

Research Paper

## Religious Intergroup Identification as a Factor in Collective Guilt Acceptance

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### ABSTRACT

In the Indian context, the Constitution has officially recognized the right to religious freedom as a fundamental right. Despite the constitutional commitment to secularism in India, the nation has consistently experienced tensions and conflicts between its two dominant religious communities, namely Hindus and Muslims. According to Doosje et al. (1998), there is a suggestion that individuals might experience feelings of guilt on behalf of their group when the behaviours of other members within the same group contradict the established norms or values of the group. Citizens of any country or social group, therefore, who have a history of oppression, exploitation, or unfairness toward other groups, may experience collective guilt. Consequently, this research study (N= 120, Mage = 32 years, SD = 12.46) focuses on understanding the extent to which religious intergroup identification as a factor in collective guilt acceptance. We first presented respondents a scenario of anticipated intergroup conflict related to mob lynching, which was used to elicit acceptance of collective guilt among persons belonging to majority-minority religious groups then we measured their religious identifications and collective guilt acceptance. Stratified random sample method was used for selecting participants from Gandhinagar and Ahmedabad city of Gujarat, India. Results revealed that majority religious group showed in-group religious favouritism and out-group religious derogation with regards to collective guilt acceptance whereas minority religious group did not showed in-group religious favouritism but exhibited out-group religious derogation with regards to collective guilt acceptance. Both communities exhibited equal level of collective guilt acceptance elicited from a scenario of anticipated intergroup conflict related to mob lynching. The findings are then addressed in light of the existing body of scholarly work, and the article comes to a close by offering some thoughts on the directions that majority-minority research should go in the future.

**Keywords:** *Religious Intergroup Identification, Collective Guilt Acceptance, Majority, Minority, Mob Lynching*

According to Allport (1954), it was posited that emotions play a significant role in shaping the content of various manifestations of bias. Emotions develop in social situations and are influenced by social aspects of the situation, such as interdependence, familiarity, and intimacy (Clark & Finkel, 2004; Fischer & Manstead,

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Received: August 12, 2023; Revision Received: December 14, 2023; Accepted: December 18, 2023

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2008; Keltner & Haidt, 1999; Tiedens & Leach, 2004). As a result of debates about whether or not emotions can be scientifically studied, two scientific schools of thought have developed. The first concerns how social contextual elements such as status, familiarity, intimacy, power, and social class shape emotional reactions. Emotions can be very different in conversations with friends compared to conversations with strangers, with superiors compared to conversations with subordinates, and in informal compared to formal contexts. A second new area of inquiry flips the traditional chain of causation on its head and investigates the question of how certain social relationships develop from emotions. The goal here is to document how various emotions or emotional processes establish specific patterns of interactions.

Doosje et al. (1998) claimed that guilt, when examined at the level of the individual, can be categorized as a self-conscious emotion. In order for it to take place, individuals must perceive that they have drifted from a set of principles or standards they hold. A person feels guilty when there is a dissonance between their own expectations of how they should have acted and their actual actions (Doosje et al., 1998, p. 872). Because of the adverse psychological effects of guilt, people often take steps to make apologies or express regret for their acts. According to research conducted by Baumeister et al. (1994), people who experience feelings of guilt are more likely to alter their behaviour in the future. The sentiments of guilt which were described before fall under the category of personal guilt since they are triggered by an act of wrong doing for which a particular agent is regarded to be guilty. Collective guilt, as defined by Branscombe and Doosje (2004b), occurs when an individual feels complicit in the harm done by a group to which he or she belongs. Doosje et al. (1998) carried out the very first social psychological research study on the topic of collective guilt. People can feel collective guilt for an offense even though they had nothing to do with the actual transgressor's actions, so long as they are members of the same group (Doosje et al., 1998). Individuals could also feel collective guilt for historical events that took place before their time, even though such events occurred before the individuals were born.

Self-categorisation Theory (Turner et al., 1987) and Social Identity Theory (Tajfel & Turner, 1986) both provide explanations for how and when social groupings influence individuals' perceptions, feelings, and behaviours. The Social Identity Theory contends that in addition to their individual characteristics, people acquire their sense of self from the social groupings they are a part of. People are able to extract meaning from their social surroundings by categorizing themselves as well as others in accordance with the groups to which they belong, as proposed by the Self-categorisation Theory. The process of identification is a sort of socialization that is on-going, unfinished, and open. It encourages one to explore actively and independently for one's own identity, and it bolsters the importance of the subjective aspect in the process of developing a self-conception. The determining factors in this identification process include culture and social reality. Accordingly, identification consists of both emotional and cognitive elements. In most cases, the development of the emotional component takes place during the early stages of a healthy relationship or as a direct consequence of pleasant emotions. Emotional connections form the basis for the cognitive component, which ultimately results in the adoption of certain values, ideas, attitudes, and worldviews. A person's positive emotional connection to the group strengthens as soon as he or she finds commonalities in perceiving and evaluating the world with other members of the group. The experience and comprehension of collective identity, commonly referred to as "we-ness," arises from the processes of social identification. This sense of identification helps to establish a group as a social aggregate and leads to similar patterns of thought and behaviour among its members. During the

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course of engaging in social interaction, an individual's developing social identity has the potential to be preserved, altered, or somehow reconceived. According to sociological literature (Klandermans, 1997; Taylor & Whittier, 1992), the concept of "collective identity" is related to the study of social movements. The idea of collective identity encompasses not only the experiences, attitudes, beliefs, and interests that in-group members have in common with one another, but it is also tied to the processes of actively establishing group images, goals, and ideals of self-representation. The accomplishment of a common goal for which this group was formed can thus be used to characterize collective identity. The term "collective identity" is used in this setting to define the interconnection that exists between social identity (on both the individual and the group level) and collective activities in the political arena (Gamson, 1992).

### *Rationale of the Study*

India is a liberal country with many different religions. The Constitution says that the right to religious freedom is one of the most important rights. Even though India's constitution is built on the idea of secularism, there have always been tensions and fights between the Hindus and the Muslims, which are the two largest religious groups. All through Indian history, this has been the case. The 2011 census showed that 79.8% of the population is Hindu and 14.2% is Muslim. Although Muslims are regarded as a minority in India, the significant proportion of both religions has long been a source of concern for the government and even the people of India, which is evidenced by the frequent conflicts and attempts to promote conflict amongst the people. Even when the majority of people in a community have a high level of tolerance for those who belong to other communities, it only takes a small number of intolerant individuals to sow the seeds of discord between two religious groups; this has resulted in a great number of violent incidents and social unrest in the society. Consequently this study is intended to study the religious intergroup identification of majority-minority religious group and their collective guilt acceptance in Gujarat, India where religious riots happened in 2002. Brown et al. (2008) stated that collective guilt "arises mainly when group members perceive that they have some responsibility for their in-group's misdeeds or the subsequent repercussions of those misdeeds" (p. 76). Collective guilt could be felt by citizens of any nation or social group whose history includes acts of oppression, exploitation, or unfairness against other groups. However, that collective guilt is not a typical social emotion, at least not among the general public. Members of a group may feel pressured to uphold a positive public image of the group, so it's understandable that they could resist the idea of accepting responsibility for in-group damage, whether it occurred in the past or is happening now. Taking moral responsibility for harm committed by the in-group may also be seen as going against the in-group's interests by exposing it to reparations costs and depriving it of potential sympathy from other groups. This suggests that members of the group may initially try to "forget" the event that caused them to feel guilty by downplaying its significance or denying its occurrence (Branscombe & Miron, 2004). When it doesn't work, members of the group may try to justify the detrimental behaviours as a shield for their reputation.

Doosje et al. (1998) stated that when individuals admit membership in a group, they may have distinct emotional reactions as a result of the acts of that group, even though they did not personally do in a disruptive manner. This is true even if the persons in question did not engage in any behaviour that was deemed to be inappropriate. Accordingly, it is suggested that individuals may feel guilty on behalf of their group when the actions of other in-group members are at conflict with the group's norms or values (Doosje et al., 1998). Hence, the

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main aim of this research reinitiated as *religious intergroup identification as a factor in collective guilt acceptance*.

### **Objectives**

- To examine the association between religious intergroup identification and collective guilt acceptance.
- To study the role of religious intergroup identification in predicting collective guilt acceptance among majority-minority separately.
- To compare the differences on intergroup identification and collective guilt acceptance among majority-minority religious groups.

### **Hypotheses**

- H<sub>1</sub>: There will be relationship between in-group religious identification, out-group religious identification, and collective guilt acceptance.
- H<sub>2a</sub>: Regression coefficient to predict collective guilt acceptance based on religious intergroup identification will be other than zero in majority group.
- H<sub>2b</sub>: Regression coefficient to predict collective guilt acceptance based on religious intergroup identification will be other than zero in minority group.
- H<sub>3</sub>: There will be differences on religious intergroup identification and collective guilt acceptance among majority-minority religious groups.

## **METHODOLOGY**

### **Design**

The present study employed a quantitative research approach. The researcher used a correlational design to quantify the data, in which a set of information regarding individuals' religious intergroup identification and their associated collective guilt acceptance was acquired from a sample. In addition, we employed the technique of regression to determine the extent to which intergroup identification (both in-group religious identification and out-group religious identification) predicted acceptance of collective guilt.

### **Participants**

The study included a total of 120 adult participants from the cities of Ahmedabad and Gandhinagar in the state of Gujarat, India. Out of the entire sample, 67 individuals (55.83%) were identified as male, while 53 individuals (44.17%) were identified as female. Their mean age was 33 years ( $SD = 15.3$ ) and ranging from 18-67 years. Since the Hindu community makes up the vast majority of Gujarat's population (88.57%), and the Muslim community is considered to be one of the state's minorities (with a population of approximately 9.67%), we made the executive decision to use a stratified random sample method for selecting participants for the purpose of this study. Following sample selection, we discovered that 88 (73.33%) of the participants in our entire sample belonged to the majority group (Hindus), and 32 (26.67%) of them were members of the minority group (Muslims), which closely resembled the characteristics of the population.

### **Inclusion criteria**

- Only native people of Gujarat were selected.
- Participants equal to or above the age of 18 years.
- Normal individuals who were not mentally disturbed or challenged.

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### *Exclusion Criteria*

- Non-native people of Gujarat.
- Participants below the age of 18 years.
- Individuals who were mentally disturbed or challenged.

### *Measures*

#### *Socio-Demographics*

Participants were asked about their age, gender, and also about their religious group membership (Hindu/Muslim).

#### *Religious Intergroup Identification*

This study employed a graphical social identification scale, as exemplified by Steffens and Haslam (2017), to assess the religious group identifications of participants, in line with the research conducted by Bergami and Bagozzi (2000) and Schubert and Otten (2002). The participants were instructed to assess the extent of alignment or overlap between their religious identification and a particular group's identity. This assessment was conducted using pairs of circles that exhibited varying degrees of overlap. The absence of any overlap suggests that they were distinct from the mentioned group, signifying a minimal level of religious identification and designated as 1. Conversely, complete overlap indicates that they and their group share similar characteristics, indicating a strong level of religious identification and designated as 7. Higher scores were indicative of a stronger level of religious identification with a specific group. In this study, two religious groups, referred to as majority (Hindu) and minority (Muslim) were utilized. Participants were instructed to provide responses pertaining to both groups, based on their religious identification. Graphical scales, such as the one utilized in this study, exhibited a high degree of reliability and were found to be exceedingly straightforward to administer. Moreover, these instruments proved to be especially advantageous in scenarios where individuals were required to express their affiliation with multiple entities, as they enabled a visual assessment of responses.

#### *Collective Guilt Acceptance*

The assessment of the participants' acceptance of collective guilt was conducted by employing the collective guilt acceptance subscale, which was originally developed by Branscombe, Slugoski, and Kappen in 2004. This subscale was comprised of five questions, and the possible answers ranged from 1 (very strongly agree) to 9 (very strongly disagree). Higher scores on the subscale were indicative of lower acceptance of collective guilt, while lower scores indicated higher acceptance of collective guilt. It was determined that Cronbach's Alpha for the collective guilt acceptance subscale on the present sample was .87, which indicated that the scale had satisfactory reliability.

#### *Procedure*

Participants' involvement in the study was purely voluntary, and they did not receive any monetary or other benefits as a result of their participation. In the questionnaire, we first presented respondents a scenario of anticipated intergroup conflict related to mob lynching, which was used to elicit acceptance of collective guilt among persons belonging to majority-minority religious groups.

The wordings of scenario was '*You might have heard about many incidents of mob lynching from past years on issues of inter-caste or inter-religion marriages, child kidnapping, and*

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issues of caste dominance or to maintain religious supremacy. Recently, in a Government hospital near your neighborhood, two brothers from another religious community who had taken their nephew to a doctor for treatment were mistaken and attacked by a mob from your religious community on suspicion of child lifting. After getting the information, the police hurried to the location and rescued the brothers. One of them, however, was certified dead upon arrival at the hospital' (Drishti IAS, 2019).

Following the initial task, participants were instructed to provide their responses on various measures utilized in this study. These measures were presented in a set of questionnaire, which was subsequently followed by a scenario depicting an anticipated intergroup conflict related to mob lynching. Participants received a debriefing after the study was completed, during which the researcher answered questions they had any and dealt with any issues they had encountered. After the completion of data collection process, the participants were thanked for their cooperation. The researcher ensured that the ethical criteria established in the APA's code of conduct (APA, 2002) were adhered to at every single stage of the study.

### Statistical Analysis

Initially, a frequency distribution was performed for the socio demographics. The IBM-SPSS statistics version 27 (IBM, 2020) was used to conduct the analysis of the data. Pearson product-moment correlations were employed to assess the associations between variables in both the majority and minority religious groups. In addition to this, we performed a standard regression analysis in order to see the extent to which intergroup identification (both in-group religious identification and out-group religious identification) predicted acceptance of collective guilt. The researchers employed an independent samples *t*-test to examine the mean difference in intergroup identification and collective guilt acceptance among majority-minority religious groups.

## RESULTS

The investigation into missing data revealed that across all of the participants' measurements, there were no missing values at all. After then, the range of possible scores on each item was investigated in order to make sure that all of the numbers fell within the parameters of the scale's acceptable range. The assumptions of parametric tests were checked, and it was found that the variables of interest fit the normality, homogeneity, and other criteria. Appropriate statistics were utilized to test the present study's hypotheses.

*Table 1 Descriptive Statistics and Correlations of Study Variables in Majority and Minority Religious Groups*

Variable	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	1	2	3
<b>Majority religious group (n = 88)</b>					
1. In-group religious identification	5.06	1.76	—		
2. Out-group religious identification	3.22	1.50	.20	—	
3. Collective guilt acceptance	15.92	7.42	.28**	-.38***	—
<b>Minority religious group (n = 32)</b>					
1. In-group religious identification	6.13	1.18	—		
2. Out-group religious identification	4.09	1.70	.44*	—	
3. Collective guilt acceptance	14.97	5.90	.14	-.40*	—

\*\*\**p* < .001. \*\**p* < .01. \**p* < .05.

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Table 1 represented the Pearson product-moment correlation between variables under study in majority-minority groups separately. In majority religious group, in-group religious identification has non-significant correlation with out-group religious identification ( $r = .20$ ,  $p = .055$ ) but has significant weak positive correlation with collective guilt acceptance ( $r = .28$ ,  $p = .008$ ). Out-group religious identification has significant moderate negative correlation with collective guilt acceptance ( $r = -.38$ ,  $p < .001$ ). In minority religious group, in-group religious identification has significant moderate positive correlation with out-group religious identification ( $r = .44$ ,  $p = .011$ ) but has non-significant correlation with collective guilt acceptance ( $r = .14$ ,  $p = .644$ ). Out-group religious identification has significant moderate negative correlation with collective guilt acceptance ( $r = -.40$ ,  $p = .025$ ). Based on findings, our proposed hypothesis  $H_1$  was supported for majority religious group but not for minority religious group.

**Table 2 Regression Analysis for In-Group and Out-Group Religious Identification Predicting Collective Guilt Acceptance**

Predictor	B	SEB	$\beta$	t	R <sup>2</sup>	adj. R <sup>2</sup>	f <sup>2</sup>	95% CI [LL, UL]
<b>Majority religious group (F(2, 85) = 16.59***, p &lt; .001)</b>								
Constant	15.27	2.35		6.51***				[10.60, 19.94]
In-group religious identification	1.58	0.40	.37	3.98***				[0.80, 2.37]
Out-group religious identification	-2.28	0.47	-.46	4.89***	.281	.264	0.39	[-3.21, -1.35]
<b>Minority religious group (F(2, 29) = 3.23, p = .054)</b>								
Constant	16.42	5.22		3.14**				[5.74, 27.10]
In-group religious identification	0.87	0.94	.18	0.93				[-1.04, 2.78]
Out-group religious identification	-1.66	0.66	-.48	2.53*	.182	.126	0.22	[-2.99, -0.32]

*Note.* CI = confidence interval; LL = lower limit; UL = upper limit. In-group and out-group religious identification were predictors and collective guilt acceptance was criterion variable.

\*\*\* $p < .001$ . \*\* $p < .01$ . \* $p < .05$ .

Table 2 outlined the extent to which in-group religious identification and out-group religious identification were both predictive of collective guilt acceptance in majority and minority religious groups, respectively. In order to accomplish this, we started by testing the assumptions behind multiple linear regression. Inconsistencies with linear assumptions were visually examined using residuals analysis to detect heteroscedasticity, variance inflation factors (VIF), and tolerance statistics to detect multicollinearity (i.e., VIF > 10; tolerance 0.1), and the Durbin-Watson (DW) test to detect non-independence of errors (i.e., DW 2 > DW) (Field, 2009). The Q-Q plots indicated that the variables followed a normal distribution. Since there were no serial correlations between errors, the average Durbin-Watson value of 2.10 was used to make this determination. Although the average variance inflation factor (VIF) was larger than 1, all of them were less than 10, and no tolerance statistics were below 0.2, which meant multicollinearity was not anticipated. All the assumptions were satisfied.

Further, results of multiple linear regression suggested that in majority religious group, the R<sup>2</sup> value of .281 suggested that the predictors in-group religious identification and out-group

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religious identification explained 28.1% of variance in collective guilt acceptance with  $F(2, 85) = 16.59, p < .001, f^2 = 0.39$ . The obtained value of Cohen's  $f^2$  was 0.39 which corresponds to large effect size. The results suggested that in-group religious identification positively predicted collective guilt acceptance ( $\beta = .37, p < .001$ ), whereas out-group religious identification emerged as a negative factor to collective guilt acceptance ( $\beta = -.46, p < .001$ ).

In minority religious group, the  $R^2$  value of .182 suggested that the predictors in-group religious identification and out-group religious identification explained 18.2% of variance in collective guilt acceptance with  $F(2, 29) = 3.23, p = .054, f^2 = 0.22$ . The value of Cohen's  $f^2$  was 0.22 which corresponds to medium effect size. The findings suggested that out-group religious identification negatively predicted collective guilt acceptance ( $\beta = -.48, p = .017$ ), whereas in-group religious identification emerged as a non-significant positive predictor of collective guilt acceptance ( $\beta = .18, p = .359$ ). Findings revealed that hypothesis H<sub>2a</sub> was supported for majority religious group but H<sub>2b</sub> did not supported for minority religious group.

**Table 3 Mean Comparison of Study Variables in Majority and Minority Religious Group**

Variable	Majority religious group		Minority religious group		<i>t</i> (118)	Cohen's <i>d</i>
	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>		
In-group religious identification	5.06	1.76	6.13	1.18	3.18**	0.66
Out-group religious identification	3.22	1.50	4.09	1.70	2.74**	0.56
Collective guilt acceptance	15.92	7.42	14.97	5.90	0.65	0.01

\*\* $p < .01$ .

Table 3 represented independent samples *t*-test which indicated significant mean differences on in-group religious identification with  $t(118) = 3.18, p = .002$ . Results indicated that the majority religious group exhibited lower mean score on in-group religious identification ( $M = 5.06, SD = 1.76$ ) compared to the minority religious group ( $M = 6.13, SD = 1.18$ ). The obtained value of Cohen's *d* was 0.66 ( $> 0.50$ ) which highlighted medium effect size. Table 3 also depicted significant mean difference on out-group religious identification with  $t(118) = 2.74, p = .007$ . Results indicated that the majority religious group exhibited lower mean score on out-group religious identification ( $M = 3.22, SD = 1.50$ ) compared to the minority religious group ( $M = 4.09, SD = 1.70$ ). The obtained value of Cohen's *d* was 0.56 ( $> 0.50$ ) which suggested medium effect size. Further, a insignificant mean difference was observed on collective guilt acceptance among majority and minority religious group with  $t(118) = 0.65, p = .515$ . Findings revealed that both majority religious group ( $M = 15.92, SD = 7.42$ ) and minority religious group ( $M = 14.97, SD = 5.90$ ) elicited equal level of collective guilt acceptance from a scenario of anticipated intergroup conflict related to mob lynching. The reported value of Cohen's *d* was 0.01 ( $< 0.20$ ) which suggested negligible effect size. Mean comparisons showed that hypothesis H<sub>3</sub> was supported for religious intergroup identification but not for collective guilt acceptance.

## DISCUSSION

According to Branscombe et al. (2002), the occurrence of collective guilt is contingent upon several factors that align with theoretical expectations. These factors include self-categorization at the group level, the perceived illegitimacy of intergroup relations among



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certain members of the perpetrator group, and the acceptance of responsibility by the in-group for the harm caused. The main goal of the current study is to examine the extent to which the acceptance of collective guilt can be anticipated based on religious intergroup identification, specifically in terms of in-group and out-group dynamics. The study conducted by Doosje et al. (2006) emphasizes that Dutch participants exhibited a stronger sense of guilt when they were presented with negative information regarding the victimization behaviour of their own social group, indicating a positive correlation between identification and guilt. Therefore, in this study collective guilt acceptance is elicited by a scenario of anticipated intergroup conflict related to mob lynching among members of majority religious group (Hindu) and minority religious group (Muslim) of Gujarat, India.

From the findings of this study, it is evident that elicited collective guilt acceptance positively relates to in-group religious identification in majority religious group but not in minority religious group which supported the findings of Ruback and Singh (2007) that both Hindus and Muslims were more likely to blame members of their own community for communal rioting. Collective guilt acceptance negatively relates to out-group religious identification in both majority religious group and minority religious group. In-group religious identification positively relates to out-group religious identification in minority religious group but not in majority religious group. The findings of Zagefka et al. (2010) are supported by the results, indicating that individuals with stronger beliefs regarding the profound interconnectedness among members of their in-group throughout history were more likely to experience heightened collective guilt in relation to the historical exploitation of out-groups. Also, Klein et al. (2011) highlighted getting the mixed results regarding the relationship using a different approach. Specifically, they argued that a curvilinear relationship exists between group identification and collective guilt which contradicted our study because we found linear relationships.

Results of standard multiple regressions conveys that in majority religious group intergroup identification emerged as a factor in collective guilt acceptance but not in minority religious group. Consistent with their findings, Mistry and Shah (2020) found that, compared to the general population, Hindus exhibit nearly eight percent greater Religious Prejudice toward Muslims. This finding is consistent with the culture and beliefs of the locals in the Ahmedabad, Gujarat area, where both Hindus and Muslims exhibit religious prejudice toward members of the opposing faith. The Hindu community has a greater extent, maybe as a result of their social dominance. In addition, political activity can make use of historical events as a "symbolic resource" (Sen & Wagner, 2005; Liu et al., 2004). Hindu activists believe that due to the growing Muslim population, India would soon experience another division (Tripathi, 2005).

In the comparison between Majority religious group and Minority religious group, members of minority religious group identified higher than majority religious group to their religious in-groups and out-groups. Members of both the community elicit equal level of collective guilt acceptance from a scenario of anticipated intergroup conflict related to mob lynching, similarly according to Ghosh and Huq (1985), there are instances where Hindus and Muslims do not negatively differentiate themselves from one another. Further researches need to be conducted in future in regards to see the dynamics of intergroup relations among majority and minority groups at large in Indian context.

### CONCLUSION

On the basis of findings of this study we can conclude that in majority religious group (Hindu), both components (in-group and out-group) of religious intergroup identification were significantly associated with collective guilt acceptance. Although in minority religious group (Muslim) only out-group religious identification as a component of intergroup identification was associated. Majority religious group showed in-group religious favouritism and out-group religious derogation with regards to collective guilt acceptance whereas minority religious group did not showed in-group religious favouritism but exhibited out-group religious derogation with regards to collective guilt acceptance. Minority religious group members identified higher with their own religious group members and also to the members of majority group members. Both communities exhibited equal level of collective guilt acceptance elicited from a scenario of anticipated intergroup conflict related to mob lynching. We also suggest that more researches need to be done in India regarding group-based emotions and group identifications.

### *Limitations and Future Suggestions*

Even if the findings of this study make it possible to start a new line of inquiry in psychology studies on religious intergroup identification as a factor in collective guilt acceptance, it is crucial to recognize that this study has certain limitations before recommending new avenues of research.

The findings of this study show that religious intergroup identification can be a factor in collective guilt acceptance. First, because our study was conducted in Gujarat (India), a particular sociocultural setting where Hindu is in the majority and other communities making up the minority, its findings cannot be generalized to different sociocultural contexts. As a result, any future research needs to focus on cross-cultural studies.

Second, this study solely makes use of the quantitative research methodology, which does not take into consideration the subjective answers of the participants. As a result, in future studies, researchers may choose to employ a mix-method strategy for the analysis of group-related emotions and intergroup religious affiliation.

Third, we opted for a survey method rather than undertaking experiments for this study. As a consequence of this, we must refrain from drawing causal conclusions from our findings. As a consequence of this, future research ought to make use of experimental or longitudinal methods in order to identify the potential causal impacts of religious intergroup identification as a factor in collective guilt acceptance involving a scenario of anticipated intergroup conflict between a majority religious population and a minority religious population.

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### **Acknowledgment**

The authors express their deep gratitude to all individuals who have made significant contributions to the successful completion of this paper. Their contributions are recognized, but their names are not mentioned here for legal reasons.

### **Conflict of Interest**

The authors make a bold assertion that there are no conflicts of interest associated with this paper.

**How to cite this article:** Jha, V., Khan, S.M. & Parray, A.R. (2023). Religious Intergroup Identification as a Factor in Collective Guilt Acceptance. *International Journal of Indian Psychology*, 11(4), 2160-2171. DIP:18.01.201.20231104, DOI:10.25215/1104.201