

Gender and Group Entitativity: A study of Prejudice and Aggression among University students of Delhi towards Afghan Immigrants

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Abstract:

Afghanistan is gauged and considered as one of the most dangerous countries, listing at number five (Rogers, 2015). Howbeit, India and Afghanistan have since centuries shared a convivial and companionable relationship on political front, thereby fostering and enkindling the coming of Afghan immigrants to India. As a result, capital Delhi has become a magnet for immigrants from Afghanistan, to receive education, procure medical treatment, as asylum seekers, as tourists or for business purpose. Yet, this migration of Afghans is not always welcomed, or given a positive response. This study sought to investigate whether Intergroup threat theory (ITT) of prejudice (Stephan & Stephan, 1996) explains prejudice, effect of gender differences and displaced aggression towards Afghan immigrants. The sample consisted of N=82 university students of Delhi. A questionnaire was issued to the participants in order to establish how they feel (perception) or how they have felt, or how they would feel when interacting with Afghan immigrants. Various scales were used to ascertain this information. Linear regression, descriptive statistics and independent T test were conducted. Findings indicated that in terms of gender; realistic threat, intergroup anxiety, negative stereotypes was exhibited towards Afghan males, in comparison to Afghan females; and entitativity and out group homogeneity effect was also recorded towards Afghan immigrants in general.

Keywords: Gender, Entitativity, Prejudice, Intergroup Threat Theory, Aggression, Out group Homogeneity Effect, Afghan Immigrants, University students of Delhi

I. INTRODUCTION

Landlocked and mountainous Afghanistan is one of the most misperceived countries around the world (Roggio, 2015). Afghanistan is not only known for its aesthetic hand embroidered carpets, luscious oversized fruits but is also known for its interminable war and terrorism (Rubin, 2013). In recent years, terrorist attacks have been a salient threat to everyone. News broadcasts frequently report about the threat of Muslim extremist terrorist acts, using vivid pictures of terrorist bombing, buildings crashing down and innocent people being killed. The 9/11 attack, deadliest terrorist act in world history has caused enormous pain, anger, fear and threat in people who have lost their closed ones and those who caught the sight of this dreadful event (Wagner, 2012). As Afghanistan comes under scrutiny for harboring Osama bin Laden, the mastermind behind 9/11 attack, Afghans who fled their homeland for a new life in United States, UK, India or any other country are troubled to find themselves subject to suspicion and mistrust on basis of their nationality and religion (Juade, 2010). Misunderstanding and misperception have caused great predicament and obstruction whenever an Afghan, especially men travels across the country to acquire higher education, employment, seeking medical treatment, or to reside as permanent resident.

II. INTERGROUP THREAT THEORY

Social identity theorists argue that one reason for intergroup antagonism is the psychological benefits conferred on group members, particularly those associated with identification with ingroups (Tajfel & Turner, 1986). Because of the needs they fill, groups are as precious to us as life itself, and we all

get alarmed and petrified by their destruction as much as we panic for our own lives. as a result we tend to favor our own group and exhibit hostility towards other groups, especially during dangerous and threatening times (Branscombe, Ellemers, Spears & Doosje, 1999; Tajfel & Turner, 1986). In the context of Intergroup threat theory (Stephan & Stephan, 2000), intergroup threat is experienced when members of the one group perceives that another group is in a position to cause them harm. It is a social psychological theory in that it is primarily concerned with perception of threats. According to Intergroup threat theory, perceived threats have real consequences, regardless of whether or not the perceptions of threats are accurate. The primary reason that intergroup threats are important is because their effects on intergroup relations are largely negative. The theory argues that there are four basic types of threat that lead groups to be prejudiced towards one another. First one is realistic threat, which is concerned with the threats to the very existence of the ingroup, threat to the physical or material well being of the ingroup members (Stephan et al., 1999). The greater the threat that the outgroup is perceived to pose to the ingroup, the greater the level of prejudice and negative attitude towards the outgroup members (LeVine & Campbell, 1972). Second type of threat is Symbolic threat, which is concerned with group differences in terms of morals, values, beliefs, norms, standards and attitudes. Groups holding differing values, morals and beliefs threaten the ingroups' ethnocentric worldview, hence leading to hostility towards the outgroups (Sumner, 1906). Third type is intergroup anxiety, Stephan & Stephan (1985) argued that people often personally

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threatened in intergroup interactions because they are concerned about negative outcomes for the self, such as being embarrassed, rejected and ridiculed. Thus intergroup anxiety typically has negative impact on intergroup relations by stimulating negative attitude towards an outgroup (i.e. prejudice). Lastly, the fourth type is negative stereotype. It often leads to avoidance of outgroup members, provide negative trait attributions to explain their behavior, and justify discrimination against them. As a consequence negative stereotypes are likely lead to prejudice, as indicated by number of studies (Esses et al., 1993; Stephan & Abalakina, 1994; Stephan & Stephan, 1993).

III. ENTITATIVITY AND OUTGROUP HOMOGENEITY EFFECT

Categorical or grouping divergence impacts how we think about, perceive, feel about, and interact with other members of the group, and they often define the way the groups themselves relate to each other. As a result people begin to develop belief systems- stereotypes- about the groups. Cognitive responses to intergroup threat include changes in perceptions of the outgroup such as changes in stereotype (Quist & Resendez, 2003), perceived outgroup homogeneity (Rothgerber, 1997) and others. Cognitively sorting people into groups is one way of framing information in an effort to understand complex, and overwhelming social world. Some social categories (e.g. race, ethnicity, nationality, gender) are activated more readily than others. In general, a less cognitive effort is expended on understanding members of the outgroups. One result of this decreased effort is that members of the outgroup is seen or perceived as similar to one another as are members of the ingroups- "they" are all alike. In additions, once people make a distinction between the ingroup and outgroup, they tend to be biased in favor of ingroup because of familiarity, attachment, and preference for the ingroup members (Stephan, Renfro, Esses & Martin, 2005; Brown, 2010). A stereotype can be defined as a person's "knowledge, beliefs and expectancies about some social group" (Hamilton, Troler, 1986). They are belief systems about groups, that represent the attributes, characteristics, behavior pattern and so on, associated with a particular group. Once formed, these set of beliefs are applied to all members of the group, generalizing across individuals, despite the fact that those persons may show considerable dissimilarity in numerous ways. This generalization affair leads to the perception of homogeneity among members (Hamilton, Sherman, Crump & Rodgers, 2009). One cardinal and radical way in which groups varies is the degree to which they may be viewed as systematic, coherent unit or entities (Campbell, 1958; Hamilton & Sherman, 1996; Lickel et al., 2000). Campbell (1958) introduced the term 'entitativity' to refer to the degree to which members of the group are bonded together in a coherent social unit. Campbell (1958) introduced the term to differentiate the groups that evoke a sense of continuity and coherence from more nebulous and fugitive collection of people. Entitative groups, as the name suggests, seems more like entities- more like 'real' groups. Many researchers have emphasized and gave weight to the close relationship between the perceived homogeneity of a group and degree of entitativity (Brewer et al., 1995;

Dasgupta, Banaji & Abelson, 1999; Yzerbyt, Rogier & Fiske, 1998). The literature on outgroup homogeneity effect has shown that people perceive outgroup members to be more similar to each other than one's ingroup members (Park & Judd, 1990). According to Social identity theory (Tajfel, 1978), ingroup members desire positive distinctiveness from outgroup members. One way to attain such distinctiveness is by viewing members of the ingroup as unique and distinctive, whereas members of the outgroup as "all are same". Intergroup threat theory talks about outgroup homogeneity effect towards outgroup members but did not consider the close link with entitativity as perceiving outgroups as one social coherent unit, hence the current study focuses on studying the effect of entitativity and outgroup homogeneity effect towards out group members.

IV. VICARIOUS RETRIBUTION EFFECT

Negative emotions such as anger, resentment, fear and anxiety are common responses towards to outgroup. Anger can arise in response to ill-treatment, disrespect, or aggression. Anger is especially important because it is closely linked to intergroup aggression. Primary reason prejudice is so important is that it is associated with wide range of negative responses towards the outgroup, such as negative evaluations of members of the outgroup, avoidance of the outgroup, and overtly aggressive acts such as insults, bullying, taunting, name calling, and discrimination. According to Lickel et al., (2009), little research has examined the pivotal psychological factors that contribute negative human treatment of outgroup in many circumstances. Lickel et al., (2009) came up with Vicarious retribution Model, it occurs when a member of a group commits an act of aggression towards an outgroup for a provocation that had no personal consequences for him/her but did harm a fellow ingroup members. In these situations the aggression is often directed at outgroup members who themselves were not direct causal agents in the original attack against the person's ingroup. Thus, retribution is vicarious in the sense that neither the agent nor the target of retribution was directly involved in the original event (Lickel, Miller, Stenstrom, Denson & Schmader, 2009). The model has been drawn from the literature of displaced aggression, because the situation that concerns involves directing one's aggressive impulse to a person other than the individual who was the original or thought to be the perpetrator. But research on displaced aggression is largely concerned with instances of interpersonal aggression (Dollard, Miller, Mowrer & Sears, 1939), however vicarious retribution model moves the analysis of displaced aggression from the interpersonal to intergroup level (Lickel et al., 2009). According to Lickel et al., the spread of retribution is greatest when the outgroup is perceived to be high in entitativity. Intergroup threat theory talks about aggression (displaced/directed) as one of consequences of threat, behavioral in nature. However, based on empirical research on intergroup threat theory till date have neglected the importance of aggression (displaced/directed) and its impact towards outgroup members. Thus, the current study used vicarious retribution model to explore aggression in displaced on directed form.

V. PREJUDICE, DISCRIMINATION AND THREAT PERCEPTION TOWARDS MALE GENDER (AFGHAN MEN)

When we speak of or criticize about terrorism, violence or when we assume Afghans involvement in any terrorist activities (e.g. 9/11 terror attack, 26/11 bombing and shooting), we without any contemplations begin to believe that obviously men were/are involved, not even considering women could be part of the villainous act. Research have demonstrated that by mid 2008, women have acted as suicide bombers 21 times in Iraq's market and other civilian venues. Since 2002, women have carried out fully 50% of suicide attacks in Sir Lanka, Turkey and Chechnya. Cultural norms in conservative societies, for example, Afghanistan, and the stereotype that women are less prone to use violence provide terrorist organizations with comparative advantage when deploying women. Precisely why it is imperative to understand the role of gender in prejudice and threat perception in current context. when we talk about gender equality then why do we forget about men? Does the term gender only include women? There is a strong tendency in many discussions to assume that 'gender' issues are issues about women. From sociological to psychological theories on gender, the preponderance work is on women equality and problems faced by women. Psychology and Social Psychology have sadly abandoned the critical, requisite and certainly the most imperative aspect of men's issues- the rise of prejudice, discrimination, aggression and feeling of threat towards men because of interplay of ethnicity, race and nationality to which they are associated with. With intense scrutinization, McGinley and Cooper (1995) came up with Masculinity and Multidimensionality theory, as a tool for analyzing the experiences, practices and lives of men who undergo prejudice and discrimination. Masculinity theory really took off in social sciences in response to the late 1960s and 1970s feminist movement (Intersectionality by Kimberle Crenshaw, 1989). Intersectionality approach analyzed lives of women and the way their lives were understood, however the approach limited its intuitive power in analyzing men as gendered beings. According to Mutua (2013), although most people analyzed racial profiling from a racial perspective, there existed a gender component. That is, both black men and women were subject to racial profiling, but black men suffered higher incidence of profiling and prejudice and seemed especially targeted for not only because they were black but also because they were men. Intergroup threat theory have sadly left unnoticed the gender issue which can also create perception of threat from one gender outgroup (male) as compared to other (female), towards the ingroup. Much of the empirical work on intergroup threat theory have neglected the importance of understanding the gender aspect in threat perception.

VI. METHOD

Objectives:

- To study aggression (displaced/directed) using vicarious retribution model towards outgroup members (Afghan immigrants) shown by ingroup members (university students of Delhi).
- To study the effect in difference of gender outgroup (Afghan male/Afghan female immigrants) towards ingroup members (university students of Delhi) in perception of threat and prejudice.
- To study entitativity and outgroup homogeneity perception towards outgroup members (Afghan immigrants).
- To study realistic threat, negative stereotype, intergroup anxiety and prejudice towards outgroup (Afghan male/female immigrants) as perceived by ingroup members (university students of Delhi).

Hypotheses:

- Ingroup members will show aggression (displaced/directed) towards outgroup members.
- Ingroup members will show outgroup gender differences (Afghan male/Afghan female) in perception of threat and prejudice.
- Ingroup member will show entitativity and outgroup homogeneity effect towards outgroup (Afghan immigrants).
- Ingroup members will show realistic threat, negative stereotype and prejudice towards outgroup (Afghan male) as compared to (Afghan female).

Materials:

The data related to threat perception from the participants were collected using Intergroup threat questionnaire, which had four subscales. The first subscale was Prejudice scale by Spencers-Rodgers & McGovern (2002). All the scales were used differently for Afghan male and Afghan female. The subscale had six items with 7 point rating scale. The second subscale was intergroup anxiety scale by Stephan & Stephan (1985). The scale had 10 items with 7 point rating scale. The third subscale was realistic threat scale by Stephan & Stephan (1996). The scale had 15 statements with 5 point rating scale. To collect data on aggression, Displaced Aggression questionnaire was used by Denson & Miller (2006). The scale had 7 statements, keeping in mind the gender of the outgroup, with 7 point rating scale. Entitativity scale by Lickel et al., (2009) was used. The scale had 8 statements with 7 point rating scale. Outgroup homogeneity scale by Park & Rothbart (1982) was used. The scale had 4 statements with 7 point rating scale.

Sample:

Undergraduate students from Delhi University and Central University (Jamia Milia Islamia and Jawaharlal Nehru University) were contacted via friends and relatives. Snow ball technique was employed in the entire study. 82 participants took part in the study. The age group of the participants ranged from 20 to 26. Out of these participants, females were 57 and males were 38. Participants were further divided into Hindu and Muslims, Hindu male participants were 15 and female were 37; Muslim male participants were 23 and female were 15, Christians participants were 4 females.

VII. METHODOLOGY

Data analysis for the responses obtained were conducted by using linear regression and t test. Descriptive statistics was also used.

VIII. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Table 1. Model summary for afghan males

| Model | R | | R Square | Adjusted R Square | Std. Error of the Estimate |
|-------|---------------------------------------|---|----------|-------------------|----------------------------|
| | GENDERAFGHAN = afghan male (Selected) | GENDERAFGHAN ~ afghan male (Unselected) | | | |
| 1 | .696 ^a | .097 | .485 | .465 | 7.90387 |

Table 2 .ANOVA for Afghan males

| Model | Sum of Squares | df | Mean Square | F | Sig. |
|--------------|----------------|----|-------------|--------|-------------------|
| 1 Regression | 4471.999 | 3 | 1490.666 | 23.862 | .000 ^a |
| Residual | 4747.808 | 76 | 62.471 | | |
| Total | 9219.807 | 79 | | | |

The Adjusted R square was (.465), suggesting that 46.5% of variance in dependent variable, that is, prejudice, is explained by the independent variables, which are, intergroup anxiety, realistic threat and negative stereotypes. There was however a significant interaction (F (3,76)= 23.86, p<.000). The F value was (F=23.86), which is found to be significant at .000 level, suggesting that model is significant which means that in terms of Afghan males, intergroup anxiety, realistic threat and negative stereotypes prove to be good predictors of prejudice (table 1 and 2).

Table 3. Model summary for afghan females

| Model | R | | R Square | Adjusted R Square | Std. Error of the Estimate |
|-------|---|---|----------|-------------------|----------------------------|
| | GENDERAFGHAN = afghan female (Selected) | GENDERAFGHAN ~ afghan female (Unselected) | | | |
| 1 | .132 ^a | .588 | .017 | -.020 | 5.91264 |

Table 4. ANOVA for Afghan females

| Model | Sum of Squares | df | Mean Square | F | Sig. |
|--------------|----------------|----|-------------|------|-------------------|
| 1 Regression | 48.452 | 3 | 16.151 | .462 | .710 ^a |
| Residual | 2726.828 | 78 | 34.959 | | |
| Total | 2775.280 | 81 | | | |

The Adjusted R square came out to be (-.020) which means that variance in dependent variable, that is, prejudice, is not at all explained by the independent variables, which are, intergroup anxiety, realistic threat and stereotypes. There was no significant interaction (F (3,78) =.462, p>.710). The F value was found to be at (.462), at (.710) level, suggesting that in terms of afghan females, the model is not significant and intergroup anxiety, realistic threat, and negative stereotypes do not prove to be good predictors of prejudice (Table 3 and 4).

Gender Difference between afghan males and females on prejudice, realistic threat, negative stereotypes, intergroup anxiety and displaced aggression

In order to assess prejudice, realistic threat, negative

stereotype, intergroup anxiety and displaced aggression towards one particular gender outgroup (Afghan male) as compared to other gender outgroup (Afghan female) from the ingroup members, an independent sample t test was conducted. The mean and standard deviation for prejudice came out to be- for afghan males was (M=23.09, SD10.80); for afghan females it was (M=14.37, SD=5.85); for realistic threat- for afghan males it was (M=20.60, SD=8.09), and for afghan females it was (M=3.91, SD=6.79); for displaced aggression- for afghan males is was (M=28.21, SD=13.53); for afghan females (M=8.50, SD=2.12); for negative stereotypes- for afghan males (M=47.23, SD=10.99), for afghan females it was (M=30.91, SD=9.91) and lastly for intergroup anxiety for afghan males it was (M=39.46 SD=8.60), and for afghan females it came out to be (M=35.13, SD=6.80).

Table 5. Mean and Standard Deviation for both afghan male and afghan female on prejudice, realistic threat, displaced aggression, intergroup anxiety and stereotypes.

| | GENDERAFGHAN | N | Mean | Std. Deviation | Std. Error Mean |
|----------------------|---------------|----|---------|----------------|-----------------|
| Prejudice | afghan male | 82 | 23.0976 | 10.80307 | 1.19300 |
| | afghan female | 82 | 14.3780 | 5.85344 | .64640 |
| Intergroup anxiety | afghan male | 82 | 39.4634 | 8.60404 | .95016 |
| | afghan female | 82 | 35.1341 | 6.80189 | .75114 |
| Realistic threat | afghan male | 82 | 3.9146 | 6.79179 | .75003 |
| | afghan female | 82 | 20.6098 | 8.09932 | .89442 |
| Displaced aggression | afghan male | 80 | 28.2125 | 13.53448 | 1.51320 |
| | afghan female | 2 | 8.5000 | 2.12132 | 1.50000 |
| Negative stereotypes | afghan male | 80 | 47.2375 | 10.99395 | 1.22916 |
| | afghan female | 82 | 30.9146 | 9.91968 | 1.09545 |

Entitativity and Outgroup homogeneity effects towards Afghans

In order to assess entitativity and outgroup homogeneity perception towards outgroup members, descriptive statistics was conducted. High scores indicated high level of entitativity, whereas low scores indicated low level of entitativity. High scores on outgroup homogeneity indicated high level of out group homogeneity effect; whereas low scores indicated low level of outgroup homogeneity effect. As can be seen in table 6, the mean score for entitativity came out to be (M=46.40, SD=7.54), and the mean score for outgroup homogeneity came out to be (M=22.31, SD=5.37), suggesting that as hypothesized, entitativity and outgroup homogeneity perception towards out group members is seen, and consequently, ingroup members (Indians) do show “they are all the same effect” towards outgroup members (Afghans).

Table 6. Mean and Standard Deviation on Entitativity and out group homogeneity towards outgroup members (Afghans).

| | N | Range | Minimum | Maximum | Mean | Std. Deviation | Variance |
|-----------------------|----|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|----------------|-----------|
| | | Statistic | Statistic | Statistic | Statistic | Std. Error | Statistic |
| Entitativity | 82 | 27.00 | 29.00 | 56.00 | 46.4024 | .83308 | 7.54388 |
| Out group homogeneity | 82 | 24.00 | 4.00 | 28.00 | 22.3171 | .59352 | 5.37456 |
| Valid N (listwise) | 82 | | | | | | |

IX. CONCLUSION

Afghanistan is considered as one of the most dangerous countries around the world. The country ranks 4th with the deadliest terrorist group on the planet (DePetris, 2015). Such impactful reports leads people to perceive Afghans as threatening, hostile and dangerous. The current study have shown that university students of Delhi perceive Afghan immigrants as threatening and hold prejudice against them. The study showed that realistic threat, negative stereotype, intergroup anxiety was more towards Afghan male immigrants as compared to Afghan female immigrants, despite being from the same nationality and religion, threat and prejudice was seen more towards particular gender outgroup as compared to other. Displaced aggression was not seen towards any of the gender, the reason plausibly being on part of the respondent trying to put forward socially desirable answers. Entitativity and outgroup homogeneity was seen towards Afghan immigrants in general, which proves that ingroup (university students of Delhi) do consider outgroup members (Afghans) as similar, sharing goals, beliefs, values and hence consider them "alike".

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