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COMMUNAL CONFLICT IN INDIA

WITH SPECIAL REFERENCE TO JULY, 1973
RIOTS IN AHMEDABAD
(PILOT STUDY)

by

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Chairman (Research)
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Technical Report

Title of the report .....Communal Conflict in India..............

Name of the Author ...Mirza S. Saiyadain.........................

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ABSTRACT (within 250 words)

This study was purely exploratory in nature... Though it touched upon
the causes and remedy of communal riots in India, its main thrust was
to understand July 1973 riots in Ahmedabad. In order to meaningfully
comprehend the problem of communal conflict, it was viewed from the
point of view of the proximity of living of the two religious groups
Hindus and Muslims in Ahmedabad. Using open ended schedule 80 respon-
dents were interviewed individually. Results indicate that by and
large leadership and administrative set up were pointed out as causes
and faith in the members of other community plus efficient police...
administration as cures of communal problems in India in general and
Ahmedabad in particular. Suggestions are also made for the manage-
ment of communal conflict.

Please indicate restrictions if any that the author wishes to place
upon this note ....

NONE

Date ....

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Signature of the Author

M. S. Saiyadain

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

To those who cared to cooperate

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INTRODUCTION

This is essentially a study of July 1973 communal disturbances in Ahmedabad. The study is exploratory in nature and is not intended to test hypotheses.

Realization of socialistic ideals is not possible in a society which is not secular both in spirit and essence. Communal harmony, among other factors, is an important input in actualizing a socialistic pattern of society. In India the problem of Hindu-Muslim relations has been considered from the view point of romantic idealism without facing the harsh and painful truth underlying it. After the outbreak of communal riots the State has hardly thought of doing anything substantial except issuing public appeals for communal harmony.

Researchwise, not much is known to predict with any degree of certainty when and where communal riots will start. Whatever research has been done is mostly being carried out on individual initiative of the researcher and has hardly been published or made known to masses. And yet the topic remains vital for psychological health and the general well being.

What makes it still more important to research communal tension in India is (a) the readiness of vested interests to exploit and capitalize such occurances, (b) the susceptibility of fragile communal feelings, and (c) a history of similar incidents in the past. Although we have concerned ourselves with July 1973 riots in Ahmedabad, the generalizability of the results is not limited to this time period or this place.

In this study we have focussed our attention on what happened in those 3-4 days and why it happened the way it did. We fully realize that a description of happenings in itself may not be enough to understand Hindu-Muslim relations in this country. Hence we have tried to research, on a limited basis, the factors which lie behind prejudice, suspicion and other failures of human beings to understand one another and to devise means of working towards group ends.

Since the study was carried out on a post-facto basis, it was decided to understand first of all what happened before going to field. We were interested to learn the sequences of events that precipitated the communal flavour in otherwise food riots. We decided to look at police records and newspaper reports and also to interview some police officials. What follows is a summary of this effort.

The discontent of the masses has been brewing over price spiral non-availability of foodstuff, exploitation by the opposition partie and the prevailing rift in the Congress(R). The police was aware that the people were uptight and restless and would not hesitate to follow the example of the people elsewhere wherein food riots had broken out. However, the restlessness of the people did not give any indication that it would take a communal turn.

As a reaction to increasing prices and non-availability of essential commodities, two groups, Gujarat Nagrik Yuvak Samiti and Vidhyarthi Madhyastha Samiti have given calls for Ahmedabad Bandh and Hartal respectively. It was decided to observe July 14, 1973 as the day for these protests. This day being a Saturday did not make much difference as far as Bandh was concerned because the major part of the city remains closed on Saturdays anyway. What seems to have perpetuated the tempo of protest was complete closure of educational institutions in the city on July 14, 1973.

Upto this point it was a protest equally shared by members of all communities and was perceived as a general but mild discontent against decreasing food situation. However, towards the evening of July 14 police started getting news of stone throwing on police patrol cars, Municipal transport buses and burning of milk cabins. From 2100 hours curfew was imposed within the walled city area which was later extended to cover the whole city.

What seems to have given it communal turn was damaging and burning articles belonging to Edward Washing Company. This washing company belongs to member of minority groups. Because of its' being a major target in 1969 communal riots in Ahmedabad it had acquired a symbolic value. Its burning again was seen associated with communal riots of 1969 and probably led to the conclusion that the communal riots have broken again. To some extent, this stray incident sparked off a series of incidents of communal overtone and before their nature could be ascertained the city was engulfed in a somewhat large scale communal conflict.

Several incidents took place in rapid succession. Nota-Bene and Novex washing companies belonging to Muslims situated in Chhabila Hanuman near Raipur Gate, were ransacked and a bonfire was made of the articles; at Dabgarwad a Hindu doctor was stabbed; the Garment Cleaners near the Oriental Building was ransacked and a bonfire was made of the articles; an attempt was made to loot some shops on the Relief Road, at Panchkuva some Hindu shops were set ablaze; at Raja Mehta's pole some Muslim shops were broken open and similar incidents of arson were reported from Manek Chowk, Akasheth Kuvani Pole, etc.

It would be unfair not to record at this point the efficiency with which police dealt with these incidents, and controlled them much before they could spread to other parts of the city. It was in this background that the present study was conceived and carried out.

SAMPLE SELECTION

There is some evidence to suggest that people living in proximity with each other do not experience as much prejudice as those living at a distance from each other. Several studies (Newcomb, 1956; Festinger, Schacter, & Back, 1950) have suggested that "Functional distance" helps reduce prejudice. In other words, the usage of common areas results in their seeing one another more often and bringing them functionally more closer than with those living far off. Without hypothesizing the direction of effect we were interested in studying two areas one where Hindus and Muslims live in proximity with each other and second where they are physically spaced out.

An additional consideration was placed by police records where few localities were found to be listed as "hot beds", i.e.those where something or the other has always been happening. These localities were under constant watch by the police and are first to be patrolled whenever any trouble is foreseen.

Thus, in selecting our sample we had three main considerations:-

1. Selection of two groups, one Hindu and other Muslim, both matched and homogenous in all respects.

2. Selection of two localities of Hindus and Muslims, one where both religious groups live in proximity with each other and second, where they are physically spaced out.

3. These samples should come from localities identifed as "hot beds".

In going through the geographic details of Ahmedabad and with the help of police and Corporation Office we located Dhabgarwad, Kalupur, and Khadia areas that satisfied the above criteria.

Dabgarwad locality is unique in many respects. Hindus and Muslims live together but not side by side. The groups are divided by a very narrow lane, on one side of which are Hindu houses and on the other, are Muslim houses. Hence despite physical proximity there is a geographic division. Hindu houses are slightly on the higher ground and are mostly of two to three stories. Muslim houses, on the other hand, are on relatively lower ground and are mostly of single storey. Kalupur (predominantly Muslim area) and Khadia (predominantly Hindu area) are spaced out from each other. Thus in our sample Dhabgarwad with its division becomes the physically proximate and Kalupur-Khadia as distant localities. Table 1 below gives a visual presentation of four fold sample distribution.

Table 1

Sample Distribution

	Proximate	Distant
Hindus	Dhabgarwad (Hindu area)	Khadia
Muslims	Dhabgarwad (Muslim area)	Kalupur

Since the study was exploratory and limited in scope, we decided to interview a random sample fo 20-25 people from each one of the four localities. In the process, however, same sample was lost because of incomplete interviews and also because of respondents' hesitation in giving answers. Eventually we ended up with 20 respondents in each cell. So the total sample of the study consisted of 80 people. The means and standard deviation estimates or percentages of the biographic characteristics of the sample are given in Table 2.

Table 2

Biographic characteristics of the sample

Factors		Khadia	Dhabagarwad		Kalupur	Total Sample
			Hindu	Muslim		
Age	$\bar{X}$	37.60	38.10	42.00	34.70	38.10
	S.D.	11.90	12.19	15.40	9.61	13.80
Family Members	$\bar{X}$	7.45	7.55	7.75	8.90	7.91
	S.D.	2.78	2.49	4.20	3.74	2.95
Education	$\bar{X}$	9.35	9.55	7.80	9.75	9.11
	S.D.	3.79	2.83	4.91	5.48	4.33
Length of Stay	$\bar{X}$	27.40	30.80	40.20	30.50	32.32
	S.D.	10.70	6.02	17.19	14.08	10.40
Yearly income(in thousands)	$\bar{X}$	11.78	9.19	7.12	5.31	8.35
	S.D.	4.75	6.03	2.02	4.46	4.20
Birth Place	U	12(60%)	13(65%)	19(95%)	19(95%)	63(78.8%)
	R	8(40%)	7(35%)	1(05%)	1(05%)	17(21.2%)
Sex	M	9(45%)	13(65%)	9(45%)	11(55%)	42(52.5%)
	F	11(55%)	7(35%)	11(45%)	9(45%)	38(47.5%)
Profession	B	2(10%)	8(40%)	3(15%)	6(30%)	19(23.8%)
	H	11(55%)	6(30%)	9(45%)	9(45%)	35(43.8%)
	S	5(25%)	1(05%)	2(10%)	3(15%)	11(13.8%)
	M	2(10%)	5(25%)	6(30%)	2(10%)	15(18.8%)

U = Urban; R = Rural; M = Male; F = Female;

B = Business; H = Household; S = Service M = Miscellaneous.

The differences in the biographic and background factors of the four samples do not show any significant departure from the averages or percentages of overall sample. Two minor exceptions exist in yearly income and birth place. For example, the yearly income of the Khadia sample is fairly high compared to other groups. Same way, there are more respondents from rural areas in both Khadia and Dhabagarwad (Hindu) sample than the rest. These discrepancies are not significant. By and large the four samples are homogenous.

DATA COLLECTION

Data were collected by means of individual interviews. These interviews were carried out by a trained interviewer and in Gujarathi language. The respondents were individually interviewed at their places of residence. They were asked not to reveal their identity except for those demographic and background information presented in Table 2. They were given the assurance that their replies will be treated strictly confidential and were also assured that the researcher is interested in the feelings of the group rather than the single individual. The interviews revolved mainly around the causes and remedy of riots in general and July, 1973 riots in particular.

In order to avoid time consuming reminscene and to structure the answers in manageable categories an interview schedule was formulated. These open-ended questions were used by the interviewer only to initiate the response elicitation process (See annexure1). In addition, an attitude scale (Social Distance Scale) was also included.

Several studies (e.g. Murphy, 1953) have suggested that the extent of religious tolerance, among other things, is one of the crucial variables in reducing communal tension. In other words, the more the religious communities are tolerant of the traditions and belief systems of other communities, the greater is the likelihood of their accepting the other communities. Of the several indications of acceptance we decided to use social distance.

Social Distance Scale developed by Bogardus (1925) is an often used tool to measure interactions, ranging from intimacy by marriage to complete separation (no contact) between members of different groups.

It is a 7-point scale. Because of the parsimony of this measuring device, it has been an important instrument in all prejudice research. The test has gone through several validity and reliability measures across cultures. In India, Murphy (1953) utilized it for measuring intergroup prejudice and hostility. We have used this version for present research. The scale is given in annexure 2.

RESULTS

For the sake of convenience and flow first we will present the results of the causes and remedy of riots in general. This will be followed by July 1073 riots. In this regard first the results of open ended questions will be presented and then those based on structured questionnaires.

Communal Riots in General (Causes)

In trying to understand what causes communal tension leading to riot in India, we were motivated not only to know the reasons but also to learn if Hindus and Muslims and those living proximate/distant differed in their reasons for riot. Table 3 gives frequency distribution and percentages of various reasons identified by the respondents.

Table 3

Reasons for communal riot

Contents		Khadia	Dhabagarwad		Kaluour	Total
			Hindus	Muslims		
Political parties with communal overtones	f	5	4	1	8	18
	%	16.1	16.0	3.7	25.0	15.7
Vested interests	f	7	2	4	6	19
	%	22.6	8.0	14.8	18.8	16.5
Faithlessness	f	6	9	11	4	30
	%	19.4	36.0	40.7	12.5	26.1
"Bad" leadership	f	12	8	9	12	41
	%	38.7	32.0	33.3	37.5	35.6
Rumours	f	1	2	2	2	7
	%	3.2	8.0	7.4	6.3	6.1
Total		31*	25*	27*	32*	115*

* The totals in tables 3-8 do not add to 20 or 80 because respondents mentioned more than one factors.

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that some thought should be given to ban political parties with
communal overtones, as they are perceived to fan minor incidents
to a full scale tension. Much could be achieved if responsible
leadership is provided. Good leadership includes such themes as
responsible and dedicated leaders representing masses and their
feelings rather than vested interests. Factors relating to
impartial, efficient system of administration free from biases and
pressures were included under efficient system. Specific example
were of police administration suggesting more police stations and
quicker reactions from police. In the "other" category were
included such themes as severe and public punishment to miscreants,
dictatorship, banning processions, emphasize on education and
checking rumours etc. However, a very small group endorsed such
themes.

In terms of order of importance the total sample of 80 felt
that what could help reduce communal tension and riots is faith in
the integrity of communities, knowledge and tolerance of their
belief systems and a general acceptance of communal groups as indi-
viduals rather than as members of a religious group. This was
followed by efficient system, good leadership, and banning the
political parties with communal overtones.

To see if sub-samples showed differences in the order of the
means to control communal riots once again we calculated Chi-squares
for each one of these factors. The Chi-square values are given
below :-

Building faith	$x^2 = .97$,	df = 1, n.s.
Ban political parties with communal overtones	$x^2 = .08$,	df = 1, n.s.
Good leadership	$x^2 = 1.31$,	df = 1, n.s.
Efficient System	$x^2 = 1.18$,	df = 1, n.s.
Others	$x^2 = .01$,	df = 1, n.s.

Once again dividing the total sample in subgroups based on
religion and proximity does not bring out a differential order of
the suggestions for controlling communal conflict. Hindus and
Muslims living close or away from each other, all seem to feel that
encouraging mutual understanding between the two groups (Hindu and
Muslim) is the key to solve communal problems in the country.

July 1973 Communal Riots

In this section we would like to present first results concerning the sources of knowledge about July 1973 riots, their causes, and remedy and finally results based on structured questionnaire.

a. Knowledge : "How did you come to know about the July riots"? This open ended question was designed to get their sources of knowledge. Table 5 gives the sources and the frequency and percentage of respondents endorsing a given source.

Table 5

Sources of knowledge about the riots

Contents		Khadia	Dhabgarwad		Kalupur	Total
			Hindus	Muslims		
Other persons	f	19	15	15	10	59
	%	70.31	57.6	60.0	40.0	57.3
General assault situation	f	5	8	7	9	29
	%	19.5	30.7	19.0	36.0	28.1
Mass media	f	3	0	2	4	9
	%	10.2		9.02	16.0	8.7
Curfew/police arrival	f	0	3	1	2	6
	%		11.7	4.5	9.0	5.8
Total		27	26	25	25	103

Four sources merge to be the main means of getting information about the riots. The category "other persons" refers to people in general relatives, and friends who broke the news either in person or over the telephone. "General assault situation" is referred here to cover such conditions as people trying to harm others, fleeing in scare, and a general disturbed condition. "Mass media" are restricted here to radio and newspaper. "Curfew/police arrival" refers to the imposition of curfew and as a result arrival and/or increased patrolling by police.

As indicated in Table 5 most of the people (50% and above) came to know of disturbances by word of mouth. This was followed by general assault situation, mass media and curfew situation in that order. Localitywise, though the general order remains the same as that of total group we were interested to check if there are statistical differences in the sources of information as far as religious X proximity groups are concerned. For the first two sources of information ("other persons" and "general assault situation") we ran Chi-square tests. The other two could not be subjected to this test because of zero values in the cells. The Chi-square values are given below :-

"Other persons" $\qquad$ $x^2 = 1.45,$ $\quad$ df = 1, n.s.

"General assault situation" $\qquad$ $x^2 = .97,$ $\quad$ df = 1, n.s.

Both Chi-square values are insignificant suggesting that all four subsamples irrespective of their religious affiliation and physical proximity got to know the July incidents first from other persons and second from the perception of a general assault situation.

b. <u>Initial reactions</u> : As soon as they found out that communal riots have broken out what did they feel like doing first? Here the respondnets were provided with six alternatives. Of the six possible alternatives provided, respondents endorsed only four. Table 6 gives the frequency distribution and the percentages.

Table 6

Initial reactions to riots

Factors		Khadia	Dhabgarwad		Kalupur	Total
			Hindus	Muslims		
Report to police	f	6	7	8	9	30
	%	20.0	21.2	26.7	40.9	26.1
Ascertain facts	f	4	5	5	0	14
	%	13.3	15.2	16.7		12.2
Organize peace parties	f	6	7	2	0	15
	%	20.0	21.2	6.7		13.0
Stay home and mind their business	f	14	14	15	13	56
	%	46.7	42.4	46.7	59.1	48.7
Total		30	33	30	22	115

The foremost thought among the respondents in situation of riot was to stay home and mind their own business. This has been invariably pointed out by more than 40% respondents, irrespective of religious affilication and proximity. This was followed by the reaction to inform the police about the situation, organize peace parties, and ascertain facts. It is interesting how ascertaining facts has been perceived to be least important reaction to the news of riot situation. Subsequent Chi-square test for contents 1 and 4 show no significant variations in religion X proximity comparisons. The actual Chi-square values for "report to police" and "stay home and mind their business" are .09 and .07 respectively.

One would assume that once a riot is broken out it will almost be inconceivable to think of a person passing through a locality predominantly inhabited by persons of other religion. The reason is simple It is the fear of life. And yet there are persons who would pass through such localities. Our concern here was to learn why such bheaviour should take place despite the knowledge of the consequences. To learn what motivates such behaviour we asked the question "why would they or would'nt they pass through such localities?". The responses of those who either answered in affirmative or negative are given in Table 7 .

Table 7

Willingness to pass through locality of other community during riots

| | | Khadia | Dhabgarwad | | Kalupur | Total |
			Hindus	Muslims		
"Yes"	f	2	3	2	6	13
	%	40.0	27.3	12.5	26.1	23.6
"No"	f	3	8	14	17	42
	%	60.0	72.7	87.5	73.9	76.4
Total		5	11	16	23	55

Since not all respondents answered this question we cannot place much confidence on the results. Though it is true that majority of the people will not like to visit or pass through locality predominantly inhabited by members of other religion (76.4%), one fifth of the total

sample still responded by "yes" to the aforementioned question. What
motivates them to do so? In this situation following reasons for
passing through other localities were suggested :-

1. They did not have much choice simply because their closest
provision shops happened to be in localities predominantly inhabited
by members of other religion. In addition their houses were located
in such a way that the passage to main road was through localities of
other community.

2. Some felt an obligation to go out of their way to spread the
word of peace, discuss with members of other religious groups and in
general make an attempt to bring about harmony in relations. Obviously
this would not have been possible unless they would have gone or passed
through other localities. What is more interesting to note is that
both Hindus and Muslims equally share the feeling and show willingness
to indulge in such behaviour responses. Subsequent Chi-square test
further support this observation because the values fail to reach
conventional levels of significance. The X^2 values of "yes" and "no"
replies are 1.59 and 2.47 respectively.

c. <u>Causes and Remedy</u> : Because of the consistency of causes
given for riots in general and July 1973 riots, we have omitted the
discussion of causes and have concerned ourselves with the remedial
measures suggested. Specifically what could have been done to control
July 1973 riots. The factors that emerge are more or less the same as
that in Table 4 except the emphasize here has moved to police adminis-
tration. Table 8 gives the frequency distribution of factors.

Table 8

Table showing factors mentioned for
controlling July 1973 riots in Ahmedabad

Factors		Khadia	Dhabgarwad		Kalupur	Total
			Hindus	Muslims		
Policing	f	15	16	10	11	52
	%	60.0	72.7	40.0	52.4	55.9
Building faith	f	1	2	9	4	16
	%	4.0	9.1	36.0	19.0	17.2
Ban political parties with communal overtones	f	1	1	3	5	10
	%	4.0	4.5	12.0	23.8	10.8
Others	f	8	3	3	1	15
	%	32.0	13.6	12.0	4.8	16.1
Total		25	22	25	21	93

The descriptions of "building faith" and "ban political parties with communal overtones" remains the same as in the section controlling communal conflict. The factors "policing" refers to such things as efficiency, crisp administration and better "bandobast". Had police been more alert and had it banned processions, bandhs, and strikes etc., July riots could have been averted. This is the most predominant feeling that all the respondents referred to during their interviews. Among "others" they named such themes as formation of peace parties and joint consultations by community heads after they realized the gravity of situation. It is very interesting to note that for the specific case of July riots bad leadership has not been mentioned by any of the respondents unlike for a situation where we talk of riots in general. This is much more important because it was during this time period the factions between the members of Congress(R) had surfaced and the political situation was extremely fluid.

To see if there are differences in the frequency of the various factors among members of different religious groups living close or distant from each other, Chi-square statistics were calculated. The values are given below :-

Policing $x^2 = .08$, $df = 1$, n.s.

Building faith $x^2 = .01$, $df = 1$, n.s.

Ban political
parties with $x^2 = .10$, $df = 1$, n.s.
communal overtones

Others $x^2 = 2.78$, $df = 1$, n.s.

The results suggest that it does not matter whether one comes from a locality where Hindus and Muslims live close to each other or contrary wise, the respondents in general feel that a strong and efficient police action could have helped control the communal disturbances of July 1973. It is necessary to point out here that compared to 1969 riots in Ahmedabad the police force was not taken by surprise in July 1973 riots. In fact the police had sensed the situation and to a great extent was prepared to handle it.

d. Social Distance : Willingness to interact and establish relationships with other communities can go a long way in establishing and/or maintaining communal harmony in the society. With a view to understand the degree of social distance various subsamples would like to have, social distance scale was administered. The means and standard deviation estimates of social distance score are given in Table 9.

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and a general ea: rness to react effici...ly can make the difference.
There have been several sharp criticisms levelled against police
bureaucracy, inefficiency, and lack of performing their duty well.
However, some changes against the police administration in such situ-
ations can be attributed as reactions to wide spread frustration
caused by riots, and may not necessarily be valid.

Throughout the first section of this study our results indicate
that from the knowledge to the efforts to control communal conflict
subgroups have shown no significant variations (See tables 3-8). In
fact all the Chi-square values are insignificant. This is a most
exciting finding. It suggests that pople in general, and not any
specific group, have though through the problem of communal conflict
in India and have arrived at common conclusions. That whether we ask
Hindus or Muslims living in proximity or distant from each other, the
answers are more or less the same.

The consistency of replies in all four subgroups needs addi-
tional thinking. Right after freedom the country has seen quite a
few communal riots, big or small, that a stereotype pattern for both
causes and remedy has emerged. It is this pattern that has been reporte
by the four subsamples in this study. Any communal riot is a repe-
tition of a history with known and common answers and questions. The
communality here happened to be experience based and experience
happened to be the same over and over again.

If the degree of reciprocal religious tolerance and social
intimacy is high, one would expect that the causes and remedy of
communal conflict would be perceived in variables other than religious
differences. To what extent it is valid can be estimated by our
content analysis results in Table 3. Though it is true that both
groups have attributed the causes of communal conflict in agencies
other than the two religions, the very presence of the content "faith-
lessness" castes doubts on the generalizability of above mentioned
relationship. Of the total 115 replies, atleast 30 (26.1%) still
indicate that there is a definite lack of faith and trust in the members
of other communities.

On a limited basis we tried to explore the assumption that
proximity of living creates mutual understanding. Our results seem to
support the assumption. Irrespective of religion, people living close
have indicated greater likelihood of intimacy than those living away
from each other.

What seems most interesting is that though in general the degree
of social intimacy is very high, Muslims seem to indicate greater
social intimacy with Hindu counterparts ($\overline{X} = 5.07$) than Hindus ($\overline{X} = 4.40$)
The difference is significant at .01 level of significance. That it
seems that probably over the years Muslims have been able to break
away from the strong religious tenets of segregation and are now
willing to relate themselves with other communities. Whether this has
come about because of economic pressures, increased educational
opportunities or greater political freedom, the limited scope of this
study inhibits any speculation. The finding nonetheless is significant
and should be pursued further. If there is a way to lower tension
and increase intimacy our answers to the problem of communal conflict
in India may become very clear.

MANAGEMENT OF COMMUNAL CONFLICT IN INDIA

Because of historical reasons the communal prejudice lies too
deep in the dark labyrinths and chambers of the minds of both Hindus
and Muslims in India. While it is true that there is no single, all-
powerful shortcut formula to completely eliminate or even minimize
communal conflict in India, there is some hope that it could be brought
within managable limits. This study has tried in a limited way to
wxplore some avenues that might be useful in paving ways for successful
management of communal conflict in India. In trying to understand ways
and means to control communal conflict in India we have confined our-
selves within the framework suggested by the results of this study.

Ignorance is the first and foremost factor in the darkness of
which prejudice blooms. Ask an average Muslim or Hindu, how much he
knows about other's religion. The answer will probably be very little.
Despite the fact that religions in general have an enormous amount
that indicates essential brotherhood of man, the subtility of the
fact has hardly been brought to surface in the invocations. Much that
goes in the name of religion is blind and superstitious manipulation
of the unseen environment. Dignity of human being, the basic tenet
of all religions, is neither known nor preached. A beginning could be
made in our schools and colleges where arrangements should be made for
the sympathetic study of great truths taught by different religions.
Study groups, cooperative activities and common celebrations etc. can
help understand point of views different from one's own and thus
dispel ignorance and build faith.

Whatever may be the form of political parties, in determining their contents, religious feelings play a large part. The activities of Jan Sangh, R.S.S. and Muslim League, irrespective of their professed aims, have been based upon religious exclusiveness of a community. In addition, the economic backwardness, lack of social mobility and cultural homogeneity have been responsible for pushing group loyalities to a given party. Religion has thus become a necessary element of political life of Indians. Except for some parties that cut *cross religious boundaries, others have definite religious overtones. Hence it is not surprising that they are pointed as causes and their abolition as cure of communal conflict in India. Since religious sentiments of Indians are too fragile and easy to exploit such parties have survived. While under the democratic set up it is inconceivable to abolish any political party what could be done is to induce greater political consciousness among the masses. Adult education geared to programmes for liquidating communal prejudice and inducing consciousness of rights and obligation can be one such direction.

The concept of participation is neither new nor elusive to behavioural scientists. Since the time of change in food habits experiments by Lewin (1947) participation has picked up a meaning hitherto unknown. The spirit of participation lies not only in doing things together but being involved in them on terms of equal status. For a successful implementation of any programme for communal harmony the state has to insist that (a) the programmes are for the citizens of the country and (b) make uncompromising insistence on participation by both communities on terms of equal status. It is the sharing which will generate respect for members of all communities and minimize communal conflict.

We, Indians are used to traditional joint family systems, characterized by security, cooperation, and compromises. It is a small but to a great extent a total world. Being used to such a unit they feel beguiled and confused if things are handled at a level that is too big to represent a joint family unit. Too ambitious national level programs are definitely things to be proud of but hardly help in solving problems. Hence for an effective administration of a program on communal harmony, a beginning has to be made at smaller levels, that seem to represent levels similar to joint family unit. Instead of large scale national level programmes it may probably be more useful to initiate programs of communal harmony at such levels as a small collectivity of few families (Mohalla) community schools, play grounds, and other social gatherings. It is hoped that the small size of the program would provide a better gestalt to those who are going to be affected by programs of communal harmony.

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INDIAN INSTITUTE OF MANAGEMENT

SURVEY

Age _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _   Place of birth _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _

Sex_ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _   Its approximate population _ _ _ _ _

Education _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _   Length of stary in present
                                                         locality _ _ _ _

Occupation _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _

1. How did you come to know about the July Riots?

2. When you heard that communal riots has broken out what did
    you feel like doing first?

    (a) Report to police

    (b) Ascertain facts

    (c) Believe what you heard

    (d) Organize peace parties

    (e) Stay home and mind your own business

    (f) Any other

3. When there is a rumour of disturbance would you pass through
    a locality which is predominantly Hindu/Muslim?

    Yes _ _ _ _ _ _ _   No _ _ _ _ _ _ _

    Why ?

4. What is your opinion are the causes of **communal riots in general?**

5. What in general should be done to eliminate communal conflict?

6. What could have helped to check July 1973 riots?

To what extent would you be willing to associate yourself with members of Hindu/Muslim community? Please indicate one answer keeping in mind the Hindu/Muslim community as a whole and not any particular individual whom you might know -

_____ To close kinship by marriage

_____ To take food in my dining room

_____ As an intimate personal friend

_____ As a guest in my house

_____ As my neighbour

_____ As an acquaintance