

## **Role of Media in Promoting Communal Harmony**

**By**

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### **Abstract**

Because media is so intertwined with people's and society's lives, understanding its impact is crucial. Modern mass media affects commerce, entertainment, politics, and aesthetics. "Mass media impact" in media psychology refers to the effects of various forms of mass media on individuals and audiences' behaviours, attitudes, and thoughts. It may help or hurt. Mass media can cause crime, poverty, violence, nudity, poor physical and mental health, and other serious issues. The study's primary goals are to examine how movies represent faiths and religious terrorists in communal harmony. This descriptive study uses primary and secondary data. Primarily Uttar Pradesh data. The study used convenience sampling to pick 500 registered registrants. A standardised questionnaire and observational methods collected replies. To assess how movies reflect communities. Mass media (movies) is one of the best ways to maintain community cohesion due to its broad reach and significant influence. The media should use its freedom to promote community cohesion. Scientific rather than dramatic reporting on communal riots and confrontations will eliminate errors in media coverage. The media must discuss intolerance issues lawfully and appropriately and promote social peace. Since social media is the most powerful tool for swaying public opinion, it should help make society healthier.

**Keywords:** Humanities, Social science, Sociology

### **Introduction**

In the last 50 years, the media and its impact on the general public have increased dramatically. The telegraph served as the sole source of information and news at first. But as technology developed, there were many new ways for the public to get news, including radio, television, websites, magazines, newspapers, and now mobile applications.

Understanding how the media affects individuals is crucial since the media has integrated itself seamlessly into society and everyday life. The media now affects everything, from the economy to amusement to politics to beauty. In media psychology, the influence of mass media on people's behaviour, attitudes, and thinking is known as mass media influence (D. R. S et al., 2020). Its influence may be favourable or unfavourable. Mass media's harmful influence on society can have major consequences such as poor physical and mental health, criminality, violence, nudity, and poverty. Under mass media, movies have the most extensive coverage of society, and also they impact the larger population, so here in this study, we will be studying the impact of movies on communal harmony. Social media is also an important part of the impact caused on communal harmony through movies.

All civilisations, religions, and societies have embraced coexistence since the beginning of time. It is the foundational principle of creation, and it still controls our daily lives. The term "joint" is the root of the word "harmony." In the context of communities of different opinions and beliefs, whether social, economic, political, or ecological, it is characterised as "tying together and being in harmony with one another and the cosmos." It simply means coexisting in harmony and with respect for one another, irrespective of gender, caste, class, or any other distinction. Violence breaks out when communal cohesion is disturbed. Nobody enjoys disharmony or violence. Communal harmony is now an essential component of every nation's structure. Communal harmony means that people of various religions, castes, creeds, sexes, and backgrounds coexist in society with love and peace. The promotion of benevolence and harmony among distinct communities is the aim of community harmony. The intention is to promote a culture of coexistence that is based on or influenced by cultural and religious ideals.

Communalism is a barrier to the country's development. India has a legacy of unity and diversity that must be preserved by promoting communal harmony. There is also an urgent need to instil a sense of patriotism among the country's citizens. To keep the peace, we must address the rising intolerance in our society. Apart from that, people of different religions must recognise the importance of living together and mixing with one another, as mixed neighbourhoods are rapidly disappearing. People prefer to live in ghettos for safety reasons in various societies. Social harmony Committees must be formed at the village, block, municipal, and city levels to promote communal harmony among members of society. Which should include elected representatives at the above-mentioned levels as well as government functionaries, such as doctors from village primary health centres and primary school teachers, as well as members of civil society, and so on. Akshaya.S(2022) .There is also a need to teach mutual tolerance and harmony so that every citizen of a law-governed country can live in peace and harmony.

In today's world, media influences an individual's life in a variety of ways. The process has an impact on one's thinking, attitude, and actions. Given this, what role does the media play in promoting societal harmony, particularly in a diverse country like India?

## **Literature Review**

There are various pieces of research being conducted on this topic:

(Ruslan & Harahap, 2020) Social media is common in a post-truth society. Social media lets individuals connect, share, and learn. Nonetheless, irresponsible social media use can hinder religious unity. Hence, this paper explores how social media in the post-truth era fosters religious concord both inside and beyond faiths. Library research analyses primary and secondary materials. This study shows that digital literacy is crucial to establishing internal and inter-religious harmony by making people more selective about receiving and forwarding news.

According to Khan & Hassan (2019), in the current technological era, social media has developed into a crucial and accessible means of communication. Social media has, without a doubt, transformed communication; it only takes a little while to disseminate news or information to other locations. Information from social media has influenced every sphere of society. Nevertheless, this technology has been misused recently. False news is frequently disseminated via morphing images and videos on social media, upending communal harmony and harming the social structure of society. The nation and nationalism suffer when community peace deteriorates because it affects the nation's political, economic, and mainstream social structure. As everyone is aware that social cohesion is essential to a country's development and

that social media, in particular, is very user-friendly, media outlets now have a greater need to preserve it. The goal of the current study is to identify instances in which social media have been abused in the name of fostering racial harmony. This paper will also look into why social harmony is important for a country.

According to Sarkar (2019), Over the past 20 years, social media has evolved dramatically. Users can quickly share facts or thoughts on several social channels. Facebook, WhatsApp, Twitter, and Instagram have billions of users. Social media connects millions worldwide. Technology has changed information, extended opportunities, and improved people's lives, but there are drawbacks. Community harmony is one of several characteristics that hurt social media compared to possessiveness. We can readily find communal confrontations caused by social media. Antisocial elements can easily disturb social harmony in societal media. Antisocial persons promote sectarian lies on social media. Social media has been used to spread hoaxes and incite violence in several cases.

Pathak(2016) Hinduism, Buddhism, Jainism, and Sikhism originated in India, which has been home to Jews, Zoroastrians, Muslims, and Christians for thousands of years. Most people of all religions live peacefully and respect religious freedom and minority rights, yet religious violence does occur. Marketers have avoided utilising "religion" in their ads. Yet, current TV commercials like "Kaun Banega Crorepati," "Brooke Bond Red Label," and "Havells HiMu Commercial" use "religious harmony" to promote their products. These three national television ads may help religious communities connect. The researcher would also analyse our nation's religious harmony laws.

## Objectives

From the above discussion, it is found that the research has not been conducted in this area specifically. So, the aim of this study is:

1. To analyse the impact of portraying religions in movies on communal harmony.
2. To analyse the impact of showing religion in different roles in movies.

## Hypothesis

**H1:** The religions portrayed in movies affect the harmony in the community.

**H2:** There is an impact of religion shown in different roles in the movie.

## Material Method

The current study uses both primary and secondary data to support its descriptive nature. The primary source of data is Uttar Pradesh. Of the entire number of registered registrants, the researcher chose 500 respondents using the convenience sampling approach. A structured questionnaire and observational methods were used to obtain the responses. To gauge respondents' perceptions on the effect of the portrait of communities in movies, a scaling technique was applied to the questionnaire schedule in which one is numbered strongly disagree and five is numbered strongly agree.

## Results and discussion

**Objective 1:** To analyse the impact of portraying religions in movies on communal harmony.

**H1:** The religions portrayed in movies affect the harmony in the community.

**Question 1:** The representation of various communities in films has an impact on communal disharmony.

Number	Min.	Max.	Mean	Standard Deviation
500.00	1	5	03.9120	0.61074

Researchers can see that assertion in the table above: “The representation of various communities in films has an impact on communal disharmony.” it had a high mean value of 3.91 with a standard deviation of 0.6. This demonstrates that the public “agrees” that the portrayal of various populations in films has an impact on social unrest.

**Question 2:** People’s opinions are influenced by film depictions of communal harmony.

Number	Min.	Max.	Mean	Standard Deviation
500.00	1	5	03.9120	1.43680

The following assertion can be made based on the above table: “People’s opinions are influenced by film depictions of communal harmony” had a “high mean value of 3.91” with a “standard deviation of 1.4.” This shows that the people “agree” that The portrayal of communal harmony in films affects the opinions of people.

**Question 3:** Religious propaganda about why their God is sad or displeased leads to violence.

Number	Min.	Max.	Mean	Standard Deviation
500.00	1	5	03.7440	0.74537

The following assertion can be made based on the above table: “Religious propaganda about why their God is sad or displeased leads to violence.” had a “high mean value of 3.74” with a “standard deviation of 0.75.” This shows that the people “agree” that questioning the mood of God leads to violence.

Maximum respondents agree to the questions asked, which concludes that the null hypothesis is accepted. The religions portrayed in movies affect the harmony in the community is accepted

**Objective 2:** To analyse the impact of showing religion-based terrorists in movies

**H2:** There is an impact of the religion of terrorists shown in the movie.

**Question 4:** The religion of terrorists in films influences people’s attitudes towards communal harmony.

Number	Min.	Max.	Mean	Standard Deviation
500.00	1	5	03.9060	0.82372

The following assertion can be made based on the above table: “The religion of terrorists in films influences people’s attitudes towards communal harmony.” it had a high “mean value of 3.90” with a “standard deviation of 0.82.” This shows that the people “agree”

that The religion of terrorists in films affect the opinions of people towards communal harmony.

**Question 5:** Rumors spread through the media play an important role in the emotional upsurge of various communities.

Number	Min.	Max.	Mean	Std. Deviation
500.00	1	5	03.5700	1.22315

The following assertion can be made based on the above table: “Rumors spread through the media play an important role in the emotional upsurge of various communities.” had a high “mean value of 3.57” with a “standard deviation of 1.22.” This shows that the people “agree” that the rumours spread through the media play an important role in communal harmony.

**Question 6:** Atrocities against a community or religion reported in the news cause communal strife.

Number	Min.	Max.	Mean	Standard Deviation
500.00	1	5	03.5220	1.17996

The following assertion can be made based on the above table: “Atrocities against a community or religion reported in the news cause communal strife.” had a high “mean value of 3.52” with a “standard deviation of 1.17.” This demonstrates how "agreement" with atrocities committed against a community can cause communal discord.

Maximum respondents agree to the questions asked, which concludes that the alternate hypothesis is accepted. There is an impact of religion shown in different roles in the movie on communal harmony.

## Conclusion

It is essential to have an understanding of the mass media’s influence on individuals since people’s lives, and the lives of society as a whole have grown inextricably intertwined with the mass media. The mass media today have an impact on every aspect of modern life, from business to the entertainment industry and even politics and aesthetics. The term "mass media impact" in the subject of media psychology refers to the influence that different forms of mass media have on people's attitudes, behaviours, and thoughts, as well as audiences. Its impact may either be beneficial or detrimental to the situation. The deleterious effects of mass media on society can result in a number of serious issues, including poverty, criminal activity, nudity, violence, and poor mental and physical health, amongst other potentially disastrous repercussions.

For the purpose of supporting its descriptive nature, the current study makes use of both primary and secondary data. The information primarily comes from the state of Uttar Pradesh. Using the method of convenience sampling, the researcher chose 500 responders from the total number of registered registrants. The replies were collected through the use of a structured questionnaire as well as observational methods. A scaling method was applied to the questionnaire schedule in order to determine how respondents felt about the effect that movies had on portraying communities.

The study demonstrates that because of its wide reach and significant influence, mass media (movies) is one of the best tools for maintaining and promoting social harmony. The

media should effectively utilise its right to freedom of expression by spreading ideas in a way that fosters racial peace. Scientific reporting should be relied on by the media in place of sensational reporting in order to reduce the amount of error that is present in reports that are published or printed about communal riots and clashes. The media have a responsibility to address, in an appropriate and lawful manner, the problems that arise from intolerance and to work towards establishing peace in society. It should take a proactive role in fostering a healthier society today that the media is the most popular, effective, and efficient tool for swaying public opinion.

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