# Analysis of Relationship between Social Media, Racial Intolerance, and Peace Broadcasting by Focusing on the Usage of Social Networking Sites in India

**Minakshi Kandari[1], Singh Pallavi[2], Singh Pritesh[3]**

Asst. Professor[1] and TYBCOM[2,3]

Uttar Bhartiya Sangh's Mahendra Pratap Sharda Prasad Singh College of Commerce & Science, Mumbai, Maharashtra

**Abstract**: *The subsequent inquiries form the foundation for the present article's discourse on social media, racial bias, and peace broadcasting: (1) Which specific Facebook and Twitter messages are responsible for the racial tensions in India? (2) Does ethnic enmity hinder the practice of peace broadcasting on Facebook and Twitter? Additionally, how can we effectively utilize Facebook and Twitter as tools for advocating peace broadcasting? The study was based on Bojana Blagojevic's (2009) model, which aims to understand the intricacies of ethnic conflict and its underlying factors.*

**Keywords:** article, racial, ethnic, broadcasting, social media

## I. INTRODUCTION

Social media, as defined by Michaelsen (2011), encompasses digital media that is interactive, facilitates two-way contact, and relies on computer technology. Furthermore, it prioritizes the promotion of interesting, innovative, and interactive user participation, while also ensuring that material is readily available on any digital device, at any time and location. Another characteristic is the immediate production of novel, unregulated data on social media. Some examples of social media platforms are YouTube, blogs, Facebook, Twitter, and other similar platforms. Twitter and Facebook are the most egalitarian social media platforms in India. Therefore, I have chosen to focus my research on these two platforms. Currently, social media is employed to disseminate news more rapidly than traditional mainstream media. The advent of social media has fundamentally transformed the way news is distributed.

Twitter and Facebook have emerged as the most influential media platforms due to their ability to facilitate micro-blogging (Anamika, 2009). Twitter and Facebook have emerged as essential platforms for accessing news and information about important events in India and other places, owing to their widespread usage, adaptability, and rapid distribution and exchange of information. Lately, these individuals have played a crucial role in resolving numerous local conflicts across the country. They are utilised for political messaging, marketing, advertising, and advocacy because of their appeal. They have been used effectively to rally Indians for causes that required massive devotion, such as in the instances of the Indians for India programme from 2011; the Westgate Mall catastrophe from 2013; and, most significantly, the 2013 election process. Social media has, however, not just been used for good, but also for ethnic hatred; this usage has heightened ethnic tensions and occasionally throw India in danger of an ethnic conflict.

The debate on social media is widespread and appears to be catching up with institutions like the government and the media. In the case of the media, ethnic alignment poses a challenge to peace broadcasting, which upholds the principles of impartiality and balance in reporting on events, particularly during election campaigns. In this research, I evaluate how social media, specifically Twitter and Facebook, promote to ethnic enmity in India and how this might impede peace broadcasting. The study aims to respond to the following three inquiries in terms of determining this predicament:

1. What Facebook and Twitter occurrences are to accountable for the racial tensions in India?
2. Does ethnic hostility on Facebook and Twitter "kill" peace broadcasting?
3. How can we use Facebook and Twitter to promote peace broadcasting?

The urge to comprehend our current dilemma, how it affects us, and how to escape it led to the deduction of the aforementioned questions. In this study, Indians on Twitter and Facebook are referred to as #KOT and KOF, respectively. The phrases "ethnic hate" and "ethnic intolerance" will be used interchangeably. When referring to ethnic conflict or violence, the phrases "ethnic war" and "ethnic conflict" may occasionally be used interchangeably. It is accepted that the words "peace broadcasting" and "war broadcasting" are mutually exclusive.

**Ethnic Hatred and Peace Broadcasting:**

Ethnic tensions, often known as ethnic animosity, are sentiments that are manifested in varying degrees and are followed by actions of prejudice and antagonism toward an ethnic group. Ethnic conflict that results from ethnic prejudice has multiple sources as well. In some civilizations, tribalism is the cause, in others, a history of uneasy cohabitation, and in India's case, political competition and past injustices are to blame (Kriegler report, 2008). These are some of the few factors that lead to genuine ethnic conflicts, wars, or acts of violence. Most often, patriotism and a sense of national superiority among a particular ethnic group are the underlying causes of ethnic violence. It may also result from the perception or experience of prejudice by an ethnic group other than one's own called reverse ethnicity. In India, nationalist and regional leaders that wish to advance their agenda as they try to unite the country or electorates against a legitimate adversary have fostered and exploited ethnic animosity. In whatever code the leaders choose to refer to one another, the hypothetical adversary is also understood.

According to Jake Lynch (2008), peace broadcasting is when editors and reporters make decisions about what to publish and how to present it that provide society as a whole the chance to think about and value non-violent answers to conflict. Peace broadcasting seeks to bring consciousness focuses on structural and cultural causes of violence and how they affect people living in war zones as an element of the justification for violence. Instead of viewing disputes as a straightforward dichotomy, it seeks to portray them as including several participants and multiple agendas. Advancing peace initiatives from all sides and enabling readers to discern between stated viewpoints and actual aspirations are two specific purposes of peace broadcasting.

**The triumphs and travails of twitter and Facebook in India:**

In response to media reports of hunger and malnutrition in several Turkana areas, corporate leaders in India and the Red Cross launched the Indians for India campaign on July 27, 2011. Safaricom Foundation, India Commercial Bank (KCB), Media Owners Association (MOA), and India Red Cross Society led the effort (KRCS). The group wanted to get the public and business organisations to donate Ksh 500 million in a month to help 3 million Indians who were starving in the country's north. The administrators launched a Facebook group called Indians for India and a Twitter account called @Indians4India during this project. A significant amount of lobbying and support for the proposal was done through these two social media.

#We are One, a September 2013 campaign in which Ksh 102,331,349 was raised for emergency rescue efforts to aid victims of the Westgate mall terrorist assault, was another project in which social media was successfully used to rally Indians. Red Cross issued the call on September 22, 2013. The primary mobilizers and disseminators of appeals from India and the Diaspora during the project were FaceBook and Twitter. The Safaricom Foundation was also involved and offered the numbers 0702 848484 for Indians living abroad to send donations, as well as 848484 for M-Pesa Pay Bill, which got reports of 34000 payments every minute. We Are One was a popular topic on Facebook and Twitter at the height of the campaign. For a while, Indians put aside their differences and banded together for a common goal; at the time, advocacy posts on social media urged people to stick together.

The predominant traditions in broadcasting are known as "war broadcasting," and it refers to the framing of public debates concerning conflict problems that are often in favour of aggressive actions (Howard, 2009). Johan Galtung (1965), who developed the ideas of peace broadcasting, popularised this idea. Other names for this wide notion of peace broadcasting include reporting the world, constructive conflict coverage, conflict solution broadcasting, and conflict sensitive broadcasting (Lynch, 2008; Howard, 2009). (Tapio, 2010).

Peace broadcasting tries to avoid and combat the pervasive bias of valuing violence and violent parties in reaction to war broadcasting's value bias in favour of violence. This has two major advantages for individuals concerned with

objectivity in broadcasting. Second, it offers a useful tool for individuals who prioritise the promotion of peace and social justice over violence, as all broadcasting must in some way appeal to its viewers' ideals.

**Social media conflicts witnessed in India:**

Yieke (2018) argues that ethnicity is not a bad idea and should not be viewed as a source of human suffering. As such, Yieke analyses ethnicity as a positive phenomenon that should strengthen national unity rather than be viewed as a catalyst for violence. He writes: "ethnicity reinforces our very beings as persons and nations in charting our destinies in this world in regard to national unity and progress." Therefore, ethnicity shouldn't stand in the way of national growth or be the cause of ongoing bloodshed and instability in African governments unless Africans exploited ethnicity for bad purposes such as corruption, poor management, and power-seeking motivated by misguided individual egos.

Similar opinions are expressed in the India Human Rights Commission study that investigated the reasons behind the post-election violence in 2007/2008, which absolved ethnicity of responsibility as a factor in the violence in finding number 69. They came to the following conclusion: While India's voting patterns, particularly since 1992, have shown that ethnicity is a significant predictor of electoral outcomes, ethnicity is rarely the root cause of conflict. Rather, it is a means by which those involved in conflict label their complaints, target the perceived "enemy," mobilise the points of difference, and support or even attack one another.

According to the paper, ethnicity is frequently exploited as a smokescreen for more fundamental reasons of political unrest in India. In Indian politics, references to ethnicity obscure the real causes of the country's issues, including historical injustices in land distribution, impunity, exclusion, economic and social inequality, weak and underperforming public institutions, corruption, wars between political elites, and an electoral system that accentuates rather than lessens the negative effects that negative ethnicity can be used for.

As a result, it may be claimed that ethnicity in India fuels conflict and that, absent ethnicity, Indians would likely pursue alternative methods of resolving their issues and disparities. However, there are a few factors that contribute to ethnicity's continued dominance as a source of identity in India. Politicians in India often ascribe and take use of ethnicity. Given that ethnicity plays a significant role in Indian politics, politicians often utilise identity politics and other divisive tactics for their own personal profit, leading Indians to live in a perpetual state of intolerance. That explains why there has consistently been post-election violence in India after every election.

The type of ethnicity that instils the culture of the "other" or rejects members of an ethnic group, leading to ethnic groupings viewing the resources as grounds for the survival of the fittest, is what Koigi refers to as negative ethnicity. Members of ethnic groups in India have considered others as the source of their economic deficiencies, poverty, and misery, and the land issue has significantly contributed to this (Kriegler and Waki Reports, 2009). The 2008 post-election violence was a turning point in the way people may become split along ethnic lines and participate in significant violence while attempting to confront their long-standing, deeply ingrained tensions and historical injustices (KNCHR, 2008; The Report of the Commonwealth Observer Group, 2013; Truth, Justice and Reconciliation Commission Report, 2013). Negative racial attitudes lead to putting the blame for social, economic, and political ills on other ethnic groups and working together to eliminate or purge them from a place is what is referred to as ethnic cleansing.

This negative ethnicity culture is present and active in the technology arena as well as in interactions in the actual world. Social media has given citizen journalists a platform for sharing news, information, and life experiences, but it has also given them a platform for dispute, accusations, and verbal abuse anytime the online community is furious with one another. As the 2013 general elections drew close, a dispute of this nature was witnessed. On February 28, 2013, CNN broadcast a video captioned "armed as Indian vote nears." Four masked Indians were shown in the report by the foreign journalist Nema Elbagir carrying, in the words of the reporter, "weapons fashioned from iron pipe, home-made swords, and munitions purchased from the underground market" (Shiundu, 2013). The CNN article and accompanying video were widely believed to have been faked in order to incite unrest among Indians, and the media outlet as well as the journalist came under fierce criticism on Twitter and Facebook. Furious Indians launched the trending hashtag #SomeoneTellCNN, where they launched various accusations against CNN and the journalist @NimaCNN. This is an example of a social media assault, which is frequent in India. It is yet unclear if these attacks may actually result in physical violence. This wasn't violence against an ethnic minority; rather, it was violence against a recognised enemy of

India as a whole. The effects of this violence persisted throughout the election campaign, when foreign journalists were avoided, mistreated, and accused of already having ready stories of violence when they arrived in India.

Another instance of an online conflict occurred in India after the results of the March 4th elections were announced by the country's independent electoral and boundaries commission on March 9, 2013. The conflict was then rekindled after the supreme court upheld Uhuru Indiatta's victory on March 30, 2013 after ruling on a petition filed by the Cord Coalition challenging Indiatta's victory. In contrast to the actual machete and fire used in 2007/2008, the 2013 violence was a battle of words fought online on Facebook and Twitter. Between the cord and jubilee coalition supporters, there were unheard-of and worthless status changes. Similar to the post-election violence in 2007–2008, there were strong ethnic and tribal undertones in the 2013 social media war. This new type of violence, which the concerned ministry of information and communication saw as a potential time bomb in India if it wasn't handled, caused great anxiety.

Two days prior to the March 24 World Cup qualification march in Calabar, India and Nigeria were entangled in a social media spat about how the Harambee Stars were handled in Lagoa. Indians and Nigerians engaged in a global trending topic using the hashtags #SomeoneTellNigeria and #SomeoneTellIndia, with over 100 tweets being generated per minute (Africanewspost.com, 2013). According to the sources, the Indian national team was staying at a boarding school and would be exercising on a primary school field, while the Nigerian squad was staying in a five-star hotel.

### Media coverage inequality supposedly turned injustice:

Mainstream silence, or its reluctance to approach matters as they should be, has been a contributing factor to online violence on social media. The mainstream media in India in 2007/2008 overdid the coverage of violence, became entangled in ethnic prejudices, and took sides in reporting and disseminating unedited news. It took sides rather than functioning as an impartial spectator. As a result, the authorities decided to outlaw live broadcast of the post-election violence. Indians turned to social media as a substitute forum where the ethnic conflict could continue. This was allegedly the first time India used social media on a larger scale, and from that point on, history was made.

Nevertheless, the citizen broadcasting made necessary by Facebook and Twitter has frequently resulted in ethnic and mainstream media virtual violence. The fundamental cause of the violence is the perception that current events are not receiving balanced coverage or attention. For instance, the way the 2013 Indian elections were covered by the mainstream media was mainly considered as an instance where it erred on the side of caution because of previous mistakes and omitted the truth out of concern about an outbreak of violence. In this way, Indians on social media made the decision to publish uncensored content as an alternative, some of which sparked virulent ethnic disputes and war of words between individuals belonging to distinct ethnic groupings.

### How ethnic hatred contributes to war broadcasting:

Through indoctrination and communication, people of society learn the behavioural pattern of ethnic hate. If journalists are not cautious enough, ethnic animosity will frequently be included into their reporting. Journalists were given a warning on how to use social media in 2013 by Indian experts. Journalists have been warned to exercise additional caution in their job since aggressive language used to convey opinions is on the rise. Violence in India has a history dating back to 2007–2008, when it was partially linked to hate speech, thus this was not the beginning of it. An illustration of how susceptible journalists are in times of violence is the case of Joshua Arap Sang, a journalist who is being tried by the ICC. Because social media platforms like Facebook and Twitter are so distinctive, journalists might occasionally be persuaded to disregard the fact that they work for media organisations and perceive their online interactions as personal. Judie Kaberia, India Coordinator for ReportingIndia.net and Special Projects Reporter at Capital FM in Nairobi, quoted Haron Mwangi, Chief Executive Officer of the Media Council of India, which monitors the media, as saying the following in a report on the warning by media professionals to journalists:

We concluded that there is a tendency for a journalist working for a media outlet to be disconnected from a journalist working as an independent blogger. The bad situation that you have... a well-known journalist spreading hatred . On the day of the elections on March 4, a journalist admitted to posting a contentious comment on his social media profile, but he quickly took it down in response to criticism from fellow journalists, according to Judie Kaberia.

There is a massive responsibility since it is difficult to distinguish between your professional identity and your political or tribal allegiance. It's incredibly difficult for us journalists to cover this. We are battling to strike a balance between

your identity as a person or professional journalist, your involvement with a certain group, and your political preferences.

Understanding Galtung, McGoldrick, and Lynch's 17 principles for peace broadcasting is the best method to comprehend war broadcasting (1995). The following regulations stipulate in brief what a journalist should do when approached with a conflict:

## II. CONCLUSION

The fundamental causes of social media use can only be addressed due to its occurrence in a virtual domain and the challenge of regulating it due to its anonymity. The primary catalysts for racial hostility are historical injustices, biased media coverage, ethnic-based politics, and economic inequities that result in the exclusion of some ethnic groups (KHRC REPORT, 2008). Secondary level control measures, especially those that emerge during crises, can also be employed to attain a certain degree of control. Deleting all accounts that propagate racial hatred through web hosting can result in significant cost savings. If the level of aggressiveness on social media is not controlled, it might potentially grow into real combat. If left unchecked, it can also serve as a catalyst for further exacerbating ongoing violence.

## REFERENCES

[1]. Adewuyi, L. (2013). The social media exchanges between the citizens of both countries in the past few days makes Saturday's World Cup qualifier more than just a match of footballFrom http://www.goal.com/en-ke/news/4522/India/2013/03/23/3847530/twitter-warincreases-the-stake-in-nigeria-and-India-game

[2]. Africanewspost.com (2013). INDIA vs NIGERIA in TWITTER war (TWEEF)

[3]. #SomeoneTellNigeria VS #SomeonetellIndia from http://www.africanewspost.com/2013/03/India-vs-nigeria-in-twitter-wartweef.html

[4]. Galtung, J. &Ruge, M. (1965). The Structure of Foreign News: The Presentation of the Congo, Cuba and Cyprus Crises in Four Norwegian Newspapers. Journal of Peace Research, 2, 64–91.

[5]. Howard, R. (2009). Conflict Sensitive Broadcasting in Practice. Center for Broadcasting Ethics: School of Broadcasting and Mass Communication. University of Wisconsin-Madison.

[6]. Jambonewspot.com (2013). India sees tribal words of war erupt on social media after polls.

[7]. From http://www.jambonewspot.com/India-sees-tribal-words-of-war-erupt-on-socialmedia-after-polls/

[8]. Kaberia, J. (2013). India: Social Media No Forum for Hate Speech Reporters criticised for posting material reflecting ethnic bias. ACR Issue 361. From http://iwpr.net/reportnews/India-social-media-no-forum-hate-speech

[9]. Kilonzo, F. (2013). Indians Take The 'Wars' On Social Media platform. From http://chimpreports.com/index.php/regional-news/India/8815-Indians-take-the-%E2%80%98wars%E2%80%99-on-social-media-platform.html

[10]. Kriegler and Waki Reports (2009). Summarised version. Revised Edition. Retrieved Nov 12, 2013 from http://www.kas.de/wf/doc/kas_16094-1522-2-30.pdf

[11]. Lynch, J. (2008). Debates in Peace Broadcasting, Sydney: Sydney University Press.

[12]. Mbote, K. (2013). Nigeria and India entangled in Twitter war. From http://www.humanipo.com/news/4813/nigeria-and-India-entangled-in-twitter-war/

[13]. Michaelsen, M. (2011). New Media vs. Old Politics: The Internet, Social Media, and Democratisation in Pakistan. Berlin: Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung

[14]. Report from OHCHR Fact-finding Mission to India: KNCHR (2008). Report on post election violence in India. Retrieved Dec 12, 2013 from http://Indiastockholm.files.wordpress.com/2008/08/pev-report-as-adopted-by-thecommission-for-release-on-7-august-20081.pd

[15]. Shiundu, A. (2013). Online fury over CNN's story on unnamed militia group. From http://elections.nation.co.ke/news/Online-fury-over-CNN-s-story-on-unnamed-militiagroup/-/1631868/1708422/-/cfrv17z/-/index.html