

Public Opinion on Contemporary Forms of Racism and Bigotry on Social Media Platforms in India

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Abstract: *Although racism remains an issue for social media sites such as YouTube, this focus often overshadows the site's productive capacity to generate 'agonistic publics' from which expressions of cultural citizenship and solidarity might emerge. We discuss the prevalence of vitriolic exchange and racial bigotry, but also, and more importantly, the productive and equally aggressive defence of more inclusive and tolerant forms of cultural identification that play out across these different media forms. To prevent violating the abuse policies of social media platforms and also to avoid detection by automatic systems like Google's Conversation AI, racists have begun to use a code (a movement termed Operation Google). This involves substituting references to communities by benign words that seem out of context, in hate filled posts or Tweets. This article maps and discusses the recent developments in the study of racism and bigotry in the sub field of social media research. In this regard, social media companies play a particularly central role, as a handful of mainly US and Chinese corporations have grown into near-ubiquitous giants. While companies such as Facebook present themselves as democratizing forces, increased attention has in recent years been given to their role in mediating and amplifying old and new forms of abuse, hate, and discrimination. This article examines the phenomenon of racist speech on social media, focusing on the controversy over views on racism and bigotry spread through the social media platforms and analyses ways to regulate it.*

Keywords: Racism, Bigotry, Aggressive nature, Cultural identification and Discrimination

I. INTRODUCTION

While social media tools enable new kinds of creativity, cultural expression and forms of public, civic and political participation, we often hear more about the harms that arise from instances of trolling and 'aberrant' online participation, including racist provocation. In media and communications research, these issues have been framed in a number of ways, usually focusing on new tools for civic engagement, political participation and digital inclusion. Government policy has been shifting steadily towards potential regulation of social media 'misuse' in relation to appropriate forms of 'digital citizenship'. It is in this evolving context that we consider several instances of cultural or nationalistic provocation and conflict in which social media platforms (YouTube and Facebook in particular) have been central to the social dynamic that has unfolded. India has a shameful record of attacks on the African community in different parts of the country. In 2012, Yannick Nihangaza, a Burundian national was beaten to near death in Jalandhar and was left to die by the roadside. In July 2013, Wandoh Timothy, a Chadian national was assaulted by ten people in full public view in Hennur, Karnataka. In November 2013, a Nigerian national, Obado Simoen was stabbed to death in Goa in a narcotics-related turf war incident. Then came the 2014 infamous midnight 'raid' by former Delhi law minister Somnath Bharti in a house in New Delhi's Khirki extension, charging the African residents with prostitution and drug peddling. In this article, we contend that while racism remains an issue in uses of social media platforms such as YouTube, this focus often overshadows these platforms' productive potential, including their capacity to support agonistic publics from which productive expressions of cultural citizenship and solidarity might emerge.



Objectives :

The main objectives of this paper are :

- 1) To critically assess the element of racism and bigotry present in social media
- 2) To analyse the impact of racism and bigotry in this contemporary world and
- 3) To list out various ways to prevent the racism and bigotry from social media platforms.

II. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

(Cienna Davis , 2022) This chapter offers a scale for evaluating cross-racial intimacies of dance challenge participation, from playful exchange to cultural extraction. The chapter concludes by considering how platforms and influencers might undermine this exploitative digital economy through legal intervention and justice-oriented investments.

(Vimala Balakrishnan and Hamid R Arabnia , 2022) The study investigated cyber-racism on social media during the recent Coronavirus pandemic using a semi-supervised approach. Specifically, several machine learning models were trained to detect cyber-racism, followed by topic modelling using Latent Dirichlet Allocation (LDA). (Alvin Thomas and et.al , 2022) This study examined the effects of social media use on Black and Hispanic youth's psychological and academic functioning, with an attempt to investigate the role of online racial discrimination in accounting for these associations. The findings confirm that social media is a space that proffers positive and negative effects on adolescents' psychological and academic functioning, suggesting the need for unique protections for racially/ethnically marginalized youth as they explore these online environments. (Ariadna Matamoros and et.al , 2021) This article maps and discusses recent developments in the study of racism and hate speech in the subfield of social media research. The article finds a lack of geographical and platform diversity, an absence of researchers' reflexive dialogue with their object of study, and little engagement with critical race perspectives to unpack racism on social media. (Keum, B. T. H., & Cano M. Á , 2021) The research examined whether alcohol use may be linked to stress associated with online racism as a risky coping behavior among racial minority adults, and potential gender differences across women and men. The authors have tested parallel stress pathways in which we hypothesized that exposure to online racism would be indirectly related to alcohol use severity via general psychological distress and social media-related stress.

(Carlos Aguirre and et.al , 2021) The study analyze the fairness of depression classifiers trained on Twitter data with respect to gender and racial demographic groups. It also finds that model performance systematically differs for underrepresented groups and that these discrepancies cannot be fully explained by trivial data representation issues. This study concludes with recommendations on how to avoid these biases in future research. (Matamoros Fernandez and Ariadna , 2020) This paper explores how structural racism encodes itself into social media. As a first step, the paper links "El Negro de WhatsApp" meme with the long racist tradition of commodifying black bodies in American popular culture and beyond. (Deen Freelon , Michael Bossetta and et.al , 2020) The study has suggested that race may also play a substantial role in determining the targeting and consumption of disinformation content. In addition to its contributions to the study of ideological asymmetry in disinformation content and reception, this study also underscores the general relevance of race to disinformation studies. (Marzieh Mozafari and et.al , 2020) This paper introduces a transfer learning approach for hate speech detection based on an existing pre-trained language model called BERT (Bidirectional Encoder Representations from Transformers) and evaluate the proposed model on two publicly available datasets that have been annotated for racism, sexism, hate or offensive content on Twitter. (Ashley Stewart and et.al , 2019) This chapter has outlined the research on online racial discrimination, which groups are most at risk for having these experiences as well as related mental health, behavioral, and academic outcomes. Cultural assets that may buffer youth against discrimination online has also been discussed by the author.

(Chelsea Litchfield and et.al , 2018) This study investigates issues of gender, race and identity, as enacted through social media, focusing on the abuse experienced by tennis player Serena Williams during the 2015 Wimbledon Championships. Such themes showed a simultaneous overlapping of multiple forms of oppression encountered by Williams, reinforcing the notion of the black female athlete as 'other' in virtual spaces. (Jessica Gantt Shafer , 2017) The author address the long debate over "political correctness" and whether promoting certain language enables or restricts critical thinking and problem solving. He then reviews the theories of the white racial frame, colorblind racism,



aversive racism, symbolic racism, and front and backstage performances of racism as manifest in contemporary US neoliberal discourse.(**Rijul Magu and et.al , 2017**) The author analyses the hate code on social media , a platform for expressing opinions and beliefs, communicated to a massive audience. It was found that to prevent violating the abuse policies of social media platforms and also to avoid detection by automatic systems like Google's Conversation AI, racists have begun to use a code (a movement termed Operation Google).(**Daniel Kilvington and John Price , 2017**) This article explores and critically assesses the response of English football's institutions, organisations, and clubs to the problem of racism on social media. Its findings are based on interviews with key officials from the Professional Footballers' Association and Kick It Out and with safeguarding and media officers from football clubs across the English Premier League and English Football League.This article concludes with some recommendations about how these weaknesses may start to be improved.(**Andrew Jakubowicz , 2017**) This article charts the most recent rise and confusion of the Internet under the impact of the Alt_Right and other racist groups, focusing on an Australian example that demonstrates the way in which a group could manipulate the contradictions of the Internet with some success. Using an analytical model developed to understand the political economy and sociology of mass media power in the later stages of modernity, before the Internet, the author offers a series of proposals on how to address racism on the Internet.

(**Amelia Johns and Anthony McCosker , 2015**) This paper examines these issues through two case studies: the recent proliferation of mobile phone video recordings of racist rants on public transport, and racist interactions surrounding the performance of a Maori 'flash mob' haka in New Zealand that was recorded and uploaded to YouTube. (**J. David Cisneros and Thomas K. Nakayama , 2015**) This article examines the phenomenon of racist speech on social media, focusing on the controversy over racist tweets about the first Indian American Miss America, Nina Davuluri. The essay highlights tensions between "old" and "new" cultural logics about race. Specifically, it explores why such an "old" form of racist discourse, which explicitly imputes racial difference and exclusion, resurfaces on social media in the era of "new" or "color-blind" racism.(**Lisa Nakamura , 2014**) This article argues for a new digital media archaeology that would investigate or acknowledge the conditions of racial coercion and enforced primitivism that gave rise to these digital imaging practice pictures. The author examines how sharing affordances on imageboards and social media sites encourage users to unknowingly circulate abject images of race and gender.(**Anthony McCosker and et.al , 2014**) The authors contend that while racism remains an issue in uses of social media platforms such as YouTube, this focus often overshadows these platforms' productive potential, including their capacity to support agonistic publics from which productive expressions of cultural citizenship and solidarity might emerge.(**Neil Farrington and et.al , 2014**) This article provides the first significant, academic account of how social media is shaping the nature of racisms in sport. Among the questions it addresses are: How, and why, is racism being expressed across different social media platforms and sporting contexts? And To what extent is social media providing new platforms for traditional prejudices or actually creating new forms of racism?

III. METHODOLOGY

The research method followed here is a Empirical research. A total of 202 samples have been collected out of which all samples have been collected through convenient sampling method.The samples have been collected in and around Chennai through the online database source.The independent variables are gender , age , educational qualification , occupation , income and living area. The Dependent Variables Are , has social media exposed to racism in India , would stronger civil penalties improve the effectiveness of the Racial Discrimination Act , the better initiative to prevent racism and bigotry in social media platforms. The statistical tools used here are correlation and graphical representation.

Hypothesis :

H0: There is no significant relationship between the respondent's gender and their opinion on has social media exposed to racism in India.

H1: There is a significant relationship between the respondent's gender and their opinion on : has social media exposed to racism in India.



Case Processing Summary

	Cases					
	Valid		Missing		Total	
	N	Percent	N	Percent	N	Percent
Gender * Has social media exposed to racism in India ?	202	100.0%	0	0.0%	202	100.0%

Gender * Has social media exposed to racism in India ?

Crosstabulation

Count

		Has social media exposed to racism in India ?		Total
		Yes	No	
Gender	Male	8	1	9
	Female	189	4	193
Total		197	5	202

Chi-Square Tests

	Value	df	Asymptotic Significance (2-sided)	Exact Sig. (2-sided)	Exact Sig. (1-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	2.910 ^a	1	.088		
Continuity Correction ^b	.370	1	.543		
Likelihood Ratio	1.657	1	.198		
Fisher's Exact Test				.206	.206
Linear-by-Linear Association	2.896	1	.089		
N of Valid Cases	202				

a. 2 cells (50.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is .22.

b. Computed only for a 2x2 table

Legend :

Correlation with respondent's gender and their opinion on social media exposed to racism in India.

Results:

The correlation of the respondent's gender and their opinion on social media exposed to racism in India. The Pearson chi-square value is .088 and it is more than 0.05, so my alternative hypothesis is proved.

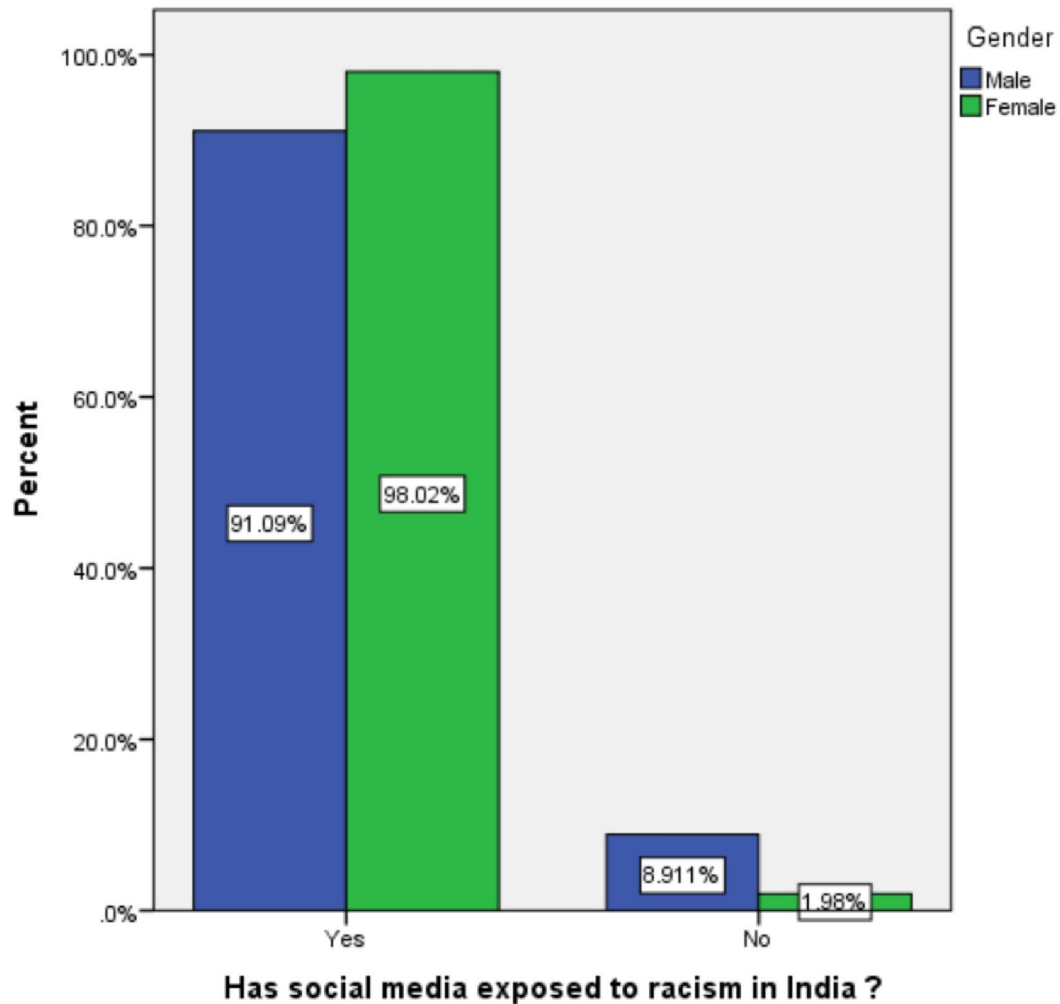
Discussion :

The correlation of the respondent's gender and their opinion on social media exposed to racism in India. The Pearson chi-square value is .088 and it is more than 0.05, so my alternative hypothesis is proved. There is a significant relationship between the respondent's gender and their opinion on social media exposed to racism in India.



Graphs and Analysis :

Figure 1 :

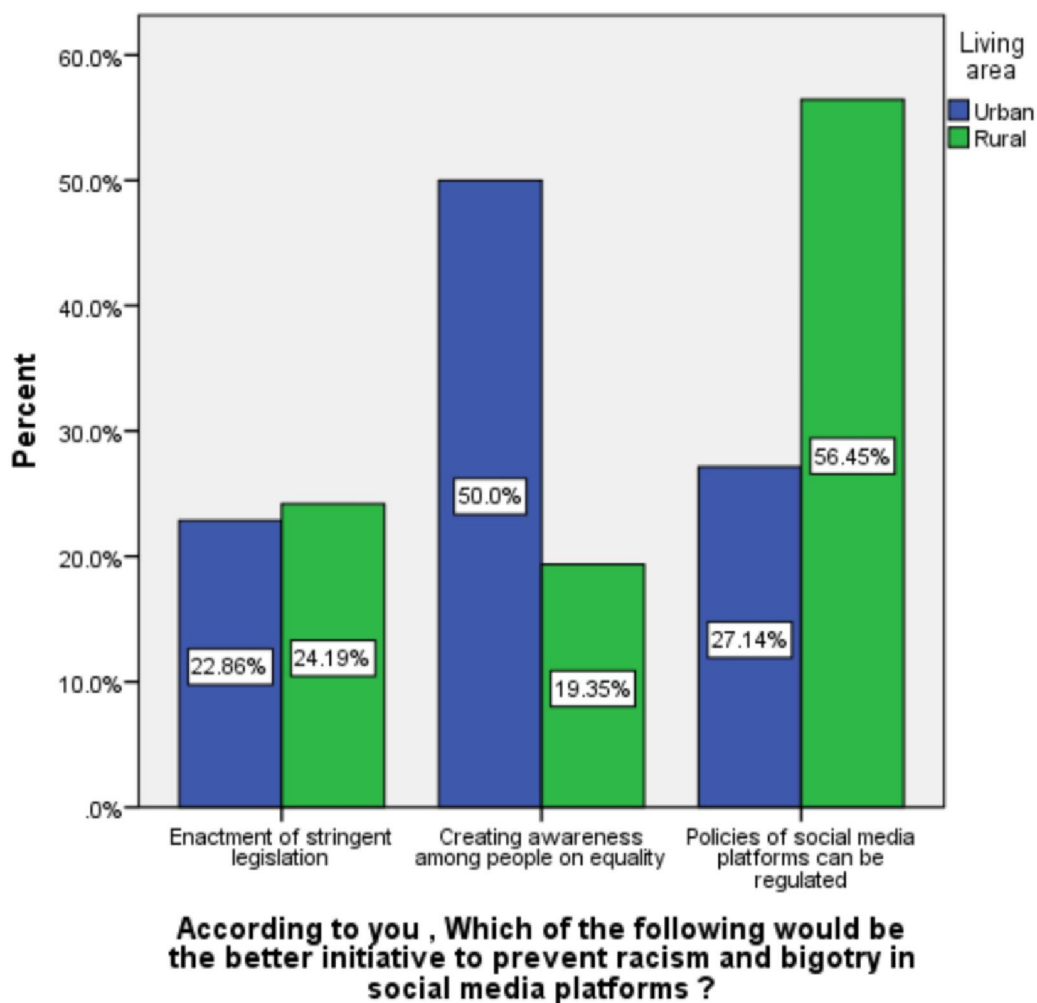


Legend :

This graph discusses the opinion of people on whether the social media has exposed to racism in India with respect to the responses classified as per their gender.



Figure 2 :

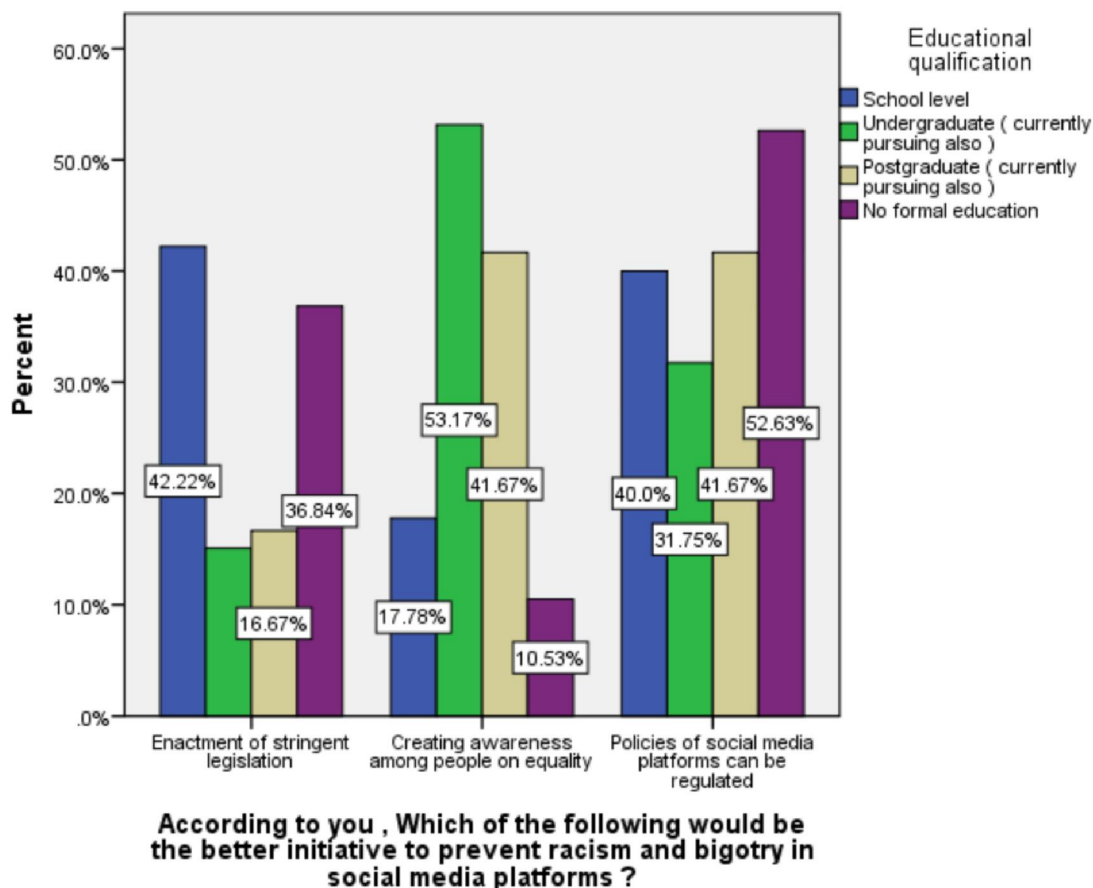


Legend :

This graph discusses the opinion of people about the better initiative to prevent racism and bigotry in social media platforms with respect to the responses classified according to their living area.



Figure 3 :



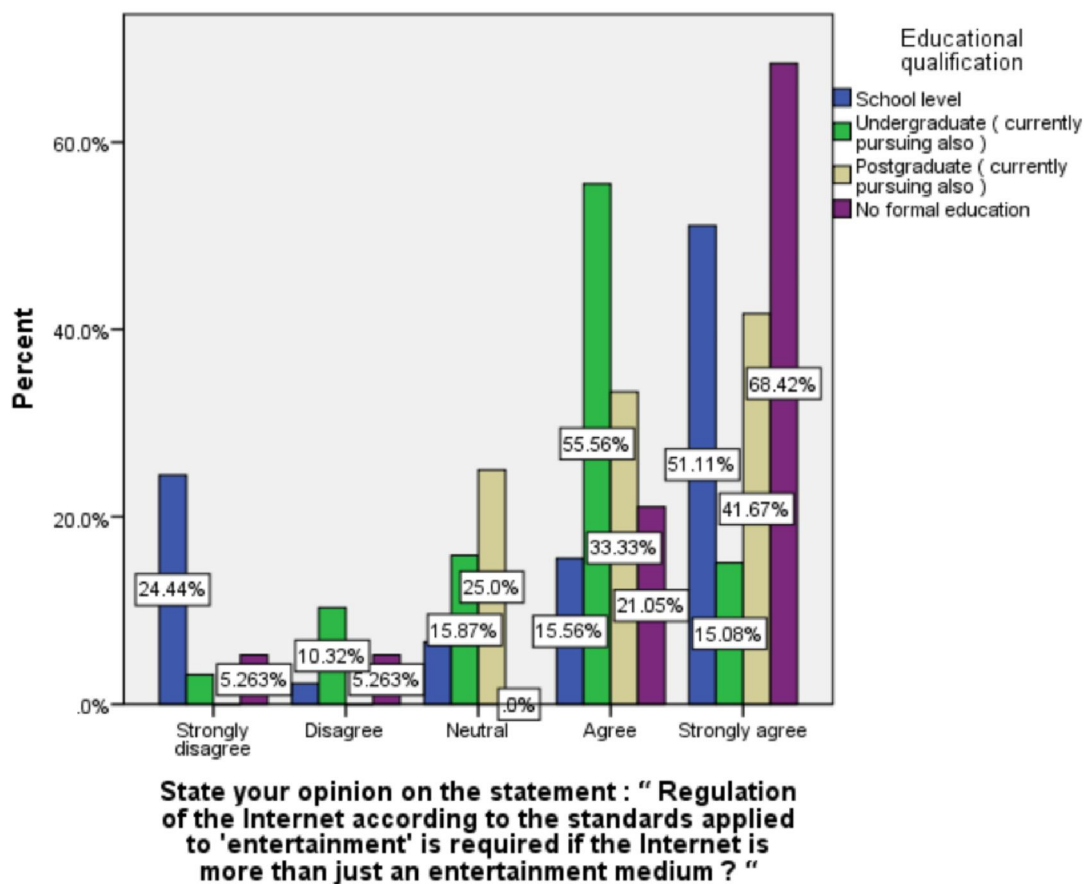
Legend :

This graph discusses the opinion of people about the better initiative to prevent racism and bigotry in social media platforms with respect to the responses classified according to their educational qualification.



Figure 4 :

7

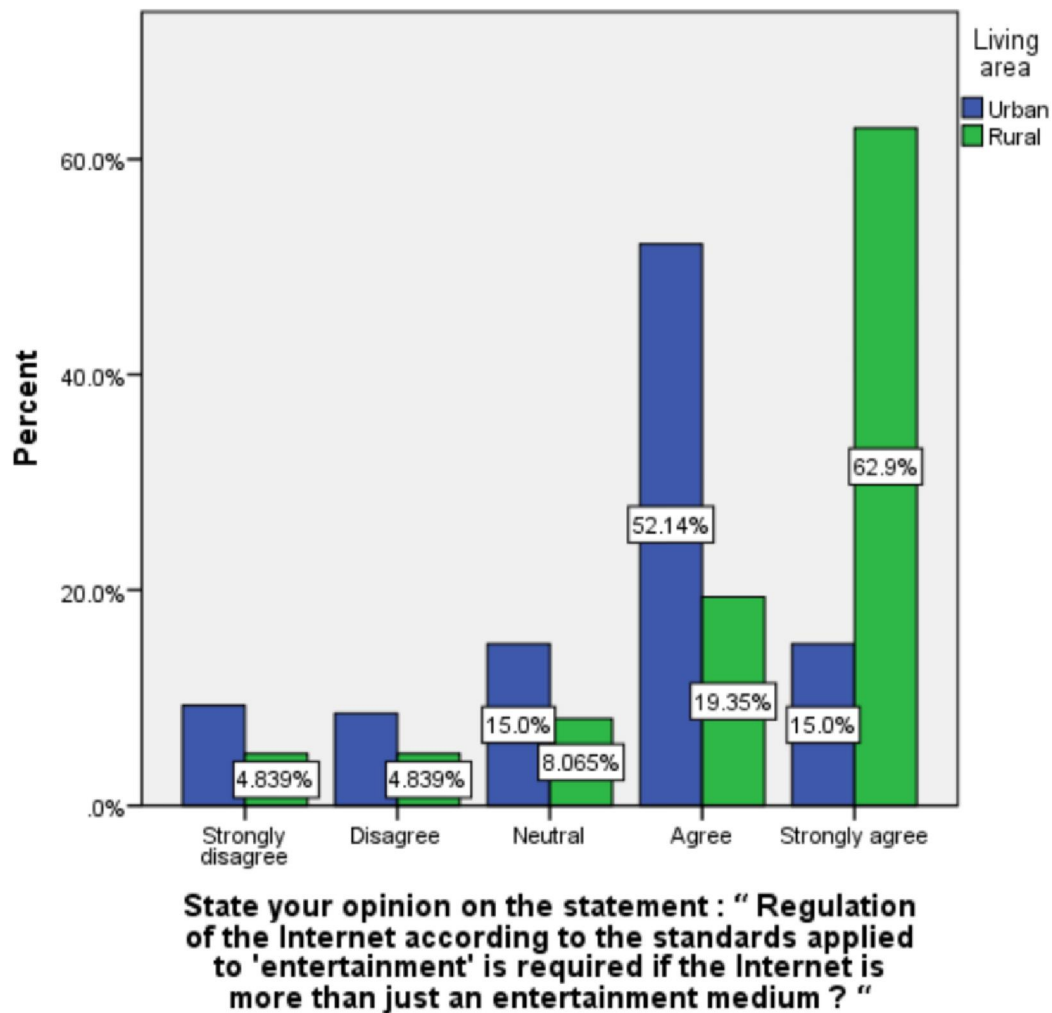


Legend :

This graph discusses the opinion of people on the statement : " Regulation of the Internet according to the standards applied to ' entertainment ' is required if the Internet is more than just an entertainment medium " with respect to the responses classified according to their educational qualification.



Figure 5 :

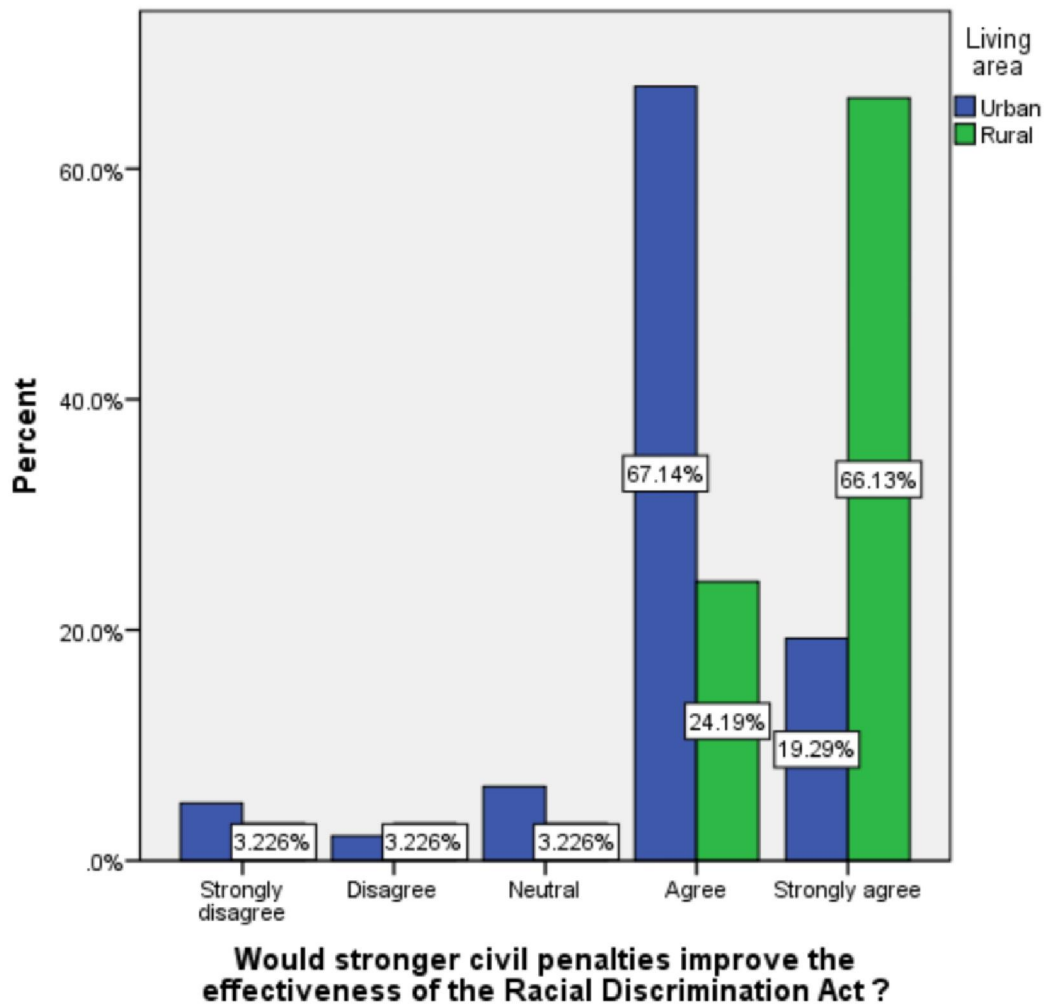


Legend :

This graph discusses the opinion of people on the statement : " Regulation of the Internet according to the standards applied to ' entertainment ' is required if the Internet is more than just an entertainment medium " with respect to the responses classified according to their living area.



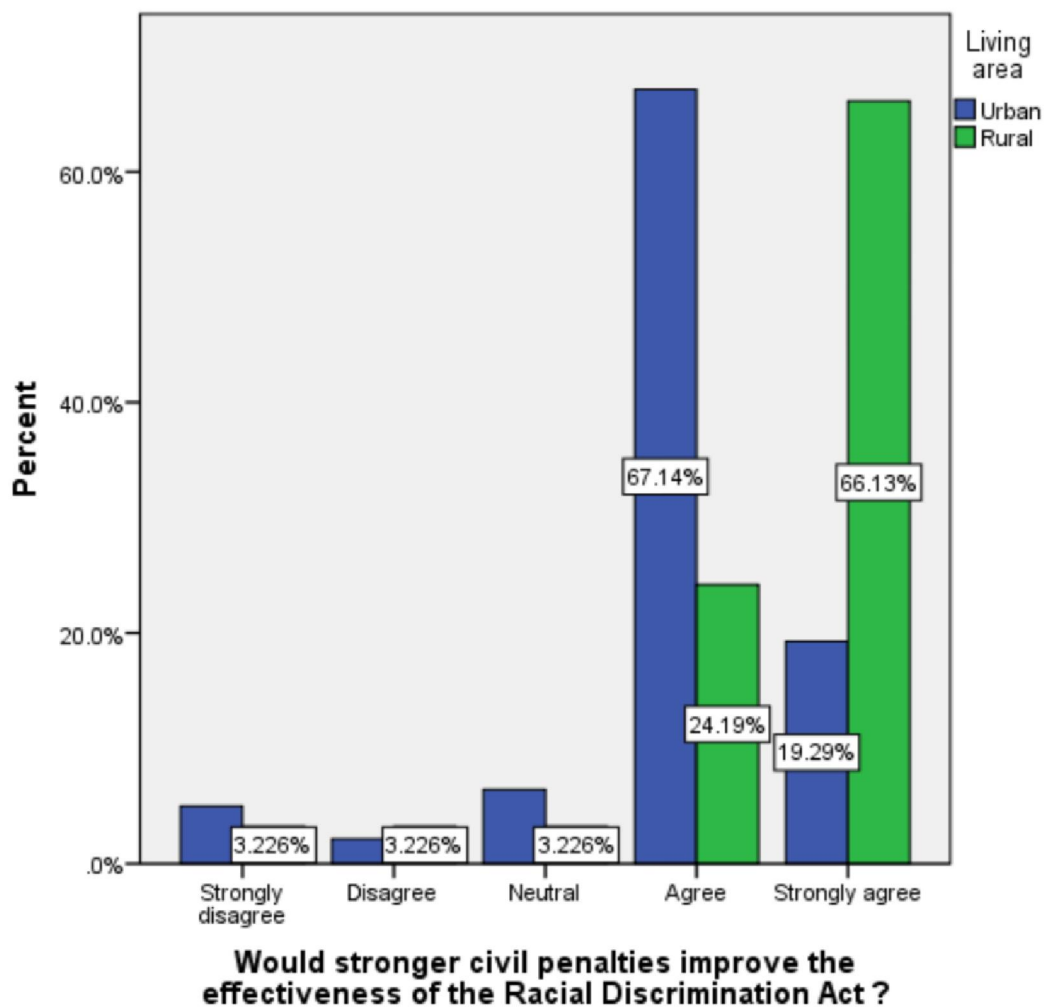
Figure 6 :



Legend : This graph discusses the opinion about whether stronger civil penalties improve the effectiveness of the Racial Discrimination Act with respect to responses classified according to their living area.



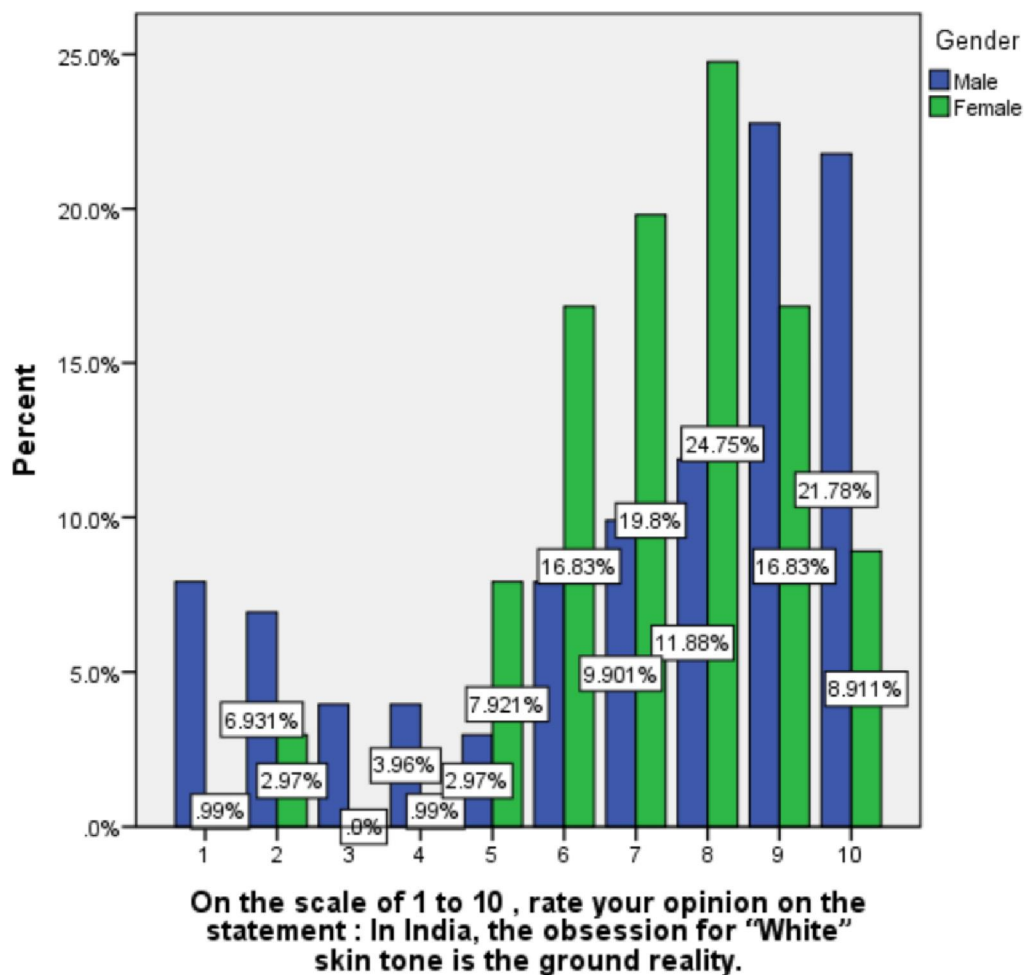
Figure 7 :



Legend : This graph discusses the opinion about whether stronger civil penalties improve the effectiveness of the Racial Discrimination Act with respect to responses classified according to their educational qualification.



Figure 8 :

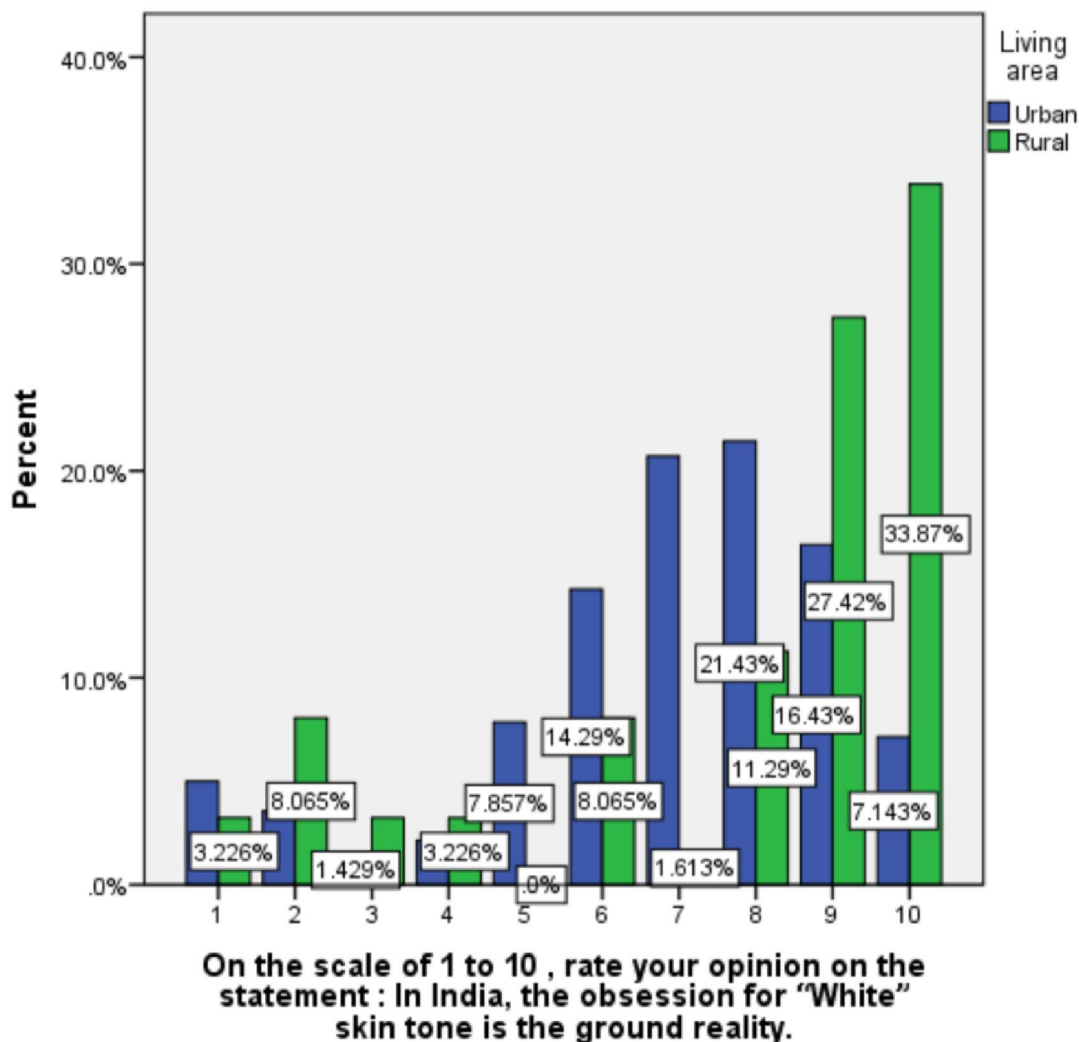


Legend :

This graph discusses the opinion of people on the statement : In India , the obsession for " White " skin tone is the ground reality with respect to responses classified according to their gender.



Figure 9 :

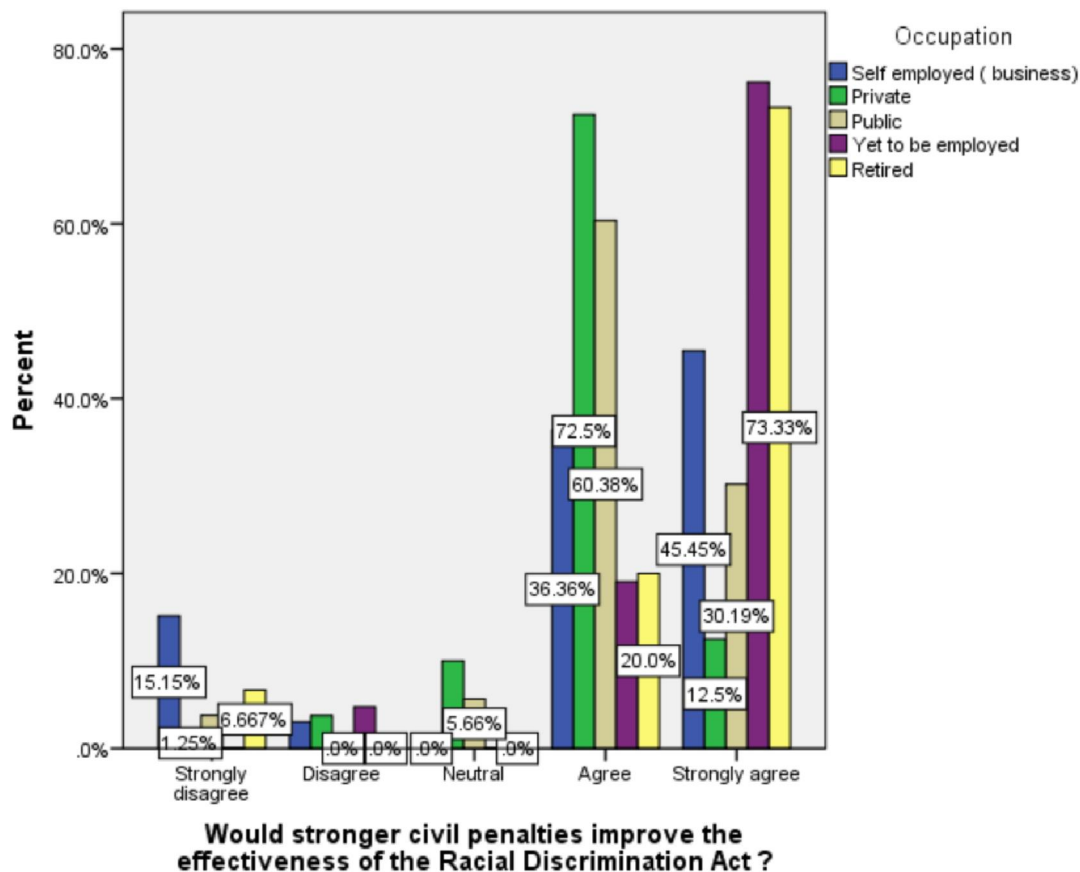


Legend :

This graph discusses the opinion of people on the statement : In India , the obsession for " White " skin tone is the ground reality with respect to responses classified according to their living area.



Figure 10 :



Legend :

This graph discusses the opinion of people about whether stronger civil penalties improve the effectiveness of the Racial Discrimination Act with respect to the responses classified according to their occupation.

IV. RESULT

Figure 1 - According to the responses , it is clearly stated that social media is exposed to racism in India. **Figure 2** - According to the responses , it is clearly stated that the regulation of social media policies would be the better initiative to prevent racism and bigotry in social media. **Figure 3** - Majority of the results stated that creating awareness among people on equality would be the better initiative to prevent racism and bigotry in social media. **Figure 4** - According to the responses , it is clearly implied that Regulation of the Internet according to the standards applied to “ entertainment “ is required. **Figure 5** - According to the responses , it is clearly implied that Regulation of the Internet according to the standards applied to “ entertainment “ is required. **Figure 6** - Majority of the results implies that stronger civil penalties would improve the effectiveness of the Racial Discrimination Act. **Figure 7** - According to the responses , it is clearly implied that stronger civil penalties would improve the effectiveness of the Racial Discrimination Act. **Figure 8** - According to the responses , it is clearly implied that the obsession for “ White “ skin tone exists in India. **Figure 9** - According to the responses , it is strongly affirmed that the obsession for “ White “ skin tone exists in India. **Figure 10** - From the graph , it is clear that stronger civil penalties improve the effectiveness of the Racial Discrimination Act.



V. DISCUSSION

Figure 1 - According to the responses , it is clearly stated that social media is exposed to racism in India. It is because Social media platforms have served as venues for political engagement and social activism for many years. **Figure 2** - According to the responses , it is clearly stated that the regulation of social media policies would be the better initiative to prevent racism and bigotry in social media. Because, The response has been uneven, and the task of deciding what to censor, and how, has largely fallen to the handful of corporations that control the platforms on which much of the world now communicates. **Figure 3** - Majority of the results stated that creating awareness among people on equality would be the better initiative to prevent racism and bigotry in social media. Because, The response has been uneven, and the task of deciding what to censor, and how, has largely fallen to the handful of corporations that control the platforms on which much of the world now communicates. **Figure 4** - According to the responses , it is clearly implied that Regulation of the Internet according to the standards applied to “ entertainment “ is required. Because, The response has been uneven, and the task of deciding what to censor, and how, has largely fallen to the handful of corporations that control the platforms on which much of the world now communicates. **Figure 5** - According to the responses , it is clearly implied that Regulation of the Internet according to the standards applied to “ entertainment “ is required. Because, The response has been uneven, and the task of deciding what to censor, and how, has largely fallen to the handful of corporations that control the platforms on which much of the world now communicates. **Figure 6** - Majority of the results implies that stronger civil penalties would improve the effectiveness of the Racial Discrimination Act. As more and more people have moved online, experts say, individuals inclined toward racism, misogyny, or homophobia have found niches that can reinforce their views and goad them to violence. **Figure 7** - According to the responses , it is clearly implied that stronger civil penalties would improve the effectiveness of the Racial Discrimination Act. As more and more people have moved online, experts say, individuals inclined toward racism, misogyny, or homophobia have found niches that can reinforce their views and goad them to violence. **Figure 8** - According to the responses , it is clearly implied that the obsession for “ White “ skin tone exists in India. The Internet is increasingly used by racist groups to disseminate racist ideology, as well as to communicate to, organise and mobilize members and raise finances through the sale of racist merchandise. **Figure 9** - According to the responses , it is strongly affirmed that the obsession for “ White “ skin tone exists in India. The Internet is increasingly used by racist groups to disseminate racist ideology, as well as to communicate to, organise and mobilize members and raise finances through the sale of racist merchandise. **Figure 10** - From the graph , it is clear that stronger civil penalties improve the effectiveness of the Racial Discrimination Act. As more and more people have moved online, experts say, individuals inclined toward racism, misogyny, or homophobia have found niches that can reinforce their views and goad them to violence.

Limitations :

One of the major limitations is the sample size , which is very small in the research (202) as we know that higher sample groups will try to eliminate the sample error because smaller sample size might fail to explain the characteristics of the whole population of the state/country , which might lead to sample error (inaccurate results) and access the relevant information was a task to difficult.

Suggestions :

We often tend to conveniently forget that the Indian diaspora in African countries is around three million strong and they are highly regarded due to their economic standing. Thousands of Indians in well-run established businesses have prospered both economically and politically in Africa. When Persons of Indian Origin (PIOs) and Non-Resident Indians (NRIs) have been welcomed with open arms and accommodated in African societies, then why can't we extend the same respect and hospitality to our African brothers and sisters in our country? Social acceptance of foreigners, migrants and refugees is always a difficult process and acquiring cohesive societal integration is full of challenges. Being a multi-cultural, progressive and a democratic country, it is essential for us to take firm and strict action against the perpetrators of acts of intolerance and bigotry. Strong and effective institutional mechanisms are needed for quick redressal of grievances of foreign nationals.



VI. CONCLUSION

India has been the preferred choice of education for thousands of African students, mainly due to the cheap, affordable, and standard education available in India in comparison to the US or the European countries. From 2015 onwards, the government of India has provided around 50,000 scholarships for African students to pursue undergraduate, postgraduate, and higher courses programmes. It is noteworthy that China has received a lot of flak for some most unsavoury incidents involving the ill-treatment of African nationals, more recently in Guangzhou in April. The issue quickly turned into a full-blown political crisis for Beijing when different videos, pictures, and posts came to be circulated on the internet showcasing the discrimination and maltreatment of the African community living in Guangzhou. African nationals were evicted from their lodgings, denied entry to food marts, were allegedly subjected to arbitrary and enforced quarantines, despite showing no symptoms of infection. African ministers and ambassadors promptly summoned their respective Chinese counterparts and demanded answers and assurances. With all our democratic values and internationalist outlook, the core Indian society is still overwhelmingly traditional, and stereotyping of African nationals creates difficulties.

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