



INTER-COMMUNAL ATTITUDE AS A FUNCTION OF RELIGION AND EDUCATIONAL LEVEL IN INDIAN HOUSE-WIVES

**Dr.
A.K.S.Kushwaha**

Professor of Psychology, Govt. M.L.B. Girls P.G. College, Bhopal (M.P.)

Dr. Jamal Akhtar*

Professor of Psychology, Govt. M.L.B. Girls P.G. College, Bhopal (M.P.)
*Corresponding Author

ABSTRACT The present study is an attempt to investigate the role of religion and education in the development of inter-communal attitude. By using a sample of 100 house-wives taken from Indian Hindus and Muslims families a 2x2 factorial design is used in this study. The semantic differential technique of Osgood et al. (1975) was used for this study. The main effect of religion and education and their interactional effect significant at .01 level showed its significant role in the development of inter-communal attitude. The higher mean score of the Hindu house-wives on the scale than their counterpart Muslim house-wives indicated that they have greater prejudices during forming inter-communal attitude. Level of education was also found to be significant role determining prejudices. Indian house-wives of low educational level showed a greater prejudice mean score than the Indian house-wives of higher educational level.

KEYWORDS : inter-communal attitude, Indian house-wives, Type of religion and educational level.

Introduction:

Inter-Communal attitude can be defined as a prejudiced attitude expressed by one community towards other community. It predisposes a person to think, perceive, feel and act in favorable and unfavorable ways towards a group or its individual members (Secord and Backman, 1964). It refers to positive or negative evaluation or judgments of members of a particular group which are based primarily on the fact of their membership in the group and not necessarily because of particular characteristics of individual members (Feldman, 1985). It is a cognitive, affective and behavioral tendency existing between communities. It may also be denoted as communal prejudice. In Indian context it can be seen from time to time between Hindu community and Muslim community. Because of this inter-communal attitude sometimes aggressive movements are resulted in the form of communal-rights which is harmful for our national integration. We feeling in the country is a significant part of nationalism. It involves the consciousness of being members of one nation, which is responsible for the stability of the nation.

Romila Thaper and associates (2016) have stated that religious sects, as different from monolithic religion, tend to shade off from the very orthodox of those far or less so. This allows greater flexibility and fluidity in belief and practice among them than is normal in a religion treated as monolithic entity. This change from sect to monolithic religion changes the nature of the relationship between religion and society.

Allport (1979) has defined prejudice as 'an aversive or hostile attitude towards a person that group and is therefore presumed to have the objectionable qualities of the group. Thus, one's loyalty to the we-group automatically implies disloyalty, or hostility, or other forms of negativism towards other-group. A behavioral definition was formulated by Gordon Allport, who wrote in his book "The Nature of Prejudice" that it is "an aversive or hostile attitude toward a person who belongs to a group, simply because he belongs to that group, and is therefore presumed to have objectionable qualities ascribed to the group." Prejudice is an unreasonable dislike of a particular group of people or things, or a preference for one group of people or things over another.

According to Baron & Byrne (1995) prejudice is an attitude (usually negative) towards the members of some group, based solely on the membership in that group. It may involve tendencies to act in negative ways- or intentions of doing so – towards those who are the object of prejudice. Inter-Communal attitude is a special type of prejudice which involves more negative evaluation of those communities towards whom it is directed. Here, it seems to be important that group conflict occurs first in between groups, not between individuals, which lead to intergroup or inter-communal prejudice.

Religion is considered to be an important factor in determining prejudiced behaviour. Jackson and Hunsberger (1999) reported that more religious individuals attitudes toward religious others were very

positive and attitudes toward non-religious others were quite negative. Religious intergroup bias has been shown to take two forms: (a) in-group favoritism, in which religious individuals show favor toward their own in-group members (Jackson and Hunsberger, 1999), and (b) out-group derogation, in which religious individuals show disfavor toward out-group members (Harper,2007).

Venkata Subrahmanyam (1973) has reported that social interaction between various linguistic groups are marred by stereotypes like "Bengalis are clannish", "Marwaries are avaricious", "Andhras are crude," and "Tamils are cunning."

Keeping in view of the studies reported above, the objectives of the present study is to investigate empirically, whether religion and education independently or jointly with each other account for differences in inter-communal attitude of Indian house-wives or not?

Hypothesis:

To seek the solution of this problem, following differential and interactional hypotheses are formulated.

Differential hypotheses:

1. Religion will be able to generate significant differential effect upon inter-communal attitude in Hindu and Muslim housewives.
2. Education will be able to generate significant differential effect upon inter-communal attitude in high and low educated housewives.

Interactional hypotheses:

1. Religion and education will jointly be able to generate significant variance upon inter-communal attitude score of housewives.

Methodology

Design:

A 2x2 factorial design is employed to investigate this problem. Here the dependent variable is inter-communal attitude and religion as well as education will be acted as independent variables. Thus, there are two levels of religion variable, i.e. Hindu and Muslims and two levels of education variable, i.e. high and low education. In the present study high educational level is manipulated through their post graduation qualification and low educational level through their high school / higher secondary qualification.

Sample:

In order to meet the requirement of the 2x2 factorial designs, stratified random sampling technique is employed to select an unbiased representative sample from the population. For this purpose one hundred housewives of middle socioeconomic status having age range 25-35 years, residing in Bhopal have been selected. The participants are divided into four homogeneous strata according to two specific characteristics of population, i.e. religion and education, which have been varied to two levels. In each cell 25 participants have been put randomly. Thus a total of 100 housewives (50 Hindus and 50 Muslims)

are selected as final sample.

Tools:

In the present study, semantic differential technique propounded by Osgood, Suci and Tannenbaum (1957) was used to measure the inter-communal attitude of Hindus and Muslim housewives towards each other. A seven point scale included three dimensions - potency, evaluation and activity comprising a series of nine bipolar adjectives have been used randomly in the scale

Procedure:

After selecting the final sample of 100 housewives residing in Bhopal city, participants were contacted personally and the above scale was administered to them individually. They were asked to give their responses on seven point scale by putting a tick mark (v) before each statement. After completing the test, responses were put for scoring. Scoring was done on basis of the responses of housewives given on the scale by putting highest score-7 marks to extremely positive value in decreasing order gradually to lowest score-1 mark for extremely negative.

Result and Discussion:

Result Table

Mean and SDs of Inter-communal Attitude Scores for Different groups

Groups	Educational Level			
	High		Low	
Religion	M=12.98	SD=3.60	M=20.30	SD=4.12
	N=50		N=50	
Hindu	M=15.50	SD=3.70	M=20.85	SD=4.06
	N=25		N=25	
Muslim	M=10.45	SD=3.50	M=19.75	SD=4.18
	N=25		N=25	

ANOVA OF INTER-COMMUNAL ATTITUDE SCORES FOR RELIGION AND EDUCATIONAL LEVEL

Source of Variations	df	Sum of Squares	Mean Sum of Squares	F-ratio	Level of Significance
Main Effect	A-- Religion	1 179.80	179.80	8.12	.01
	B-- Educational Level	1 202.45	202.45	9.14	.01
Interactional Effect	A x B	1 265.75	265.75	12.00	.01
Within Groups	df = N—r.k	96 2125.44	22.14		
TOTAL	df = N-1	99 2773.44			

Religion gives different outlooks to their followers which ultimately influences their attitudinal patterns. In the present study, religion has been found as a potential variable in generating significant variance upon inter-communal attitude. It is evident from the observation of the table that Hindu housewives having mean inter-communal attitude score of 18.88 are significantly higher than their counterpart Muslim housewives having mean inter-communal attitude score of 15.10. The obtained F-ratio (1, 96) for religion is 8.12, which is significant at .01 levels. The present finding is contradictory to the findings of Hassan and Khalique (1987) who has showed higher prejudiced attitude in Muslims than the Hindus.

Education has also been found to be an important predictor of inter-communal attitude in this study. A perusal of the table shows that high educated housewives having mean inter-communal attitude score of 12.98 are significantly lower than their counterpart low educated housewives having mean inter-communal attitude score of M=20.30. The obtained F-ratio (1, 96) for education is 9.14, which is significant at .01 levels. Higher education liberalized the prejudiced attitude of post-graduate housewives in contrary to low educated (higher secondary) housewives, who have showed high inter-communal attitude score on the scale. This finding supported to the studies made by Jha (1972) who reported that due to increasing the educational level, people liberalized their prejudiced attitude towards scheduled castes and thus they showed low prejudice towards scheduled castes.

A perusal of the table made it clear that when religion and education

were put for interaction to each other, they generate significant variance upon inter-communal attitude score of housewives having obtained F-ratio (1,96) 12.00, which is significant at .01 level. Since, both factors (religion and education) are potentially enough to generate significant variance upon inter-communal attitude independently, therefore, the two factors interactional effect became able to generate significant variance upon inter-communal attitude. Findings of this study show that religion and education both are powerful factors in developing inter-communal attitude. Through cultivation of religious generosity and educational enhancement, counselors and social reformers can make an effort to reduce the inter-communal attitude for establishing communal harmony.

References:

- Allport, G.W. (1979): The Nature of Prejudice .New York: Addison-Wesley Publishing Company, pp. 14-15.
- Baron, R. A.& Byrne, D. (1995): Social Psychology: Understanding Huma Interaction. New Delhi: Prentice-Hall, pp 218-220.
- Feldman, R.S. (2001): Social Psychology: Theory, Research and Application. P e a r s o n Publication, pp 85.
- Fishbein, H.H.(1996): Peer Prejudice and Discrimination: Evolutionary,Cultural a n d Developmental Dynamics. Boulder: Westview Press
- Harper, M.(2007): The stereotyping of nonreligious people by religious students: Contents and subtypes. *Journal for the Scientific Study of Religion*, 46, pp 539-552.
- Hassan, M. K. and Khalique, A.(1987): A study of prejudice in Hindu and M u s l i m s college students. *Psychologia: An International Journal of Psychology in the Orient*, 30 (2), pp 80-84.
- Jackson, L.M. and Hunsberger, B.(1999): An intergroup perspective on religion and prejudice. *Journal for the Scientific Study of Religion*, 38(4), pp 509-523.
- Jha (1972) : Socio cultural approach of Prejudice : Education, published in the book written by Arun Kumar Singh: An outline of Social Psychology. D e l h i : Motilal – Banarasidas, pp 212.
- Osgood, C.E.,Suci, G. and Tannenbaum,P. (1957): The measurement of meaning. Urbana,IL: University of Illinois Press.
- Secord, P.F. and Backman, C.W. (1964): Social Psychology:. NewYork: McGraw-H i l l Book Company, pp 165.
- Thapar, Romilla; Noorani, A.G. and Menon,S. (2016): On Nationalism.a New Delhi: Aleph Book Company
- VenkataSubrahmanyam, T. R.(1973): Group Prejudices in India: Experiments in Learning Theories. New Delhi :Sri Ram Centre for Industrial Relations and H u m a n a n Resources