internet can participate in some kind of online education about mob justice. The adult idlers (unemployed) can participate in a big workshop all together outdoors with music and free soft drinks.

Two female students have another idea of how to sensitize the public. They suggest that lawyers should get involved in the discussion about mob justice in daily media like radio, TV and daily newspapers. Another student has a different opinion in this matter, she says that newspapers are not read by those that they want to address and continues:

> - It has to come down to those people, if you want to touch those people […] that is why […] everything in this country fails, because it stops with "the clouds" and doesn't come with "the soil", it stops up there! […] people write about […] "it's very bad, bla, bla, bla", and it ends in "the clouds" […] (Female)

What she means is that this kind of discussions does not really change anything, it is only the educated ("the clouds") that read this and not the masses ("the soil"). She says that the young boys read the sport pages and not the front page. Her suggestion is that lawyers should associate with the masses, come down to them. If they only associate themselves with the educated, it will not help the masses.

One male student comment sensitization like this:

> - […] another problem, as he said, is I can explain to a million Ugandans that the law is for you and the law is good for you, but even if they understood what the law is without getting a positive […] of the government in enforcing that law and when they are still in their current state of poverty there is no way you can fight mob justice. You have to first of all address the law enforcement mechanism and then the poverty […] if you address these two, me as a lawyer basically I can't do so much […] (Male)

It is not a positive view one might say, at the same time it may be very realistic. If this problem does not get attention on a larger scale, as discussed above in root causes, sensitization as a working method is probably futile.

Collaboration between professions

Sensitization drives

A male law student suggests that sensitization should be collaborated with other professions, such as social workers and most importantly priests because people will listen to the priest. Religion is widely spread in Uganda, as we have explained earlier (introduction chapter). If we understand this student correctly he means that the priests give the other professionals legitimacy and it might help them in their work. A female student is on the same track, but she means that lawyers should teach priests about the law and legal aspects of mob justice, how they could explain it to the people during Sunday mass. The female students also return to their idea of workshops. They see journalists, social workers and police officers as potential working partners in order to create, for example, different theme weeks.

Organize against the government

A male student's suggestion about collaboration is that certain professions should direct their force against the government.

> - I think I would buy his idea but I wouldn't […] to the people, if we all go together, lawyers, doctors, social workers and direct our force to the government […] I think we can all go together and change the whole legal system, we can change the judicial system, we can make people better […] when we don't change their [the people's] predicament, you can't do anything to change the society, it's just changing the society first then changing mob justice.

Moderator: How would you direct your forces against the government, how would you actually do it?

-Yeah of course as we have said if Ugandan law society, that's a number of lawyers, come together and […] I mean the policemen don't do that because it's, by its nature it cannot […] but social workers can do the same, if all the people who think, ok we call ourselves the elite […] if the elite can start to change the way how people live, of course we can do that, we can change policies, we can make policies […] (Male)

As we see it, his main point is that nothing will change with mob justice until the system change. He refers to, what he calls the elite, as a strong group that can work for a change through the democratic channels.

Results: Police trainers

This chapter presents the empirical results from the two focus groups with male and female police respondents. Their discussions and arguments are divided into three different sections: causes of mob justice, the mob justice situation and prevention and working methods.

Causes of mob justice

Judicial system

Weak law enforcement

When it comes to explaining why the phenomenon of mob justice exists in the Ugandan society, one of the female police respondents points out a slow legal process as crucial:

> - […] sometimes somebody could have come to report a case and it has been delayed, and the suspect has not been arrested. So people… those who are offended can just decide for what? –Mob justice on that person. (Female)

> - […] you can be very assured that it [the criminal investigation] has delayed … the person has… that it has not been an arresting, it has taken long. That can also cause mob justice. (Female)

Two respondents further highlights that the delay of the police sometimes might be a public perception:

> - […] even the system, at least the way police works, it's not just a matter of just going to arrest someone immediately, first report, first make a statement –time is going. That's enough to cause those people do something, they may think police is delaying when they are actually taking reports before moving out for an arrest. (Female)

> - Because the complaint they normally raise is that we are ever investigating, investigating, investigating, which means that there is that pressure they want to put on the police that we are delaying. Yet, we have procedures to follow. Even during sensitization on many programs, those are the same questions that they ask, that why does police delay the what? –The process. But police doesn't delay. (Female)

The male respondents also accentuates that a slow legal process in fact is more of a public opinion and not strictly a limitation of the Ugandan Police Force. This comment from one male respondent exemplifies this:

> - […] that perception, people think that the system of the legal process is ineffective… I don't want to call it inefficient, it is not inefficient but the perception, people think that taking a person to the police –you do not get justice. That is people's perception. So people think police takes long to bring justice. So they think they can do it more… better than the police. Then, that way they decide to participate [in mob justice]. (Male)

Another male respondent continues:

- […] there are cases like witchcraft. These cases takes long actually and it is very difficult to prove. So you find the legal process takes longer. When someone knows that somebody has committed a crime due to witchcraft activity, they know that it is better to deal with it than take it to the police. Police takes time to gather what? – Gather evidence. (Male)

The female respondents point out that inadequate funding of the police force is an essential reason why proper police work, in their opinion, is not carried out the way it is supposed to in Uganda. One of them explains:

- They [the public] may find somebody has killed a person, he is very deep in the village, they raise police to come. That time lag can cause mob justice. People may gang on that person and beat him to death cause the police has delayed, maybe due to transport or the distance, then mob justice has to come as a result. (Female)

Another female respondent explains further:

- Mostly it's a lack of funds, cause the police are not facilitated to reach immediately to the scene, so they keep delaying. As they delay, mob justice takes place. And also the distance. Police, like in the villages… Police is not covering all the villages, you may find that from here about again fifty kilometers you find a police post. So now, those people, when they think now how to take the person up to the police, how to go and report, they now feel that they should punish that person themselves. And that thing causes mob justice because everybody now… they began now start beating the person.
Moderator: - So, what I hear is that there are too few police officers as well and too long distance between the police and the public?
- The number of police in fact is not enough, they have not covered… in fact they cannot cover each and every whatever. Every village. You find from here, there is a police post very far so it is very difficult for the local people to move from there to report a case, instead of just finishing this one [the offender]. (Female)

The aspect of a limited amount of police officers is also briefly mentioned by one of the male respondents.

Legislation

Both groups mention weak laws as an important factor which creates public distrust towards the judicial system. One of the female respondents highlights this aspect:

- Another reason of… cause of mob justice can find there in the villages. Somebody commits a crime, they are arrested and taken to the police, they even go to court. But the public is not satisfied with the judgment. So, next time somebody commits such a crime they [the public] say "Ah, they will just release this person after all, why can't we beat him to death?" . That is loss of trust in the judicial sector; that can cause mob justice also.
Moderator: - So, what you are saying, if I hear you right, is that the individual person doesn't really trust the legal system?
- No, the same would be even on prison sentences and after a period of time they [the offenders] come back. And yet the one he assaulted died, and [for him] he is alive so they [the public] decide to take the law into their hands. (Female)

One male respondent also exemplifies this:

- People feel that the law gives light punishment compared to the offence committed. […] Have you heard of defilement? In court they give them [the offenders] community service, they give you [the offender] to go and slice [grass] for someone. But for them [the public], they will not be satisfied. They want to see you being killed, attend for long [in prison]. That one also causes that [mob justice], light punishment. […] (Male)

Education

The male respondents highlight ignorance of the law among the public as a cause of mob justice. One male respondent states:

- People should know that mob justice is a crime. They may not be knowing that it is a crime. People may not be knowing that when a person commits... When they suspect a person has stolen, he still remains innocent until proven guilty by a competent court. People are not aware of that. (Male)

One female respondent also point out how this is connected to mob justice:

 - At times that person [the victim of a crime] may be ignorant, may not be knowing about the law. May not be knowing that he should go and report this to the police. So for him, he decide just to do what? –To revenge. (Female)

Another female respondent points at the importance of knowledge about how the police work is executed:

- [There is a] lack of sensitization by the law enforcement officers to the public. Because however much they [the police] have a process which they follow before going to arrest a person, if they had sensitized the public about the process under which they arrest, the public would be patient. (Female)

One of the female respondents agrees with her fellow colleagues about the importance of educating the public about the law. In her opinion though, this intervention is fruitless if the police is not present and available to the public when a crime has been committed:

- […] some people have been sensitized and many people are aware that it's not allowed, mob justice is not allowed. Other people who don't know that it is an offence maybe, probably they will get some information and try to resist from it. But I have a strong feeling that many people know that it's not allowed. But they do it in the absence of police. (Female)

According to both groups of respondents, ignorance of the law is caused by a high rate of illiteracy among the Ugandan public. Many people are not fortunate enough to go to school when they are young and have not learned how to read and write. According to the respondents, the understanding of the written law is therefore limited among the public.

Crime prevention

One argument from a female respondent is that the public want to set examples by punishing criminals. With mob justice, the public try to scare potential criminals from committing crimes, according to the respondent.

The mob justice situation

Participants

According to both groups, idle, unemployed persons who are ignorant of the law are most likely to participate in mob justice. The male respondents also states that the participants mostly are young, while the female respondents highlight that drug abuse is common within this group. The male respondents explain that when someone for example alerts that a thief is present, nearby

people, who do not necessarily know each other, gather very quickly in order to deal with the suspected criminal.

Victims

The victims of mob justice are usually men, criminals or serial offenders, according to the respondents. The male respondents state that young people mostly are involved in theft while older citizens are overrepresented in crimes connected to witchcraft.

Mechanisms

Emotions

According to respondents in both police groups, the mob is always driven by a collective rage.

Frustration

The female respondents accentuates that many people have been subjected to theft and when a thief has been caught, they find a way to revenge even if the perpetrator is not the same.

The group as a shelter

One of the male respondents also mentions that the people within the mob group feel quite safe conducting mob justice since the often extensive amount of participants makes it very difficult for the police to point out and arrest specific individual actors.

Prevention and working methods

Structural changes

In order to reduce the incidents of mob justice on a structural level, the female group highlights the importance of strengthening and uphold the laws. One female respondent states:

> - Mob justice can be reduced by punishing the offenders, by giving them punishment which [is equal] with the offence they have committed. [Then,] the public get satisfied and they trust the law enforcement, that even if they take the person there [to the police], the person will get enough punishment. (Female)

One of the male respondents develops this argument a bit further and proposes that a strengthening of the whole legal system is necessary in order to gain public trust and confidence in these matters:

> - Me, I would think that... we need to strengthen the legal process, the legal structure. Apart from arrest – that is police, prison and [the] process of dealing with culprits, apart from arrest. Police investigation and court and prison – that chain. If we strengthen it, the people can get some bit of confidence that they will be given justice and can reduce on mob justice. (Male)

Both groups also highlight that the Ugandan government should work more actively with the issue of unemployment. Many people, especially in urban areas, are young and idle and are, according to the respondents, more involved in mob justice situations than people who have a job

or a small business of their own. One of the female respondents explains the issue of unemployment:

> - […] people that are idle, doing a lot of nothing, eh, and they are very good at inciting, inciting others and they come and I… I would think that if there's a program for these people who are idle, and they make something out of their lives, it would help us. (Female)

One of the male respondents also mentions that the corruption on different levels within the legal system must be addressed in order to gain public trust and confidence in the legal institutions.

Working methods: The police force

Community policing

Both groups mention community policing as an important working method for the police when trying to prevent mob justice. By community policing they mean to frequently visit different communities and enlighten the public about the Ugandan law, how a court process works and what the police do/how the police work. According to the female respondents, it is also important to inform the community members about where to report a case. The male respondents mention the significance of putting the negative sides of committing the crime of mob justice in the picture, like the killing of an innocent person.

One female respondent also mentions that a working method within community policing is to encourage the villagers to look out for each other when the police is absent:

> - As in villages you can know a very big area and you know people, not like in towns, so you become like a police of the other and the other one becomes your police, even if he is not a member of the police force. So that's it, before some of these things happen, maybe you can get some information. But sometimes it's difficult to get information. Then we also need further cooperation we as police, though we are cooperating but we need further cooperation from the members of the public. They are cooperating but we need their further cooperation in order to do away with…mob justice. (Female)

Collaboration between professions

Both groups state that it is important to establish rewarding collaborations between different professions in order to reduce the cases of mob justice. According to the respondents, pastors and other church leaders have a great influence on people's attitudes in Uganda. They could, together with the community police officers, inform and sensitize the public about mob justice. Both groups also mention the school as an important base where the police, social workers and teachers can sensitize children in these matters.

According to both female and male respondents, the collaboration between the police and the local leaders of the public should also be strengthened. The local leaders should be given mandate to handle minor criminal situations and make arrests when the police are absent. One of the female respondents mentions how different professions can collaborate:

> - This one can apply when police has good public relations, so if a crime is committed the public can arrest even in absence of police, they can arrest and take to police, the culprit…
> Moderator: - Mmm, so the public can do some of the work when the police is not there?
> - When it is in terms of the police, yeah…

Moderator: - Is there any specific persons that should be given that mandate you think?
- The local leaders… (Female)

One male respondent explains further about the local leaders:

- We have local leaders on village level. Like, in the village, you find they have their leaders. There is also one, you find he has a committee. And some areas… you find them, they are deep villages where the police cannot reach, we use those local leaders. So, in case there is any problem they are the ones to link with the police or any security agency around them. (Male)

Another male respondent also explains that the local leaders are sometimes linked to a local council which operates on village-, parish-, sub county- and district level. He states that these councils have mandate to handle some of the issues within the community:

- And there are some also, minor crimes which the law gives them [the local councils] power also to settle. Like some disputes over maybe neighborhood, maybe a small land dispute. They handle those matters and resolve them, they have been given that mandate. (Male)

Theoretical analysis

In this chapter we will analyze our empirical results from our result chapters. We will not analyze the entire empirical results. We have chosen to theoretically analyze specific parts of the empirical results, as we have explained in our method chapter. The theoretical analysis is divided into three sections. In the first section we will primarily analyze the judicial system using the *anomie theory*. The second section will analyze class, education, poverty, unemployment and breakdown of cultural institutions, using the concept of *stratification*. In the third section we will analyze the mechanisms in a mob justice situation using the concept of *forward panic*. In the first two sections of our theoretical analysis we will also include arguments and discussions from the key informants to further problematize the analysis.

The judicial system

People in a society need predictability and structure or else they will set their own structure (Dahrendorf, 1985). The way we understand our respondents, the Ugandan judicial system does not offer the public any predictability and the structure in society is fragile. The Ugandan judicial system is permeated of corruption, weak law enforcement and poor legislation. The punishments are arbitrary and the notion of the public, according to our respondents, is that as long as somebody has money they can always bribe their way out of prison. The public has lost their trust in the system. Mob justice, as we understand it, can be seen as a way for the public to create predictability in a sense that everyone knows what will happen if someone commits a crime. In this section we are analyzing the structural problems within the judicial system with Dahrendorf's first and second no – go areas. The third no – go area is used to analyze mass – actions, on one hand the weak law enforcement and on the other hand one of the mechanisms within the group. We use the anomie theory to problematize the consequences of a failing judicial system.

First no – go area

All of our respondents point out corruption as a major issue within the police force and the judiciary. A corrupt judicial system implicates that some crimes will not be punished. A person with money has no problems paying for his/her freedom when committed a minor crime, according to our respondents. This creates a situation where people get the notion that criminals can elude justice. This is also discussed by a key informant from a human rights organization. The key informant confirms the conception that justice is only for the rich. Another key informant (journalist) relates the corruption to the price the victim of a crime has to pay for getting the crime investigated. According to this key informant, a victim has to pay for a crime scene investigation, analysis of the material collected at the crime scene and so on. This result in a lack of evidence since most victims cannot afford to pay for an investigation. This makes it difficult to charge an alleged culprit with the crime. Corruption can be connected to Dahrendorf's (1985) first no – go area, which regards remission of sentence. There can be several reasons for the police or judiciary not to bring a criminal before justice and corruption is one of them. As our focus group respondents state, this kind of behavior within the judicial system creates distrust and frustration amongst the public which in turn result in mob justice.

The students discuss delays in the court system but also delays regarding the police force. The police respondents concur in this matter (although they also believe that this public opinion can be a misconception). These delays can be connected to Dahrendorf's (1985) first no – go area since the delays can cause alleged culprits not to be charged for their crimes. When discussing the court system, the respondents point out that a legal process can take many years. This is supported by both our key informants from human rights organizations. The key informants argue that the delays in the criminal justice system are due to poor facilitation within the police force, e.g. no transport or fuel. Another point emphasized by one of the key informants is delays in investigations. They can drag on for a very long time and to keep a person in detention, while the police conducts their investigations at its own pace, is not possible. The whole court process is also claimed to take long, by the key informant. The reason to this is logistic problems within the system; first the police investigate a file, it goes to the public prosecutors who also have to go through it again. From there they may decide to let the matter go to court. The key informant claims that there is a lack of human resources for the court personnel to effectively do their work. This causes frustration amongst the public who feels that it is easier and more time saving to solve their problem on the spot.

Our results show that the respondents consider punishments being too weak or not in proportion to the crimes committed. This can be seen as certain crimes not being punished, according to the public, which is connected to Dahrendorf's (1985) first no – go area. When the public perceive the punishments not standing in proportion to the crimes, frustration is built up and they take the law into their own hands.

Second no – go area

When analyzing the weak law enforcement, the second of Dahrendorf's (1985) no – go areas emerge. It regards the police withdrawing from certain geographic areas, and it is consistent with what the students claim to be the case. The withdrawal of the Ugandan police is, according to the social work students, caused by a lack of resources (e.g. manpower, transportation, fuel and facilitation). This is, according to Dahrendorf, a common reason for withdrawal. Insufficient funding, especially within the police force, can cause this, according to the students. This is further more supported by two of our key informants (a professional from a human rights organization and a journalist), which state that the Ugandan police force is poorly facilitated, significant understaffed and encounter logistical problems.

The lack of recourses within the police force is not just affecting the rural areas but also the more urban settings in Uganda. As a result of the police force not being present to maintain law and order, people are forced to self – regulate breaches of the law. Dahrendorf (1985) talks about this as a system of sanctions towards criminals incorporated in society when the judicial system does not hand out sanctions. The respondents' perception of how the public can create some kind of order is through mob justice. According to the social work students, mob justice works as a crime preventing method and a method of decreasing the level of culprits. Mob justice can therefore be seen as a sanction, carried out by the public that deals with the shortcomings of the legal system. Mob justice does not occur systematically, as Dahrendorf claims legitimate sanctions are supposed to do, but is nevertheless often used in Uganda when a crime has been committed.

However, when members of the public create their own sanctions like this, the punishments tend to not stand in proportion to the crimes. The punishment is more serious than the offence, our study shows. As Dahrendorf (1985) mentions, transgressions of norms must be punished. But to problematize this we have to ask ourselves which norms are the ones to follow? A thief stealing a

mobile phone can receive the death penalty from an angry mob without a fair trial. To beat somebody to death, not knowing whether the person is guilty of the alleged crime or not, is a huge violation of norms. A key informant from a human rights organization takes the discussion of norms one step further. He argues that when a person commits a crime in Uganda, he/she is no longer a part of the social community. The public does not see the culprit as a person with rights and obligations, but a thief, defiler or a rapist, an "it". This is apparently a very strong social norm, according to our key informant. This conception makes it easier to punish that person because it is not a person beaten to death, it is an "it" getting killed.

Another view why people are prepared to violate a fundamental norm is because of poverty. Our results show that minor thefts are often severely punished by the public because most people in Uganda own few material things. When something is stolen from a person with very little assets the damage can be crucial.

Why people break rules, regulations and transgress the norms in society in order to punish a petty thief can also be connected to the concept of forward panic, which is explained below.

Third no – go area

The third of Dahrendorf's (1985) no – go areas regard the difficulty to punish culprits when there is a mass – action such as demonstrations and riots. A mob justice situation can be seen as a mass – action since there usually are several hundreds of people involved. People taking part in a mob justice situation knows that it is a very small risk of getting caught and prosecuted, according to our respondents. This is on one hand due to lack of manpower within the Ugandan Police Force, whereby it becomes dangerous for them to intervene in a mob justice situation. Their quantitative inferiority (in comparison to the large crowd) makes the police officers vulnerable in the event of the mob turning against them. On the other hand the large quantity of people taking part makes it difficult for the police force to incarcerate all of the participants, especially when they run away in different directions when the police are showing up. Just as Dahrendorf points out, this collective behavior obstructs the justice to take its course. The above discussion is also supported by key informants from two human rights organizations. One of the key informants argues that it is almost impossible to prosecute people involving in a mob justice situation because how can the prosecutor know, out of several hundreds of people, who dealt the lethal strike? The key informants also add (together with our respondents) that, due to group solidarity it is difficult to find witnesses of a mob justice situation.

Social class

The empirical results show that certain groups in the Ugandan society do not use the judicial system. The groups mentioned are poor, uneducated and unemployed and the way we interpret the respondents they mean that these groups form a certain *lower social class*. Svanbergs (2008) fourth step (which we explained in our theory chapter) says that people from a lower social class, is less likely to use the judicial system as opposed to people from a higher social class. This analysis will explain why poverty, lack of education and unemployment lead to people not using the judicial system. We will also show how the judicial system itself excludes major parts of the people.

In this section we refer to the concept of a *lower social class*. With a lower social class we mean people suffering of poverty, lack of education and unemployment. However, it is important to highlight that it is not a homogeneous group. People do not necessarily suffer from all these is-

sues. It is also important to emphasize that, just because a person belongs to a lower social class does not mean that he/she automatically will involve him/her in mob justice. However, our study shows that it is an increased risk for these people to involve in a mob justice situation.

Svanberg (2008) explains that economy is a factor that usually decides if a person uses the judicial system. Regardless the legal issue, a wealthy person is always more likely to use the judicial system (Svanberg, 2008). A poor person in Uganda does not use the judicial system because it is corrupt. The corruption exists on many different levels, according to our results, and the poorer people cannot bribe the police in order to start an investigation when a crime is committed against them. Many people have no money to afford this so they end up taking the law into their hands. This is a somewhat extreme form of stratification because of social class and as Svanberg says, it is not the legal rules that are inefficient; it is the whole judicial system that is unfair. The corruption within the Ugandan judicial system excludes a major group in society. This group has no legal rights and they have no access to the judicial system.

The empirical results in this research also show that the lower social class using mob justice is illiterate, uneducated and ignorant of the Ugandan law. Svanbergs (2008) view is that lower social classes see themselves as people outside the community. They do not see themselves as members of the community, as citizens. They do not see themselves as persons worthy of taken seriously by the judicial system. We believe our research has shown why such a perception can be rooted in people. The first issue is the lack of education. Many people do not go to school and even if they do, the Ugandan law does not have a great part in the curriculum, according to our respondents. People do not understand the judicial system. One example regarding this is given by one of our key informants from a human rights organization. The key informant explains that the public often believe that certain police officials have been bribed to release an offender when the offender is actually released on bail. This way the ignorance of the law creates public misunderstanding and the perception of a corrupt society is also enhanced. The second issue is the language. The social work students and two of our key informants (one professional from a human rights organization and the journalist) informed us that the Ugandan law is written in English which is not well spread among the masses. According to all of our respondents many are also illiterate (see also the introduction chapter for more specific statistics). If a person cannot read it is hard to know the law and also, if the law is written in a language this person does not understand, most likely he/her will not feel as a member of the social community following this law. Svanbergs theory helps us to put words to and problematize the results we have found, but are our respondents really talking about how a specific social class perceives themselves? Maybe between the lines, but the more obvious analysis is that a certain social class does not have the tools to even comprehend what the law really is and who it really is for. The judicial system is in this way removed from the people. They are shut out in a more definite way because many do not even speak the language their own law is written in. Again (as with our analysis of poverty above) the Ugandan society shows, what we argue is, an extreme form of stratification. There are fundamental structural problems in society that excludes major groups from the judicial system. The judicial system itself further excludes major parts of the people through language.

The lower social class suffers from unemployment, and idleness is a big issue, according to our respondents. What exactly unemployment has to do with participating in mob justice is not fully clear. Our respondents see a great danger with groups of people hanging around in urban areas. Here, however, we will reflect upon unemployment in relation to the judicial system with Svanbergs (2008) perspective that people acquire social identities through work, family and participation in different associations or clubs. These social identities make people more inclined to use the judicial system because with the social identity they acquire a community citizenship. Many

people are unemployed in Uganda and do not have a social identity in the way Svanberg mentions; they do not feel as universal citizens. They are less likely to use the judicial system because it is a part of the community they do not feel they belong to. According to one of our key informants (the journalist) the major part of the people does not have a known address and no one has a social security number. They are not a part of what we would call a general system, maybe this strengthens the feeling of not being part of what we understand as a social community.

This analysis about social class above is interesting in relation to what the law students and a key informant from a human rights organization reflected on, that education is not always a reassurance that a person will not be part of a mob. For example, there have been incidents involving students at Makerere University. The key informant explains that a lack of understanding the judicial system can be seen as a cause of mob justice but at the same time he also says he knows university educated professionals that support mob justice, and maybe have participated themselves. He also says that mob justice could, for example, be said to be used by the poorer people in society. But he also explains that this is not entirely true, in a mob group the most unlikely person can be found. Even those people with money, who could pay for lawyers (and bribe the police?) instead, choose to take the law into their own hands. This is an interesting contradiction that shows the complexity of mob justice and its many different levels and perspectives. There is really no truth, only different views. Our key informant means there is a more important structural problem, a lack of understanding or appreciation of the law. We see his discussion as connected to the law students' discussion about the breakdown of cultural institutions, that foreign western culture has pushed aside the traditional Ugandan culture. The judicial system is, according to the key informant, alien to many people. He connects this alienation to Uganda's history as a British protectorate. Before Uganda received English Law including e.g. the penal code Act, the judicial system was understood by everyone and trusted. The key informant sees language as a big part of the alienation (as explained above) and also the fact that judges are not any longer a part of the community. They have a university degree from e.g. Makerere University and also put on a wig and a red robe. The people can no longer understand the judicial system and therefore it becomes removed from society, it becomes something they do not quite trust, according to the key informant.

When we see the Ugandan judicial system through our key informant's eyes, Svanbergs (2008) concept of stratification is again problematized. Svanberg explains that certain social classes do not have the same access to the judicial system as others. According to the key informant, the most significant problem with the Ugandan judicial system is not the fact that there are structural problems (e.g. poverty), even though he mentions this too. He refers to another kind of historical structural problem, the fact that the judicial system was introduced by the British during the United Kingdom's colonial era. The system is alien to people from all different social classes. It is the judicial system itself that pushes people away. According to our key informant justice has "gone up" and therefore no one bothers to reach it. The people remain down and carry out justice the way they can.

Crowd violence

Throughout this section, our attempt is to first analyze the processes at work before the actual mob justice situation takes place. Secondly, we will shortly problematize the occurrences once the mob violence has started.

The build-up of a mob justice situation

The conditions our respondents find crucial in order for a mob justice situation to start are very similar to the ones Collins (2008) describes as characteristic for the build – up of a large scale forward panic. The situational tension/fear that Collins illustrates can be seen as something built up by the common frustration/common suffering our respondents emphasize is present among members of the Ugandan public. Our respondents claim that the mob justice participants share a feeling of hopelessness connected to their situation, where for example poverty and unemployment are bonding factors as well as their perception of a failing justice system where criminals are not arrested by the police. Then, if someone for example catches an alleged culprit, this informal group assembles on spot and the members release their tension collectively. The culprit becomes the enemy who people despise and aim their frustration, fury and anger towards even though the person normally is a member of the same informal group as everyone else within that context. Collins describes that the background of large scale crowd violence mostly contains tension between different groups in a society. But Collins also states, the circumstances surrounding an increase of tension during forward panic situations can vary. In Uganda, the general suffering among members of the public (as problematized above) might be one background to this build-up.

Collins (2008) also sees that the spreading and circulation of rumors creates tension and can lead to a situation of forward panic. This can be a process that prolongs for a period of days. The process involves and mobilizes extensive amount of people and as shown in the theory chapter, Collins mainly refer it to contexts where a conflict between different groups (e.g. an ethnic conflict) is already at hand. Collins accentuates that every forward panic is unique and the mechanisms at work before and during these occasions can differ somewhat depending on situation and context. The mob justice situation does not necessarily consist of the ethnic conflict that Collins refers to. However, rumors are a part of the mechanisms according to our respondents and Collins' theory is useful when understanding the mob justice situation. Our respondents mention rumors as a process which is not prolonged for days as Collins describes, it happens instantly in the heat of the violent moment. Our view is that the tension within the mob group has been built up for a long time mainly through the common frustration. The rumors are in the mob justice situation something that builds up the last fragment of tension and ignites the violent situation.

The release of frustration

Once the violence has started, it is impossible to stop and more people get affected by the collective emotions and join the bandwagon as described by both our respondents and Collins (2008). The emotions of rage, excitement and joy within the crowd that our respondents describe are typical in forward panic situations and reinforced by screams and cheering (Collins, 2008). These affective reactions create a temporary, social zone, where the violent acts are repeated in absence of critical reflection (Collins, 2008). Collins accentuates that even though these violent acts looks very disturbing from a moral point of view, they cannot be connected to certain violent individuals. Instead, these kinds of situations can affect anyone in the right circumstances.

Conclusions and discussions

In this section we answer our research questions connected to our purpose with this study. We will present the conclusions from our theoretical analysis chapter together with the theoretically unanalyzed material from the empirical results. We will also include our own reflections concerning the conclusions.

What are the causes of mob justice?

The judicial system emerges as one of the main causes of mob justice. Due to corruption, delays in the judicial system and weak legislation certain crimes are not punished, which in turn creates an arbitrary and unreliable judicial system. Our study shows that under circumstances where the law enforcement is absent, the public will try to uphold the law themselves and create their own sanctions. The sanctions set by the public replace the failed judicial system. Our study also shows that when the public, instead of the legal system, distribute punishments they tend to be much more severe and does not seem to stand in proportion to the crime. This can be explained with poverty, in the sense that a small item can be very valuable, and certain social norms, regarding the perception of criminals, in the Ugandan society. How these social norms are established, is something our empirical results do not show. One thought is that it might have religious connections, since many people are strongly religious and put great faith into the words of the bible.
Our empirical results show that the police set bad examples for the public by not acting appropriate according to Ugandan law. The law students claim that the police officers do not regard the fact that an alleged culprit is innocent until proven guilty. The police officers are teaching the public the wrong way of treating an alleged culprit. This is something that we have not theoretically analyzed but we believe it is still important because, if this is true, it shows how poorly the legislation is implemented in society.

Our study shows that persons from a lower social class are less likely to use the judicial system. One way of looking at this issue is that they do not feel as a part of the social community and the general system and therefore distance themselves from the judicial system. Another way is that the lower social class is kept out by the structure of the judicial system. Corruption keeps out a major part of the poor people in Uganda, since they cannot afford to bribe certain officials. The uneducated lower social class is ignorant of the law, many are illiterate and most people do not understand English since it is not their first language, which creates huge language barriers. Unemployment can be perceived as a lack of social identity. These conditions create a feeling of not belonging to the social community and the judicial system, especially since the Ugandan law is constituted in English. Another perspective, as explained in our theoretical analysis, is that the judicial system itself is shutting out extensive parts of the population in a definite way, mainly through language. Major parts of the Ugandan population do not have the tools to even comprehend what the law really includes and who it is for. The judicial system is in this way removed from the people. Our study also points at another, maybe even more, fundamental judicial structural problem which concerns Uganda's history. The judicial system was introduced by the British during the United Kingdom's colonial era. The law is therefore alien to many people; it is not understood and not trusted. This does not only regard a certain social class. The judicial system itself pushes people away.

Our theoretical analysis has explained how corruption undermines the judicial system but also how it affects the poor population in a negative way. Our empirical results also show that the corruption is fed by poverty. When salaries are low, people might see the corruption as a way to secure their own economy. This is something brought up by the law students. Our reflections concerns how corruption can be understood in a larger scale. We believe that attempts to prevent corruption, without knowing why it exists or what feeds it, are doomed to fail. A police officer taking a bribe can be understood as his or her way of surviving and providing for his or her family.

The empirical results show that unemployment results in large groups of people being idle on the streets. According to all of our respondents, these are the people most likely to engage in mob justice because they are easy to mobilize. However, a lot of people have small businesses at the roadside but are still regarded as likely to engage in mob justice, according to the social work students. Our interpretation of the social work students' discussion (result chapter/the mob justice situation/participants) regards whether it matters if people have a business or not, they are still on the streets and this is, according to us, a fundamental condition for mob justice to occur. The streets of Kampala are always crowded with all kinds of people and the people with their own businesses are as easy to mobilize as the ones that are totally idle.

One topic presented in our empirical results, is the aspect of socialization in the Ugandan society. The results show that one cause of mob justice can be the normalization of violence. There are different ways the violence can be normalized e.g. domestic violence, violence in school and violence through media, according to the student participants. If a person sees mob justice carried out on a regular basis it becomes normalized as a way of handling situations with alleged criminals.

This conclusion shows that mob justice is a complex phenomenon and the major causes lies on a structural level in the Ugandan society. The discussions above shows that all of the factors mentioned, e.g. judicial system, corruption, weak law enforcement, illiteracy, lack of education, unemployment, poverty and history, relate to, and affect, each other. This is not a linier causality; it is circular in ways we initially could not predict.

What happens in a mob justice situation?

Our research shows that a tension precedes a mob justice situation in Uganda. This tension is built up through a common frustration concerning poverty, unemployment and a failing justice system. It is also built up and ignited by rumors. Our theoretical analysis also shows that, under the "right" circumstances, anyone can be a part of a mob group. Even if our study is limited to the Ugandan context, our theoretical analysis shows that, as long as tension – builders are present, the social psychological mob phenomenon can occur anywhere.

Our reflection concerning the question of tension is how strongly it relates to the conclusions of the previous research question. All the causes presented are a foundation for the build – up of tension in Uganda.

Our empirical results (the social work students and the law students) show that the only necessary trigger for mob violence to occur is that someone shouts the word "thief!". Our reflection regarding this is that the people, by using mob justice, have replaced an arbitrary judicial system

with another system, just as arbitrary but more lethal. Without a fair trial, an alleged criminal miss out on the opportunity to prove his or her innocence, and innocent people risk getting killed.

The empirical results (the law students) show that peer pressure can be a mechanism in a mob group. This argument relates to the previous research question above, where we have suggested that mob justice is not only related to social class, where lack of education is connected to a lower social class. Peer pressure can, according to us, be another explanation why educated people, such as university students, engage in mob justice.

Mass – actions, such as mob justice situations, make it difficult for police officers to intervene due to the large amount of people. It is therefore also difficult to catch and prosecute the mob justice participants. People know there is a very small risk to be prosecuted, which makes them more likely to participate in a mob justice situation.

What changes in the Ugandan society and what work related methods are adequate in order to prevent mob justice?

This section is a summary of the empirical results. This is not theoretically analyzed, as we explained in our method chapter.

Structural changes

In order to prevent mob justice the structural causes need to be addressed. The government should work more actively with the issue of unemployment and poverty. Improvement of the educational system is required where the law should be integrated in the curriculum.

According to our respondents, changes in the judicial system are required. The government has to deal with the corruption in order to rebuild the public trust in the system. It is suggested that the transparency of the judicial system has to be increased in order to fight corruption. The transparency of the system also builds trust in that the judicial process is upheld. The police force needs more resources, especially regarding the issue of manpower, in order to uphold the law.

In order to make the system more available for the common Ugandan the law students suggest that the bureaucracy of the system has to be reduced. This way it will be easier understood and people will be more inclined to use it.

Working methods

Community policing, meaning police frequently visit different communities and enlighten the public about the Ugandan Law, how court process works, what the police do and how they work, is suggested by many groups as a working method for the police.

The law students suggest that lawyers should treat all clients equal regardless of social status. They also emphasize that lawyers are supposed to protect clients and enforce the constitutional law as well as people's rights.

All the respondents see the importance of their specific profession engaging in sensitization of the public. The public needs information and knowledge about the law and mob justice. This can be executed through workshops, media and focus group discussions concerning mob justice and the proper way of using the judicial system. Although, a question is raised whether sensitization is

a constructive way of addressing the issue of mob justice without considering the structural causes (mentioned above).

Collaborations

All the respondents distinguish possible collaborations between different professions. They emphasize the church as an important institution in society. Most people are religious and see the priest as a person worth listening to. Furthermore, the church is seen as having a huge impact on people's attitudes. The collaboration should consist of different ways of giving information about mob justice and laws to the public through various channels such as Sunday mass, community policing or sensitization drives. Cooperation between social workers, police officers, lawyers and school teachers is also suggested in order to sensitize the children from an early age. There is also proposed collaboration between Local Councils and the police force. The police is often absent in remote areas and need assistance from these public actors in order to uphold the law. However, the respondents emphasize that nepotism within the Local Council can make their assistance arbitrary.

There is also proposed that social workers, that have a natural connection to the communities, should conduct research about the root causes behind mob justice. The results of this research can provide a foundation for public actors working to prevent mob justice.

Respondents also suggest a tax relief for NGOs oriented towards human rights. This way they can work to prevent mob justice in a larger scale.

Another suggestion is for professionals, such as lawyers, doctors and social workers, to unite and organize using democratic channels in order to change the root causes of mob justice in society.

Our reflection regarding this research question is that the structural changes are the most important to address. Our respondents raise the question whether sensitization is a constructive way of addressing the issue of mob justice. They emphasize that the structural changes are more important. We are of the same opinion. We believe sensitization, as well as the other proposed working methods; will have a limited impact on the issue of mob justice without structural changes. All of the causes referred to in the first research question need to be addressed. As referred to in the paragraph above, a change has to take place on a political level in order to prevent mob justice. We agree on that a political awareness regarding the causes of mob justice is crucial but the question is whether Uganda has the resources to properly address these issues today. However, a society is the people living in it, and the thoughts, reflections, arguments and discussions in our empirical results show an awareness of mob justice and motivation to work for a change in society.

Epilogue

One year has passed since we witnessed the mob justice situation described in the prologue. During this year, we have managed to find answers to the questions that were raised regarding mob justice. Today we do not see mob justice situations as something brutal, frightening, chaotic and incomprehensible, as we experienced it during the incident we witnessed. Mob justice is still brutal, frightening and chaotic to us but today we can see the structural causes preceding it. We now understand why mob justice exists. However, it is important to remember that our essay only describes our respondents' view of mob justice.

Through our study of mob justice we have gained a deeper understanding of the Ugandan society. We have learned how the formal judicial system and the informal judicial system (mob justice) work and also increased our contextual understanding concerning the social class structure and the impact of colonialism as well as other important historical events.

The group psychological mechanisms we discovered in crowd violence are connected to the build – up of tension and frustration. However, the mob phenomenon is not limited to the Ugandan context; it can happen anywhere as long as there are elements that create a frustration within people. As discussed in our method chapter (generalizability), our research findings are transferable to other contexts if used with a reflective and critical approach. We can see similar group psychological phenomenon, comparable to mob justice situations, here in Sweden, such as the incidents in Vännäs and Bjästa. In Vännäs, a crowd of people threatened Iraqi fugitives after a conflict between teenagers. The Iraqi fugitives had to flee town with the help of police escort (Thornberg, 2009). In Bjästa, a fourteen year old girl was raped by a fifteen year old boy who did not fit the society's image of a rapist. Rumors were spread that the girl lied. These rumors (which were spread both verbally and through social forums on the internet) inflamed the situation and, in the end, the girl had to move because of the hateful environment created in the community (http://svtplay.se). Our view is that these examples show how a situation can escalate beyond control when a crowd of people is involved and the mob mentality draws people into the emotional bandwagon. It is difficult to draw any further parallels between Uganda and Sweden without knowing more about the build – up of tension in these specific cases. Although, it is apparent that mob actions can be seen as a human behavior, which can exist in any context.

During our research, a lot of questions have emerged. Our study leaves certain questions regarding the judicial system unanswered. How extensive is the corruption, within the judicial system but also in other institutions? What impact has the multi – tribal society on the implementation of a common rule of law? It would also be interesting to gain more knowledge about the colonial history and its impact on today's judicial system. Furthermore, it would be interesting to know how peoples' perception of the law enforcement is affected by the violent acts this institution executed against the public in the past. It would also be appealing to compare the causes of mob justice in Uganda with other countries, where mob justice exists, to find similarities but also to maybe discover new causes.

This essay has been an emotional journey, with a lot of frustration and stress, but also laughter and many interesting meetings. We hope that this study can bring something fruitful to the understanding of the violent phenomenon mob justice.

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Appendix 1

Questionnaire, focus group:

Write down your answers below each question. You have 20 minutes to answer the questions. The questionnaire should be answered *individually*, later we will discuss your answers in the whole group.

Introduction
1. Which crimes against the Ugandan law can result in mob justice? Name the *three* most common ones.

Individual level
2. How can you understand one individual beating a person to death for committing a crime against the Ugandan law? Why is this person taking the law into his/her own hands? According to you, which are the *three* most likely explanations?

Group level
3. a) Is mob justice carried out by certain groups and are certain groups usually subjected to mob justice? If so, which groups and why?

   b) How can you understand a mob group? What sorts of mechanisms within the group drive it? Give *one* or *two* examples.

Society level
4. What causes mob justice on a structural level in the Ugandan society? According to you, which are the *three* most likely explanations?

5. Which changes in the Ugandan society are needed to prevent mob justice? Which *three* changes do you think are most important?

Working methods
6. a) Which work related methods do you, as future social worker/lawyer/priest/police officer, find adequate in order to prevent mob justice?

   b) How can different professions cooperate in order to prevent mob justice?

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Appendix 2

Focus group session plan

Checklist: recorder, extra batteries, interview guide, paper, pencils, sodas, snacks

1. Arrival. Welcome everybody in person, thank them for coming. Offer them some drinks and crackers. Small talk. Ask about earlier focus group participations. Would you say you have gained a deeper knowledge of mob justice through your education?

2. Sit down. Welcome everyone again and thank them for participating in our research. Explain what the following 2-2,5 hours will include. 1) Presentation 2) Paper with our questions 3) Questions

Present ourselves and what we are doing in Uganda.
We are students from Sweden writing an essay for a Bachelor's degree in social work. This essay is a part of our education and it is the first time we are doing research with focus groups. After another semester at our university in Sweden we will receive our social work license in June 2010.

Introduce the purpose with our research.
The purpose of our research is to examine how different student groups talk about the causes of mob justice and possible professional working methods to prevent it. The reason for choosing different student groups is because we want views from diverse academic perspectives regarding the subject. The student groups are social workers, lawyers and theology students (later removed from our sample) and police students (later removed from our research but superseded by police trainers).

Explain our definition of mob justice
Our understanding is that there are different types of mob justice. We want to study mob justice situations when someone commits a crime according to Ugandan law and the mob take the law in their own hands.

Explain why we chose the topic.
What started our interest in the issue was self witnessed mob justice situations during field practice in Uganda. Two of us spent five months at a NGO in Kampala, training as social workers in different communities. The third researcher of this essay was at that time in Sweden and we started discussing the phenomenon mob justice and how it can be understood. That is how the idea of writing this essay came to life.

We are not experts
We are not experts on the subject, we see you students as experts. It is your discussion we are interested in and there is no right or wrong opinions. We are not searching for final answers, instead different perspectives of the phenomenon.

Explain what roles we will have in the focus group session
One of us is moderator; he/she is moderating the discussion. That means listening to your conversation about the subject and asks follow up questions. One of us is assistant moderator; he/she is recording the discussion and taking notes. One of us is observer; he/she is observing

the discussion in order to provide feedback to us, the researchers, afterwards. We will all three participate because we have never conducted this research method before and need all the training we can get.

Ethics

Your answers will be confidential and anonymous. If you have any questions regarding the ethics, please ask us after the session or e-mail us. Our contacts is on the questionnaire.
If you want a copy of our research when it is finished, please give us your e-mail and we will get back to you.

Discussion

What we want during this session is for you to discuss our different questions and bring your perspectives on the subject into the discussion. This is not an interview session; you are not supposed to give us your answers, the important thing is your discussion.

3. The interview session starts

Hand out the questionnaire. Let them read it through, is there any questions? You have 20 minutes to answer the questions individually. Later we will discuss them in the whole group. We have approximately **1,5 hours** to complete the focus group session.
Don't forget the time! Any questions before we start?

4. Round up.

Are there any other questions you want to add or discuss further? Does the assistant moderator or the observer have anything to add?
In the end: Thank everyone for participating!

Appendix 3

Letter of information
Why does mob justice persist?

We are three social worker students from Gothenburg, Sweden, researching about causes of mob justice in Uganda and professional working methods to prevent it. The study is a part of our social work education in Sweden and the final essay for a Bachelors degree in social work. After another semester at our university in Sweden we will receive our social work license in June 2010.

What started our interest in the issue was self witnessed mob justice situations during field practice in Uganda. Two of us spent five months at a NGO in Kampala, training as social workers in different communities. The third researcher of this essay was at that time in Sweden and we started discussing the phenomenon mob justice and how it can be understood. That is how the idea of writing this essay came to life.

We see mob justice as a complex phenomenon with many different perspectives and levels. Our purpose is to examine both the causes of mob justice in Uganda and possible professional working methods to prevent it.

Our method is a qualitative study based on **focus groups** with certain **future experts**, which means *you* students. A qualitative approach gives a deeper knowledge on how future experts perceive their situation, expert perspective and future profession. We are not searching for final answers, instead different perspectives of the problem. With the qualitative method we are exemplifying, our goal is not to generalize.

Our question to *you* is, do you want to participate in a focus group and our study? We will form small groups of 4-7 people (within the same academic field) which will discuss the causes of mob justice and working methods to prevent it. The focus group takes approximately 2-3 hours. Your participation will be confidential and anonymous.

Thank you for your time and we hope to meet you soon! Let us know as soon as possible if you are interested to participate, inform us through one of our e-mail addresses and please contact us if you have any questions about the research or your own participation.

Yours sincerely

Robin Glad, social work student, Gothenburg University. E-mail: (removed in report)

Anton Westerlund, social work student, Gothenburg University. E-mail: (removed in report)

Åsa Strömberg, social work student, Gothenburg University. E-mail: (removed in report)

Our contact person in Uganda
Narathius Asingwire, PhD in Social Work, Head of Department of Social Work and Social Work Administration at Makerere University.
Our supervisor in Sweden
Ronny Tikkanen, PhD in Social Work and senior lecturer in Social Work at the University of Gothenburg.