CHAPTER - II

REVIEW OF LITERATURE
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Religion through the ages has been the major reason for some of the most violent and bloodiest wars in human history. It still is the single most important cause for violence all over the world like the Catholic-Protestant tension in Ireland, the war like atmosphere between the Israelis and Palestinians in the Middle East, the Shia-Sunni skirmishes in Muslim countries, the Hindu-Muslim violence in India etc. Religion has provided the base for violence perpetrated by man against man, when it was actually created to bring peace and harmony to mankind.

In India, communal violence has become a regular feature. The loss of life and property in riots is only on the increase. There has been no abatement. This is the scenario not just in India but also all over the world. Since religion is the major reason the world is facing so much of turmoil destroying the fragile fabric of peace and harmony it becomes necessary to understand it.

In studying religious tensions, we learn that the social perception of the different religious groups play an important role. The social perception of these groups helps the individuals develop certain attitudes, prejudices and stereotypes which tend to harden out as the individual progresses in age. As the individual grows older he acquires more and more attitudes, which makes his actions stereotyped, predictable and consistent. By knowing their attitudes it is possible to do something about the prediction and control of their behaviour.
In the Indian context the Hindu-Muslim violence has increased with every passing year. In between these there are a few reports of attacks on Christians. In such a volatile situation a number of researches have been undertaken to analyse and work out strategies to combat religious violence.

In any kind of social interaction people engage in social categorization whereby they generally divide the world into two distinct categories called 'us' and 'them' or 'in-group' and 'out-group'. The in-group or 'us' is perceived or evaluated favourably possessing highly positive and desirable traits whereas the out-group or 'them' is perceived negatively possessing undesirable and unfavourable traits (Allen and Wilder, 1975; Howard and Rothbart, 1980; Mackie, Worth and Asuncion, 1990; Wilder, 1990). Several studies have been conducted on this concept. Majeed and Ghosh (1981) studied in-group and out-group evaluation in inter group context by studying 150 male students aged between 13 and 18 years from Uttar Pradesh. They found that high caste Hindu and Muslim adolescents perceived their self-group positively. Both, high caste Hindus and Muslims showed strong positive self-identity. In another study Majeed and Ghosh (1982) examined social identity in three ethnic groups using three frames of references: self, own group and out-group. The sample consisted of 150 subjects aged between 13 and 18 years from high caste Hindus, Muslims and scheduled castes. Considerable similarity in social identity of Muslims and high caste Hindus was found. In both groups a strong sense of positive social identity was found.
In a cross-national study of Hindu-Muslim relations in India and Bangladesh, Ghosh and Huq (1985) found that self and own group perceptions were similar for both groups cross nationally. Variations in out-group attitudes were due to the status differences in Hindu-Muslim inter-group relations. While ethnocentric rejection was observed in India for both Hindus and Muslims, in Bangladesh reciprocal mutually favourable out-group evaluations were reported. It was argued that socio-linguistic similarity between Hindus and Muslims and weaker status difference accounted for the results in Bangladesh. Ghosh, Kumar and Tripathi (1992) found that Hindus clearly ascribed more power to themselves compared to Muslims. Muslims identifiably differentiated themselves more from Hindus in terms of own group positive identity. Taylor and Jaggi (1974) examined attributions (internal or external causal attributions) of Hindu subjects to the behaviour of in-group (Hindu) or out-group (Muslim) actors, performing either socially desirable or undesirable acts. They also investigated the incidence of in-group and out-group stereotyping. Results revealed a strong tendency to derogate the out-group with reference to both trait ascriptions and causal attribution. Jayakumari (1989) studied 503 Post-graduate students of Kerala state belonging to seven communal groups, namely Nairs, Ezhavas, Brahmins, Muslims, Harijans, Catholics and non-Catholics. She reported that in describing itself, each community chooses only complimentary epithets, while in describing other communities, each community chooses complimentary epithets or non-complimentary epithets or both types of epithets. She also reports that not a
single community was found free from the weakness of self-glorification. Muttagi (1979) investigated the cross community attitudes of students of undergraduate and postgraduate classes in the University of Bombay. He studied 659 students of different religious and linguistic groups by administering two questionnaires containing anti-democratic and fascist scale, social distance scale, stereotype scale, rejection scale, prejudice scale, contact scale and discrimination scale. He found that the respondents expressed more prejudice towards out-groups than towards members of their own group. Kothurkar (1981) reported similar findings in Poona, when he studied graduates and housewives. He found that there was a distinct tendency to enumerate more frequently the undesirable characteristics with respect to the other social groups. This is more pronounced with respect to some groups like the Muslims.

But Bohra (1982) found that social perception of in-group and out-group members in India vary with their position within the society. He reached this conclusion after administering a 10-item in-group out-group attitude scale to 100 male students from Udaipur and analyzing the results. Tripathi and Srivastava (1980, 1981) studied the relationship between inter-group attitudes and relative deprivation. They hypothesized that Muslims' favourable attitudes towards in-group and unfavourable attitudes towards out-group members were mediated by their relative deprivation. Therefore, they predicted that glorification of in-group and devaluation of out-groups would be characteristic of Muslims high on relative deprivation. Their sample consisted of 112 Muslim
male undergraduate and postgraduate students. Inter-group attitudes were measured with the help of two identical adjective checklists containing both positive and negative adjectives. The results indicated that Muslim subjects had negative out-group attitudes and positive in-group attitudes. India being a caste-ridden society, it has been found that the caste system significantly influences the perception and attitude of the people. It also evokes strong in-group and out-group feeling. Iqbal and Nabi (1993) found that socially deprived subjects were highly prejudiced than those of non-deprived subjects.

Tiwary (1985) found that preferences of the high caste children were according to the caste hierarchy. They liked their own caste groups most, followed by the middle castes. The low castes were the least preferred by them. On the other hand, low caste children showed maximum in-group feeling and had little interaction with children of other castes. Paranjpe (1970) and Bohra (1979) on the basis of their studies have found that in-group feeling or the ethnocentric feeling about one's caste depends upon the social position of the members themselves. Paranjpe (1970) predicted that the position of respondents within a societal framework determined the criterion of defining in-groups. Male undergraduate Hindus and Muslims from five caste groups were studied. Results indicated that respondents at the upper end of the social (caste) continuum defined their in-group on the basis of caste (the closer, narrower category) as per Allport's model of concentric circles of expanding identities. However, respondents falling along the lower end (lower caste) of the caste continuum defined in-group on the basis of religion (a more distal and
broad category). Dalai, Bhagat and Ghosh (1988) found that caste differentiation and hierarchy led to positive own group bias on all response measures, whereas negative own group bias was reported for low social class subjects. Dalal (1988) reported that the members of upper castes carry positive bias towards their own group. They rate themselves higher in self-regard than the persons of lower castes (Basavanna and Ujjawalrani, 1988).

So it's confirmed that in any given social situation perceivers categorize other people into groups. Though this process is largely automatic, unconscious and involuntary, it is accompanied by systematic cognitive biases since we need to simplify a complex world. Ashburn, Voils and Monteith (2001) conducted three experiments using Implicit Association Test and concluded that inter-group bias occurs automatically even in unlikely conditions.

Inspite of the advancement in science and technology, religion has become an all-pervading aspect of our life. Gautham M.L. (1970) studied university students and found that their attitudes towards the central values, belief in God, Karma, the theory of rebirth etc. as well as the peripheral values of Hindu religion have become rational. He says that though students are secularized under the impact of modern education, the traditions are still honoured albeit with certain modifications. The general trend has been favourable to religion. Kulandaivel and Jacob (1981) studied the attitudes of 400 high school students in Kottayam district and found that their attitudes were quite favourable to religion. Dutt N.K. (1975) reported similar results when he studied the attitudes towards religion of 200 postgraduate students.
from Punjab University. Tandon (1979) studied students of 9th and 10th standards from Uttar Pradesh, and found that though in general they have a favourable attitude towards religion the lower income group in particular showed more favourable attitude towards religion. Favourable attitude towards religion correlated positively with home adjustment.

Most of the studies have reported a difference in the favourableness between the sexes. Girls have been found to be more religious minded or to be more favourable towards religion than boys. Kulandaivel and Jacob (1981), Dutt N.K. (1975), Tandon (1979) found that girls in general were more favourable towards religion than boys.

Since religion influences each and every facet of our life inspite of the violence it causes, its relation to psychological and physical adjustment is being increasingly examined. One of the major studies was by Abraham Maslow soon after the Second World War, when he reported that Holocaust survivors tended to be those who held strong religious beliefs, suggesting that it helped people cope in extreme circumstances. Investigations by Humanistic psychologists found that religious or spiritual identity may have correlations with longer lifespan and better health. Wright et al (1993) conducted a study of adolescents and found that frequent churchgoers with high spiritual support had the lowest scores on the Beck Depression Inventory. Natalie Frank and Stephanie Kendal (2001) examined religion in relation to psychological and physical adjustment in youth. They reported that religious belief systems in youth helps decrease adolescent risk behaviour and increases healthy lifestyle.
choices especially from the stress and coping perspective. Leslie Francis and Peter Kaldor (2002) studied the relationship between psychological well-being and Christian faith and practice in an Australian sample. Their subjects, 989 adults, in an Australian community survey completed the Bradburn Balanced Affect Scale together with three measures of Christian faith and practice, namely, belief in God, personal prayer, and church attendance. The data demonstrated a positive association between all three religious measures and psychological well-being, as assessed by balanced affect, after controlling for age and sex. In the Indian context Bhushan (1978) conducted a study on 100 college girls in Bhagalpur University, by administering Bhushan’s Religiosity Scale and Indian adaptation of Bell’s Adjustment Inventory. He reported that religious students were significantly better adjusted than the non-religious students in all the four areas of adjustment (home, health, social and emotional areas).

Religious training and development of religious identity is a part of the socialization process. Khan, H.R (1978, 1979) studied the development of religious identity and prejudices of Hindu and Muslim children using a sample of 286 children between 4-9 years of age. He used the structural interview technique with a pictorial test. He also obtained data from the parents of these children on authoritarianism, religiosity, religious prejudice and socialization practices. He concluded that religious identity and prejudice are interrelated, where the former develops earlier and both develop with age. He observed no sex differences in the development of religious identity and prejudice. Children from mixed schools develop religious identity earlier than children.
from segregated schools dominated by one religion, though no difference was observed in religious prejudice in these two types of schools. The religiosity of the mother influences the development of religious identity of the child. However the religiosity of the father does not have any effect. Religiosity of the parents does not influence the development of religious prejudice in children. The socialization practices of the mother, but not of the father, influence the development of religious identity in children.

The development of religious identity and prejudice in Hindu (L. Chatterjee, 1986), Muslim (Khalique, 1986), Sikh (Jabbi, 1981,1982) and Christian (R. Vidyarthi, 1986) children were studied. The sample consisted of 480 schoolchildren between 4-15 years from each of the four religious groups. A pictorial test was developed to measure religious preference-prejudice. All pictures were arranged thematically in sets and were shown together to the subject who was asked to them from the most to the least preferred, indicating preference and prejudice. The results showed that the developmental curves of religious identity in the four religious groups, despite some variations, show a strikingly similar pattern. Religious identity emerges very early in childhood. The majority of the children in the four religious groups had learnt to show maximum preference for their own religion by 4-5 years. The intensity of religious identity reached the peak by 8-9 years. In the case of ethnocentrism, formation of prejudice is also nearly complete by 8-9 years. After 8-9 years the developmental curves of ethnocentrism and prejudice become stable and flatten assuming the shape of a plateau. The minority group status hastens the
formation of religious identity and strengthens it. The identity of minority group children is stronger than those of Hindu children. Stronger the religious identity, greater the perception of social distance.

Religious group membership brings about a deep sense of group identification and any attack on the individual's group will be responded to as attacks on the self. This was proved by Wallace, Libman and Poser (1960) when they found that any attack on the group is responded to as attacks on the self and this effect is powerful enough to increase the willingness and capacity of the individual to suffer intense pain. Arnold Buss and Norman Portnoy (1971) replicated this design with certain modifications. They selected subjects for the experiment after scaling them for strength of identification. These men were tested for tolerance of pain induced by electric shock. Between the first and second pain tolerance trials they were given false norms about the pain tolerated by their reference group. The false norms increased pain tolerance, the greater the strength of identification to one's group the greater the increase in pain tolerance. Such strong group identification is usually accompanied by strong emotions. Cooper (1959) in his study used 20 college students who displayed either extremely favourable or unfavourable attitudes toward 20 ethnic groups as subjects. They were attached to a galvanic skin response apparatus and read out derogatory statements about their most liked groups and complimentary statements about their most disliked groups. Results showed that GSR was greater for complimentary statements about their most disliked
groups and also for derogatory statements about their most liked groups. When
group identification is so strong it leads to ethnocentrism.

O'Driscoll and Feather (1982) reported that ethnocentrism is the most
potent determinant of social distance and perception of ethnic groups. Mohsin
(1984) used Ethnic Attitudes Checklist with 50 adjectives to measure
ethnocentricity and ethnic prejudice. Data was collected on several occasions
between 1973 and 1983 from Hindu and Muslim students of Patna and Utkal
universities. Analysis showed strong ethnocentrism and prejudice in both
Hindu and Muslim students as reflected in the stereotypes. He concluded that
the prejudiced attitude of Hindus and Muslims towards each other has become a
part of the social norm as most members of the respective communities share it.

Categorizing other people into groups, loosely based on gender, age,
religion etc. we form certain impressions about them and attribute certain traits
to them. In the process we develop certain attitudes towards them. If the
attitude is positive and in the event of no conflicting information, it is
reinforced every time we interact with the group. But if the attitude developed
is negative then there is a high chance that behaviour towards it will be hostile
and antagonistic. Group antagonism has three inter-related but distinguishable
elements namely, stereotypes, prejudice and discrimination.

Stereotypes are beliefs about the typical characteristics of group
members. Prejudice is negative feelings toward an out-group or simply put it is
a negative attitude. Discrimination refers to behaviour that disadvantages
individuals simply because of their group membership. These three elements
characterize the three components of attitudes, namely, cognitive (beliefs), affective (feelings) and behaviour (action).

Stereotypes, which are the cognitive component of group antagonism, are beliefs about the personal attributes shared by people in a particular group or social category. For example, stereotypes regarding race and ethnicity are common in America. Kluegel (1990) found that white subjects attributed lower income levels among African Americans to a lower level of motivation or basic skills. India too has her share of stereotypes. Panchbai (1977) conducted a study on provincial and religious stereotypes of the undergraduate and postgraduate students of Calcutta University. He studied 310 college students using the Katz and Braly checklist and found that stereotypes are more definite towards in-groups and the group with whom their own people are or have been in conflicts. It is less definite for distant and unfamiliar groups or with whom their interests are not thwarted. He reported that all groups had evaluated their self-group more favourably than the out-groups.

The tendency to stereotype others, and to think about them in terms of stereotypes stems partly from the fact that this strategy saves us cognitive effort (Macrae, Milne, and Bodenhausen, 1994). This supposition is based on the logic that we have only limited capacity to perform various tasks covering different aspects of social cognition. To perform these tasks we often adopt various cognitive shortcuts in our efforts to make sense of the social world. Usually we resort to stereotypes when our capacity for handling social information is pushed to the limits. As Gilbert and Hixon (1991) put it,
stereotypes are tools that “jump out” of our cognitive toolbox when we realize that we are being exposed to more information than we can readily handle (Baron and Byrne, 2000).

In India it has been found that the Hindus harbour negative stereotypes about Muslims and Muslims about Hindus. In a study on communal stereotypes in Kerala, George and Mathew George (1977) studied 300 professional and non-professional course students in Kerala. They found that favourable qualities were attributed to their own community than to other communities. Christians and high caste Hindus were attributed with desirable qualities while unfavourable traits like cruel, religious and fanatic were attributed to Muslims. Jayakumari (1991) studied 500 graduate teachers in Trivandrum city belonging to seven communal groups. She reports that each community expressed first preference to its own community. All the five communities except the Harijans and Muslims expressed last but one preference toward Muslims. Anant Santosh (1972) reported that out of six religious groups presented, Hindu subjects were unfavourably oriented towards Muslims only. He reported this finding after studying 300 subjects from Agra, Delhi and Varanasi and administering a stereotype checklist of 88 traits. Panchbhai (1977) reported similar results when he studied 975 subjects with the help of the Katz and Braly checklist. He found that in general the non-Muslim south Indian population had the most unfavourable opinion about Muslims while the non-Christians had the least prejudice towards Christians.
Prejudice is the affective component of group antagonism. It is an attitude, usually negative, toward the members of some group, based solely on their membership in that group. In other words, a person who is prejudiced toward some social group tends to evaluate its members in a specific manner, usually negative, merely because they belong to that group. Their individual traits or behaviours play little role; they are disliked or in very few cases liked, simply because of their membership in the group (Baron and Byrne, 2002). It is a pattern of hostility in interpersonal relations, which is directed against the whole group or against a member of a group fulfilling a specific irrational function for its bearer (Ackerman and Jahoda, 1950). Singh et al (1981) compared Hindu and Muslim students of mixed and segregated secondary schools in Bhavnagar and found that Muslim students both in mixed or segregated schools were more prejudiced than the Hindu students. Khan Nusrat (1990) reported that Hindus and Muslims, were more or less equally prejudiced. Khalique (1982) studied the effect of religious prejudice on religious images and religious and caste stereotypes of Muslim school students using a religious prejudice scale. He found that high religious prejudice group attributed more unfavourable stereotypes to other religions as compared to their own religion than the low prejudice group. In another study Khalique (1982) reported that rural Muslim school children were more prejudiced than their urban counterparts. Allport and Rose (1967) found that churchgoers were more prejudiced than non-church goers. Strommen (1961) reported that most of the orthodox Dutch expressed agreement with prejudiced statements. Bhushan and
Sinha (1975) found that religious subjects tended to be more conservative and prejudiced than non-religious subjects. Hassan (1975, 1978, 1981) and Jayaswal (1985) have concluded on the basis of their studies on students that Muslim subjects were more prejudiced than Hindu subjects.

Ghufran (1992) found religion to be a non-influential factor for prejudice, but social tension and education were found to be potent factors, which influence prejudice in significant ways. The subjects from riot-prone areas were found to be more prejudiced than subjects from riot-free area. Hasnain (1997) found that caste Hindu and scheduled caste subjects were more prejudiced to Muslims than Sunni and Shia subjects to Hindus. However, in-religious prejudice was greater in both Hindus and Muslims than intra-religious prejudice. But contradictory findings were reported by Adinarayana (1953), Hassan (1975, 1978) and Enayatullah (1980) when they found that Muslim subjects have more religious prejudice than Hindu subjects. On the other hand, Natraj (1962), Chatterjee (1967), Sarkar and Hassan (1973) failed to obtain any significant difference between the prejudice scores of Hindu and Muslim subjects. Residence and living experiences may also influence the development of prejudice. Kagitcibasi (1978) studied young Turkish students spending one year in the United States of America and found a considerable change in their attitude because of favourable nature of their sojourn experience. It resulted in decrease in authoritarianism and religiosity and increase in world mindedness of the subjects. But Hasnain and Shehla (2001) reported that Hindu and Muslim students of South Delhi did not differ significantly so far as their
prejudice was concerned. They also found that there was a relation between religious dominance and prejudice. They report that Hindu females of Hindu dominated area were more prejudiced than Hindu males of the same area. Hindu females seem to have more lop-sided and unrealistic views regarding Muslims, which may be attributed to the rearing practices followed in childhood or it maybe due to the lack of opportunity to interact, share and live with Muslims. An increasing trend of prejudice in Muslim males of Muslim dominated area than their counterpart females, and in Muslim females of Hindu dominated area than their counterpart males was found.

Prejudice develops early in human beings. Singh (1985) concluded on the basis of several studies on religious identity and prejudice that the Indian children show maximum preference for their own religion by the age of 4 or 5 years. The intensity of religious identity reaches its peak by 8 to 9 years and prejudice is also nearly complete by this age. Vyas (1973) showed that group prejudice increases with age. He studied “the origin of prejudice in children” on a sample of 700 school students in Tamil Nadu, using a modification of the dolls test, where the dolls represented various religious, caste, linguistic and class groups. He reached the conclusion that prejudice increases with age, and that religious, caste and class prejudices begin by the age of 3, whereas linguistic prejudice emerges later. Similar findings have been reported by Sharma (1978), Tiwari and Misra (1980, 1985).

Information that is consistent with individuals’ prejudiced views often receives closer attention and so is remembered more accurately than
information that is not consistent with these views (Fiske and Neuberg, 1990; Judd, Ryan and Parke, 1991). Because of such effects, prejudice becomes a kind of closed cognitive loop and tends to increase in strength over time (Baron and Byrne, 2002). People in old age groups are found to be more conservative and rigid and carry stronger belief in traditional values related to caste and communities (Ray, 1974; Ojha and Sah, 1990).

Prejudice is considered a special kind of attitude. Thus it can be deduced that it may involve more than negative evaluations of the groups toward whom it is directed. It may also include negative feelings or emotions on the part of prejudiced persons when they are in the presence of, or merely think about, members of the groups they dislike (Bodenhausen, Kramer, and Susser, 1994). These emotional reactions were shown very clearly in research conducted by Vanman and his colleagues (Vanman et al., 1997). In this investigation, white participants of both genders were asked to imagine working on several cooperative tasks (e.g., a team running race, a debate team competitions, a team research project, or team participation on a game show) with a partner who was either white or black. They were further told to imagine either that their rewards in each situation would be determined by their joint efforts or by their own individual performance. While participants were imagining these situations, the researchers made recordings of electrical activity in their facial muscles, (which are related to smiling and to frowning). The researchers predicted that although participants would not report more negative attitudes toward black than white partners, their facial muscles would show more
activity indicative of negative emotional reactions when their imagined partner
was black than when this person was white. Moreover, they reasoned that this
would occur under both the independent and joint reward conditions. Results
supported the predictions concerning facial muscles. Other findings indicated
that these reactions occurred despite the fact that participants actually reported
more positive attitudes toward their partners when these persons were
supposedly black than when they were supposedly white. Additional evidence
suggesting that these negative emotional reactions to a black partner were
indeed related to prejudice was provided by a follow-up study in which white
participants known to be high or low in racial prejudice were shown photos of
white and black strangers. Activity from their facial muscles indicated that for
the low-prejudiced persons, there was no difference in muscle activity for white
and black strangers. For highly prejudiced persons, however, activity patterns
indicative of less positive and more negative feelings occurred. Khalique and
Enayatullah (1994) reported that Muslims, Christians and Hindus, in that order,
showed prejudice. They also observed that prejudiced persons have favourable
attitudes towards orthodox religiosity, traditional social institutions of caste and
joint family, traditional social customs and rituals associated with child-birth,
wedding and funeral. They are against widow remarriage and social equality.
They have unfavourable attitudes towards democracy, civil rights, secularism
and political participation.
Education is a powerful instrument of social change and is a well-acknowledged index of its modernization and social progress. It broadens one’s outlook and reduces conservative attitude and prejudices (Newcomb, 1943; Rose, 1948) and authoritarianism (Bhushan, 1967). Laucer (1975) has shown positive relationship between educational attainment and mobility streams. Most of the longitudinal studies have indicated that attitudes and prejudices change in a favourable direction with the number of years spent in educational institutions (Coursey, 1971; Helen, 1961; Robert, 1965). But certain studies show little or no impact of higher education on liberalization of social attitudes (Gurupada, 1962; Paul, 1966). In fact, Upreti (1975) and Prem Kirpal (1977) have observed that education has helped in increasing social distances between the ethnic groups.

Economic inequality is one of the major factors, which promotes prejudice. Dollard et al (1939) suggested in their book ‘Frustration and Aggression’ that aggression often stems from frustration i.e., aggression often occurs in situations where people are blocked or prevented from getting what they want. When this hypothesis is applied in the social framework, it denotes that when groups are competing with each other for scarce resources, they come to view one another as potential or actual sources of frustration. After all it is reasoned, if “they” get the jobs, the housing, and other benefits, which are, always in short supply, then “we” don’t. This results not just in negative attitudes toward opposing groups but also strong tendencies to aggress against them. This fact serves as the foundation for what is perhaps the oldest
explanation of prejudice called the realistic conflict theory (Bobo, 1983). This theory suggests that with the increase in competition the members of the groups involved come to view each other in increasingly negative terms, whereby they label each other as "enemies", view their own group as morally superior, and draw the boundaries between themselves and their opponents more and more firmly. Eventually what starts out as simple competition relatively free from hatred gradually develops into full scale, emotion-laden prejudice that often leads to direct, and sometimes-violent conflict. Harding et al (1969) have shown that the history of American Immigration is full of riots against the immigrant groups. The people who felt economically threatened by immigrants were the most prejudiced people. Hovland and Sears (1940) reported an association between racial violence and economic hard times. Reviewing information on fourteen southern states of United States of America, from 1882 to 1930, they found strong negative correlations between the number of lynchings of black men and economic indicators such as the acre value of cotton. As the price of cotton fell, more lynchings occurred. Subsequent studies have confirmed the relationship between economic distress and racial violence (Beck and Tolnay, 1990; Hepworth and West, 1988). Campbell (1947) found that anti-Semitism was most common among such people who were not satisfied with their economic position.

In India, Singh (1988) observes that poverty and economic inequality produce economic competitions and inter group rivalries. This is accentuated by the growing political consciousness in the hitherto exploited and
discriminated groups. Several writers have emphasized the importance of economic factors in communal riots between Hindus and Muslims. It has been noted that communal riots have occurred in recent years in such towns where a new group of Muslims has emerged as a potential economic competitor of the Hindus. As Rustomji (1980) wrote “A riot does not occur in a sleepy little village of Uttar Pradesh where all suffer equally, nor in a tribal village of Madhya Pradesh where all live safely in the poverty. It occurs in Moradabad where the metal workers have built up a good industry; it occurs in Aligarh where lock makers have made good; it occurs in Bhiwandi where power-loom rivalries are poisonous; it occurs in Hatia and Ahmedabad and Hyderabad and Jamshedpur where there are jobs to get, contracts to secure, houses and shops to capture, it occurs in Agra and Ferozabad and in all other towns where economic rivalries are serious and have to be covered with cloak of communalism.” Greater economic prosperity among Muslims has increased economic competition between them and Hindus. Tripathi and Srivastava (1981) found that Muslims who feel highly deprived have more negative out-group attitude that Hindus who do not feel so much deprived. Ansari (1981) observed that Muslims higher on fraternal relative deprivation used “forcing” as a style of Hindu-Muslim conflict resolution more than their less deprived counterparts.

It has come to be believed that parental attitudes and child rearing practices are the main sources through which a child acquires attitudes, prejudices, values etc. A number of studies have reported positive correlations
between parental prejudice and those of children (Anisfeld et al., 1963; Epstein and Komorita, 1966; Goodman, 1964; Troll et al., 1969). Vyas (1973) reported that generally children of highly prejudiced parents show greater prejudice than children of low prejudiced parents. He also found that children of high and low prejudiced parents differ significantly in the development of prejudice. Dewan and Hassan (1990) reported after a longitudinal study of the development of prejudice in Hindu children that prejudice developed faster in children of prejudiced parents. Studies by Hyman (1959) Wrightsman (1969) indicate the similarity between the attitudes of parents and children. Nijhawan (1976) and Ojha and Sah (1990) have reported that conservative parents have children high in conservatism. In two complementary studies, Hindu (Rai, 1981) and Muslim (H. Khan, 1981) children, having prejudiced and unprejudiced parents, were compared. In both Hindu and Muslim samples, children of prejudiced parents showed more prejudice than children of unprejudiced parents. Hassan (1983) examined the role of parents in the development of a child’s prejudice by comparing children of parents grouped into four categories: 1) prejudiced parents, (2) prejudiced father/ unprejudiced mother, (3) prejudiced mother / unprejudiced father, and (4) unprejudiced parents. The sample consisted of 400 pairs of Hindu and Muslim parents from Bihar. The results showed that parents tend to produce definite effects on the development of children’s prejudice, as was evident from the fact that children whose parents were prejudiced showed the highest degree of prejudice and were brought up under restriction and authoritarian parental discipline. Conversely, children having
unprejudiced parents were least prejudiced. There seemed to be no differential impact of father's and mother's prejudice on the male child, but the female child tended to be influenced by the prejudice of her mother.

Thanks to the negative perceptions of each other the cleavage between the different religious groups seems to be deepening with no let-up. This has caused a social distance between the various religious groups, especially between Hindus and Muslims. Several studies have been conducted on this aspect. Natraj (1965) studied the social distance within and between castes and religious groups of college students. He found that social distance was more marked among religious groups than among caste groups. He also reported that Hindus and Jains were the most conservative while Muslims were least conservative and most distant from the other groups. Studies conducted by Saraswathi and Dutta (1980) confirmed the social distance between the Hindu and Muslim adolescents. Anwar Ansari (1956) conducted a study on Hindus and Muslims in Aligarh, which showed that there was positive and high correlation between the number of stereotypes used, and the scores on the social distance scale. Hindus and Muslims tended to place each other at a greater distance and use greater number of stereotypes for them. It was also found that when there was a lack of social contact with the member of the other communal group the prejudice were stronger, the social distance greater and the perceptions of the characteristics of members of the other group more distorted. Naqvi (1982) investigated the relationship between relative deprivation and the attribution of blame in communal riots as mediated by
social distance and locus of control. The sample consisted of 100 Muslims from riot-prone and another 100 from non-riot areas. Data demonstrated that the relatively deprived Muslims attributed maximum blame for riots on the Hindus. This tendency was more pronounced among Muslims from riot-prone areas. The relatively deprived Muslims maintained more social distance with Hindus. They had external locus of control. The difference in the attribution of blame in riots was also found to be a function of income. The middle-income group felt relatively more deprived than the high and low-income groups. A group may also feel the feeling of deprivation if it perceives that others usurp its legitimate share in the benefits of development. Most of the studies have reported a difference between the male and female preferences regarding social distance. Prakash Jai and Reddy (1967) reported this when they studied 75 men and 75 women in Madhya Pradesh. They found that boys on the whole feel more proximity to all groups when compared to girls. Sheriff (1973) found in a study of University students that the males revealed more personal involvement than the females. Hall and Gentry (1962) indicated that the Negro male students had been more accepted in the integrated school than Negro female students. This was perhaps because males in general were more amenable to the socialization process and females more “locked in” by their previous experiences and expectations than were the male students. But Deutsch (1960) and Musgrove et al (1973) found that the girl students were better in personal and social adjustment than the boys.