

Development of Religious Awareness and Prejudice among Children in India

Vandana Tripathi^{1*}, Prof. Rashmi Kumar²

ABSTRACT

About F.E (1988) stated in her book “Children and Prejudice”, “prejudice develops as awareness of one’s race and ethnicity develops” with this idea, the basic theme of this study was, how do prejudice and religious awareness develop in Indian children and What is the correlation between religious awareness and prejudice? Is it affected by age and schooling? Schooling is likely to affect religious awareness as in mixed school of children, so there is likelihood of more religious awareness and thus less prejudice. On the basis of review of literature researcher assumed that due to religious awareness we perceived similarity and dissimilarity between ingroup and outgroup. Similarity between groups will increase liking for out group so prejudice would be less in when religious awareness is more. Study was done on 4 to 15 years old Hindu and Muslim children who study in mixed and non mixed schools (Religious schools) at Prayagraj. To measure religious awareness (which refers to the knowledge about own group and others group’s religion) pictures were used which were related to religious symbols, religious name, religious dress and religious events of both Hindu and Muslim religions, along with a checklist of positive and negative adjectives as well as semi structured interviews. Data was collected in the form of qualitative data which converted into quantitative data and analyzed by using SPSS, Anova and correlations were computed. Results revealed that Hindu and Muslim children followed the same pattern for religious awareness (correct recognition of pictures) and religious awareness was related to the minority group’s perceptual discriminatory features. Schooling affected the religious awareness such that children from mixed schools were more aware of the out-group’s religion than children from non mixed schools. Prejudice and religious awareness was negatively correlated. The more religious aware children were less prejudiced. And prejudice was found more in 7- 9 yrs group of children in comparison to other age groups and religious awareness increased with age among both group of children.

Keywords: *Prejudice, religious awareness, schooling, sociocognitive theory and age*

Generally prejudice refers to strong unreasonable feeling of not liking somebody/something, especially when it is based on race, religion or sex. Prejudice is an assumption or an opinion about someone simply based on that person's membership to a particular group. If someone is acting on their prejudices, they are *pre-*

¹Assistant Professor

²Professor

*Corresponding Author

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judging (hence the term "prejudice") someone before even getting to know them on a deeper level.

And a child cultivates self concept through all the experiences of childhood and gradually prepares a sense of identity. A child's life constitutes many experiences including religious ceremonies and daily rituals, sharing of mythological tales and use of symbols and materials and ceremonies which give a continuum to the child and which helps him to become a religious child. As religious child the maturing child not only identifies with the group's attitude and the values inherent to him, but also develops belief in accordance with the beliefs which their own group holds towards other religious groups. Children learn categorization on the basis of group membership and perceived similarity and dissimilarity between groups and become aware of other's religious group membership, and this awareness leads to categorization between ingroup and outgroup.

According to Merriam college dictionary awareness is a part of knowledge, familiarity with something or someone through experience or association, understanding something or someone or cognition, that is the fact or condition of having information of something or someone. The concept of awareness is related to four terms familiarity (contact), knowledge understanding and cognition. Awareness is linked with the culture, identity, experience and social practice. Culture is indicated in how we express our thoughts and experiences spiritually and cognitively, knowledge is also produced through a given space. When awareness relate with the ethnic awareness its works three types. (Matusitz 2012).

The highest of level of awareness of another ethnic group implies that possessing a lot of information about a group culture behavior language knowledge that we are able to understand and appreciate the perspective of others.

In the middle level of awareness member's racial identity interact with his or her experiences ingroup members awareness of her or his own racial identity and about other ethnic identity. It may result in more prejudice or stereotype will occur.

Lowest level of awareness is ignorance, the main cause of prejudice; ignorance is simply the state of being devoid of knowledge of about something or someone. Ignorance can leads to both stereotyping and prejudice. And since religion is a universal institution. It plays an important role in directing, shaping and molding social behavior at both the individual and group levels in a multi-religious country like India. It is closely related to the development and change of attitudes and beliefs, arousal and reduction of anxiety and guilt, and determination of cognitive and motivational processes. It may be mentioned that the function of religion varies from society to society as well as from culture to culture.

Smart and Smart (1972) have pointed out; religious concepts are the products of cognitive development and social interactions and knowledge. This type of knowledge seems to develop in three stages:

- At about 6 years, the child has a global undifferentiated concept of being a Hindu, Muslim or Christian. The global concept he/she forms, however, depends on the religion, which is offered to him.
- From 7 to 9 years the concepts are differentiated but apply only to concrete circumstances.

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- Children between 11 and 14 years have a differentiated and abstract concept of their denomination. The child realizes that his/her religion is one among others.
- And according to social cognitive theory of Aboud (1988) a child's attitude towards other group of Children depends upon his/ her level of development in relation to two overlapping sequences of perceptual cognitive development. One sequence involves the process that dominates the child's experience at a particular time.

1) At early age (up to 5 years) children's attitude is dominated by affective perceptual processes associated with fear of the unknown and the attachment to the familiar. Perceptual processes subsequently dominate with preference for the similar (in group) and rejections of the (different) outgroup being determined primarily physical attributes (e.g skin color, language, body size). At this stage thinking is egocentric.

2) Operational stage (5 to 9 years)Piaget (1954) refers as "beginning age of mental operation, capacity of logical thinking and multiple aspects into account and also transitive inference- recognize relationship between two objects by knowing relationship each of them and third object" in terms of more abstract and internal attributes and coupled with this social (social orientation moved towards groups attributes) and cognitive changes is likely to facilitate a particularly high degree of ethnocentrism.

3) At age of 9 years onwards, finally as the child acquires proper operational thinking means to see the recognition of the possibility of individual within variation of group. Whereas social cognitive theory (Aboud 1988) argues that ingroup bias and outgroup prejudice increase to peak at 7 year of age when group difference are paramount at ethnic minority group member (Brown 1995).

In India Prasad (1976) did a study on caste awareness in Bihari Children and found caste awareness was low in 5 to 6 years age group and did not increase significantly up to 7 to 8 years. A step wise increases in caste awareness was observed up to nine to ten years, and continued to 11-14 years of age. Tiwari and Mishra 1988 carried out a study development of caste awareness in primary school children. It was found that 70% children in the age group were able to report their own caste name. In older subjects caste identity was 100%. As for the choice of friends, majority of children were found to prefer their own caste and to avoid friendship with other caste. The general findings of the review of studies (Singh A.K,1978) on the development of self-identity among Indian children is that all kinds of identities religious, ethnic, sex and caste are as formed early 4 to 5 years of age for all four religious communities. Many empirical studies on the development of religious and caste identities have been carried out in India. (Agrawal 1980 Singh, Singh and Singh 1980 Sharma 1978). Latika (2009) found in her study, children at age of 4 ready begin to identify with their religious group and develop a sense of separateness from other religious group and locating identity in their religion, faith in family religion. And children showed ignorance or limited knowledge about other's religion. Also, difference in religious practice and rituals get translated into emotional distance and revealed disliking for other's group. And when they perceived similarity in common rituals they showed degree of positive interest and tolerance for other's group.

Reviews of developmental studies reveals that education is strongly related to religiosity and caste and negative correlation was found between education and prejudice. Singh and Khan (1979) had reported that children from non segregated school developed religious identity earlier than those attending segregated school. Singh (1979) examined the origin and

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development of religious identities and prejudices in Hindu, Muslim and Sikh children. He demonstrated an early formation of prejudice in Indian children. Prejudice began to take shape at the nursery school. However no differences were observed in religious prejudice in these two types of school (R.C Mishra and ShabanaBano 2004). In India context children get education mostly in two type of school.

Mixed Schools: public school based on western system of education

Mixed schools refer to those schools in where included western system of education (Mishra 1988), these are also called integrated schools, because in these schools children belonging to Hindu, Muslim and other groups are taught together in a common classroom. These schools teach languages, arithmetic, history, geography and science. This type of schools does not provide religious education; religious topics are taught only as lessons of moral education.

Denominational schools: schools of particular religion.

These are also called segregated schools. These schools provide religious education. Children who belonging to particular religious groups get admission in, Madrasa for Muslims and Sanskrit schools for Hindus and Buddha math for Buddhist.

And in the present study researchers had taken Sanskrit pathashal and Madrasa and Mixe School. In Sanskrit school emphasis on the knowledge of Sanskrit language, and the same is used as the medium of instruction. These schools teach Vedic literature, philosophy, astrology, religion and traditional rituals of Hindu religion. Madarasa (also called Quranic schools or maqtabs) have served as traditional institutions of teaching and learning for the Muslim society. It refers to elementary or intermediate level of traditional education, which provides the learner with the basic skills of reading, writing, elementary notions of grammar and knowledge of Islamic law. The teaching is done Urdu and Arbic languages.

Since studies reveals that a strong relationship between socialization and development of prejudice has already been established, it is expected that Sanskrit pathshala and madarasa will have impact on the development of prejudice.

Some studies supported the relationship between religion and prejudice and some did not. So, there is a controversy., During review of literature it has been found that studies which studies about development of religious prejudice related to age and type of schooling (Latika 2009, Bano and Mishra 2005) did not mention how prejudice develop with age and what impact of this development is related with type of school. However, no differences were observed in religious prejudice in these two types of school. Singh and khan (1979) had reported that children from integrated school developed religious identity earlier than those attending segregated school.

Present study

In Indian context physical features such as skin color, hair and physiognomy do not differentiate ethnic or religious group, some studies reported through the religious cues (dress, name, and event and symbols religious story etc.) children categorize between groups. But very few studies had done on developmental pattern of prejudice in India (Bano. s & Mishra). Most of the research has done in Western countries in where context is different from Indian intergroup relation & conflict. And these researches are not revealed the unequivocal age of prejudice development. So, researcher would like to see the

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relationship between age, awareness and prejudice among Indian children along with type of school.

Objective of study:

1. How does religious group awareness develop among children? How does religion effect the religious group awareness, are children more aware of own religion related cues in comparison to other?
2. At what age children acquire religious group awareness and prejudice. Does this change with age?
3. Does religious group awareness development following the same pattern for both communities of children?
4. What are the effect of type of schooling on religious group awareness and prejudice?
5. What is the relationship between religious group awareness and prejudice?
6. What is the effect of schooling and age and religion on prejudice?

Hypothesis:

- **H1:** Children will recognize more ingroup cues in comparison to outgroup cues for religious group awareness.
- **H2:** Children will recognize the differences between groups at the age of four.
- **H3:** Religious group awareness will increase with the age for Hindu and Muslims group.
- **H4:** Segregated school children will be score more on religious group awareness for in group in comparison to outgroup.
- **H5:** The children who having more religious awareness will be less prejudiced in comparison to those children who have less knowledge about both the religion i.e. Hindu and Muslim
- **H6:** At the age group of 7-9 years children will more prejudice in comparison to age group of 10-12.
- **H7:** Religious awareness would be negatively correlated with prejudice.
- **H8:** Prejudice would not decline with the age, be more specific .in age of 7-9 years
- **H9:** Children who attend non mixed school would be more prejudiced than those who attend a mixed school.

METHOD

The following measures were used in the present study.

Religious awareness was defined in terms of knowledge about own group religion and other group religion. It was developed through following process. Researcher took the interview of Hindu and Muslim children on the concept of religion of own & own & another group. On the basis of these findings researcher selected the pictures of showing the members of the Hindu, Muslims, Sikh and Christians four religious groups on four-dimension dress, names, religious symbol, religious event and then researcher asked the children to recognize it on the basis of familiarity and significance. From this process researcher found that children differentiated between Hindu and Muslims by dress, names, religious symbols and religious action.

Dress: A set of 16 pictures of traditional dresses of Hindu, Muslims, Sikh and Christians was shown to respondent. The task of the child was to naming the religion of the individual shown in the picture.

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Since religious awareness in terms of dress was measured on the basis of no. of correct identification out of 4 for each of the four groups. The minimum score for identification was 0 and maximum was 16.

Event: A set of 16 pictures in which existing particular religious context of Hindu and Muslims events (e.g picture of Ganga's arti). The purpose was to know about child's awareness to happening religious event in society.

Symbols: On this used the set of 16 pictures, such as trisul, 786, cross and gurudwara, the aim was to how much a child knew about for own and others religion.

Names: In this task researcher was take 4 Hindu names and 4 Muslim names, Sikh and Christians and asked the children recognize it.

Above measures were used with the following questions -

- What is this / What is in these pictures?
- Who are in these pictures?
- What is being done in these pictures?
- What is similar to you in these pictures?
- Who are you?
- Who is not similar to you?
- Do you like him? If yes, then why and if no, then why?
- Whose names are this?
- Which names of people you like?
- To whom you want to be a friend?

Prejudice: Adjective checklist

In this study prejudice was operationalised as negative attitude towards out group. Prejudice was measured by adjective checklist, for this children were given a set of 18 different adjective written on 18 cards 9 of these adjectives were positive and 9 were negative. Each child was presented photos of each of the four groups viz Hindu, Muslim, Sikh and Christian one by one and asked to tell which of the 18 adjectives were applicable to the group and responses of children were noted down in terms of yes or no to each of the 18 adjectives. The same process was repeated with the presentation of the photo of each of the four religious groups. Then add the no of adjectives reported applicable to the group. Number of positive and negative adjectives was counted and following formula was used to measure attitude towards each of four groups.

(Attitude = number of total negative adjective – number of total positive adjectives / Numbers of total applicable adjectives) + 1).

Later recording of attitude towards Hindus and Muslims was done as ingroup and outgroup attitudes, for this attitude towards Muslim was recorded as outgroup attitude and towards Hindu as ingroup attitude for Hindu participant only. For Muslim participant, the opposite was done. Thus for Hindu respondents a set of intergroup attitude was computed in terms of attitude towards ingroup (viz. Hindu) attitude towards outgroup (viz Muslim),. Similarly for Muslim respondents, the set of intergroup attitude consisted of attitude toward ingroup (viz. Muslims) attitude towards outgroup (viz. Muslims).

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Samples and procedure:

The present study was conducted on Hindu and Muslims children of the age range of 4 to 15 years ,age group (4-6), (7-9), and (10 -12)(13-15)yrs, were administered semi structured interviews with above measures and questions .The unequal size of sample found in the age group of 4-6 that is 20 children among Hindu segregated schools , Sanskrit pathshala where children were studying their minimum age of 8 years .Researcher visited school 6-7 times with whole data collection process and just keep to make the children familiar with her face, thus establishing rapport with the children. The data was collected in two types of schools segregated (where teaching is dominated by religion,) and non segregated (where teaching is not govern by the religion, they are also called mixed schools) at Allahabad (now Prayagraj)

Scoring

Religious Group Awareness: Scoring of that task researcher count the correct recognition of dress, event, name and symbols of each group. Correct response was scored as 1 which by respond Sanskrit, Madras and mixed school children and not correct response for 0.

For prejudice: For scoring of that task researcher use the 1 and 0 score for applicable and not applicable for positive and for negative traits and count the all applicable adding all applicable in positive and negative. After that computed the attitude towards Hindu, Muslim each separate column for that a formula had been generated {(total negative-total positive/total applicable) +1} computed separately for each group.

RESULT

Religious group awareness measured as mean of no of photos correctly recognized (total of dress, event, symbols and name) by participants, used in that descriptive statistics and ANOVA presented in below tables.

Table-1 Overall religious group awareness among Hindu and Muslim children for ingroup and out group.

Religion		Religious Group Awareness for			
		in-group	out-group	Sikh	Christians
Hindu	Mean	15.0645	14.0276	12.10	11.9355
	N	217	217	217	217
	Std. Deviation	1.78094	3.14307	5.124	4.96986
Muslim	Mean	14.8584	15.0265	13.33	12.5664
	N	113	113	113	113
	Std. Deviation	1.84133	1.99759	3.239	3.41445
Total	Mean	14.9939	14.3697	12.52	12.1515
	N	330	330	330	330
	Std. Deviation	1.80171	2.84070	4.599	4.50276
F		.972	9.423**	5.423*	1.461

Above table shows that, Hindus are more aware of their religion in comparison to out groups and for the out group they have more awareness for Muslims in comparison to Sikh and Christians. And Muslims are more aware for their outgroup as Hindu in comparison to Sikh, and Christians. The hypothesis is partially supported i.e. children would be more aware as ingroup, religious group awareness and also, they would more aware for out group as Hindu/Muslim in comparison to other out group such as Sikh and Christians.

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Table-2 Means of Religious Group Awareness responses among Hindu and Muslims.

Religious Group Awareness																
Age group (years)	Hindu								Muslims							
	In-group		Out-group		Sikh		Christians		In-group		Out-group		Sikh		Christians	
	Mean	SD	Mean	SD	Mean	SD	Mean	SD	Mean	SD	Mean	SD	Mean	SD	Mean	SD
4-6	12.50	2.67	9.80	4.75	4.93	4.0	5.02	4.0	12.20	2.2	11.80	2.7	8.35	2.64	7.9	2.51
7-9	15.33	.91	14.12	1.47	13.25	2.7	13.21	3.4	14.67	1.5	15.60	.72	15.03	1.12	13.73	2.66
10-12	15.63	.61	15.23	1.16	14.14	3.4	13.82	3.4	15.67	.59	15.61	1.0	14.58	1.88	14.33	1.19
13-15	15.97	.18	15.62	1.30	13.78	4.8	13.46	3.9	15.93	.25	15.97	.18	13.57	2.9	12.56	3.500
Total	15.06	1.78	14.03	3.14	12.10	5.12	11.93	4.96	14.86	1.8	15.03	.19	13.33	3.29	12.56	3.41
F	67.76**		56.87**		57.84**		56.01**		39.86**		48.57**		42.47**		28.98**	

This table is showing that according to age Hindu and Muslims children's followed same pattern for correctly recognized to in-group and out group related religious group awareness, and religious group awareness is govern by minority group perceptual discriminability which means that outgroup which is huge in numbers in society and notable and has more relevance for the intergroup context than other out-groups, for those children have more religious group awareness. For example, Hindu is most relevant out group for Muslims so they are more in their religious group awareness and same among in Hindus.

Table -3 Mean, SD and F of Religious Group Awareness for ingroup and outgroup among Hindu and Muslims children in Segregated and Non Segregated schools.

Religion	Religious awareness	Type of school	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	F
Hindu	In-group (Hindu)	Segregated	110	14.7909	2.11198	5.372*
		non segregated	107	15.3458	1.31108	
		Total	217	15.0645	1.78094	
	Out-group (Muslims)	Segregated	110	13.3545	3.87792	10.69***
		non segregated	107	14.7196	1.92694	
		Total	217	14.0276	3.14307	
Muslim	In-group (Muslims)	Segregated	109	14.8165	1.86173	1.603
		non segregated	4	16.0000	.00000	
		Total	113	14.8584	1.84133	
	Out-group (hindu)	Segregated	109	15.0826	1.98200	2.45
		non segregated	4	13.5000	2.08167	
		Total	113	15.0265	1.99759	

According to this table Hindus who are studying in non-segregated schools follow same pattern for own group religious awareness and out group religious awareness but in Muslims children they are studying in non-segregated school they have more aware for ingroup group

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religious awareness and those are in segregated schools they are more aware of Hindu's religious awareness, but this is not significant so there is no effect found to type of schooling among Muslims children.

Table-4 Mean of Religious Group Awareness for ingroup of Hindu and Muslim children according to Age and Schooling.

Religious Group Awareness for Ingroup								
Age Group	Hindu				Muslim			
	Segregated		Non Segregated		Segregated		Non-Segregated	
	Mean	Sd	Mean	Sd	Mean	Sd	Mean	Sd
4-6	11.65	3.15	13.55	1.78	12.20	2.26		
7-9	15.16	1.01	15.50	.77	14.66	1.56		
10-12	15.36	.71	15.92	.26	15.63	.61	16.00(3)	
13-15	15.93	.25	16.00	.00	15.93	.25	16.00(1)	.00
Total	14.79	2.11	15.34	1.31	14.81	1.86		
Schooling	15.42**				.80			
F Age	74.089**				38.026**			
Age&Schooling	3.84*				.037			

According to this table there have a significant effect of schooling which means in non-segregated children are more aware for their ingroup religious group awareness and age is also affecting in increasing form with age in both group of children.

Table-5 Religious group awareness for Outgroup the effect of Age and Schooling among Hindu and Muslims

Religious Group Awareness for Outgroup								
Age Group	Hindu				Muslim			
	Segregated		Non Segregated		Segregated		Non Segregated	
	Mean	Sd	Mean	Sd	Mean	Sd	Mean	Sd
4-6	7.5	5.51	12.05	2.30	11.80	2.70		
7-9	14.00	1.55	14.23	1.40	15.60	.72		
10-12	14.63	1.32	15.88	.32	15.90	.32	12.66	1.52
13-15	15.30	1.78	15.93	.25	15.96	.18	16.00	
Total	13.35	3.87	14.02	3.1			13.50	2.08
F SCHOOLING	31.66**				4.802*			
F AGE	69.65**				60.114**			
F AGE & SCHOOLING	91.83**				5.01*			

Similarly to table 5, religious group awareness for out group is more in children from non-segregated school and it increases with age , among both group of children(Hindus and Muslims).Analysis is showing that pattern of religious group awareness for out group is same in segregated school for outgroup among Hindu and Muslims children and non-segregated ,in form of increasing according to age but non segregated schools children differ on quantity of awareness from segregated schools children .

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Table-6 Overall prejudice level for outgroup among Hindu and Muslims children in age range of 4-15.

Religion		Prejudice For			
		in-group	out-group	Sikh	Christians
Hindu	Mean	1.1437	4.8593	2.70	3.32
	N	217	203	113	155
	Std. Deviation	1.91499	2.33566	2.167	1.803
Muslim	Mean	1.2650	1.2650	3.52	2.66
	N	106	106	77	77
	Std. Deviation	1.88140	1.88140	2.594	2.213
Total	Mean	1.1835	3.6263	3.03	3.10
	N	323	309	190	232
	Std. Deviation	1.90197	2.77588	2.377	1.969
F		.289	187.42**	5.56*	5.97*

P>.001 *p<.05

This table is showing that Hindu is more prejudiced for Muslims.

Table -7 Mean and F Value of prejudice score according to age of among children for relevant group

Prejudice	Age in yrs.				Total	F
	4-6	7-9	10-12	13-15		
Muslims for outgroup						
Mean	2.28	.93	1.08	1.14	1.26	2.285
SD	.90	1.18	1.79	.267	1.88	
Hindu for outgroup						
Mean	4.49	6.25	4.77	3.62	4.85	14.70**
SD	2.85	1.81	1.95	2.05	2.33	

The table show that Hindus are more prejudice for Muslims in age of 7-9 yrs. And after that they become less in prejudice for Muslims but there is no significant difference found in Muslims children.

Table-8 Effect of Schooling and Age on prejudice among Hindu children for Muslims.

Prejudic in Muslims for Hindu(outgroup)		Age group				F
Type of school		4-6	7-9	10-12	13-15	
Segregated	MEAN	11.80	15.00	15.0	15.9	60.11**
	SD	2.70	.73	.30	.18	
Non segregated	MEAN	---	----	12.00	16	
	SD			1.5	.00	
F		4.8*				
F (TYPE OF SCHOOL *AGE)		5.00*				

*p<.01

Table shows that Hindu children studying in non-segregated schools they are more prejudiced for outgroup (Muslims than children studying in segregated schools.

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Table -9 Prejudice for Muslims among Hindu children.

Prejudice in Hindu for (outgroup)Muslims		Age group				
Type of school		4-6	7-9	10-12	13-15	F
Segregated	MEAN	7.55	14.00	14.63	15.30	69.68**
	SD	5.5	1.5	1.3		
Non segregated	MEAN	12.85	14.23	15.88	15.93	
	SD	2.30	1.4	.32		
F		31.66**				
F (TYPE OF SCHOOL *AGE)		9.18**				

**P<.01

Note n=3 and 1 in non segregated school

Although results are significant but data is not fully comparable due very small nut you may write about comparison for segregated and non segregated schools.

Table -10 Correlation between religious group awareness and prejudice.

Hindu			Muslims	
Prejudice			Prejudice	
Religious Group Awareness	Ingroup	Outgroup	Ingroup	Outgroup
Ingroup	-0.15		-.197*	
Outgroup		.28		-.34*

The table shows that among Muslim children religious group awareness and prejudice negatively correlated.

DISCUSSION

The purpose of the present study was to how age and awareness about own and other religious group and segregated and non segregated schools settings affect the development of prejudice among Hindu and Muslims children.

Table1 showed the overall religious awareness for ingroup and outgroups among Hindu and Muslim children. The hypothesis is partially supported i.e. children would be more aware as ingroup religious group awareness and also they would more aware for out group as Hindu/Muslim in comparison to other Out group such as Sikh and Christians. And in result Hindu children were more aware for ingroup religious awareness than Muslims, and for outgroup religious awareness they are more aware to Muslims in comparison to other outgroup. Muslims were more aware to outgroup in comparison to ingroup. According to sociocognitive theory (Aboud 1998) and cognitive development theory (Piaget & Weil 1954) increasing age of children gives them a parameter of cognitive skills by which they think about the internal qualities of ingroup and outgroup member. The same arguments can be made in case of Hindu and Muslim children for religious awareness of ingroup and outgroup.

The table2 presenting the age wise differences among children for religious awareness of ingroup and outgroups, the findings are, according to age religious awareness increases among children for outgroup and ingroup, which is significant. Again, the developing

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cognitive skills are the cause of this. So Hindu children religious awareness for ingroup increased with age and also increased for outgroups,

The table 3 partially proof that the hypothesis “in non-segregated school children would be more in religious awareness for in group and out group in comparison to segregated school children “In non segregated schools, children came from different religious background such as Hindu Muslims, Sikh and Christians, meaning thereby in non segregated schools we have found multi-cultural / multi religion settings. This environment become cause for religious awareness for all religion, contact between different religious community children, friendship, conversation and playing together maintain the religious awareness for outgroup and ingroup also. And other hypothesis “segregated school children would be more religious awareness for ingroup in comparison to outgroup” is that again environment is the cause for this. In segregated schools environment is fully nurtured for own religion and other community or religion could not enter in these school so children could not contact with other community children. In lack of contact they are more aware for own group religious awareness.

Table 4 and 5 shows the religious differences among segregated and non segregated school children. Hindus who studying in non segregated schools they have same pattern for own group and outgroup religious awareness , meaning thereby Hindus have more in religious awareness for Hindus and Muslims also, but in Muslims children they are more conscious their own religious awareness, since Muslims are in minority in non segregated schools setting and they have a threat for identity diffusion these type of schools so they are more in own group religious awareness and in segregated schools Muslim children more in religious awareness for outgroup, reason of this that there is no threat for ingroup identity diffusion so they do not felt the threat and show the actual awareness for the outgroup.

Table -6 present the overall prejudice level for outgroup among Hindu and Muslims children in age range of 4-15. Here Hindus are more prejudice for Muslims, and Muslims are not prejudiced for Hindu, since prejudice presents in ignorance form also so in result does not shows the prejudice for Hindu among Muslims, but it happened due to ignorance and also result is not significant.

Tables 7 showing the development of prejudice among Hindu and Muslim children for outgroup age wise. Hindus are more prejudice for Muslims in comparison to own group. According age Hindu children is more prejudiced for outgroup (Muslims) at the age of 7-9, reason of this although children acquired cognitive skills such as abstract thinking but on them have effect of embodied of our cultural practices and rituals and also ethnocentrism for own group inhibit them tolerance and respect for other group. So they feel more biasness for out group as Hindu / Muslims.

Table-8 & 9 Result reveals that among Hindu children according to age religious group awareness increased in both type of schools. (segregated and non segregated) for ingroup and outgroup but when we see the effect of only segregated and non-segregated schools we found that non segregated teachings are more effective for religious group awareness for ingroup and outgroup. Combined effect of age and schooling, affect the children from both religions, increasing age and non-segregated schools are more affecting for development of religious awareness. For the development of prejudice effect of schooling and age among Hindu and Muslim children for outgroup (Hindu for Muslim and Muslim for Hindu), Hindu children which are studying in non segregated schools more biased for Hindu children and

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this biasness increased with age .and for Muslims no comparable data available in present study.

At this age, children of both the Hindu and Muslim groups had also learnt some of the ethnic ABCs, i.e., the words and concepts used to describe the members of other groups. Analysis of the developmental trend revealed a similarity in the way religious and prejudice developed among Hindu and Muslim samples. Children in both the groups were clearly aware of their religious identity, and both expressed their bias towards each other to some extent.

This analysis suggests that in identifying groups, children's emphasis was generally more on internal than samples of the basis of awareness showed considerable variation according to age. The young children (0-6 years) mainly focused on external features (e.g., dressing style) in identifying their own or the other group member on the religious awareness, whereas slightly older children (7-12 years) laid greater emphasis on (psychological characteristics) in identifying the models. This finding seems to be consistent with those reported by others in respect of the development of social thinking in a child. Piaget (1954) has indicated that thinking of a child in early years is dominated by physical attributes (e.g., clothing, colour) of the stimuli. Children at this stage generally believe in the invariance of physical properties. At a later age (5-7 years), their thinking becomes more sophisticated, abstract and internal. At this stage, children seem to recognize that category memberships (be they social or otherwise) are relatively stable, and they do not change with superficial changes, such as of appearance (Aboud, 1988; Piaget, 1954). The latter features become more salient at the higher age levels, suggesting a kind of shift from the use of external (dressing/clothing, appearance) to more internal features (e.g., perceptions, religious beliefs) to describe the differences between groups.

Table10 reveals that result of relationship between religious awareness and prejudice, in this sequences hypothesis partially proof prejudice and religious awareness would be negatively correlated, Muslims children are more in religious awareness for out-group and ingroup so they are less in prejudice for ingroup and outgroup and among Hindu there is no significant correlation found that. Children for Muslims community more aware for ingroup and outgroup (Hindu) because they are aware for environment and maintain his belief time to time, theories of development of prejudice reveals that familiarity and perceptual discriminability decrease the prejudice for ingroup and outgroup (Aboud's theory 1988, bigler's theory 2006).

CONCLUSION

This was a comparative study in which data was collected on Hindu children from segregated (Sanskrit pathshala) and non-segregated schools and Muslims children from segregated (madrassa) and non-segregated schools (here N is very small due to unavailability of sample) on snaps of Hindu, Muslim, Sikh and Christians consisting of measures of religious group awareness and recognizing of others religious groups such as more relevant out group (Muslims for Hindu and Hindu for Muslims) and less relevant out group Sikh and Christians with semi structured questions and checklist of adjectives for prejudice measurement. In the measure of religious group awareness consisting for Hindu and Muslims, Sikh and Christians on dimension of dress, event symbols and name which related to religion for these groups, measures of prejudice took the checklist of adjective of 18 traits written on cards for four groups viz Hindu and Muslims all these measures scoring was 1 for correct recognition and 0 for not correct recognition.

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Findings of effect of age on religious group awareness suggested that religious group awareness increased with age for own group and out group and non-segregated children is more aware for own group religious awareness and other group religious awareness in both Hindu and Muslims. Findings of combined effect of age and schooling are significant.

Findings on development of prejudice suggest that Hindu are more prejudice for Muslims in comparison to others group such as Sikh and Christians, and effect of age on development of prejudice.

Findings of combined age and schooling on development of prejudice suggested that Hindu children from non-segregated children in each age are more prejudiced for out group (Muslims). And for Muslim respondent it is not analyzed due less no of N in non-segregated schools.

Findings of correlation is suggests that among Muslims children religious group awareness related positively with prejudice for in group and out group.

On the basis of findings it is concluded that age is very important and crucial factor in development of religious ingroup identity and identification of others religious group and also age playing a role in development of prejudice for most relevant outgroup in comparison to less relevant outgroup .meaning thereby in Indian context intergroup relations is more meaningful in terms of Hindu and Muslims in comparison to other out-groups.

Implications of the present study:

The findings of the study have several implications for understanding and managing intergroup relations in a culturally plural society like ours. Some of these are mentioned below:

- The analysis suggests that prejudice develops when people are differentiated on the basis of religion. Thus, we should emphasize similarities rather than differences before young children members of different groups and also celebrate our cultural diversities.
- And the intervention should be introduced early in childhood, starting from pre-school years, because religious identity develops primarily during these years and prejudice also.
- The analysis also indicates that the period of 7-10 years is a critical period for the development of prejudice because at this stage children's identities become more internalized. Hence, there is a need to modify their thinking style by giving appropriate exposure prior to development of prejudice.

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Conflict of Interest

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