

## **A STUDY ON HATE CRIME: HOW PREJUDICE MOTIVATES VIOLENCE**

### **CHAPTER-1**

#### **INTRODUCTION**

India is a multicultural nation with a long history of coexisting with other cultures, faiths, and tongues. It is important to comprehend hate crimes and prejudice in India in the context of its social, political, and historical development. However, because of the disputes and discrimination that have resulted from this variety, there have been more hate crimes and other types of prejudice.

Criminal acts motivated by an individual's identity, such as their religion, caste, gender, sexual orientation, or disability, are known as hate crimes. In India, there are a lot of hate crimes, and caste and religion account for the majority of these crimes.

Contrarily, prejudice is a preconceived idea or bias held towards a person or group because of their identity. Prejudice can be present in a variety of contexts, including education, the workplace, and society at large. It is not exclusive to any one group or community. Verbal abuse, social rejection, and even physical violence are just a few of the various ways that discrimination manifests.

In India, prejudice and hate crimes pose serious social and political issues. It is critical to solve these problems by raising awareness, encouraging tolerance and respect for diversity, and holding those responsible who commit such crimes accountable. We can only create a more inclusive and just society for everyone by working together.

#### **1.1. DEFINITIONS**

##### **1.1.1 Prejudice**

Prejudice can be defined as an unfair and unreasonable opinion or feeling, often formed without sufficient thought or knowledge. Prejudice, for instance, may mean having unfavourable ideas or passing judgment on someone based only on that person's membership in a certain social or racial group. These discriminatory beliefs and behaviours can result in unequal treatment in many facets of life.

It is important to note that discrimination and prejudice should be distinguished from one another. While discrimination refers to the unfair or unequal treatment based on these prejudices, prejudice refers to prejudiced views or opinions.

#### **1.1.2      Violence**

Violence is the deliberate use of physical force, power, or aggressiveness against other people or things with the aim to cause hurt, damage, or to maintain control over them. Physical, psychological, and structural violence can all take different forms, including striking, kicking, or the use of weapons. Psychological violence can also take the shape of threats, intimidation, and emotional abuse. Violence often has substantial social, psychological, and emotional repercussions for both the perpetrators and the victims. It can cause pain, injury, suffering, and occasionally even death.

#### **1.1.3      Hate Crime**

The United States Department of Justice defines hate crime as a crime motivated by bias against race, colour, religion, national origin, sexual orientation, gender, gender identity, or disability. It also includes acts of prejudice that are not crimes, but do not involve violence, threats, or property damage. Two conditions must be met for a crime to qualify as a hate crime: According to the law, the act is unlawful, and bias was the act's driving force (USDOJ, n.d.f.).

The Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) defines hate crime as a criminal offense against a person or property that is motivated, in whole or in part, by the offender's bias against a race, religion, disability, sexual orientation, ethnicity, gender, or gender identity.

#### **1.1.4      Types of Hate crimes**

There are three main types of hate crime; physical assault, verbal abuse and incitement to hatred.

- **Physical assault**

Physical assault of any kind is an offence, which should be reported. Depending on the level of violence used, a perpetrator may be charged with common assault, actual bodily harm or grievous bodily harm.

- **Verbal abuse**

Verbal abuse, threats or name-calling can be common and an equally unpleasant experience for minority groups.

- **Incitement to hatred**

The offence of incitement to hatred occurs when someone acts in a way that is threatening and intended to stir up hatred. That could be in words, pictures, videos or music and includes information posted on websites.

### **1.2 Legal provisions to address Hate crimes and related issues**

Regarding hate crimes and related issues, India has numerous laws and legal requirements. Key laws and provisions include the following:

**IPC (Indian Penal Code)** Several sections of the IPC deal with hate crimes and other similar offenses:

- Section 153A: Deals with actions that undermine efforts to maintain harmony by inciting hostility between various groups based on factors such as religion, race, place of birth, domicile, language, etc.
- Section 295A: Deals with wilful and malicious actions meant to offend someone's religious sensibilities by disparaging their religion or religious beliefs.
- Section 298 prohibits speaking in a way that is intended to offend someone's religious sensibilities.
- Section 505: Addresses remarks that incite hatred, hostility, or ill-will among various racial, ethnic, linguistic, or geographical groups.
- Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes (Prevention of Atrocities) Act, 1989: This law attempts to stop crimes against people who are a part of the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes. It includes both bodily and mental injury as part of its broad spectrum of transgressions.
- Protection of Civil Rights Act, 1955: Aiming to end untouchability, this act outlaws a number of customs and behaviours that prejudice people based on their caste.
- Information Technology (Intermediary Guidelines and Digital Media Ethics Code), 2021: The dissemination of hate speech and false material online is prohibited by these rules, which provide guidelines for social media sites and digital media companies.
- Prevention of Insults to National Honour Act, 1971: This act criminalizes actions that insult the Indian national flag or the Constitution of India.
- Religious Institutions (Prevention of Misuse) Act: This act was passed by several states in an effort to stop the abuse of religious organizations for the purpose of instigating hate

speech or other forms of violence.

- **State-Specific Laws:** To combat hate crimes and intergroup violence, some Indian states have passed state-specific laws. For example, the Maharashtra Prevention of Dangerous Activities of Slumlords, Bootleggers, Drug Offenders, Dangerous Persons, Video Pirates, Sand Smugglers, and Persons Engaged in Black-marketing of Essential Commodities Act, 1981, governs the state of Maharashtra.

It's significant to note that there have been discussions on the application and enforcement of these laws, and that their efficacy can vary. The necessity for comprehensive anti-discrimination legislation has been discussed in recent years in order to more effectively handle hate crimes and associated issues.

### **1.3            Major cases of hate crime in India**

- **Gujarat riots of 2002**

The Gujarat riots of 2002 are one prominent instance of a hate crime in India. The Gujarat state experienced a string of intercommunal conflicts that mostly targeted the Muslim minority community. The unrest began after a train transporting Hindu pilgrims caught fire under questionable circumstances, killing a large number of passengers, the most of whom were Hindus.

The tragedy in Gujarat caused widespread rage and gave rise to coordinated violence against Muslims. Muslim communities, houses, shops, and places of worship were targeted by mobs, which resulted in a large loss of life and damage. Around 1,000 to 2,000 individuals were killed during the many weeks-long unrest, the bulk of whom were Muslims.

Due to the magnitude of the violence and claims of governmental involvement, the Gujarat riots, which were characterized by targeted violence, rapes, and burning, attracted considerable international attention.

Questions regarding social peace, religious tolerance, and the government's responsibility in preventing and dealing with hate crimes were raised in the wake of the riots. The incident also made clear the need for all-encompassing action to resolve intercommunal conflicts and stop similar massive acts of violence in the future.

It's critical to remember that hate crimes are a difficult and delicate topic, and any case studies

should be addressed with compassion and a dedication to comprehending the political, social, and historical context in which they occur.

- **1984 Sikh Riots (Delhi Anti-Sikh Riots)**

Anti-Sikh riots broke out in Delhi in the wake of Prime Minister Indira Gandhi's murder by her Sikh bodyguards. Thousands of Sikhs were killed as a result of mob attacks on Sikhs, their houses, places of business, and gurdwaras (Sikh places of worship).

- **2008 Kandhamal violence**

Violence between the Hindu and Christian groups erupted in the Kandhamal area of the state of Odisha in 2008. Numerous churches were destroyed, hundreds of Christians were uprooted, and many people died as a result of the bloodshed.

- **2013 Muzaffarnagar Riots**

Communal violence broke out in the Uttar Pradesh district of Muzaffarnagar in 2013, especially between the Hindu and Muslim communities. Many people were killed and displaced as a result of the conflict.

This research focuses on the trends and patterns of hate crimes in India, media influence and impact on communities and studies on the prevention and intervention strategies. The objectives of the study are to assess the evolvement of hate crimes over time, to assess what are the primary motivations behind hate crimes, to explore the impact on the targeted communities in terms of psychological, social, and economic consequences and to explore what are the successful strategies and interventions, both at the community and governmental levels, to prevent hate crimes and promote social harmony in India. The research approach would be mixed method in nature with both usage of quantitative and qualitative data. The data is collected from the young adults and adults aged 18-44 all over India through snowball random sampling. The data analysis is done by the combination of thematic and descriptive analysis.

## **CHAPTER 2**

### **REVIEW OF LITERATURE**

Hate crimes, which involve acts of violence and hostility towards individuals or groups based on their actual or perceived characteristics, are a serious problem in society. By addressing the

historical backdrop, influencing factors, impact on communities, legal framework, prevention techniques, and opportunities for further research, this literature review tries to consolidate the body of knowledge already available on hate crimes in India.

Data from the National Criminal Records Bureau (NCRB) shows that between 2014 and 2020, the number of charges filed under Section 153A of the Indian Penal Code (IPC), which deals with inciting hatred amongst various groups based on their race, religion, place of birth, place of residence, or language, grew by a factor of six, or roughly 500%. The number of cases increased from 323 in 2014 to 1,804 in 2020, which was the most in seven years. Tamil Nadu (303), Uttar Pradesh (243), Telangana (151), Assam (147), and Andhra Pradesh (142) were the states with the most cases in the industry in 2020. In a comparable fashion, from 13 cases in 2014 to 82 cases in 2020, instances made under section 153B (presumptive claims against national integration) increased sixfold.

In India, there is no legal definition of hate speech, yet ongoing live debates take place. The Law Commission of India stated in its report from March 2017 that "new provisions need to be incorporated into the IPC" to address the problem of hate speech. Despite the fact that there are no particular laws that define hate speech, various legal sections or chapters in the IPC forbid certain types of communication, with the exception of free speech.

In recent times, the persistent prevalence of hate crimes worldwide has elevated the urgency of understanding and addressing this grave societal issue. Fueled by deep-seated prejudices, hate crimes manifest as a global challenge, transcending borders and cultural contexts. To confront this multifaceted problem, there is a compelling need for a thorough examination of various dimensions, as the complex interplay of factors contributing to hate crimes demands nuanced insights. This literature review embarks on an exploration of existing research specifically focused on hate crimes in India, delving into key aspects such as public awareness, societal influencers, psychological underpinnings, media impacts, and the efficacy of preventive measures.

As societies become increasingly interconnected, the dynamics of hate crimes evolve, demanding a comprehensive understanding that goes beyond surface-level analysis. Hate crimes, with their roots deeply embedded in prejudice, present a formidable challenge that necessitates a holistic examination. India, with its rich tapestry of cultures, religions, and ethnicities, provides a unique backdrop for such an exploration. By concentrating on this specific geographical and socio-cultural context, the review aims to contribute not only to the

academic discourse but also to inform potential policy interventions and societal initiatives. The focus on public awareness is crucial, as the effectiveness of any strategy to combat hate crimes hinges on the populace's understanding of the issue. Public perception, shaped by factors such as education, media exposure, and cultural influences, plays a pivotal role in either perpetuating or mitigating hate crimes. Therefore, an in-depth analysis of existing research on public awareness will shed light on the gaps that need addressing, ultimately aiding the formulation of more targeted and effective awareness campaigns.

Societal influencers, encompassing economic, political, and cultural factors, contribute significantly to the perpetuation of hate crimes. A comprehensive exploration of these influencers is essential to understanding the root causes and designing interventions that dismantle the intricate web of sociopolitical forces. India, with its diverse and dynamic societal landscape, presents a unique case study, where economic anxieties, power struggles, and political interests intertwine, providing fertile ground for hate crimes to flourish.

Delving into the psychological underpinnings of hate crimes offers a glimpse into the complex mechanisms that drive individuals and groups to commit acts of violence based on prejudice. The review engages with classic theories such as ethnocentrism, contact hypothesis, and social identity theory to unravel the intricacies of intergroup hostility. By doing so, it aims to provide a comprehensive understanding of the psychological dynamics at play, informing potential interventions focused on addressing these deep-seated biases.

Media, as a powerful influencer of public opinion, plays a dual role in the perpetuation or mitigation of hate crimes. Analyzing the impact of media coverage on hate crimes is critical, considering its potential to either amplify or ameliorate societal tensions. The review scrutinizes existing research to uncover the nuanced ways in which media contributes to the issue, offering insights into responsible reporting practices and potential regulatory measures.

Finally, the efficacy of preventive measures, both legal and social, is a pivotal aspect of the review. Evaluating existing interventions provides a basis for understanding what works and what falls short in the context of hate crimes in India. By synthesizing this information, the review aims to contribute to the ongoing discourse on effective strategies, highlighting the need for context-specific approaches that resonate with the unique sociopolitical realities of the Indian landscape.

In summation, this literature review embarks on a comprehensive exploration of hate crimes in

India, recognizing the urgency of understanding and addressing this global challenge. By synthesizing existing research on public awareness, societal influencers, psychological underpinnings, media impacts, and preventive measures, the review aims to not only highlight key findings but also identify critical knowledge gaps. In doing so, it seeks to contribute to a nuanced understanding of this multifaceted issue, laying the groundwork for informed interventions and a more inclusive society.

### **Public Awareness of Hate Crimes in India**

The landscape of public awareness surrounding hate crimes in India is depicted in a disconcerting light, as revealed by recent research. A pivotal study conducted by Singh and Howden (2022) across three cities exposed a stark reality: a mere 26% of respondents could accurately define hate crimes, underscoring the gravity of the issue. This finding resonates with parallel studies conducted in the United States, such as Merrill et al.'s (2018) investigation, hinting at a global trend of insufficient comprehension of hate crime concepts.

The study by Singh and Howden (2022) becomes particularly illuminating as it spans diverse urban centers, offering insights into the widespread nature of the issue. The alarming statistic emphasizes the urgent need for a concerted effort to bridge the knowledge gap and improve public understanding of hate crimes in the Indian context.

Moreover, Black et al. (2020) contributed to this discourse by shedding light on a crucial facet: the knowledge gap concerning reporting procedures. Their research revealed that a mere 13% of respondents were aware of how to report hate crimes to the police. This revelation not only points to a deficiency in public awareness but also highlights a practical barrier in the form of a lack of knowledge about the proper channels for reporting such incidents.

The parallel between the findings in India and the United States suggests that the challenge of fostering public awareness of hate crimes is not confined to a specific geographical or cultural context. Instead, it underscores a global need for targeted interventions. The pressing nature of this issue prompts a call for strategic public education initiatives designed to enhance awareness and understanding of hate crime processes.

Addressing this deficiency in public awareness is not merely an academic exercise; it is a crucial step toward fostering a more informed and vigilant society. A populace with a heightened awareness of hate crimes is better equipped to recognize, report, and ultimately combat

instances of prejudice-driven violence. The imperative for targeted public education initiatives is clear, aiming not only to define the concept of hate crimes but also to familiarize individuals with the necessary reporting mechanisms.

### **Societal Factors Influencing Hate Crimes in India**

A profound examination into the origins of hate crimes in India reveals a intricate interplay of sociopolitical factors. Wilkinson's seminal work in 2006 identified economic anxieties and power struggles as catalyzing forces, often intricately interwoven with political interests. This suggests that the root causes of hate crimes extend beyond individual prejudices and delve into the broader socioeconomic and political landscape. Economic disparities and power imbalances can act as potent catalysts, providing fertile ground for the emergence and perpetuation of acts driven by hatred.

Mahmood's study in 2018 delved into the realm of propaganda and misinformation campaigns, uncovering their insidious role in fanning the flames of prejudice against minority groups. The findings illuminate the power dynamics at play in shaping public opinion, as misinformation campaigns contribute to the creation and reinforcement of negative stereotypes. Such societal influences, when unchecked, can escalate tensions, further exacerbating the risk of hate crimes. Keenan's synthesis of dehumanization theories in 2020 adds another layer to the understanding of societal factors influencing hate crimes. By exploring how certain groups may be dehumanized in the eyes of others, Keenan emphasizes the multifaceted nature of societal forces that drive hate crimes. Dehumanization can serve as a psychological precursor, laying the groundwork for acts of violence against specific communities.

Collectively, this body of research underscores the intricate web of social dynamics contributing to the perpetuation of hate crimes in the Indian context. The multifaceted interplay between economic factors, power struggles, propaganda, misinformation, and dehumanization creates a complex tapestry that demands comprehensive strategies. Addressing hate crimes necessitates going beyond individual attitudes and prejudices, delving into the societal structures and influences that contribute to their persistence.

### **Psychological Factors Related to Hate Crimes**

A psychological perspective is indispensable for unraveling the intricate link between prejudice

and violence. Sumner's concept of ethnocentrism, articulated in 1906, sheds light on how favoritism towards one's own group can breed negativity towards others. This inherent bias towards one's own group, when unchecked, can contribute to the devaluation and demonization of out-groups, laying the foundation for hate crimes.

Allport's contact hypothesis, proposed in 1979, offers another psychological framework for understanding intergroup hostility. It posits that increased exposure and positive interactions between different groups can reduce prejudice. This theory highlights the importance of fostering meaningful interactions between diverse communities as a means of mitigating the risk of hate crimes.

Tajfel and Turner's social identity theory, also from 1979, delves into the psychological mechanisms that drive individuals to maintain a positive distinctiveness of their own group over others. This theory underscores the role of group identity in shaping intergroup dynamics and, by extension, the potential for hostility.

These psychological frameworks collectively underscore the importance of addressing deep-seated biases as integral components of efforts to mitigate the risk of violence. Understanding the psychological mechanisms that contribute to hate crimes is essential for developing interventions that target the root causes, rather than merely addressing the surface-level manifestations.

In conclusion, both societal and psychological factors play pivotal roles in influencing hate crimes in India. The complex interplay of economic disparities, power struggles, propaganda, misinformation, dehumanization, and deep-seated psychological biases creates a challenging landscape. Comprehensive strategies are imperative to address these multifaceted factors and foster a society that is resilient against the perpetuation of hate crimes.

### **Media Influences on Hate Crimes**

The media's role in shaping perceptions of hate crimes is pivotal, yet it exists in an ambivalent space. Nellis and Savage (2012) contend that inflammatory media coverage post-trigger events has the potential to escalate violence, emphasizing the delicate balance between upholding free speech and preventing harm (Smith, 2018). The power of the media to amplify the impact of hate crimes is underscored, as sensationalized reporting can contribute to a heightened sense of fear and animosity within society.

Contrastingly, Dayag's (2018) research provides a counter-narrative by demonstrating that constructive reporting, which humanizes victims, can contribute to a reduction in hate crimes.

This suggests that media outlets have the capacity to play a positive role in fostering empathy and understanding, countering the negative narratives that often fuel acts of prejudice-driven violence. These findings collectively underscore the imperative for responsible media practices that seek to mitigate, rather than exacerbate, societal tensions. Striking a balance between the imperative of free speech and the responsibility to prevent harm is crucial in crafting media practices that contribute to a more inclusive and harmonious societal discourse.

### **Legal and Social Interventions**

The effectiveness of interventions aimed at curtailing hate crimes presents a complex landscape with mixed conclusions. Gerstenfeld (2013) advocates for social media regulation as a means to curb the dissemination of inflammatory content, acknowledging the challenges in enforcement. The evolving nature of online platforms poses unique challenges, necessitating ongoing efforts to strike a balance between freedom of expression and preventing the spread of harmful content that incites hate.

Perry and Alvi's (2011) research suggest that tolerance education programs have the potential to reduce youth prejudice. However, the lingering uncertainty regarding long-term attitudinal change highlights the need for continued evaluation and refinement of educational initiatives. The dynamic nature of societal attitudes and the persistence of deep-seated biases necessitate ongoing efforts to foster understanding and tolerance, particularly among younger generations. Laws et al.'s (2019) exploration of community policing efforts reveals context-dependent impacts, emphasizing the need for tailored approaches that consider the unique sociopolitical realities of different communities. While community policing holds promise, its effectiveness is contingent on factors such as community engagement, trust-building, and adapting strategies to suit diverse contexts. This underscores the importance of nuanced, context-specific interventions that recognize the heterogeneity of communities within India.

### **Challenges in Implementation and Future Directions**

Despite the valuable insights provided by the existing literature on hate crimes in India, challenges persist in translating this knowledge into effective interventions. Implementation hurdles, cultural nuances, and the dynamic nature of societal structures pose formidable challenges to the application of proposed solutions. Future research must prioritize not only the identification of effective interventions but also a thorough understanding of the contextual factors influencing their success or failure.

Addressing these challenges is paramount for the development of sustainable strategies that resonate with the unique sociocultural landscape of India. Cultural nuances, regional variations, and the evolving nature of societal structures demand a nuanced and flexible approach to intervention strategies. Future research should not only focus on identifying effective interventions but also delve into understanding the contextual intricacies that influence the reception and impact of these interventions within diverse communities.

In conclusion, the literature review highlights the pressing need for targeted public education initiatives to enhance awareness of hate crimes in India. The complex interplay of sociopolitical and psychological factors underscores the multifaceted nature of the issue. Media's role appears ambivalent, emphasizing the delicate balance between inflammatory coverage and constructive reporting. The efficacy of interventions, both legal and social, remains a subject of mixed conclusions, emphasizing the need for nuanced, context-specific approaches. Challenges in implementation, cultural nuances, and the dynamic nature of societal structures underscore the importance of ongoing research to develop effective and sustainable strategies for combating hate crimes in India.

## **CHAPTER 3**

### **METHODOLOGY**

#### **3.1. Aim and Objectives**

- 1) To examine the awareness of occurrence of hate crimes.
- 2) To investigate the impact of societal factors on the perpetration of hate crimes.
- 3) Explore the psychological mechanisms that contribute to the connection between prejudice and violent behavior.
- 4) To analyze the role of media and its influence on promoting or mitigating hate crimes.
- 5) To assess the effectiveness of existing legal and social measures in preventing and addressing hate crimes.

### **3.2. Research Design**

The method used for the research study are mixed methods research designs, combining both quantitative and qualitative research methods to provide a more comprehensive understanding of a research topic. By using a mixed methods approach, researchers can gather both numerical data and rich, descriptive insights. This allows for a deeper exploration of complex phenomena and a more holistic view of the research question.

### **3.3. Data Collection**

The total number of participants in this study were 30. A minimum of 30 people had to take part in the experiment for it to be considered a success, and there was no set cap on the number of people who may enrol. The sampling method used was random snow ball technique. The information was gathered through a quantitative approach of an online questionnaire and qualitative approach of case studies. The participants are all over India above the age of 18. When collecting data through questionnaires for research, we typically design a set of questions to gather information from participants. The questionnaire can be administered in person, through online surveys, or via mail. Participants respond to the questions, providing their thoughts, opinions, or experiences. The data collected from questionnaires can then be analysed to draw insights and conclusions for your research. It's important to ensure that the questions are clear, unbiased, and relevant to the research objectives.

### **3.4. Data Analysis**

The thematic analysis approach is used to analyse the data gathered. Thematic analysis is a method used in qualitative research to identify and analyze patterns, themes, and meanings within a dataset. It involves systematically coding and categorizing data to uncover recurring ideas or concepts. By organizing the data into themes, researchers can gain a deeper understanding of the underlying phenomena being studied. Thematic analysis allows for a comprehensive exploration of the data, providing insights into the experiences, perspectives, and emotions of the participants.

### **3.5. Ethical considerations**

Before taking part in the study, consent form was sent across with the online questionnaire. The individuals' participation was purely voluntary. The participants were free to depart at any time. Participants' private information will always be maintained in strict confidence. Even so, the findings would be available for more research. The participant's time and effort were seen as valuable. In the study, there were no significant advantages or dangers. The study's objective was explained to the participants.

## CHAPTER 4

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

A thematic approach was used to analyse the gathered data. The data was coded into various themes and displays comparable patterns. The questions were categorised into different main themes and sub themes accordingly.

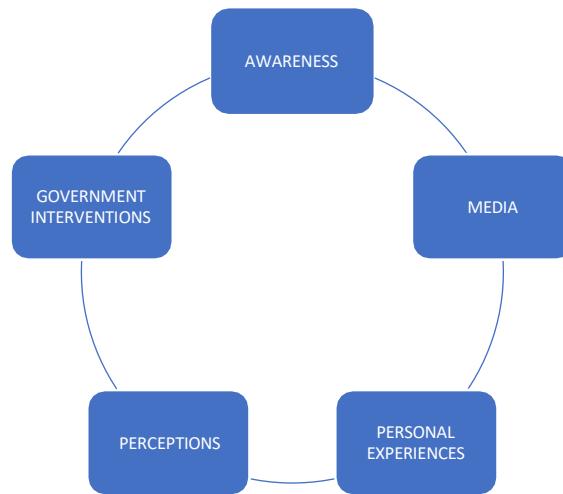
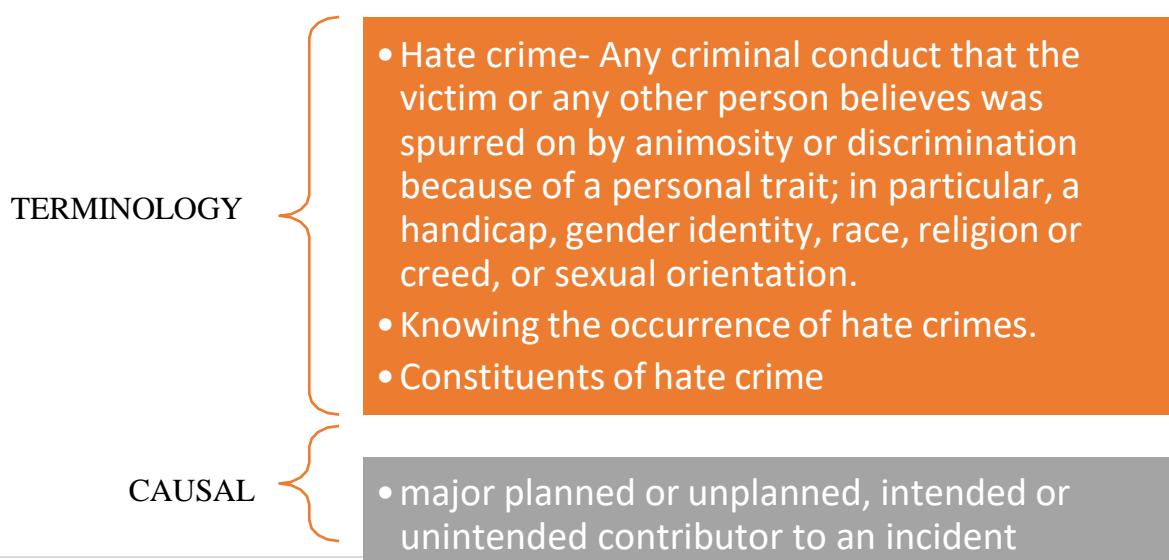


FIGURE 1- 5 MAIN THEMES

## 4.1. AWARENESS



## FACTORS

Figure 2- Schematic representation of sub themes under Awareness theme.

The online survey received 31 total responses assessing perceptions related to hate crimes. The data was analysed using descriptive statistics to summarize overall trends.

The participants answered the questions related to the awareness theme and the below were the results.

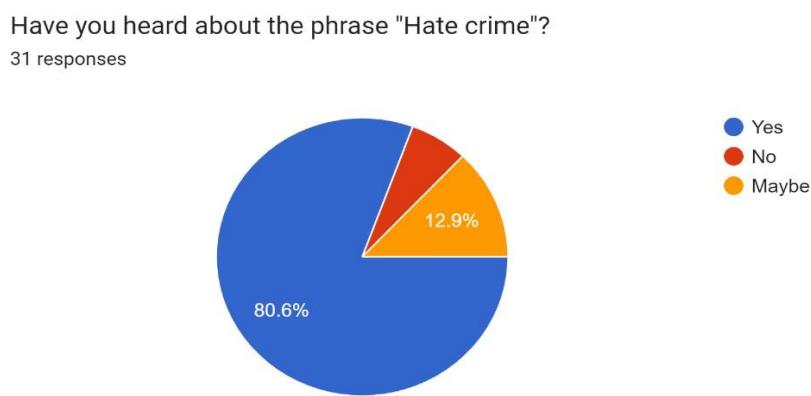


Figure 3- Pie chart representation of answers to Question 1.

As seen in the above pie chart, 80.6% of the participants were aware about the term "Hate crime", 12.9% were not sure of it and 6.5% were totally unaware of it. Awareness of the Term "Hate Crime", When asked whether they had heard the term "hate crime" before, a large majority of 80.6% (n=25) responded yes. Only 12.9% (n=4) said they were not familiar with the term. This indicates relatively high awareness of the basic terminology related to hate crimes among the survey respondents.

The recognition of the term "hate crime" among survey respondents marks a significant initial step in addressing this societal issue. It indicates a fundamental awareness of offenses driven

by bias or prejudice, creating a foundation for broader conversations about the implications of hate crimes on society. This awareness serves as a catalyst for collective efforts aimed at addressing and preventing such incidents.

While the acknowledgment of the term is a positive sign, it's crucial to delve beyond surface- level recognition. The survey presents an opportunity to conduct more in-depth investigations into respondents' nuanced understanding of hate crimes. Exploring their comprehension of the diverse forms of bias or prejudice that may motivate criminal acts could provide a more insightful perspective on their awareness levels, contributing to a more thorough understanding of public perceptions.

What according to you constitutes a hate crime?

31 responses

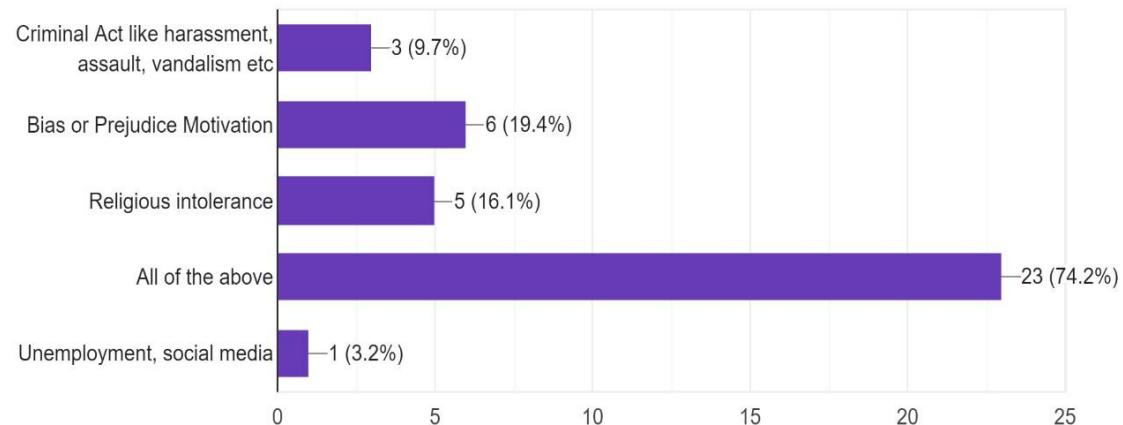


Figure 4- Representation of answers to Question 2.

Despite general familiarity with the term, only 74.2% (n=23) selected the most comprehensive

definition of a hate crime as "a criminal act motivated by bias or prejudice". Nearly 20% (n=6) defined it solely as religious intolerance and another 9.7% (n=3) said just criminal acts like assault constitute hate crimes. This suggests that while the term "hate crime" is widely recognized, there is less clarity on the full criteria that qualify an act as a hate crime. Targeted educational campaigns on the concept could help improve public understanding.

To address this gap, there is a clear need for targeted educational campaigns that delve into the intricacies of what constitutes a hate crime. These initiatives should aim to provide the public with a deeper understanding of the various forms of bias or prejudice that can motivate such criminal acts. By offering clarity on the full spectrum of behaviors and motivations encapsulated by the term "hate crime," these educational efforts can contribute significantly to enhancing public comprehension.

Educational campaigns could encompass information about the legal definitions of hate crimes, the different types of biases involved, and real-world examples to illustrate the complexities of these incidents. Additionally, providing guidance on recognizing and reporting hate crimes would empower individuals to play an active role in combating such offenses.

Do you have any knowledge about how to report hate crimes to the police?

31 responses

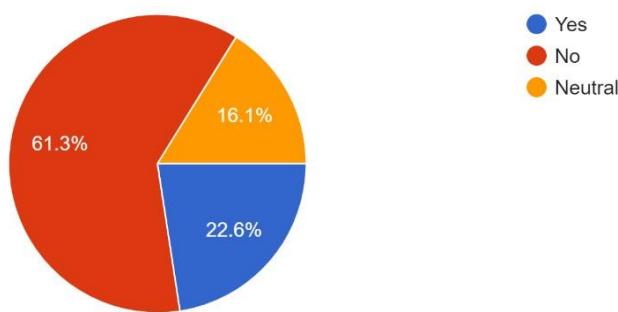


Figure 5- Pie chart representation of answers to Question 3.

The survey findings highlight a significant lack of awareness among respondents regarding hate crime reporting procedures, with only 22.6% indicating familiarity with the process. This emphasizes the urgent need for targeted public awareness campaigns to educate individuals about how to report hate crimes. Improving awareness in this area is crucial to ensuring a more effective and timely response to such incidents.

The absence of knowledge about hate crime reporting procedures poses a notable obstacle to addressing and preventing these offenses. Public understanding of how to report hate crimes is essential to ensuring that incidents are promptly brought to the attention of law enforcement, enabling swift investigations and interventions.

To address this gap, awareness campaigns should focus on disseminating information through various channels, including social media, community workshops, and educational programs. These initiatives should not only aim to increase awareness about the existence of hate crime reporting mechanisms but also provide practical guidance on the steps individuals can take to report incidents. This may include sharing relevant contact information, emphasizing the importance of documentation and eyewitness accounts, and addressing any concerns individuals may have about reporting such incidents.

What do you believe are the primary sources of prejudice?

31 responses

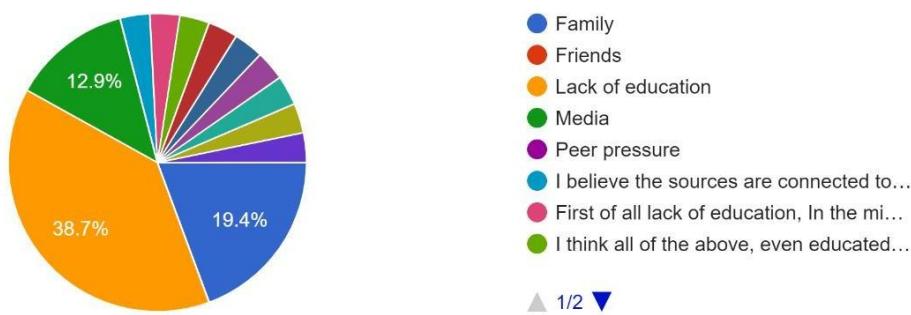


Figure 6- Pie chart representation of answers to Question 4.

Survey participants pointed out several main sources contributing to prejudice, showing that the issue is complex and has various origins. The key sources identified by respondents were:

1. Lack of Education (38.7%):

- Participants highlighted a lack of education as a significant contributor to prejudice, suggesting the need for better educational initiatives to address biases and promote inclusivity.

2. Family (19.4%):

- Family dynamics were mentioned as a major source of prejudice, emphasizing the influential role of upbringing and familial attitudes in shaping individual perspectives.

3. Media (12.9%):

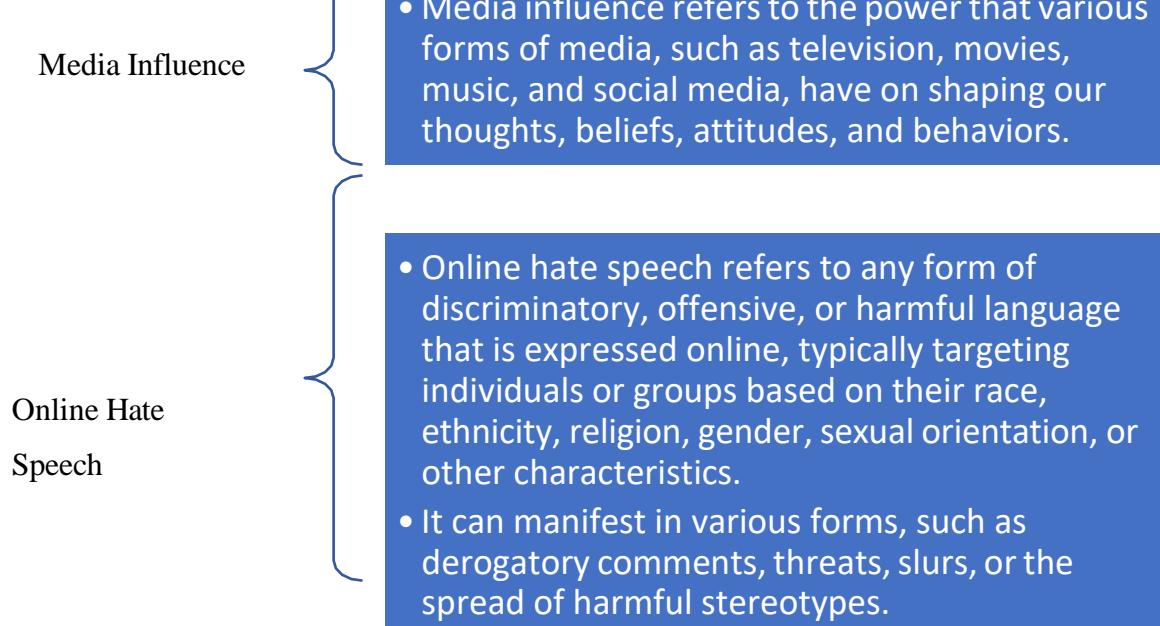
- The media was recognized as a critical source of prejudice, indicating that biased portrayals and narratives in media content can contribute to the formation of prejudiced attitudes among individuals.

Social circles, including friends and peer pressure, were acknowledged as factors influencing prejudiced beliefs, highlighting the role of interpersonal relationships in shaping individual

perspectives. Respondents pointed to broader societal influences and growing circumstances as sources of prejudice, recognizing the impact of external factors on shaping individuals' attitudes and biases.

The survey participants, aligning with the provided options, indicated that prejudice has diverse origins. The varied responses highlight the interconnected nature of these sources, emphasizing the need to address prejudice through a comprehensive approach that includes education, familial influences, media literacy, and consideration of the broader societal context.

## 4.2. MEDIA



Under the main theme of Media, there are two sub-themes, Media influence and Online Hate

speech.

A large majority of participants, 87.1% (n=27), recognized that media significantly influences prejudiced attitudes, indicating a widespread awareness of the potential risks associated with media impact.

Respondents expressed worries about biases in media reporting, particularly in the context of conflicts and minority representation. This indicates a shared understanding among participants that negative portrayals in the media can be harmful and may contribute to the development of prejudiced attitudes. The recognition of biases emphasizes the importance of considering how media representations may exacerbate societal tensions.

In summary, the survey results point to a strong awareness among participants regarding the influential role of the media in shaping prejudiced attitudes. The belief that media often impacts hate crimes underscores the perceived significance of media influence in contributing to these incidents. Concerns about biases in reporting highlight the need for a nuanced understanding of media's societal role, especially in relation to conflict and minority representation. Overall, participants view media representations as a significant factor in fostering prejudice and influencing hate crime occurrences by portraying certain groups unfavorably.

Do you believe that the way that some groups are portrayed in the media might lead to discriminatory attitudes?

31 responses

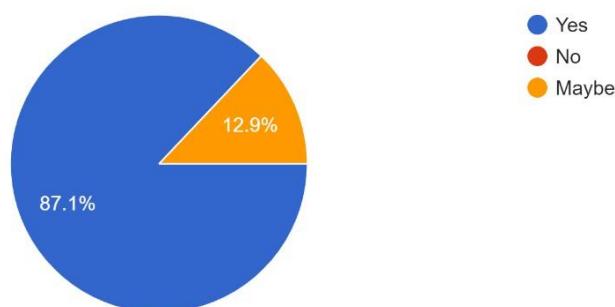


Figure 7- Pie chart representation of answers to Question 5.

How much do you think media portrayals of different groups influence prejudiced behaviour or hate crimes?

31 responses

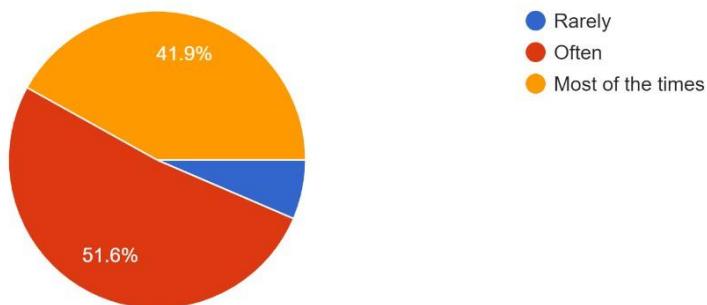


Figure 8- Pie chart representation of answers to Question 6.

More than half of the respondents, specifically 51.6% (n=16), emphasized that media has a frequent impact on hate crimes, indicating a notable perception of its substantial influence. This finding underscores a prevailing belief among participants that media plays a significant role in shaping attitudes and behaviors that may contribute to the occurrence of hate crimes. The acknowledgment of media's frequent impact suggests a heightened awareness among respondents of the potential link between media influence and the manifestation of hate crimes.

Online hate speech can have serious consequences, contributing to the perpetuation of discrimination, prejudice, and even inciting real-world violence. It's crucial to promote online environments that are respectful, inclusive, and free from hate speech.

When the participants were asked the question – “Can you think of any occasion where the media helped to sway public opinion on a given group in a negative way?”

The responses from the survey indicated a widespread recognition of instances where the media has played a role in negatively influencing public opinions towards certain groups. Here's an analysis of the provided responses:

1. **Kerala Story:** The mention of the "Kerala Story" suggests a specific incident or narrative related to Kerala that may have been portrayed negatively by the media. Further details would be needed to delve into the specifics.

2. **Religious Dispute on Education:** The reference to a recent dispute showcasing the influence of religious practice on the education system highlights a potential case where media coverage contributed to negative perceptions.
3. **Generalization of Minority Actions:** Respondents point out instances where media tends to generalize the actions of a minority, contributing to stereotypes and prejudice. Terms like 'love jihad' and 'land jihad' are cited as examples of narrative-shaping.
4. **Religious Discrimination and Violence:** Several incidents involving discrimination and violence based on religious and caste affiliations are mentioned. These incidents showcase the deep impact media portrayal can have on public attitudes, leading to real-world consequences.
5. **Impact of Media on Perception of Women:** The mention of how media concludes a woman's dressing as an invitation for harm reflects a broader issue of victim-blaming perpetuated by certain media narratives.
6. **COVID-19 and Muslim Community:** Instances during the COVID-19 pandemic where media channels focused on Muslims who traveled for religious gatherings, potentially contributing to the stigmatization of the entire community.
7. **Hindu-Muslim Riots:** The acknowledgment that media hype can exacerbate Hindu-Muslim riots highlights the role media can play in escalating communal tensions.
8. **Fear Mongering During COVID-19:** The mention of media installing fear among citizens during the COVID-19 pandemic underscores the potential negative impact of sensationalized reporting.
9. **Different Media Perspectives on Israel-Palestine Conflict:** The example of the Hamas and Israel war illustrates how different media channels can present conflicting angles, influencing public opinion.
10. **Portrayal of Historical Events:** Instances like the Godhra riots and the building of the Ram Masjid by demolishing a mosque showcase how historical events are portrayed in the media, influencing public perceptions.
11. **Media Trials and Legal Matters:** The response refers to media portrayal affecting ongoing legal cases, emphasizing the potential dangers of swaying public opinion

through media coverage.

**12. Advertisements Reflecting Bias:** The mention of advertisements, like the Tanishq Jewellery ad, suggests that even commercial content can contribute to negative perceptions when it comes to portraying different groups.

**13. Media Coverage Post-9/11 and AIDS Epidemic:** Historical references include the negative impact of media coverage post-9/11 and during the early AIDS epidemic on public opinions towards Muslims and the LGBTQ+ community.

These responses collectively highlight the varied ways in which media narratives can contribute to the shaping of public opinion, often with real-world consequences for marginalized or targeted groups.

#### 4.3. PERSONAL EXPERIENCES

Have you ever come across offensive language or prejudice comments on social media?  
31 responses

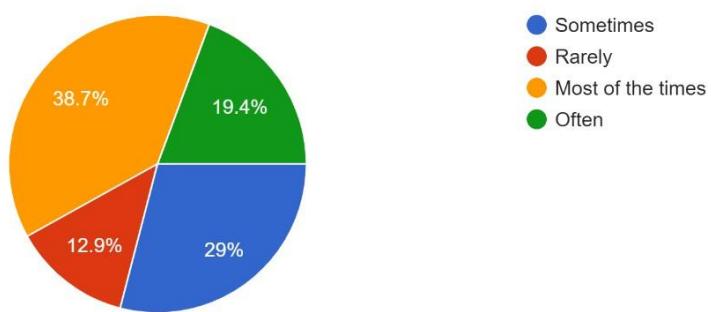


Figure 9- Pie chart representation of answers to Question 7.

The question on encountering offensive language in social media comments reflects the prevalence of discriminatory remarks in our digital society. It highlights the need for digital literacy, underscores the impact on individuals' experiences, and points to potential interventions to foster a more positive online environment.

#### 1. High Incidence of Offensive Language:

- A substantial 38.7% of respondents reported encountering offensive or prejudiced language "Most of the time." This indicates a concerning prevalence of such content, suggesting that a significant portion of the surveyed individuals regularly confront offensive language on social media.

#### 2. Frequent Encounters:

- Another 19.4% mentioned encountering offensive language "Often." This further emphasizes the frequency with which individuals come across content that includes discriminatory or offensive remarks. The term "often" suggests that such encounters are not isolated incidents but occur regularly.

#### 3. Moderate Frequency:

- Nearly one-third of respondents, comprising 29%, reported encountering offensive language "Sometimes." While not a majority, this still signifies a considerable portion of participants who occasionally face instances of prejudiced or offensive content on social media.

#### 4. Limited Instances of Rare Encounters:

- A smaller proportion, 12.9%, indicated encountering offensive language "Rarely." This suggests that a minority of respondents experience infrequent instances of offensive content on social media.

Overall, these findings underscore the pervasive nature of offensive or prejudiced language on social media platforms. The majority of respondents have experienced such content either frequently or occasionally, indicating the need for heightened awareness, digital literacy, and

potential measures to address and mitigate the impact of offensive language in online spaces.

Are hate crimes, in your perspective, more serious than other types of crimes?  
31 responses

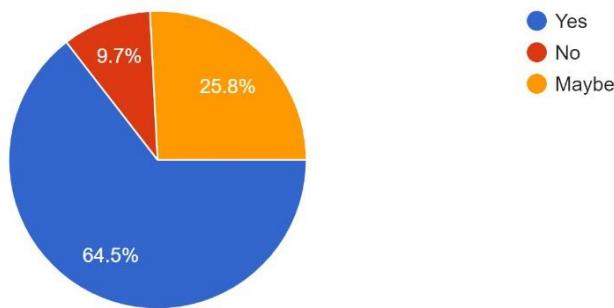


Figure 10- Pie chart representation of answers to Question 8.

The data reveals a noteworthy insight into how individuals perceive the seriousness of hate crimes in comparison to other criminal acts. A majority, 64.5% (n=20), believe that hate crimes carry a heightened level of severity, indicating a significant awareness of the gravity associated with these offenses. However, the data also highlights a substantial 25.8% (n=8) expressing uncertainty, suggesting a diversity of opinions within the surveyed group. This diversity emphasizes the importance of ongoing discussions and understanding different viewpoints on the severity of hate crimes.

#### Analysis of Responses on the Experience of Hate Crimes in the Region:

1. **No:** Several respondents state they haven't personally encountered the effects of hate crimes, indicating a segment of the population unaffected by direct exposure to such incidents.
2. **Yes, Communal Fights:** Instances of communal fights during festivals shed light on the tangible consequences of hate crimes for community relations, especially during significant cultural or religious events.
3. **Dispute over Hijab and Saffron Scarf:** The mention of disputes related to religious attire, such as the protest over wearing hijab and counter-protest on wearing saffron scarves, emphasizes the intersection of identity, education, and values in public

discourse.

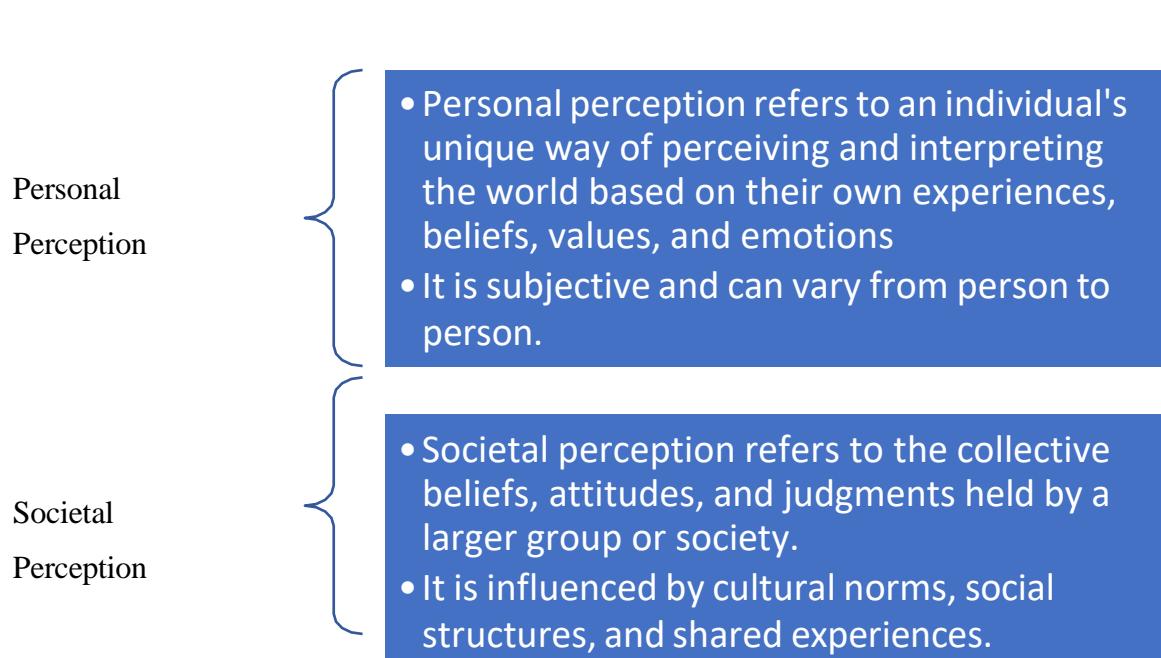
4. **Online Hate during Nuh-Mewat Violence:** Observations of online hate actors exacerbating tensions during regional violence highlight the role of digital platforms in amplifying hate narratives.
5. **Movies Triggering Rallies and Riots:** The connection between movies portraying hatred towards specific communities and subsequent rallies and riots led by extremists underscores the influence of media and entertainment on public sentiment.
6. **Discrimination in Kerala:** Despite a high literacy rate, reports of discrimination and hate in Kerala expose the persistence of biases, challenging the assumption that education alone eradicates prejudices.
7. **Reluctance to Buy from Muslim Shops:** Instances of non-Muslims being hesitant to buy goods from Muslim shops indicate economic repercussions of hate crimes, affecting livelihoods and community relations.
8. **Hate Crimes Between Hindus and Muslims:** Descriptions of hate crimes in states like UP and Bihar, with the goal of establishing India as a Hindu country, illustrate the geographical and religious dimensions of such incidents.
9. **Observation without Personal Experience:** Some respondents acknowledge not personally experiencing hate crimes but note indirect exposure, prompting community discussions about inclusivity and tolerance.
10. **Media Creating Negative Sikh Image:** Mention of media creating a negative image of Sikhs as Khalistanis, despite the disconnect between Khalistan and Sikhism, underscores the impact of media narratives on perpetuating misinformation.
11. **Witnessing Hate Crimes:** Instances of witnessing hate crimes through jokes or actual violence reveal the prevalence of religious intolerance in various forms, contributing to a climate of fear and animosity.

These responses collectively portray a diverse range of experiences and perceptions regarding the impact of hate crimes. From communal tensions during festivals to online hate campaigns, the accounts highlight the multifaceted nature of hate crimes and their far-reaching consequences on communities, relationships, and perceptions.

#### 4.4. PERCEPTIONS

Personal perception influences how we understand and make meaning of our surroundings, shaping our thoughts, attitudes, and behaviours. Societal perception can shape our understanding of various issues, influence social norms, and impact how we interact with others.

Both personal and societal perceptions play a crucial role in shaping our worldview and influencing our actions. They can impact our relationships, decision-making, and the way we navigate through society. It's important to be aware of the influence of our personal perceptions and to critically examine societal perceptions to ensure fairness, inclusivity, and understanding.



Do you think prejudice and discrimination still exist today?

31 responses

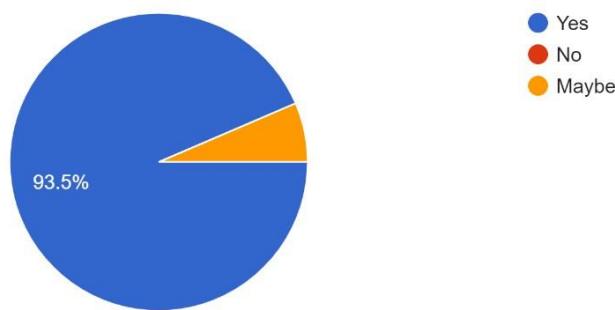


Figure 11- Pie chart representation of answers to Question 9.

The strong consensus, with 93.5% of respondents acknowledging the persistence of prejudice today, highlights a widespread awareness within the surveyed community about the ongoing existence of discriminatory attitudes. This shared understanding implies that, despite societal progress, a significant portion of individuals perceives that prejudice remains a relevant social challenge.

Several factors contribute to this collective recognition. Ongoing reports of discrimination in various contexts, whether based on race, ethnicity, religion, gender, or other attributes, likely contribute to the shared belief among respondents. Media coverage of discriminatory events, discussions around social justice, and awareness of systemic inequalities may also shape this collective understanding.

Moreover, the high percentage indicates a common understanding across diverse backgrounds within the surveyed group. It suggests that individuals from various demographic and social segments share a mutual awareness of the persistence of prejudice, emphasizing the significance of the issue.

This finding has implications for societal efforts. The broad acknowledgment of existing

prejudice indicates a collective call to address these issues systematically. It underscores the need for comprehensive strategies aimed at fostering inclusivity, promoting diversity, and dismantling systemic barriers that contribute to discriminatory attitudes.

In summary, the overwhelming agreement among respondents that prejudice is still prevalent reflects a shared societal awareness, emphasizing the ongoing importance of addressing and mitigating discriminatory attitudes for a more equitable and inclusive future.

When the participants were asked – “Have you ever engaged in a discussion with someone from a different background that made you question your own biases or prejudices?”

The responses to the question about engaging in discussions with individuals from different backgrounds reveal a spectrum of experiences. Some respondents admit to never having questioned their biases, indicating a lack of introspection in their interactions. On the other hand, individuals acknowledge that exposure to diverse backgrounds, especially through media consumption, prompted them to reevaluate preconceived notions. Caste-based biases are specifically mentioned as a subject of questioning in one response, emphasizing the impact of social constructs on perceptions. Some respondents express a continuous process of questioning biases, suggesting that interactions consistently prompt self-reflection. The importance of personal engagement is evident in responses that highlight how close contact with individuals targeted by biases led to a realization that prejudices are often shaped by societal and media influences. Overall, these diverse experiences underscore the complex nature of bias examination, influenced by individual interactions, media, and societal constructs.

#### **Analysis of Responses on the Role of Interpersonal Relationships and Empathy in Reducing Hate Crimes:**

Interpersonal relationships and the cultivation of empathy emerge as pivotal factors in mitigating hate crimes and fostering tolerance, as indicated by respondents. The consensus is that increased interaction facilitates a better understanding of diverse perspectives, making individuals more tolerant. Empathy, defined as the ability to comprehend others' motivations and intentions, is considered instrumental in developing a nuanced understanding and justifying diverse actions and behaviors. Respondents note that ego, a reluctance to listen, and a lack of open communication may impede social evolution, emphasizing the importance of respectful

discussions. Some express that opinions are often shaped by personal incidents or experiences of those close, underscoring the significance of engaging with people from different communities to dispel stereotypes.

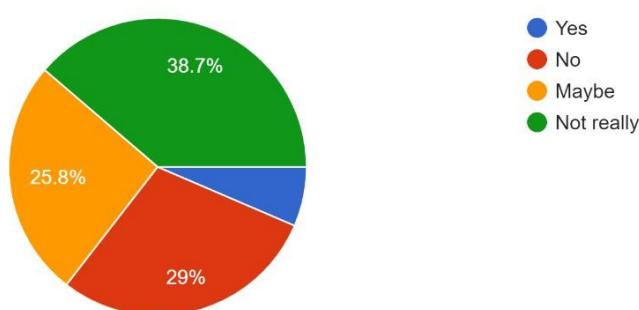
Having a proper understanding of various religions and beliefs, along with respectful relationships, is identified as a means to reduce hate crimes. Treating everyone as humans, understanding individual problems, and empathizing with their experiences are viewed as fundamental steps. Education and healthy relationships are seen as sources of positivity and solace that can contribute to a more tolerant society. Interfaith relationships are specifically mentioned as potential catalysts for promoting tolerance by highlighting the importance of each other's religions.

Empathy is seen as a tool to change perspectives, encouraging individuals to think beyond stereotypes and biases. Respondents believe that interpersonal relationships can break down prejudices, fostering a humanitarian mindset that, in turn, reduces hate crimes. Open dialogue, discussions, and acceptance of differences are viewed as essential components in building a united and tolerant society. Overall, the responses underscore the transformative power of empathy and interpersonal relationships in shaping a more inclusive and understanding society, thereby contributing to the reduction of hate crimes.

#### 4.5. GOVERNMENT INTERVENTIONS

Do you believe that hate crimes are effectively addressed by the justice system?

31 responses



The survey findings, indicating a lack of trust in the justice system's effectiveness in addressing

hate crimes, reveal significant concerns within the surveyed community. A substantial portion, at 38.7%, voiced the belief that the justice system falls short in effectively handling hate crimes, signaling widespread doubt about its current efficacy.

Several factors may contribute to this lack of trust. Cases where hate crimes were not appropriately addressed or resulted in lenient outcomes might be influencing public perceptions, undermining confidence in the system's ability to deal adequately with such offenses. Instances of perceived biases within the legal framework or cases where hate crimes were not properly categorized or prioritized may also contribute to this skepticism.

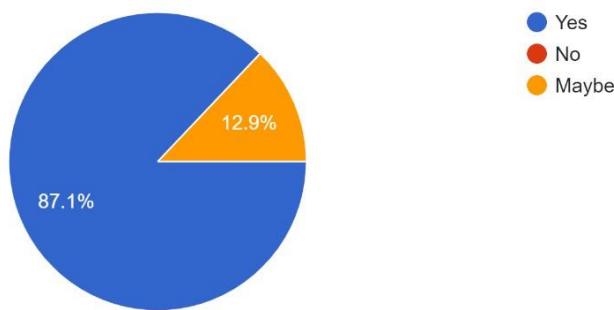
The "Maybe" responses from 25.8% of participants suggest a nuanced consideration of the complexities involved in the justice system's response to hate crimes. This subgroup might be reflecting on the challenges faced by the legal system, such as issues related to definitions, enforcement, or systemic barriers that hinder effective responses.

The 29% who unequivocally stated that the justice system does not effectively handle hate crime cases represent a sizable portion of respondents calling for substantial improvements or reforms within the legal framework.

In contrast, the minimal 6.5% expressing confidence in the justice system's ability to address hate crimes highlight a smaller but optimistic group. Understanding the perspectives within this minority could offer insights into areas where the justice system is perceived as effective or instances where successful interventions have occurred.

In summary, the survey responses reveal widespread skepticism about the justice system's ability to effectively address hate crimes. This prompts considerations about potential reforms, increased public awareness, and the need for a system that instills confidence in the community. Addressing these concerns is crucial for fostering a sense of justice and accountability in the context of hate crimes.

Do you believe that there should be stricter laws against hate speech on online platforms?  
31 responses



The significant majority, with 87.1% of respondents supporting stricter laws against online hate speech, reveals a widespread acknowledgment of the pressing need for stronger regulations in the digital realm. This clear consensus highlights a growing concern about the increase in hate speech online and its negative impacts on individuals and communities.

Various factors may contribute to this strong support for more stringent regulations. The escalating incidents of online hate speech, driven by factors like anonymity and the amplification capabilities of social media, likely contribute to heightened public awareness. Instances of high-profile online harassment and the spread of discriminatory content may have influenced respondents' views, emphasizing the urgency for robust legal measures.

The "maybe" responses from the remaining participants suggest a degree of uncertainty or nuanced consideration. This subgroup might include individuals weighing the balance between the necessity to curb hate speech and potential concerns about implications for free speech and digital expression. Understanding the perspectives within this subgroup can offer valuable insights into the complexities surrounding the regulation of online content.

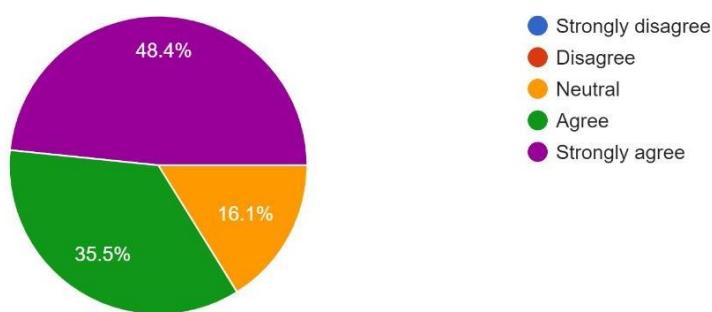
The call for stricter laws also aligns with global discussions on the responsibilities of online platforms in moderating harmful content. The prevalence of online hate speech has prompted debates about the role of legislation in holding platforms accountable and fostering a safer digital environment.

In summary, the data indicates strong public support for more stringent laws against online hate speech, revealing a collective acknowledgment of the challenges posed by hate speech in digital spaces and a call for proactive measures to ensure a safer and more inclusive online environment. Addressing the nuances within the "maybe" responses can further enrich

discussions on finding a balanced approach to regulating hate speech without compromising fundamental principles of free expression.

Should the government be involved in putting hate crime prevention measures into action?

31 responses



The substantial agreement among respondents, with 35.5% expressing the belief that the government should intervene to prevent hate crimes, reflects a clear public expectation for decisive action and policy reforms. Nearly half of the respondents, specifically 48.4% (n=15), strongly advocate for government intervention, underscoring the urgency and intensity of the collective call for concrete measures.

This widespread support for government involvement indicates a shared understanding that addressing hate crimes requires systemic responses beyond individual efforts. It suggests a belief in the government's role as a central actor in addressing the underlying causes of hate crimes and implementing effective preventive measures.

Possible contributors to this sentiment include heightened awareness due to notable hate crime incidents, both domestically and globally, and an increasing recognition of the complex relationship between government policies, societal dynamics, and the prevalence of hate crimes.

The strong agreement, particularly the significant percentage advocating for strong government intervention, signifies that the public expects more than mere acknowledgment of the issue—they are demanding practical and proactive strategies. This may encompass legislative actions,

community engagement initiatives, and educational programs designed to prevent and combat hate crimes effectively.

The data also highlights the role of authorities in fostering community security and justice. It suggests that individuals are looking to the government not only as a regulatory body but also as a catalyst for positive societal change, capable of promoting social cohesion and inclusivity.

In summary, the widespread support for government action, especially the strong advocacy from nearly half of the respondents, emphasizes a clear public expectation for tangible initiatives and policy reforms to address and prevent hate crimes. This finding underscores the need for effective collaboration between the government and the public in tackling the root causes and consequences of hate crimes in society.

When the participants were asked the question- “What part, in your opinion, should the government have in combating hate crimes? What laws or programs do you believe would successfully stop incidences of hatred?”

Respondents highlight diverse strategies for the government to combat hate crimes, including the representation of minorities in leadership, legal interventions such as stricter laws against derogatory terms, and the elimination of caste-based classifications. There is a call for educating political leaders and promoting collaboration between the government and media to foster secularism and depict unity among communities. While recognizing the limitations of laws alone, recommendations stress the importance of eradicating casteism, corruption, and promoting awareness through educational initiatives. Other suggestions include anonymous reporting mechanisms, stiffer punishments for perpetrators, and efficient online reporting systems with penalties and fines to deter hate crimes. The overall sentiment underscores the need for a comprehensive, multifaceted approach, combining legal measures, education, and societal awareness to effectively address and prevent hate crimes.

When asked what role government should play, common suggestions included:

- Implementing educational programs to reduce prejudice, especially in schools (n=12)
- Enforcing current laws stringently and equitably without partisan biases (n=9)
- Regulating media coverage and social media platforms to control dangerous speech (n=8)

- Fostering interfaith and inter-caste interactions and dialogue to improve relationships (n=5)
- Ensuring swift justice and punishments for hate crimes to deter future acts (n=4)
- Countering corrupt political rhetoric that feeds divisions between groups (n=3)

This breakdown reveals the multifaceted response the public expects from government spanning legal, educational, media, political and social dimensions.

Additionally, when asked what reforms could help stop hate crimes, the most frequent responses were:

- Stricter laws and penalties (n=9)
- Educational campaigns (n=8)
- Removing biases and increasing secularism (n=5)
- Curbing media misinformation (n=4)
- Youth programs fostering tolerance (n=3)
- Anonymous reporting mechanisms (n=2)

Overall, the data highlights the desire for a systematic government-led effort with both punitive deterrence and promoting social cohesion to mitigate hate crimes.

## **CONCLUSION**

In summary, this study delved into public perceptions regarding critical facets of hate crimes in India, spanning awareness, personal experiences, perspectives on media influence, and government interventions. The thematic analysis uncovered a pronounced apprehension regarding persisting prejudices and the influential role of biased media portrayals in fueling

hate crimes. Simultaneously, it shed light on significant knowledge gaps surrounding hate crime definitions, reporting procedures, and legal processes.

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