



## IMPACT OF PREJUDICE AND ATTITUDE ON BEHAVIOUR OF YOUTH TOWARDS THEIR FELLOW MATES

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### **ABSTRACT**

*Prejudice and attitude have a considerable impact on the behaviour of youth. Family values, Social Group Identity, In-group Norms, Anxiety, Harboursing Anger and Intolerance, Cultural Difference are the factors chosen for the study. The study reveals that few of the factors do have a significant impact on prejudice and attitude on behaviour. Prejudice and attitude play a vital role in exhibiting positive or negative behaviour towards our fellow mates.*

**Keywords:** *Attitude, Behaviour, Family values, Group, Identity, Norms, Prejudice,*

### **INTRODUCTION**

Prejudice is a social sickness that persists from generation to generation. The word prejudice comes from the Latin word 'prejudium', which also means prejudging an individual even before we get to know them. Prejudice is a biased negative attitude of an individual that influences the behaviour of youth. Prejudice being preconceived notions regarding an object, people, events, situations do have an impact on attitude and thus on behaviour of humans in general, but today's youth is highly governed by their psychological notions they carry and at times exhibit positive or negative actions. Prejudice is caused due to individual differences in ideology, personality, social group identity, group norms etc.(Dovidio et al. 2019). Prejudice is exhibited in different stages (Allport, 1954) namely;

- a) **Antilocution-** Antilocution takes place when an in-group freely makes falsely exhibits negative images of an out-group. Antilocution in itself is not harmful, but it sets the stage for more severe outlets for prejudice.
- b) **Avoidance-** It happens when members of a particular group knowingly avoids people of an outside group. Through avoidance no direct harm may be intended, but psychological harm often results through social exclusion.
- c) **Discrimination-** When the in-group members discriminate against the out-group members by denying them opportunities and services, putting prejudice into actions.
- d) **Physical attack-** Were in-group members causing maximum physical harm to members of an out-group.
- e) **Extermination-**The in-group attempts to eliminate either the entirety or a large fraction of the undesired group of people who fall in an out-group.

Attitudes are usually expressions of how we feel about an object, people, events, situations etc. while behaviour is the end result that reflects one's actions based on prejudices and attitudes. Thus, they are related. Attitude and behaviour are reciprocal. Attitude can follow behaviour and vice-versa (Shrigley, 1990). Individuals develop prejudice and attitude based on family values that are quite conflicting, social identity of an individual to a particular group, norms or rules set within the group, internal ability of individual to harbour intolerance, anger and anxiety; cultural differences, mass media and communication etc. Attitude can be either positive or negative while prejudice is always negative. It is believed that proper understanding of people, events, objects and situations can help oneself to overcome the barriers associated with prejudice, attitude and behaviour. Prejudice decreases

with knowledge, familiarity and level of education while with age it increases (Jang et al. 2012) while important attitudes change less over time than which are unimportant ones as people believe certain attitudes personally important to them (Krosnik, 1988). Both the prejudice and attitude have three components –feelings (affective), belief (cognitive) and behavioural tendencies.

The proposed study aims to address the behavioural exhibits of the youth based on their prejudices and attitudes they carry.

## **REVIEW OF LITERATURE**

Contemporary research focuses on the fact that people are motivated to respond without prejudice whereas some prejudices are intentional (Forscher et al. 2015). Individuals are susceptible to social influence especially the level of prejudice among peers from their immediate social environment during adolescence thus increasing their prejudice over time (Hjerm et al. 2018)also there is a significant relationship between prejudice and the social identity, cultural intelligence, and acculturation strategies (Genkova and Groesdonk, 2022).

Based on the previous researches on prejudice, attitudes and behaviour by Allport (1954), Duckitt (1992), Hall (2003), Vala (2009) etc. following variables for the study has been chosen and considered, that affects human behaviour. They are family values, social group identity, in-group norms, anxiety, anger and intolerance, and cultural difference which have substantial effect on human behaviour especially when an individual interacts with another individual.

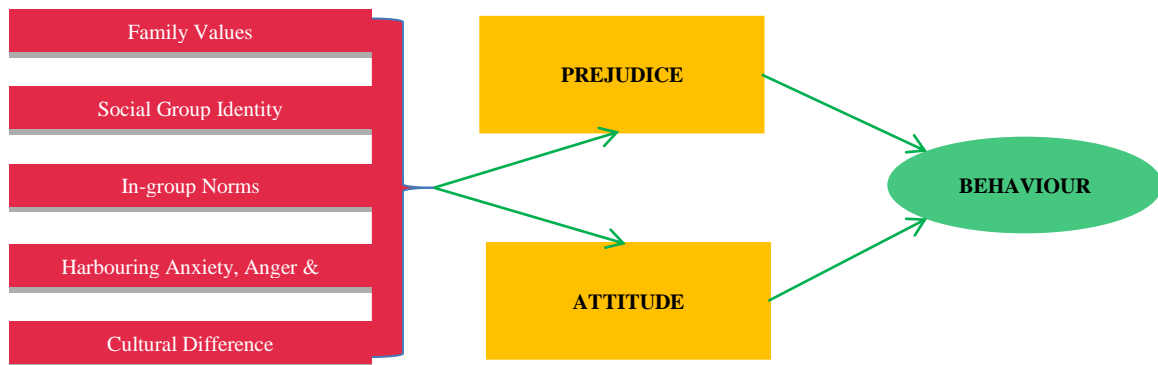
**Family Values:** Family values of different families very often conflict and they exhibit different behaviour intentions. Values often induce positive or negative valence on objects events within a close range of situation and events (Feather, 1995). Values of families may differ due to social class as well leading to different parent-child relationships. Middle class parents' values centre often on self- direction while working class parents' values revolve on external proscriptions (Khon, 1963). This in turn affect the child's prejudices and attitude.

**Social Group Identity:** Identity plays a major role in the way we see ourselves and how we categorize ourselves and how we perceive others. Identity relates to the feeling of who actually we are and to who we belong to (Hall, 2003). Social identity influences the individual's self-concept through the feeling of belonging to social groups. According to Tajfel and Turner (1986), mere categorization of oneself and others into groups can be a cause for preferential treatment and differentiation within a group. Social dominance ideology can also lead to a prejudiced mind-set and reflect negative attitude. Thus, the major forms of intergroup conflict like racism, classism, and patriarchy are derived from the basic human predisposition (Sidanus & Pratto, 1999) to form profound differences between different human societies. This can become a source of social group identity.

**In-group Norms:** The different norms that are set by the groups have an impact on group's consistency in attitude and behaviour where group identification becomes the base; also, when in a group attitude of fellow group mates does influence the display of group normative attitude and behaviour (Smith et al. 2007). Extended contact can help to reduce prejudice reducing intergroup anxiety and generating positive perceptions of in-group and out-group norms (Turner et al., 2008)

**Anxiety, Anger and Intolerance:** Beliefs regarding the toleration of frustration and discomfort are often associated with psychological disturbance. Depressed mood, anxiety and anger exhibits intolerance but have significant difference from self-worth (Harrington, 2006). Intolerance of uncertainty can harbour anxiety, anger, and fear dampens positive emotional states and behaviour. Individuals who value tolerance and exhibit the willingness to preserve and enhance welfare of people exhibit less prejudiced attitudes (Feather & McKee, 2008) towards others

**Cultural Difference:** Cultural differences often develop prejudices and attitudes in the mind of human beings. Attribution of cultural differences is an important dimension of prejudice (Vala et al. 2009) also creates in-group differentiation amongst people of different culture. At times individuals behave quite differently with our fellow mates especially with mental health issues and cultural differences have a significant impact on prejudice, stereotypes, and discrimination towards people with psychosis. They also reported lower willingness to help, greater avoidance, and higher endorsement of segregation (Ahmed et al. 2020) thereby exhibiting negative attitude towards fellow mates with sound and unsound mind. When youngsters work in multicultural groups, they often face numerous problems due to the attitudinal and cultural differences, at times these students do adopt a positive approach; however, they isolate themselves due to differences in culture, language barriers, cross-cultural communication and attitude.



Latent Constructs, Independent and Dependent Variable

### Exhibit 1: The Framework

## METHODOLOGY

**Research Design:** The chosen research design is a quantitative cross-sectional survey. This approach involves collecting data from a representative sample of youth through a structured self-reported questionnaire encompassing variables related to family values, social group identity, in-group norms, harbouring anxiety, anger and intolerance, and cultural differences attitudes, and behaviours. Descriptive statistics and T-Test will be employed to analyse the data, and compare the means. The design allows for a snapshot understanding of the factors influencing youth attitudes and behaviours towards their fellow mates.

**Population and Sample:** As per the India's National Youth Policy, 2014 the term "youth" includes all the young people between the age group of 15 and 29. Since the study aims to reflect the prejudice and attitude youths carry and how these variables affect behaviour especially for the falling in the chosen age category. For the current study the term youth is identified as undergraduate students from Bhopal City who fall between the age group of 17 to 21 years are considered.

A simple random sampling method has been used to select the sample, encompassing different youths of stated age groups, genders, ethnicities, and socioeconomic backgrounds. This approach ensures representation of various subgroups within the population, enhancing the study's ability to provide insights that can be generalized to the broader youth demographic. The sample size is 384 as per the Raosoft which was determined statistically to ensure robust results and meaningful analyses.

**Research Tool:** The research tool utilized in this study is a researcher-constructed structured questionnaire comprising 15 items for each of the three variables: prejudice, attitude and behaviour of youth towards their peers. This questionnaire aims to comprehensively assess participants' preconceived judgments, feelings, beliefs, and reported interactions through family values, social group identity, in-group norms, harbouring anxiety, anger and intolerance, and cultural differences which has been chosen based on previous study made in the relevant areas making the study more comprehensive in collaborating all the above variables. The questionnaire ensures consistency, enabling quantitative analysis to explore the comparison between prejudice and attitude on behaviour. The self-developed questionnaire was found reliable at 0.911 and was established using Cronbach's alpha measurement to demonstrate internal consistency.

Analysis of Data has been done through Paired Sample T-Test as behaviour being dependent variable while prejudice and attitude being independent variable.

## OBJECTIVES

Thus, the proposed objective of the study is as follows:

- To study the impact of prejudice in terms of family values, social group identity, ingroup norms, harbouring anxiety, anger and intolerance and cultural differences on behaviour of youth towards fellow mates.
- To study the impact of attitude towards family values, social group identity, ingroup norms, harbouring anxiety, anger and intolerance and cultural differences on behaviour of youth towards fellow mates.

## **HYPOTHESES**

- Family values associated with prejudice do not have significant difference on behaviour of youth towards their fellow mates.
- Social group identity created on the basis of prejudice does not have significant difference on behaviour of youth towards their fellow mates.
- In-group norms based on prejudice do not cause significant difference on behaviour of youth towards their fellow mates.
- Harboursing anxiety, anger and intolerance by individuals associated with prejudice do not cause significant difference in behaviour of youth towards their fellow mates.
- Cultural Differences does not cause significant difference on behaviour of youth towards their fellow mates.
- Attitudes based on family values does not cause significant difference on behaviour.
- Attitude based on social group identity do not cause significant difference on behaviour.
- Attitude based on in-group norms do not cause significant difference on behaviour of youth towards their fellow mates.
- Attitude based on harbouring anxiety, anger and intolerance do not cause significant difference on behaviour of youth towards their fellow mates.
- Attitude based on cultural difference do not cause significant difference on behaviour of youth towards their fellow mates.

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## DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION:

The demographic profile of the participants is presented below:

Table 1: Descriptives

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	Gender	Socio-Economic Status	Age in Years
N	384	384	384
Missing	0	0	0
Mean	1.35	1.80	2.39
Median	1.00	2.00	2.00
Standard deviation	0.478	0.453	0.808
Minimum	1	1	1
Maximum	2	3	4

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Above data is a summary of descriptive statistics for three variables: Gender, Socio-Economic Status, and Age in Years. The statistics provide insights into the characteristics and distribution of these variables in the dataset.

### Gender: -

N: The number of observations for the Gender variable is 384.

Missing: There are no missing values for the Gender variable, indicating that you have complete data for all 384 individuals.

Mean: The mean value for the Gender variable is 1.35. Since this variable seems to be categorical (possibly coded as 1 for one gender and 2 for another), the mean might not have a straightforward interpretation in this context.

Median: The median value for the Gender variable is 1.00. The median represents the middle value when the data is ordered, and it indicates that more individuals have a Gender value of 1 than any other value.

Standard Deviation: The standard deviation for the Gender variable is 0.478. This measures the spread or variability in the data. A smaller standard deviation suggests that the values are close to the mean.

### **Socio-Economic Status:**

·N: The number of observations for the Socio-Economic Status variable is also 384, indicating that you have data for all 384 individuals.

·Missing: There are no missing values for Socio-Economic Status.

·The mean value for Socio-Economic Status is 1.80, while the median value is 2.00, suggesting that the middle value of the Socio-Economic Status variable is 2.

·Standard Deviation: The standard deviation for Socio-Economic Status is 0.453, indicating a moderate amount of variability in the data.

### **Age in Years:**

·N: The number of observations for the Age in Years variable is 384, meaning you have complete data for all individuals.

·Missing: There are no missing values for Age in Years.

·Mean: The mean age is 2.39 years, suggesting that, on average, the individuals in your dataset are around 2.39 years old.

- Median: The median age is 2.00 years, which is the middle value in your data.
- Standard Deviation: The standard deviation for Age in Years is 0.808, indicating a relatively wide range or dispersion in ages.
- Minimum: The minimum age is 1 year, suggesting the youngest individual in the dataset.
- Maximum: The maximum age is 4 years, indicating the oldest individual in the dataset.

In conclusion, the above descriptive statistics provide a basic overview of your dataset, including the number of observations, missing data, central tendency (mean and median), dispersion (standard deviation), and the range of values for each variable.

### Paired Samples T-Test

Table 2: Paired Samples T-Test for Prejudice and Behaviour

			<b>statistic</b>	<b>df</b>	<b>p</b>
PFV1	BFV1	Student's t	-2.29	382.0	0.024
PSGI1	BSGI1	Student's t	-5.29	382.0	< .001
PIN1	BIN1	Student's t	-6.92	382.0	< .001
PH1	BH1	Student's t	-8.65	382.0	< .001
PCD2	BCD1	Student's t	-8.37	382.0	< .001

Note.  $H_a \mu_{\text{Measure 1}} - \mu_{\text{Measure 2}} \neq 0$

The data shows the results of paired samples t-tests for five different pairs of measures.

Interpretation of the results for each pair of measures:

- **Prejudiced Family Values vs. Behaviour:** The t-statistic is -2.29 at 382 degrees of freedom, and the p-value is 0.024, both of which are below the significance level of 0.05. This indicates that there is a significant difference between the two variables.
- **Prejudiced Social Group Identity vs. Behaviour:** The p-value is less than 0.001 and the t-statistic is -5.29 at 382 degrees of freedom. This suggests that there is a highly substantial difference between behaviour and social group identity.
- **Prejudiced in-group norms vs. behaviour:** A highly significant difference is found between biased in-group norms and behaviour as indicated by the t-statistic of -6.92 at 382 degrees of freedom and a p-value of less than 0.001.
- **Prejudice-based harbouring of anger, anxiety and intolerance vs. behaviour:** At 382 degrees of freedom, the t-statistic is -8.65 and the p-value is less than 0.001, indicating a highly significant difference between the two.
- **Prejudiced Cultural differences vs. Behaviour:** The t-statistic at 382 degrees of freedom is -8.37, and the p-value is less than 0.001, suggesting a highly significant difference between behavioural and cultural differences.

In conclusion, for all five pairs of measures, there is strong evidence to reject the null hypothesis ( $H_0$ ), which means that there are statistically significant differences between Measure 1 and Measure 2 in each case. These results suggest that the pairs of measures are not equal, and there are significant variations between them.

## Paired Samples T-Test

Table 3: Paired Samples T-Test for Attitude and Behaviour

			statistic	df	p
AFV1	BFV1	Student's t	4.962	382.0	< .001
ASG1	BSGI1	Student's t	2.196	382.0	0.030
AIN1	BIN1	Student's t	0.107	382.0	0.915
AH1	BH1	Student's t	0.815	382.0	0.417
ACD1	BCD1	Student's t	0.104	382.0	0.917

Note.  $H_a \mu_{\text{Measure 1}} - \mu_{\text{Measure 2}} \neq 0$

- **Family values-based attitudes vs. behaviour:** The t-statistic is 4.962 at 382 degrees of freedom, and the p-value is less than 0.001. This suggests that there is a highly significant difference between family values-based attitudes and behaviours.
- **Social group identity vs. behaviour attitudes:** At 382 degrees of freedom, the t-statistic is 2.196 and the p-value is 0.030, which is less than 0.05. This indicates that there is a statistically significant difference between the two variables, albeit not as much as in the prior comparison.
- **Attitude based on in-group norms vs. behaviour:** At 382 degrees of freedom, the t-statistic is 0.107 and the p-value is 0.915, both greater than 0.05, suggesting that there is no statistically significant difference between the views based on in-group norms and behaviour.
- **Attitudes concerning the comparison of behaviour and harbouring**

**anger, anxiety, and intolerance:** At 382 degrees of freedom, the p-value is 0.417, greater than 0.05, and the t-statistic is 0.815, indicating that there is no statistically significant difference between the two.

- **Attitudes based on cultural difference versus behaviour:** At 382 degrees of freedom, the p-value is 0.917 and the t-statistic is 0.104, both of which are greater than 0.05, suggesting that there is no statistically significant difference between the two categories of attitudes.

Interpretation of the results for each pair of measures:

In conclusion, for the first two pairs of measures (AFV1 vs. BFV1 and ASGI1 vs. BSGI1), there are statistically significant differences between Measure 1 and Measure 2. However, for the remaining three pairs (AIN1 vs. BIN1, AH1 vs. BH1, and ACD1 vs. BCD1), there is no statistically significant difference between the measures. These results provide insights into which pairs of measures exhibit significant differences and which do not.

## FINDINGS

- Of the total 384 respondents 176 (45.83%) students were male and 208 (54.17%) females.
- Of the 384 respondents including males and females, maximum undergraduates fell in the age group of 18-19 years i.e. 45.57%, followed by respondents in age group of 19-20 years
- Family values often influence prejudice, especially when the respondents felt their family values and upbringing are superior, comfortability in interacting with members with different family values and exhibiting openness to respecting diverse family values.

- Most of the undergraduates felt that social group identity has a significant impact on prejudice.
- For prejudice and group norms too reflected an agreeable response.
- Most of the undergraduates disagreed with the fact that their prejudice helps them to harbour anxiety, anger and intolerance.
- Culture has a significant effect on prejudice but the respondents never found it difficult to relate to individuals from other cultures.
- Of the respondents most of them have exhibited a positive attitude towards family values as it helps to adopt new family values, fostering social harmony etc.
- The maximum respondents stated that social group identity has a significant impact on the attitude of youth towards their fellow mates.
- Most of the youth felt that they prefer to uphold the norms and values of the in-group, reevaluate norms if it perpetuates prejudice and promote inclusivity.
- Most of the respondents expressed that they do not harbour anxiety, anger or intolerance against their fellow mates even if they come from diverse background, rather they love to engage more with such diverse people.
- Maximum respondents felt that they are quite engaging and love to learn about various cultural differences and they do not struggle in accepting different cultures.

The analysis of the hypothesis states the following:

- There is a statistically significant difference between Family Values that are prejudiced and behaviour exhibited by youth towards their fellow mates.

- There is a high significant difference between Social Group Identity and behaviour exhibited by youth towards their fellow mates.
- There is a high significant difference between Prejudiced In-group Norms and behaviour of youth.
- There is a high significant difference between harbouring of anger, anxiety and intolerance due to prejudice and behaviour towards fellow mates.
- There is a high significant difference between negatively perceived cultural differences and behaviour of youth towards fellow mates.
- There is a high significant difference between Attitude towards Family Values and Behaviour.
- The 6<sup>th</sup> hypothesis testing suggesting a statistically significant difference between attitudes based on social group identity and behaviour, although it is not as strong as in the previous comparison.
- There is no statistically significant difference between attitude based on in-group norms and behaviour of youth
- There is no statistically significant difference between attitude towards harbouring anxiety, anger and intolerance and behaviour.
- There is no statistically significant difference between attitude towards cultural difference and behaviour.
- The study shows that there is a very significant impact of prejudices latent constructs on youths' behaviour while only attitude towards family values and social group norms had significant impact while other constructs exhibited less impact on individual's behaviour towards their fellow mates.

## SUGGESTIONS

- Prejudice is often developed from childhood via parenting and family values; hence it is essential for parents to focus on reducing negative prejudices while communicating with family members. Parents must teach their children to be tolerant.
- Students must develop social contact with members of different social group and weed out prejudiced in-group norms through confrontations and open communication.
- Self-awareness is the best medicines so that individual can confirm their internal inconsistencies and overcome their cognitive dissonances. Understanding self and others are very important.
- Reduce unwanted expectations from individuals or groups.
- Consider prejudice or negative attitude from the perspective of a fellow mate.
- Educational institutions must promote inclusivity, intergroup equality, multiculturalism and liberal democracy in order to reduce prejudice and attitude impact on behaviour of students.

## FUTURE SCOPE

The study per se is limited to undergraduate youths of the Bhopal School of Social Sciences hence the same area can be considered for further research with the youth between the age group of 17- 25 years as the study here is confined to 17 to 21 years. The study can also be done to understand the relationship between prejudice, attitude and behaviour. ANOVA and MANOVA can be applied to arrive at accurate conclusions. Study on cognitive interventions in prejudice will give further insights to how to reduce prejudice.



## CONCLUSION

The study shows that there is a very significant impact of prejudices latent constructs on youths' behaviour while only attitude towards family values and social group norms had significant impact while other constructs exhibited less impact on individual's behaviour towards their fellow mates. Finally, we can conclude that prejudice plays a vital role in exhibiting positive or negative behaviour towards our fellow mates. The very foundation of prejudice is family, social group identity, its norms, cultural differences etc. Self-awareness and liberal views can help young minds to adopt a positive outlook towards people coming from myriad backgrounds like culture, religion etc. this in turn will helps human to develop positive approach towards oneself, life and others.

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