

Extra judicial Killings and Institutional Failure in Pakistan: A Criminological Analysis of Police Violence, State Power and Criminal Justice Accountability

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Abstract

This study aims to critically examine alleged extrajudicial killings in Pakistan as a potential manifestation of institutional failure within the criminal justice and state administrative systems. It specifically explores how excessive police discretion, weak investigation, inadequate forensic practices, ineffective prosecution, limited judicial oversight and institutional impunity contribute to unlawful state violence. It also examines the policing terms “Half Fry” and “Full Fry” as socio-cultural expressions associated with alleged coercive practices rather than legal concepts. This study used a qualitative documentary research design based on secondary data. Academic literature, constitutional and legal provisions, human-rights reports, United Nations materials and documented cases concerning police encounters and custodial violence are critically reviewed. The analysis is theoretically informed by State Crime Theory, police-deviance perspectives, Procedural Justice Theory and Institutional Anomie Theory. The findings indicate that alleged extrajudicial killings cannot adequately be understood as isolated acts of individual police misconduct. They reflect broader institutional weaknesses involving accountability mechanisms, investigation, forensic examination, prosecution and judicial oversight. HRCP reports at least 670 CCD-led encounters in Punjab during 2025, involving 924 reported deaths and recommends a high-level judicial inquiry (Human Rights Commission of Pakistan, 2026). These figures do not establish that all deaths constitute extrajudicial killings but highlight the need for independent investigation. The analysis demonstrates that alleged extrajudicial killings undermine public confidence, procedural legitimacy and the rule of law. The study therefore emphasizes independent investigations, forensic integrity, prosecutorial accountability, judicial oversight, transparency, victim and witness protection and effective implementation of existing legislation as essential measures for strengthening institutional accountability and preventing unlawful state violence.

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Introduction

The basic intent of the criminal justice system is the replacement of arbitrary punishment and private vengeance by a system of rules and procedures. A proper criminal justice system investigates, arrests, according to law, presents such a person before a competent judicial body, prosecutes him/her on evidence and sentences him/her to a fair trial of conviction or acquittal. The State, therefore, has the legitimate right to enforce criminal law, but it does not

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have boundless powers and must be bound by the constitution, the rule of law, due process and judicial oversight.

The Constitution of Pakistan has Article 9 that protects the life and freedom of a person except when the law says. There is also Article 10A that gives the right to a trial and proper legal process for a person. In times the United Nations has shared messages about human rights in Pakistan. These messages say that every criminal case must follow the rules in Article 14 of the ICCPR. These rules include bringing a person before a judge the idea that a person is innocent until proven guilty enough help for the person to defend themselves and a fair and open trial before a judge who is not biased and works according to the law. This was said by the United Nations Special Rapporteur on the Independence of Judges and Lawyers in 2025. Recently the rights to fair process and a fair trial for all people have been reminded. These rights apply to everyone whether the accusations, against them are serious or not. These rights are important to make sure that any claims of taking of life are looked into and if needed, taken to court (United Nations Special Procedures in 2025).

Objectives of the Study

1. To identify the nature and patterns of reported extrajudicial killings and police encounter deaths in Pakistan, with particular focus on Punjab and Sindh.
2. To investigate the reported practices of “Half Fry” and “Full Fry” within the broader context of police deviance, coercive policing, custodial violence, and alleged extrajudicial killings.
3. To find out the institutional, organizational and administrative factors contributing to allege unlawful police killings and institutional impunity in Pakistan.
4. To assess the effectiveness of existing legal and criminal justice mechanisms in investigating, prosecuting and adjudicating deaths resulting from police encounters.
5. To examine the role of forensic investigation, prosecutorial accountability, judicial oversight and independent investigation in addressing alleged extrajudicial killings.
6. To analyze extrajudicial killings in Pakistan through State Crime Theory, Police Deviance perspectives, Procedural Justice Theory, and Institutional Anomie Theory.
7. To examine the relationship between institutional weaknesses and the persistence or normalization of alleged unlawful police violence and encounter killings in Pakistan.
8. To develop an institutional accountability and reform framework for preventing extrajudicial killings and strengthening the rule of law in Pakistan.

Methodology of the Study

The methodology employed was a qualitative doctrinal legal research design with an emphasis on document analysis and criminological analysis of the problem of extra-judicial killings, police encounters, institutional failure and accountability in Pakistan's criminal justice system. The scope of research was limited to Pakistan, with a specific focus on the provinces of Punjab and Sindh due to their history of recorded issues of police encounters and claimed unwarranted deaths. Mostly secondary data sources from first-hand sources and document were utilized which included the constitution of Pakistan 1973, code of criminal procedure 1898, Pakistan

Penal Code 1860, torture and custodial death (prevention and punishment) act 2022, as well as judicial decisions of Pakistan. Primary documentary sources included governmental records, available police reports, reports by human rights commission of Pakistan, National Commission for Human rights, UN human rights documents, Parliamentary reports, fact-finding reports and media reports from credible and trusted news outlets.

Literature from peer reviewed journal articles, book regarding State Crime, Police Deviancy, Procedural Justice, Institutional Anomie and Institutional Impunity were also analyzed. Purposive sampling technique was used in the selection of documented case studies of police encounters and reported cases of extra-judicial killings on the basis of (i) their relevancy to the study's objectives, (ii) availability of credible primary documentary evidence on said reported events, (iii) involvement of law enforcement agencies, (iv) evidence of involvement of specific police officers and (v) information with respect to the investigation and follow up. Data were collected using systematic review of the collected documents, which were further analyzed using thematic analysis, and qualitative content analysis in an attempt to identify and categorize themes such as police discretion, use of excessive force, custodial violence, "Half Fry" and "Full Fry", police culture, political & administrative influence, forensic investigation, prosecution, police oversight and institutional impunity. Each identified case study was examined to analyze the interactions between police conduct, stated official account and available forensic evidence, processes of investigation, court prosecution and outcomes of accountability.

In this process, the theory of State Crime and the Police deviance perspective, procedural justice theory and institutional anomie theory was utilized for the interpretation of the findings of the study. In order to ensure the trustworthiness and reliability of the finding, the researchers applied source triangulation by comparing data gathered from legal records, official reports, human rights organizations, case files, parliamentary records and credible media reports with academic research. Distinguishing reported police encounter from allegations of extrajudicial killings, custodial death require further probing and unlawful killings which have proven as being such via competent investigations or through pronouncements of competent legal forums has been maintained throughout the paper. Ethical consideration in this research paper has been upheld as all the primary sources and documents were properly cited, relevant information from each of the source was only mentioned and no information was manipulated.

While quoting sensitive information in relation to an individual, precaution was taken that the information may not be attributed in a manner that leads to public harm, defamation. All allegations of police or personnel related action of any institution has not been taken as facts but as report which required the proof for the confirmation and validity.

The Pakistani Vocabulary of Police Violence: “Half Fry” and “Full Fry”

A unique aspect of debates around police brutality in Pakistan is the way informal language, as opposed to the formal language of the criminal law, is used.

Half Fry” and “Full Fry” are some of these terms.

The terms were seen to be specifically used in relation to police practices in Sindh, by (Younes, 2016). “Half Fry” was the alleged maiming of suspects which included shooting a person in the leg to ensure permanent disability while “Full Fry” was the alleged extra judicial killing. The terminology should be reported and not officially defined by the police or the judiciary, it should be read as a journalistic/legal comment rather than a judicial/law enforcement classification. However, the language used is criminological relevant since it could help us understand how coercive practices can become normalized in an organizational culture.

“Half Fry”

Based on the reported terminology, “Half Fry” was the reported intentional physical incapacitation of a suspect (Younes, 2016). When this happens, it poses basic legal and criminological issues as police officers cannot impose physical punishment simply because they think that somebody has broken a law. Punishment is normally reserved for the sanction of law and the court.

The reported practice thus poses questions about:

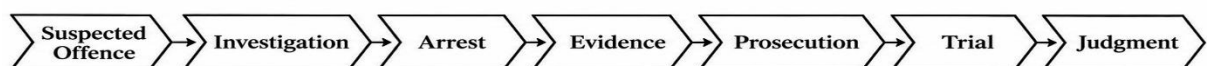
- Excessive use of force
- Custodial violence
- Police discretion
- Discipline that is not under the law
- Institutional culture
- Accountability mechanisms

“Full Fry”

Younes (2016) noted that “Full Fry” is a colloquial phrase that describes what he termed an “alleged” extra judicial killing. As a criminological phenomenon, such language means that lethal violence could be perceived as a crime-control tool and that it is an exception to the rules of how force can be used in the law.

The Usual Criminal Justice Procedure

The difference can thus be stated analytically in this way:



Alleged extra-legal process

The logic of the official narrative was such that it was never questioned.

Suspicion → Police operation → Encounter → Death → Official justification

The second model is inherently problematic as it takes away the need for independent judicial decision.

Extra judicial Killing as Potential State Crime

State Crime Theory offers a proper lens for studying illegal actions committed by state institutions.

Green and Ward (2004) claimed that crime analysis must look into the violent and unlawful behavior of state institutions, including violence, torture and criminal policing. This framework is especially relevant in the case of extra judicial killings because police institutions have coercive powers that are not available to ordinary citizens.

Police are entitled, within the framework of legality, to:

- Make arrests
- Hold suspects in custody
- Search individuals
- Take possessions
- Launch investigations
- Carry weapons
- Use force where allowed by law.

The listed powers are needed for people's safety, but at the same time the exceptional character of such powers requires guaranteeing their proper use. If state officials use their coercive powers illegally, then the very institution whose aim is to protect people can become a source of harm to people. Extra judicial killing can be regarded as a potential state crime in the situation where state power is applied to the deprivation of a person's life outside lawful procedures (Green & Ward, 2004).

From Law Enforcement to Law Violation

The legitimacy of the police is based on the concept of “police power” being used within the law. The potential shifting of the role of law enforcement to law violation produces institutional paradox: the State establishes police institutions to protect citizens from the violence but if there are not enough controls over police powers, then the police could be a source of unlawful violence. Thus, an examination of extrajudicial killings must take into account also the mechanisms for oversight, accountability and control within the institution (Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, 2026).

The institutional analysis should include:

- Police leadership

- Police operational policy
- Organizations of command
- Police supervision
- Police investigation
- Prosecution
- Police forensic institutions
- Judicial control over police
- Political police administration
- Independent accountability agencies

Criminal policing is pointed out by Green and Ward (2004) as one of the important topics in the research of state crimes. Incidents involving police contact and allegations of staged police contacts. Incidents where police contact and allegations of staged police contact occurred.

The word “encounter” does not necessarily mean “extra judicial killing”. Where officers are using necessary and proportionate force to secure the lives of others, a legitimate law enforcement operation may lead to death. The international Basic Principles on the Use of Force and Firearms by Law Enforcement Officials state that, "Law-enforcement officials should, as far as possible, eschew the use of force and firearms and limit the use of force to last resort and, if force must be used, be restrained and proportionate" (United Nations, 1990). But when it's an alleged staged encounter, it brings another set of questions to mind.

The allegations could be that:

- There was already a suspect in police custody
- The person was deliberately taken to another location
- Weapons or other evidence was supposedly planted
- The encounter scene was faked
- A post mortem story was built
- An independent investigation was not properly carried out.

These allegations should be investigated on a fact-based basis and not presumed. The Minnesota Protocol highlights the need for the prompt, comprehensive, independent and impartial investigation of potentially unlawful deaths (Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, 2017).

The Encounter Model of Criminal Justice.

The alleged normalization of encounter killings can be conceptualized as an alternative model of criminal justice.

Conventional Criminal Justice

Crime → Investigation → Arrest → Evidence → Prosecution → Trial → Judgment

Alleged Extra-Legal Encounter Model

Allegation → Police Identification → Operation → Encounter → Death → Official Narrative

The second is basically an aberration from the core tenets of a fair trial in which death appears as a substitute for determination by the courts.

Removes or significantly weakens:

- Presumption of innocence
- Right to defence
- Evidentiary testing
- Cross-examination
- Judicial determination
- Appellate review.

It is then the concern that needs to be addressed, as the very same entity can be the investigator, accuser, and justification for the lethal outcome.

Punjab and the Crime Control Department

The recent developments in Punjab offer an important contemporary case study. In February 2026, the Human Rights Commission of Pakistan (HRCP) released a fact-finding report on the Crime Control Department (CCD). According to press reports, however, an HRCP fact-finding study of activities in a particular eight month period during 2005 revealed there were at least 670 incidents attributed to the CCD, along with reported deaths of 924 suspects, HRCP stated. The study also reported the deaths of two policemen during that time and called for a high-level judicial investigation (HRCP, 2006).

These are certainly compelling statistic which should be viewed in context. They alone, are not a case for extra judicial killing for all 924 deaths but stated encounter deaths, concerning which HRCP found accountability problems, which HRCP recommends that an independent judicial investigation be initiated.

The appropriate criminological approach is therefore:

Report → Investigate → Verify → Classify → Prosecute where evidence establishes wrongdoing → Reform

All of this is applicable, especially considering HRCP's concern regarding the perceived normalization of the phenomenon and method and its suggestion for an independent high level judicial inquiry (HRCP, 2026).

The Wider National Dimension

Problem should not be limited to Punjab. HRCP's State of Human Rights in 2024 revealed that during 2024, police personnel in Punjab reported 1,008 encounters, while in Sindh police reported 3,856 encounters in which 341 suspects were said to be killed. These figures are not indicative of staged or illegal encounters. They are encounter figures as reported by police or the media. However, incidents of lethal force do offer justification for the study of police use of force, investigate practices and accountability.

A thorough analysis of the crime should take into account:

- Punjab
- Sindh
- Khyber Pakhtunkhwa
- Baluchistan
- Islamabad Capital Territory
- Federal law-enforcement institutions.

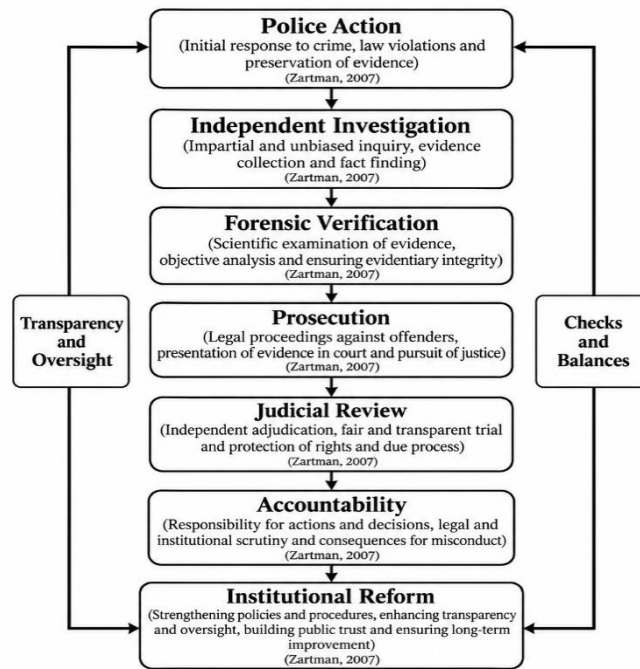
This is especially the case because of the geographic focus, inasmuch that reported cases of unlawful killing and enforced disappearance and the excessive use of force have arisen in different regional dimensions. Furthermore, human rights issues have been raised by the human rights mechanisms of the United Nations (UN) concerning alleged human rights violations in Baluchistan, including some connected to counter-terrorism activities (United Nations Human Rights Council Special Procedures, 2025).

Human Rights Commission of Pakistan and Institutional Accountability.

The Human Rights Commission of Pakistan has several times recorded issues in relation to police encounters and overall accountability in the criminal-justice system. A high-level judicial inquiry into CCD operations and deaths was recommended in its fact-finding report for the CCD for the year 2026. HRCP also expressed concerns on the implementation of legal provisions relating to investigations and inquiries into death. The point of concern is particularly one of institutional accountability, as the investigation of deaths caused by state action should not be subject to the same institutional structure that was the place of employment of the officials involved.

A credible accountability chain can be represented as:

Institutional Accountability Model



Adapted from Zartman (2007)

United Nations Standards on the Use of Force

International Humanitarian Law including the United Nations Standards on the Use of Force, International standards are a useful benchmark to assess the use of force by the police. The United Nations Basic Principles on the Use of Force and Firearms call for the development of regulations by the law enforcement body regarding the use of force and firearms. They highlight the use of non-violent methods (where feasible); restraint and proportionality (when it is not); protection of life; reporting of deaths and injuries; and criminal punishment of the misuse of force (United Nations, 1990). The concept is that the police have limits to the force they can use. Lethal force cannot be justified because there is a criminal allegation. The context should be evaluated on the bases of necessity, proportionality and life protection. The Minnesota Protocol also offers internationally accepted guidelines for investigating potentially illegal deaths, and highlights the principles of independence, impartiality, effectiveness, transparency and forensic integrity (OHCHR, 2017).

The Constitution and law of Pakistan.

An important feature of Pakistan's domestic legal system to prevent arbitrary state action. The Constitution of the United States guarantees the right to life and liberty as guaranteed by the law. Article 10 protects against arrest and detention and Article 10A ensures fair trial and due process (Government of Pakistan, 1973). The Code of Criminal Procedure, 1898 also provides for investigations of deaths. Section 174 and 176 are more relevant in the context of dead bodies that has to be investigated by police or magisterial (Government of Pakistan, 1898).

The Torture and Custodial Death (Prevention and Punishment) Act 2022 is a specific statute that deals with torture and custodial death. It is known as the Pakistan Code 2022 enacted through Act No. XXVIII of 2022 on 3rd November 2022. Within the statutory framework, the Act gives the Federal Investigation Agency as an investigative body the competency to investigate offences under the statute. The rules and official ways to hold people do not by themselves make sure that police are held accountable. How well these rules work depends on being fair and steady when they are used having checks and taking real action, against bad behavior (OHCHR, 2026).

Torture, Custodial Violence and the “Half Fry” Concept

It is specifically relevant to the relationship between custodial violence and extrajudicial violence that the reported ‘Half Fry’ practice is of concern. When a suspect has been intentionally shot, maimed or rendered permanently disabled as a punishment, it is a matter of concern for torture, excessive force, and punishment without proper judicial process.

The concept of relation, then, can be represented as:

Coercive Policing → Custodial Violence → Torture/Maiming → Potential Escalation to Lethal Violence

The 2022 Act Pakistan has been described as an important piece of legislation. However, The National Commission for Human Rights has made reference to the fact that, in some regards, the Act falls short on international standards notably: the extent to which definitions apply; the investigative protocol and handling of psychological pain and suffering. In 2026, Pakistan’s second periodical report on the situation of torture was considered by the Committee against torture. It had welcomed legislation on torture in Pakistan in 2022 and, had asked questions about the independence and capacity of investigators and the implementation of legislation (Committee against torture, 2026)

Institutional Impunity

The concept of institutional impunity could be defined as a condition where there is no effective investigation, prosecution or punishment for unlawful acts.

There are possible ways to obtain impunity, such as:

- Organizational solidarity
- Conflicts of interest
- Weak internal inquiries
- Political interference
- Inadequate forensic capacity
- Witness intimidation
- Delayed prosecution

- Inadequate judicial redress
- Weak independent oversight

It is especially concerning when an institution is investigating its own lethal force without adequate external oversight.

From the institutional point of view:

Low perceived accountability → Low perceived costs of misconduct → Low risk of institutional normalization

Not all police officers will be involved in illegal violence. Instead, it points to the fact that the likelihood and longevity of wrongdoing can be affected by institutional environments. Information and communication technology in state administration and political accountability. Police institutions are embedded in the larger administrative and political framework.

Thus, in analyzing extrajudicial killings, the following should be taken into account:

- Political directives
- Administrative targets
- Crime-control policies
- Police performance indicators
- Promotions
- Operational pressures
- Command structures
- Budgetary priorities
- Oversight mechanisms

Institutional incentives can become warped if the police's success is measured in numbers of people killed or the number of encounters it makes.

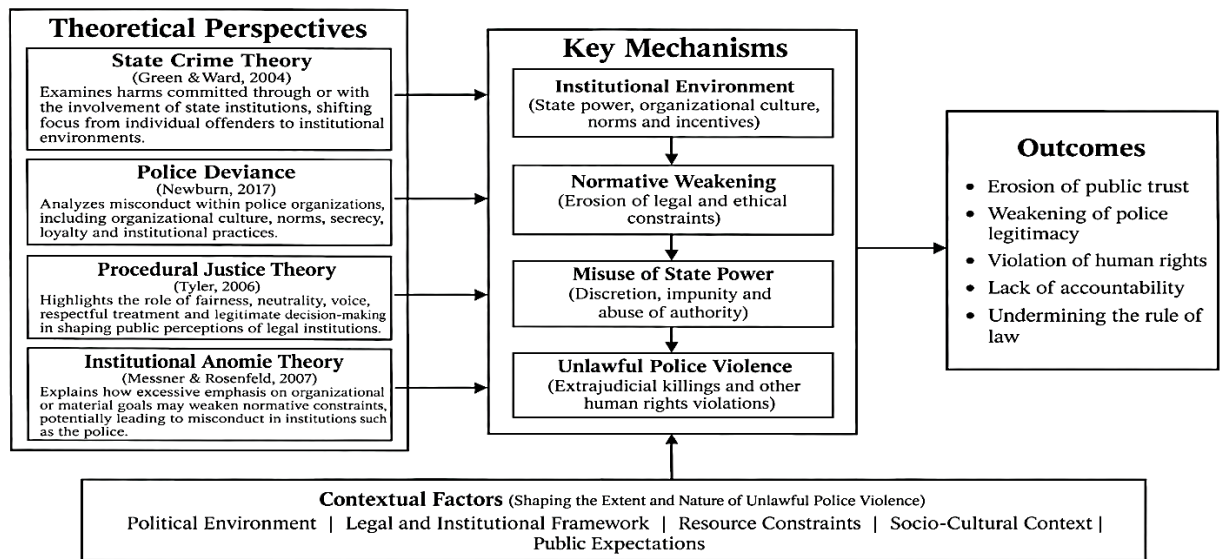
A better measure of criminal-justice effectiveness would focus on the extent to which:

Quality Investigation + Lawful Arrest + Reliable Evidence + Fair Trial + Sustainable Conviction + Reduction in Recidivism

A death of a suspect is no substitute for successful criminal adjudication.

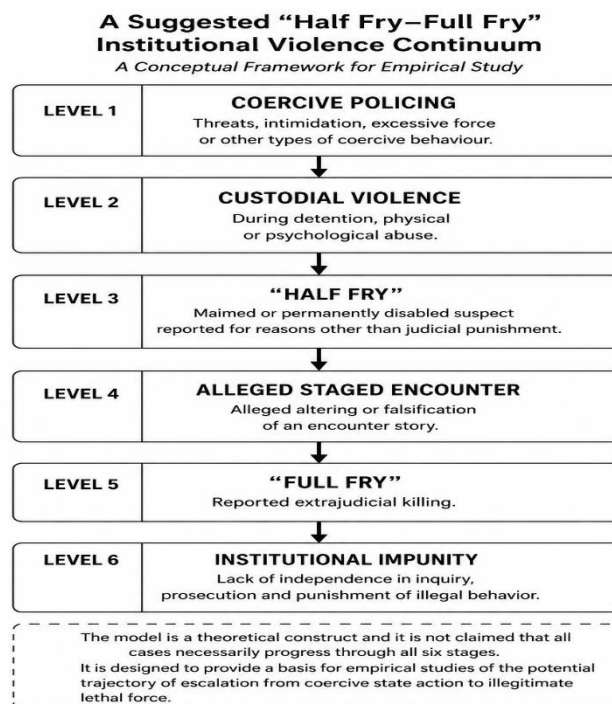
Theoretical Framework

Criminological Perspectives on Unlawful Police Violence



Adapted from Green and Ward (2004); Newburn (2017); Tyler (2006); and Messner & Rosenfeld (2007).

A Suggested “Half Fry–Full Fry” Institutional Violence Continuum



Victim ology: The Forgotten Victims

There can be more than one victim of extrajudicial killing.

Families may experience:

- Loss of income

- Psychological distress
- Social stigma
- Legal expenses
- Intimidation
- Prolonged litigation
- Lack of information

At times, it is hard to find evidence

- Fear of retaliation.

It is really important to look at things from the victim's point of view when we investigate alleged killings. Just because the person we think did something wrong dies it does not mean we should stop looking into what happened. If we have reasons to think the death was not lawful then we need to investigate the death itself in a way that is fast, effective and fair. The Minnesota Protocol says that countries have a duty to look into deaths that might not be lawful and that these investigations should be able to figure out what really happened how it happened and who was responsible if that is the case (OHCHR, 2017).

Science that looks at evidence like fingerprints and things plays a role in helping us figure out what happened during a crime. The United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime says that these science services help at stages of the process like when the police are investigating and when the case goes to court and that the people doing these services should be qualified and not take sides (UNODC, 2025).

So it is really important that we have investigations that're independent meaning they are not influenced by the police or anyone else. This is especially important when the police themselves are involved in the incident because we need to make sure the people investigating are not friends or coworkers, with the people they are investigating (OHCHR, 2017). We need to make sure that victim logical analysis and forensic science are used in these investigations to get to the truth.

The following may be relevant evidence:

- Independent post-mortem examination
- Ballistic examination
- Trajectory analysis
- Firearm examination
- Gunshot-residue testing
- DNA evidence
- CCTV footage

- Digital evidence
- Witness statements
- Crime-scene reconstruction
- Documentary records

A key principle of the Minnesota Protocol is promoting the independent and professional investigation of potentially unlawful deaths, with proper forensic methods and witness evidence being preserved (OHCHR, 2017).

A criminal justice system centered on the police story, and with little independent verification, can be the institutionalization of self-confirmation.

Central Research Proposition

If such extrajudicial killings can be substantiated and confirmed, they can be understood in Pakistan, if they are, as a possible symptom of institutional failure where too much discretion, weak investigation, inadequate judicial oversight, ineffective prosecution and institutional impunity combine and this in turn sets in motion a deterioration of the rule of law.

This is no longer a fact, but a proposition that needs to be tested.

Research should differentiate between:

1. Reported police encounters
2. Deaths during police operations
3. Encounters staged or fake
4. Deaths that need further investigation

Murders that are proven to have been committed unlawfully (after a competent investigation or a court trial).

Conclusion

Extrajudicial killing is one of the most severe forms of threat to the legitimacy of criminal justice as it substitutes judicial action for lethal action by the State. The non-legal but nonetheless important criminological illustrations of the ways in which reported types of coercive policing might gain institutional language are, first, “Half Fry” and “Full Fry,” informal expressions in Pakistan. Younes (2016) noted that “Half Fry” meant when the person was allegedly deliberately maimed and “Full Fry” meant when the person was allegedly murdered by extrajudicial means. Such statements should not be construed as findings of fact.

Recent studies show how vital further research is. HRCP claimed 1008 encounters with the police in Punjab and 3856 in Sindh in 2024, adding that 341 suspects were reported killed in Sindh encounters. HRCP's fact-finding report on CCD for 2026 revealed a minimum of 670 encounters and 924 suspect deaths in an eight-month period in 2025 and urged a high level judicial inquiry.

These numbers should not be interpreted to mean that all of these encounters were illegal. Instead, they illustrate the importance of available data, impartial investigation, forensic proof and judicial review. There are constitutional protections and statutory provisions which relate to these concerns in Pakistan. The Constitution guarantees life, liberty and fair trial; the Code of Criminal Procedure outlines procedures with respect to certain deaths; and the Torture and Custodial Death (Prevention and Punishment) Act, 2022 has a special regime with respect to torture and custodial death (Government of Pakistan, 1973, 1898, 2022).

The main difficulty is not the lack of law, however. It is the effective application of the rule of law and the independence of accountability mechanisms. The criminological perspective presented in this article focuses not only on the police officer but also on the institutional chain, as follows:

Police Discretion - State Administration - Investigation - Forensics - Prosecution - Judiciary - Accountability

When this chain is functioning properly, the State is able to fight crime and still abide by the rule of law. Where it does, institutional impunity can arise.

The crux of the lesson is simple:

It is not legitimate for the State to come to an end if it gets rid of the principles of legitimate law enforcement. The basic characteristics of a legitimate criminal justice system should be measured not in terms of the number of people killed in the process of crime investigation, but how it investigates and prosecutes crime lawfully, protects citizens and provides judicial determination. There is no death outside the courtroom, therefore, in the case of extrajudicial killing. When it exists it is an attack on the very fabric of the court system where the State dispenses lawful criminal justice.

Recommendations

The analysis of police violence and encounter deaths in Pakistan reveals the following issues that need to be addressed. Accordingly, the following recommendations are made:

- 1. Independence in the Inquiry of Encounter Deaths:** The police unit involved should not be a part of the inquiry into alleged encounter death. Such incidents need to be probed quickly, efficiently, impartially and with an independent enquiry.
- 2. Enhance role of Magisterial & Judicial Inquiries:** The procedural requirements provided in the Code of Criminal Procedure, 1898 for Sections 174 and 176 of the Code on sudden and unnatural death should not be limited to mere procedural formality, but should have to be carried out in an effective and timely manner.
- 3. Need for independent forensic analysis:** The post mortem report, ballistics reports, inspection of the crime scene or any other forensic activities must be carried out by those who are medically as well as institutionally impartial towards the police.

4. Develop Effective Civilian Police Oversight: An independent and effective civilian police oversight mechanism should be put in place or strengthened to receive complaints of extrajudicial killing and/or excessive force, review available information and make necessary recommendations for legal or disciplinary action.

5. Wide-range implementation of Body Worn Cameras Systems (BWCSs): Implement the gradual implementation of BWCSs on police officers during their response to risky policing contexts and guarantee that footage should be preserved and accessed under secure conditions and safety protections to avoid alteration and preserve integrity while addressing privacy issues.

6. Protect Victims' Families and Witnesses: Families of persons killed in encounters, witnesses, and complainants should be protected from threats, intimidation, coercion, harassment and other adverse action and must be facilitated to seek justice effectively.

7. Augment Prosecutorial Independence: The prosecution agencies must possess administrative and functional independence from the police for them to probe and prosecute police officers or government officials based on material evidence.

8. Protect Police Whistleblowers: An official of the police who discloses that some officer has taken part in or been urged to participate or aid in the execution of illegal instructions, production of fabrication documents, misuse of power or other corrupted actions must be protected from retaliation (such as denial of promotion, posting or termination).

9. Enforce Torture and Custodial Death Act, 2022: The provisions of the Torture and Custodial Death (Prevention and Punishment) Act, 2022, should be applied properly concerning the deaths on custody, and by police and security agencies with the emphasis on ensuring prompt, impartial and independent examination of the incidents of death occurring in custody of the concerned institutions and the bodies of the dead, preservation and examination of physical evidence through impartial experts, ensuring prosecution of those found involved, and the supervision by the courts, etc.

10. Introduce High-Level Judicial Inquiries into Systemic Patterns: Where consistent patterns of encounters occur and there is sufficient credible evidence indicating institutional failures and possible systemic misconduct, a higher-level independent judicial inquiry or commission should be appointed to investigate and identify systemic issues, command responsibility and command failure contributing to such patterns.

11. Institute A National Encounter-Death Database: Create and maintain a national data registry of encounter deaths collating a body of verifiable, publicly accessible data regarding the total numbers of encounters; fatalities (Police and Civilian), injuries, recovered arms alleged used by Police and suspects, registered FIRs; Magisterial inquiry findings, Forensic Reports, convictions, acquittal and judicial determinations of encounter cases in a methodical way.

12. Reorient Police Performance Indices: Re-frame the police performance assessment indicators from one which currently measures 'encounter' kills and the quantity of arrests or the apprehension of accused offenders (howsoever at all costs)' to ones that measure

successful lawful arrests, robust investigation process, evidential efficacy leading to convictions, effectiveness of crime suppression and protection of human dignity.

13. Assert Command Responsibility & Internal Accountability: Every stratum of Police leadership will be responsible for establishing internal mechanisms of internal Accountability and internal Accountability process which are robust, fair and expeditious in curbing or curbing police misuse, of, and responding to, excesses, including during encounters.

14. Create an Integrated Accountability Chain: The operational linkages and collaboration between the police, forensic experts, prosecutors, magisterial bodies and courts must be enhanced so that an encounter death case does not end or close on the statement of police alone.

15. Enhanced Transparency and Public Accountability: The relevant institutions such as the police and the courts shall routinely release statistical reports on the number of cases/incidents, related fatalities/injuries, and their legal/judicial results in all such cases.

16. Emplacement of a rights-based Police Performance Framework: In the police reform process mainstream the individual's right to life, due process, proportionality, and dignity into the standards of police performance to enable structural shift to knowledge/evidence based policing.

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