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Minority Religious Groups and Happiness in India

Abstract

The link between individual religiosity and happiness has been studied from different perspectives but the general conclusion is that religiosity makes people happier. Extant studies, however, have never considered minority religious groups in areas of conflict. This paper therefore analyses India, a multi-religious country largely characterised by religious conflicts. Membership of a minority religion which is in conflict with the dominant group is likely to decrease happiness; this effect can be reversed if the group is concentrated in a particular region (in which it constitutes the majority). Religious federalism could settle conflicts and foster people's happiness.

Keywords: India, happiness, religious conflicts

JEL Classification: D01, D69, Z12

1. Introduction

The wide literature on happiness shows that religiosity is a major factor that affects individuals' happiness. The extant works consider either attitude towards religion (i.e., belief in a god or not, attendance at religious services or not, etc.) or the specific religion/denomination to which a person belongs.

Early studies (Chamberlain and Zika 1988; Ellison 1991; Ellison *et al.* 1989; Hadaway, 1978) focusing on the multicultural USA found that religiosity and religious activities are positively and strongly associated with happiness. Swinyard and colleagues (2001) confirmed the previous findings for the USA and Singapore, two countries with very different religious traditions. Analysing the data of the U.S. General Social Survey, Ferriss (2002) found that religious organisations and participation in services contribute to community integration and happiness. Moreover he found very little variation in the latter between Protestants, Catholics and Jews. Analysing a sample of US citizens aged over 45 and living in the South-West, Soydemir and colleagues (2004) observed that attendance at services is positively correlated with happiness and self-reported health.

In line with these studies, Francis and colleagues (2003) found a statistically significant positive correlation between scores on the Oxford Happiness Inventory and positive attitude towards Christianity among Germans from different Christian denominations,¹ with respect to whose affiliations the authors do not report any significant difference. Francis and colleagues (2004) studied the relationship between happiness and religiosity in Israel, but considered only Judaism (i.e., the religion of the dominant class² in the country). Once again the finding was that happiness and attitude are positively linked.³ Analysing a sample of Hungarians both immediately after the collapse of the communist regime and some years later, Lelkes (2006) obtained analogous results: religious people are happier than non-religious people.

From a slightly different perspective, Maltby and colleagues (1999), O'Connor and colleagues (2003) and Kim (2006) found that religiosity affects psychological well-being through the frequency of personal religious practice; these studies were conducted in the UK, where some religious tensions are present, but the authors did not control for the denomination, so their results hold on average for the population as a whole.

Witter and colleagues (1985) suggest that places of worship facilitate social interaction, and thus enhance informal social networks and happiness (see also Ellison 1991). Indeed, the empirical evidence found by Hayo (2007) shows that rather than faith *per se* it is service attendance that enhances Eastern Europeans' happiness; this result cannot be considered as conclusive, however, given the overall results presented by the literature. An alternative explanation relates religiosity and happiness to a personal relationship with a divine other (Pollner 1989).

Iannaccone and colleagues (1997) and Barro and McCleary (2001) empirically showed a direct and positive link between happiness and freedom to choose religions and churches. The authors claim thus that people's happiness is enhanced by living in multi-religious societies and countries. Mookerjee and Beron (2005) examined a sample of sixty countries, focusing on religious fragmentation, and found that this variable is negatively associated with happiness. Although religious fragmentation is not a measure of the existence of conflicts based on religions, it is likely that these occur more in fragmented than in homogeneous societies. This only means, however, that riots and civil wars are more probable there, but does not suggest anything about the level of happiness of those affiliated to minority religious groups.

In sum, the existing studies find support for the hypothesis that religious people are happier than non-religious people and that extensive religious fragmentation may signal that a country is at risk of religious tensions. All the works on happiness mentioned above,

however, either involve countries characterised by the absence of religion-based conflicts or consider a sample composed of members of the dominant group only. In some parts of the (developing and developed) world the members of different religions (or denominations) fight each other for a number of reasons (whose examination goes beyond the scope of this paper), and in such situations the membership of a religion could be a source of unhappiness. This paper aims to test if this last assessment can be verified in an environment characterised by strong (though sometimes latent) religious tensions. The hypothesis is that in such situations the affiliates of a minority group tend to be less happy than the members of the dominant group, when the latter is hostile to the former. In this context the minority may fear political, or even physical, defeat by the majority group.

Both the hypothesis and the discussion above rely on the assumption that some people identify themselves as a group with common religious affiliation as a distinctive trait. Indeed, Sen (2006) argued that every human being has multiple affiliations and thus several different identities at a time, pointing out also that it is not the affiliation with a specific group *per se* that determines a conflict but rather the ability of some leaders to push the masses to fight, after persuading them to identify with a specific group. When people have scarce or no education and are poor, they are easy to manipulate: in such a case one of their identities (namely the religious) can be used to define a net border between their (good) group (those who belong to the same religion) and the other (bad) group (those who belong to the other religion(s)). When individuals identify with one specific group only, then the division between self and other is net and conflict can arise. Of course, the aim of this paper is not to divide the Indian population into religious segments, ignoring all its other identities; rather, Sen's analysis is taken as a major reference point and the manipulation of people through religious affiliation is assumed to be a way to generate conflicts in India and elsewhere (and the facts support this assumption). Indeed, theorising religion as a form of spiritual capital along the

lines of Bourdieu, Verter (2003) argued that “The notion of spiritual capital poses the trajectories of religious movements as a matter less of supply than of demand. It portrays religion as a field of conflicts, not just between rival denominations, but also among individuals [...]”.⁴

One of the best environments for empirical inquiry of this nature is India, which offers a dominant religion (Hinduism),⁵ several minorities spread across the territory, and an environment in which all the major religions of the world are represented and where several of them are in conflict with each other (the Hindus in particular are often one of the parties involved).⁶

[INSERT TABLE 1 HERE]

For centuries India has been a theatre for violent religious clashes between members of different religions (Hindus, Christians, Muslims, Jewish and Sikhs have all been involved), and last but not least, in the last decades several groups have founded national-religious political parties. In spite of the secular policies of the central government (Chadda 2002; Hardgrave 1993; Sen 2005; Wolpert 1989)⁷ religious tensions are still present and sometimes take the form of fights and upheavals that involve the dominant group and a minority; moreover, the violence is often directed against members of the minority (Field *et al.* 2008; Iannaccone and Berman 2006). In such a situation, as the Hindus represent about 80 per cent of the Indian population and a Hindu national-religious party exists, the possibility of a minority being politically and/or physically overwhelmed is not just theoretical. Klitgaard and Fedderke (1995) analysed a large sample of countries and showed that political assassinations and riots helped to decrease the average self-reported happiness of the population. Although their analysis stops with this result, it is likely that it is stronger (i.e., the decrease in happiness is greater) for the members of the groups directly involved in riots and assassinations rather than being homogeneous for the whole population.

Furthermore India is a poor country and poor people are the most active in persecuting members of other religious groups, as they struggle more than the rich for control over scarce resources (Miguel 2005; Miguel *et al.* 2004; Oster 2004; Sen 2006; Sen and Wagner 2005).⁸ Although it is natural to expect that religiosity has a greater effect on the happiness of people who are in need (Snoep 2008), tensions and fights can have a negative effect on the psychological support offered by the religion.⁹

The results of the present inquiry are consistent with the initial hypothesis: the presence of conflicts of religious origin is detrimental to the subjective happiness of the members of minorities, but the (expected) negative effect is found only for the denominations which are still actively “at war” (above all, the Muslims) or “silently” discriminated (the Jews).

2. Data and methodology

The data used in the paper (with the exception of those relative to the proportional distribution of different religions) are contained in the *World Value Survey* (WVS) and cover all the waves of the survey¹⁰ in which India was included. For the reasons explained in this section, the geographical unit of reference is the federated state.

Happiness is a subjective measure and was graded by the responder on a scale ranging from zero (“not at all happy”) to three (“very happy”).¹¹ For each interviewee the survey provides the current religious affiliation and other information presented and discussed further. Because of the nature of the dependent variable, the data are analysed by the ordered probit technique.

Like most datasets, the *World Value Survey* compels the user to deal with some missing data. In general, these are randomly distributed, especially when the dataset is large. Analysis of the data reveals, however, that a maximum of 5 per cent of observations are missing, and that the data used in the regressions are normally distributed as proved by both a

skewness/kurtosis test and a Shapiro-Wilk test for normality (see endnote 15). In addition a tabulation of the data¹² shows that the missing values of the controls are proportionally distributed with respect to the categories of the dependent variable (and thus the missing values are actually randomly distributed with respect to the sample), for which only 0.15 per cent of the values are missing.

I will approach the religious dimension from three angles. The first is the interviewee's attitude towards religion in general, i.e., whether he/she considers him/herself a religious person or not; the second is the individual's affiliation to a religious group; and the third is the subjective importance given to religion by the interviewee. The second variable is the religious affiliation declared by the responder; the third is constructed on two items of the *WVS*: how important religion is in the person's life and whether or not the interviewee requires his/her children to learn religious faith at home. The first is the answer to the following question: "*For each of the following aspects, indicate how important it is in your life. Would you say [that religion] is...*". Answers range from zero (*not at all important*) to three¹³ (*very important*). The second is the answer to the following question: "*Here is a list of qualities that children can be encouraged to learn at home. Which, if any, do you consider to be especially important. Please chose up to five*" and is a dummy variable, which equals one if *religious faith* is mentioned, and zero otherwise. The synthetic measure of religious importance is the sum of these two variables, and thus it ranges from zero to four. Although the *WVS* provides data on religious attendance, differently from most of the cited literature I do not use this variable because different religions have different rules about services and attendance, and the information provided by this variable would be extremely difficult to interpret. Nor can endogeneity be excluded.

Other usual controls are included. The first is income, whose effect on happiness (and well-being)¹⁴ has been debated since Easterlin's (1974) seminal work. The discussion there is

about its influence across countries, whereas within countries it is generally recognised to have a positive and statistically significant, though diminishing, effect (Graham 2005; for a review, see Clark *et al.* 2008). The *WVS* categorises household income in ten clusters; thus in this analysis it is not measured in rupees but is just a 10-digit categorical variable. Such a measure is particularly suitable for an analysis that focuses on happiness; the literature widely shows that the relative position of a person on the income scale has an effect on happiness larger than the effect of absolute income *per se* (Clark and Oswald 1996; Alpizar *et al.* 2005).¹⁵ The data show that the average monthly income of Muslims falls in the third decile of the income distribution in India, whereas the average income of the other groups falls in the fourth decile. Since income is generally positively related to happiness, regressing subjective happiness against both income and the religious denomination of the interviewee makes the coefficient capture the effect of the respondent's religious affiliation net of that of income.

Strongly related to income, unemployment is generally found to be relevant for happiness: among others, Clark and Oswald (1994) show the negative relationship linking the former with the latter. Here I control also for those with a full-time job, expecting a positive correlation between this employment status and happiness. More educated individuals enjoy their life more, or at least they are happier (Stanca 2010); the *WVS* reports only the higher grade attained. Although it would be possible to compute the number of years spent in formal education by assigning to each level the legal duration for completion, I do not use this method for several reasons: first, at the secondary level the Indian school system differentiates between vocational schools and preparatory education for university programmes; if the number of years were considered instead of the type of diploma, then education would implicitly assume that there is no difference between the two categories of secondary schools, and this is probably not the case. Second, as in many developing countries,

in India the number of dropouts is relatively high; although there would be no problem in assigning its legal duration to each completed level, this would involve an arbitrary (if not impossible) decision for people who have not completed a level and have dropped out at a certain point (unknown, as the *WVS* does not provide this information).¹⁶ Additionally, people who have begun, but not finished, a certain level (for example, university) could feel frustrated rather than happy, even if the total number of years they spend in the education system is high.

Among the non-economic subjective characteristics, gender has generally been found to be an important factor: women tend to be happier than men (Graham 2005; Stanca 2010). Age is another variable which presents a statistically significant link with happiness.¹⁷

Finally, I also control for the size of the town in which the interviewee lives. India's large cities are densely populated and they present an income distribution much more unequal than the countryside, partly as a consequence of the presence of manufacturing plants in the urban sites (Kijima 2006; Ravallion 2000). This high inequality in large towns can be a source of unhappiness for individuals, as inequality exerts a negative influence on happiness (Alesina *et al.* 2004; Graham and Felton 2005). People living in cities, however, can enjoy more job opportunities and health care, especially if they are skilled, young and educated. As a consequence, the size of the city can have some effect on happiness, although this is difficult to hypothesise on the basis of the theoretical and empirical literature. Another reason to control for this variable is that discrimination based on religion is not uniform in India, as apparently it is more relevant outside the urban centres (Srinivasan and Mohanty 2004), although towns tend to be more multi-religious than the countryside (but this is consistent with the hypotheses and the results of the paper). Eventually I introduce a categorical variable "*wave*" in order to capture the time trend effect (if any).

In some of the presented regressions dummies for each considered federated state¹⁸ are also added to control for regional fixed effects, which may derive from historical legacy, local economic conditions, policies, etc.

The effect of affiliation on happiness is studied with respect to two samples: the entire database for India and the sub-sample of interviewees who declared themselves to be “religious persons”. As I am testing whether discrimination against minority religious groups affects their members’ happiness negatively, I also implicitly assume that this effect holds only (or is much stronger) for the members of these groups; hence looking for the difference between the coefficients for the whole sample and for the religious sub-sample only serves as a test for this implicit hypothesis. Another control related to this hypothesis is tolerance as a value taught to children. Indeed, those whose happiness could be hit the most by discrimination are likely to be the least tolerant individuals and those most involved in religion-based conflicts, whose happiness is decreased the most by the presence of enemy groups. Unfortunately the *WVS* does not provide any information about the interviewee’s religious tolerance; hence I use the answer to the question on the importance of teaching children religious faith, giving a value of one when *tolerance and respect for other people* is mentioned, and zero otherwise.

3. Results

Tables 2 and 3 report the results for ordered probit analyses of the whole sample (Table 2) and on the sub-sample of people who declared they were religious (Table 3) without the inclusion of the dummies¹⁹ for the federated states, which are included in the regressions presented in Tables 4 and 5 (which are the same as Tables 2 and 3, but the state dummies). Table 6 includes the proportion of the population who are members of each religion in each state (and therefore omits

the state dummies). I would like to highlight here that, because of the inclusion of dummies that capture the fixed effects of the states, and since the religious shares are calculated on a state base, the coefficients and the marginal effects of Tables 4, 5 and 6 should be interpreted as deviations from the state means and not as absolute effects as they are in Tables 2 and 3. Tables 2 to 6 are divided into sets of three columns; each of these presents the coefficients (first column) and the marginal effects for rating own happiness as one²⁰ (second column) or three²¹ (third column). Let me underline that, in order to provide evidence of the fitness of the model, each column for marginal effects also reports the actual proportion of the population who declared they were either “Not very happy” or “Very happy”, and the respective proportions predicted by the estimation. It can be seen that the figures are always very close to each other, indicating that the models work quite well.

Given the small size of the R^2 of each regression, the reader might wonder if the effect of the variables, whose coefficients are statistically significant, is meaningful. In other words, it might be the case that some of these variables explain more than the whole regression. To show that this is not the case, at the bottom of each regression, I report the results of a Wald test of overall significance. We can see that in all cases the test rejects the null hypothesis of joint non-significance.

3.1 Effects of religion-related controls

The first measure of individual religiosity is based on self-report of being religious, agnostic, or atheist. The analysis includes a dummy for being religious or atheist, and agnostics are the reference group. The two dummies are almost never statistically significant except in the third set of columns of Table 4, where being religious reduces happiness with respect to being agnostic. Although this result is not very robust, it may suggest that, once state fixed effects, subjective importance of religiosity and affiliation are controlled for, religious people feel more sensitive (or are more exposed) to religious tensions than agnostics and atheists, and therefore are less happy. Indeed, the tables present other indications, which seem to support this interpretation (but I will

comment on these further). In addition there is no difference between being atheist or agnostic. These findings are in contrast with some of the literature on religiosity and happiness, but this is to be expected when these variables are analysed in a context characterised by religion-based turmoil. The fact that religious people are no happier than non-religious is a first confirmation of the initial hypothesis.

The second control (central to this paper) which is related to religiosity is affiliation to a specific religion. Here the omitted category is “Hindu”, i.e., membership of the majority group. Two main results deserve attention here: (1) only some affiliations display a statistically significant effect, and (2) this effect tends to be stronger and more statistically significant when the sub-sample of religious people only is analysed. As regards result (1), being a Jew or a Muslim is likely to decrease happiness, and Sikhs are happier than Hindus. The other religions do not display relevant effects. These results are partially in line with the hypothesis of the paper: the Muslim community is historically in conflict with certain other minorities (i.e., Jews and Christians) and, above all, with the Hindus (Baber 2004; Lankala 2006; Thorat and Attewell 2007; Wolpert 1989). Also, there have traditionally been tensions, often violent, between the Sikhs and the Hindus; however, at the time of the surveys, the former had achieved a significant political victory, which led to the creation of Punjab, where they represent the majority of the population, and to the (almost total) end of conflicts (however these seldom persist between Sikhs and other communities such as the Christians in Punjab). As a consequence, the negativity of “being Muslim” and the positive contribution to happiness of “being Sikh” confirm the hypothesis: the members of discriminated minorities tend to be less happy than those affiliated with the majority or non-discriminated groups. Also the Christians have (almost always) the expected (negative) sign, but this is never statistically significant, perhaps because of their small number in the sample (around 3 per cent of the total), or, more likely, because of their concentration in Kerala²² (see Table 1), where they are happier than the affiliates with other religions (including Hinduism); if we exclude data for Kerala the coefficient for Christians is negative and turns out to be statistically significant at the 90 per cent level.²³

For the Jews the statistical significance of the absolute effect (Tables 2 and 3) is less than the state-relative effect (Tables 4 and 5), whereas for the Muslims the opposite holds. This means that the intra-state effect is stronger for the former than for the latter, and the previous results are confirmed from a qualitative point of view. A reasonable interpretation of this is that the Muslims are concentrated in the poorest states of India (as they actually are according to the data of the Indian Census); hence it is likely that a part of the Muslims' unhappiness detected in Tables 2 and 3 is actually owed to the economic conditions of the states where the majority of them live. Once controlling for the state fixed effects, only the contribution of the religious affiliation to happiness is left, and it is still negative and statistically significant. It is possible that an analogous interpretation holds for the Jews too (in this case they would be concentrated in the richest states), but the data of the Indian Census do not allow this to be checked.

Let now consider result (2). This finding suggests that the effects of religious affiliation on happiness are more significant among religious people than among the whole population. The hypothesis suggests that affiliation with a minority religious group reduces happiness with respect to affiliation with the majority community in the presence of religion-based conflicts. Indeed, non-religious people are obviously involved in religion-based turmoil and conflicts, but less directly and less deeply than religious people are, for at least two reasons: first they may feel less offended by the others' attacks when these have a religious connotation, and second they are less likely to participate actively (and passively) in the conflict. If this interpretation is correct, then the effects of religious affiliation should be more significant when only religious people are considered than otherwise, which is what the figures in the tables show. Moreover this is consistent with the fact that "being a religious person" has a negative and statistically significant presence in the third set of columns of Table 5.

In line with the extant literature, the level of importance subjectively attributed to religion always shows a positive and statistically significant coefficient. This indicates that, in a situation as difficult as the Indian one, the intensity of religious feelings correlates positively with happiness,

(partially) compensating for other negative effects. One could argue, however, that, although in the case of affiliation endogeneity is highly unlikely,²⁴ in this case the evidence is less clear. In general it should be the unhappy people who try and find support in the relationship with a divine other, but a religious and happy person could be more likely to consider religion important as he/she deems it partially responsible for his/her happiness; moreover, unhappy people could feel resentment against God(s) because He(they) did not help them when in need, and, as a consequence, they might not consider religion as very important. In spite of this possible interpretation, testing for endogeneity in the models presented allows us to exclude its presence in the analysis shown here. The inclusion of the subjective level of importance allows for protecting the effect of affiliation from the possibility that people from different religions value religion more or less importantly, according to various religion/culture-specific characteristics.

Table 6 shows that, on average, the Indians tend to be happier in the states where the proportion of Muslims is small, whereas the opposite holds if the Jain are considered. This could be because Assam and West Bengal, where the Muslims are concentrated most strongly, are among the poorest states of India, whereas Delhi, Gujarat and Maharashtra (where there are the highest Jain concentrations) are among the richest. This seems, however, to be in line with the literature on religious polarisation (Montalvo and Reynal-Querol, 2003, 2005a, 2005b; Reynal-Querol 2002) and an interpretation in the light of the role played by religious conflicts is perhaps still possible: the states where the Muslims are concentrated the most are also those which are more polarised²⁵ from a religious perspective; since ethno-linguistic polarisation is negatively correlated with income, this result opens the door for future research on the effects of religious polarisation on happiness and well-being in conflictual contexts. In other words, the low level of development of these states and the (likely) related and relatively low level of mean happiness might be owed to the high religious polarisation present there.²⁶

3.2 Effects of the other controls

Both income and education (the reference level here is illiterate/incomplete primary) have the expected sign (positive): in particular two points are interesting about the effects of education; (1) the contribution to happiness is increasing in the level of education and (2) for almost every diploma completion has a greater effect than non-completion of the programme. Some gender effect (indicating that males are generally less happy than women) is found and the sign is in accordance with the literature; however this result is not always robust. In particular, from a statistical perspective it becomes less significant (and sometimes not significant at all), when only religious people are considered. This suggests that when only the group most exposed to religious tensions is taken into account the differences related to gender become less important and people of both genders tend to have the same feelings of happiness. In this case “nurture” (i.e., the environment) can become even stronger than “nature”. The signs for marital status (the reference group is represented by “singles”) are those generally found by other scholars; in this case we can also observe that the positive contribution of being married loses significance when only the sub-sample of religious people is considered. It is possible to interpret this finding as for the gender effect, although further research on the topic would be needed to shed more light on the issue.

As found by other works older individuals tend to be less happy than the young. Differently from other works I do not find an inverted U-shaped effect. Eventually the dummies for the waves indicate that, on average, happiness has increased over time.

4. Conclusions

Considering contemporary India, this paper shows that the members of the Muslim and Jewish communities are more likely to be less happy than the Hindus, especially in those states where the Muslim minority represents a considerable proportion of the population. Although this result is not surprising *per se*, it has never been empirically shown with

reference to religious groups. Given the complexity of the Indian case the post-independence governments have often acted in order to settle conflicts. For example, the creation of a federated state for the Sikhs, Punjab, is one of the most relevant efforts in this direction and allows for deepening the inquiry on the problem.

The findings of this paper allow the following conclusions to be inferred. (1) *Ceteris paribus* affiliation with Islam, Judaism (and, partly, Christian denominations) decreases individual happiness; in addition, on average, this is also lower in those states where the Muslims are most concentrated. It is likely that this finding is owed to the per capita income, which is, on average, low in these states. The extant literature on ethno-linguistic polarisation suggests, however, that the religious conflicts are not extraneous to this outcome. (2) Consistently with the extant literature, the importance attached by the interviewee to religion has a positive and highly statistically significant sign (but, although it is not the case in this paper, doubts about endogeneity persist and render perhaps questionable a comparison with other studies, where the problem of endogeneity is not explicitly addressed.). (3) The other controls (i.e., employment status, gender, etc.) have the sign usually found by the other scholars; however the loss of significance of the gender effect in the last regressions highlights how important religious affiliation is for happiness. (4) As the two dummies capturing the wave of the *WVS* in which the considered responders were interviewed show, happiness has gone on increasing over time in India, *ceteris paribus*.

The main finding of this paper is that people following some religions tend to be less happy than those following others. The evidence provided does not entail a direct effect of some religions on happiness in the sense that the precepts, beliefs or prescriptions of some specific religion have a detrimental effect on one's happiness. Rather, the discrimination against some specific religions by the majority group (the Hindus) decreases the happiness of the members of these groups. Historically, Muslims, Jews, Sikhs and Christians have been the

most discriminated groups in India; some of them are organised in political movements, which claim more representativeness and more freedom, especially regarding cultural practices (e.g., traditional marriages, religious festivities, etc.). Whereas the Sikhs have partially succeeded in obtaining satisfaction regarding some of their claims, the same has not happened for the other religions. This has resulted in a continuation of the conflict between Muslims and Hindus (Wolpert 1989), whereas that between Sikhs and Hindus has (partially) been resolved. Moreover, Muslims, Jews and Christians are more polarised than Sikhs, and, in the light of the extant literature on conflicts and religious polarisation, this helps to exacerbate the tensions between the groups. In this paper I suggest that discrimination based on religious differences affects the individual's happiness; in particular, this discrimination hinders the happiness of the followers of minority religions that are in conflict with the dominant group (the Hindus). The results show that this is the case for the most polarised groups (Muslims and Jews), whereas the happiness of the Jain, Buddhists and Christians is apparently not affected. Following the same reasoning, the particular status of the Sikhs, who enjoy political control of Punjab (where they represent the majority), is likely to (partially) explain the positive sign associated with this religion. I would also stress that the discrimination against specific religious groups not only has the effect of generating conflicts, but has other consequences in terms, for example, of wage differentials and social exclusion. The evidence presented in this paper, however, accounts for income differentials (as income is one of the regressors), suggesting that factors such as social exclusion and conflicts play a major role in determining individuals' happiness.

It is not easy to draw policy recommendations based on the present analysis, since happiness is a mood, and therefore is affected by many different variables and varies frequently over time. The analysis presented here suggests, however, that the members of some minorities are less happy than the Hindus are. Therefore, the Indian government should

attempt to deepen the analysis of the problem: when unhappiness pervades well-defined categories of a population, it might engender problems of social order and security. For this reason, the results of this article demand attentive studies about the determinants of unhappiness among the Muslims and Jews in India. Two different (perhaps even opposite) solutions might be evaluated. The first would foster integration of the different religious and cultural communities, so that the members of the “other groups” would feel less “strange” than now. A second possibility is to increase autonomy and separation of single groups: endowing more autonomy might decrease the sense of control and “oppression” coming from the majority group. In the light of the present situation in India, however, since Muslims and Jews are dispersed across the Indian federal territory, the first option appears more feasible than the second.

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Table1. Descriptive statistics (means)

	Happiness	Income	Males (%)	Age	Religious	Atheists	Christians (%)	Hindu (%)	Jain (%)	Muslims (%)	Sikhs (%)
Andra Pradesh	1.94	3	56.5	38	67.3	1.6	1.55	89.01	0.06	9.17	0.04
Assam	1.79	2	68.8	37	91.8	6.6	3.70	64.89	0.09	30.92	0.09
Bihar	1.90	3	53.8	34	91.9	2.5	0.06	83.23	0.02	16.53	0.03
Chhattisgarh	2.01	3	57.7	43	98.5	0.0	1.92	94.70	0.27	1.96	0.34
Delhi	2.03	4	53.4	34	88.6	3.5	0.94	82.00	1.12	11.72	4.01
Gujarat	2.17	3	49.8	36	92.1	1.3	0.56	89.09	1.04	9.06	0.09
Haryana	2.63	4	44.0	38	99.0	0.0	0.13	88.23	0.27	5.78	5.54
Jharkhand	1.43	3	56.9	34	55.4	0.0	4.06	68.57	0.06	13.85	0.31
Karnataka	1.68	3	51.4	37	53.7	1.3	1.91	83.86	0.78	12.29	0.03
Kerala	1.95	4	58.8	42	87.5	0.9	19.02	53.16	0.02	24.70	0.01
Madhya Pradesh	1.94	3	56.5	39	88.2	1.85	0.28	91.15	0.90	6.36	0.25
Maharashtra	1.92	3	51.9	38	87.6	1.0	1.09	80.37	1.34	10.60	0.22
Orrisa	2.13	4	55.9	35	71.2	3.8	2.44	94.35	0.02	2.07	0.05
Punjab	2.27	5	53.0	39	95.7	1.7	0.85	36.94	0.16	1.57	55.90
Rajasthan	2.19	3	56.8	38	95.3	1.2	0.13	88.75	1.15	8.47	1.45
Tamil Nadu	2.08	2	56.7	38	77.8	4.2	6.07	88.11	0.13	5.56	0.02
Uttar Pradesh	1.89	2	57.7	37	89.8	1.2	0.13	80.71	0.12	18.50	0.41
West Bengal	1.91	4	54.4	39	54.8	14.6	0.64	72.47	0.07	25.25	0.08
Total sample	1.97	3	54.9	37	81.2	2.7	2.3	80.5	0.4	13.4	1.9
Source:	WVS	WVS	WVS	WVS	WVS	WVS	Indian Census	Indian census	Indian Census	Indian Census	Indian Census

Table 2. Ordered probit analyses for the whole sample (state dummies excluded)

	Coefficient	Marginal effects		Coefficient	Marginal effects		Coefficient	Marginal effects	
		(score = 1)	(score = 3)		(score = 1)	(score = 3)		(score = 1)	(score = 3)
Religious	0.042 (0.039)	-0.010 (0.010)	0.014 (0.013)	0.032 (0.039)	-0.008 (0.010)	0.010 (0.013)	-0.056 (0.040)	0.014 (0.010)	-0.018 (0.013)
Atheist	-0.140 (0.091)	0.035 (0.023)	-0.044 (0.027)*	-0.137 (0.091)	0.034 (0.023)	-0.043 (0.027)	-0.113 (0.093)	0.028 (0.024)	-0.036 (0.028)
Income	0.017 (0.007)**	-0.004 (0.002)**	0.005 (0.002)**	0.015 (0.007)**	-0.004 (0.002)**	0.005 (0.002)**	0.017 (0.007)**	-0.004 (0.002)**	0.006 (0.002)**
Complete primary	0.200 (0.056)***	-0.047 (0.013)***	0.069 (0.020)***	0.193 (0.056)***	-0.046 (0.013)***	0.066 (0.020)***	0.206 (0.056)***	-0.049 (0.013)***	0.070 (0.020)***
Incomplete vocational	0.390 (0.085)***	-0.087 (0.017)***	0.140 (0.033)***	0.385 (0.085)***	-0.086 (0.017)***	0.138 (0.033)***	0.397 (0.085)***	-0.088 (0.017)***	0.142 (0.033)***
Complete vocational	0.254 (0.083)***	-0.059 (0.018)***	0.089 (0.031)***	0.248 (0.083)***	-0.058 (0.018)***	0.087 (0.107)***	0.247 (0.082)***	-0.057 (0.018)***	0.086 (0.030)***
Incomplete preparatory	0.312 (0.050)***	-0.072 (0.011)***	0.109 (0.018)***	0.307 (0.050)***	-0.072 (0.011)***	0.107 (0.018)***	0.319 (0.050)***	-0.074 (0.011)***	0.111 (0.018)***
Complete preparatory	0.354 (0.051)***	-0.082 (0.011)***	0.124 (0.019)***	0.352 (0.052)***	-0.081 (0.011)***	0.123 (0.019)***	0.367 (0.052)***	-0.084 (0.011)***	0.128 (0.019)***
Incomplete university	0.320 (0.070)***	-0.073 (0.015)***	0.114 (0.026)***	0.330 (0.070)***	-0.075 (0.015)***	0.117 (0.026)***	0.355 (0.071)***	-0.080 (0.014)***	0.127 (0.027)***
Complete university or higher	0.453 (0.050)***	-0.105 (0.011)***	0.158 (0.018)***	0.460 (0.050)***	-0.106 (0.011)***	0.160 (0.018)***	0.485 (0.050)***	-0.111 (0.011)***	0.169 (0.018)***
Male	-0.070 (0.033)**	0.017 (0.008)**	-0.023 (0.011)**	-0.071 (0.034)**	0.018 (0.008)**	-0.023 (0.011)**	-0.056 (0.034)*	0.014 (0.008)*	-0.018 (0.010)*
Married				0.123 (0.046)***	-0.030 (0.011)***	0.039 (0.014)***	0.087 (0.046)**	-0.021 (0.011)*	0.028 (0.015)**
Widow				-0.190 (0.092)**	0.048 (0.024)***	-0.059 (0.027)***	-0.244 (0.093)***	0.062 (0.024)***	-0.074 (0.026)***
Divorced				-0.143 (0.217)	0.036 (0.055)	-0.045 (0.064)	-0.126 (0.212)	0.032 (0.054)	-0.039 (0.064)
Living with partner but not married				0.350 (0.098)***	-0.079 (0.020)***	0.125 (0.038)***	0.351 (0.105)***	-0.079 (0.021)***	0.125 (0.040)***
Self-employed	0.007 (0.046)	-0.002 (0.011)	0.002 (0.015)	0.018 (0.046)	-0.005 (0.011)	0.006 (0.015)	0.009 (0.047)	-0.002 (0.011)	0.003 (0.015)
Full-time employed	-0.158 (0.042)***	0.039 (0.011)***	-0.050 (0.013)***	-0.153 (0.042)***	0.038 (0.011)***	-0.049 (0.013)***	-0.155 (0.042)***	0.039 (0.011)***	-0.050 (0.013)***
Unemployed	-0.205 (0.058)***	0.052 (0.015)***	-0.064 (0.017)***	-0.147 (0.060)**	0.037 (0.016)**	-0.046 (0.018)***	-0.165 (0.060)***	0.041 (0.015)***	-0.051 (0.018)***
Student	-0.089 (0.047)**	0.022 (0.012)*	-0.029 (0.015)*	-0.050 (0.050)	0.012 (0.012)	-0.016 (0.016)	-0.055 (0.050)	0.014 (0.012)	-0.018 (0.016)
Buddhist	0.170 (0.177)	-0.040 (0.040)	0.058 (0.064)	0.166 (0.180)	-0.039 (0.041)	0.057 (0.064)	0.199 (0.179)	-0.047 (0.040)	0.069 (0.065)
Christian	-0.062 (0.075)	0.015 (0.019)	-0.020 (0.024)	-0.053 (0.075)	0.013 (0.019)	-0.017 (0.024)	-0.090 (0.075)	0.022 (0.019)	-0.029 (0.023)
Jain	-0.105 (0.202)	0.026 (0.051)	-0.033 (0.062)	-0.108 (0.201)	0.027 (0.051)	-0.034 (0.061)	-0.124 (0.200)	0.031 (0.051)	-0.039 (0.060)
Jew	-0.478 (0.258)*	0.120 (0.062)*	-0.131 (0.056)**	-0.484 (0.263)*	0.122 (0.064)*	-0.132 (0.057)**	-0.524 (0.240)**	0.132 (0.057)**	-0.140 (0.050)***
Muslim	-0.128 (0.050)***	0.032 (0.013)***	-0.041 (0.015)***	-0.123 (0.050)***	0.031 (0.013)**	-0.039 (0.015)***	-0.160 (0.050)***	0.040 (0.013)***	-0.050 (0.015)***
Sikh	0.612 (0.174)***	-0.125 (0.027)***	0.228 (0.069)***	0.523 (0.175)***	-0.110 (0.029)***	0.193 (0.069)***	0.473 (0.178)***	-0.101 (0.031)***	0.173 (0.070)**
Importance of religion							0.113 (0.014)***	-0.028 (0.003)***	0.037 (0.005)***
Importance of tolerance							0.171 (0.029)***	-0.042 (0.007)***	0.055 (0.009)***
Age	-0.003 (0.001)***	8*10 ⁻⁴ (3*10 ⁻⁴)***	-0.001 (4*10 ⁻⁴)***	-0.004 (0.001)***	9*10 ⁻⁴ (3*10 ⁻⁴)***	-0.001 (4*10 ⁻⁴)***	-0.004 (0.001)***	0.001 (3*10 ⁻⁴)***	-0.001 (4*10 ⁻⁴)***
Second wave	0.343 (0.042)***	-0.081 (0.010)***	0.117 (0.015)***	0.335 (0.042)***	-0.080 (0.010)***	0.114 (0.015)***	0.349 (0.042)***	-0.083 (0.010)***	0.119 (0.015)***
Third wave	0.246 (0.046)***	-0.059 (0.011)***	0.083 (0.016)***	0.211 (0.048)***	-0.051 (0.011)***	0.071 (0.016)***	0.199 (0.048)***	-0.048 (0.011)***	0.067 (0.016)***
Size of town	0.012 (0.007)*	-0.003 (0.002)*	0.004 (0.002)*	0.013 (0.007)*	-0.003 (0.002)*	0.004 (0.002)*	0.014 (0.007)*	-0.003 (0.002)*	0.005 (0.002)*
Predicted Pr(y = n)		0.213	0.266		0.213	0.258		0.211	0.264
Actual Pr(y = n)		0.220	0.265		0.220	0.265		0.220	0.265
Number of observations	6,108			6,108			6,058		
Wald chi ²	272.40			298.16			385.31		
Pseudo R ²	0.0186			0.0209			0.0278		
Log pseudolikelihood	-6,894.68			-6,878.84			-6,776.15		

Table 3. Ordered probit analyses for the religious only sub-sample (state dummies excluded)

	Coefficient	Marginal effects		Coefficient	Marginal effects		Coefficient	Marginal effects	
		(score = 1)	(score = 3)		(score = 1)	(score = 3)		(score = 1)	(score = 3)
Income	0.015 (0.008)*	-0.004 (0.002)**	0.005 (0.003)*	0.012 (0.008)	-0.003 (0.002)	0.004 (0.003)	0.014 (0.008)*	-0.003 (0.002)*	0.005 (0.003)*
Complete primary	0.186 (0.061)***	-0.044 (0.014)***	0.064 (0.022)***	0.174 (0.061)***	-0.042 (0.014)***	0.059 (0.022)***	0.181 (0.061)***	-0.043 (0.014)***	0.062 (0.022)***
Incomplete vocational	0.406 (0.094)***	-0.090 (0.018)***	0.147 (0.036)***	0.398 (0.094)***	-0.088 (0.018)	0.143 (0.036)***	0.408 (0.095)***	-0.090 (0.018)***	0.147 (0.037)***
Complete vocational	0.252 (0.095)***	-0.058 (0.020)***	0.089 (0.035)***	0.238 (0.095)***	-0.055 (0.021)***	0.083 (0.035)**	0.237 (0.094)**	-0.055 (0.020)***	0.083 (0.034)**
Incomplete preparatory	0.268 (0.055)	-0.063 (0.012)***	0.093 (0.020)***	0.252 (0.055)***	-0.059 (0.012)***	0.087 (0.020)***	0.262 (0.056)***	-0.061 (0.012)***	0.091 (0.020)***
Complete preparatory	0.340 (0.057)***	-0.079 (0.012)***	0.119 (0.021)***	0.327 (0.057)***	-0.076 (0.012)***	0.114 (0.021)***	0.342 (0.057)***	-0.079 (0.012)***	0.120 (0.021)***
Incomplete university	0.307 (0.083)***	-0.070 (0.017)***	0.109 (0.031)***	0.304 (0.083)***	-0.070 (0.017)***	0.108 (0.031)***	0.333 (0.084)***	-0.075 (0.017)***	0.119 (0.032)***
Complete university or higher	0.451 (0.056)***	-0.104 (0.012)***	0.158 (0.020)***	0.445 (0.056)***	-0.103 (0.012)***	0.155 (0.020)***	0.466 (0.057)***	-0.107 (0.012)***	0.163 (0.021)***
Male	-0.060 (0.037)*	0.015 (0.009)*	-0.020 (0.012)*	-0.075 (0.038)**	0.018 (0.009)**	-0.025 (0.012)**	0.014 (0.038)	-0.059 (0.009)	-0.019 (0.012)
Married				0.082 (0.051)	-0.020 (0.013)	0.027 (0.016)*	0.048 (0.052)	-0.012 (0.012)	0.016 (0.017)
Widow				-0.324 (0.106)***	0.083 (0.027)***	-0.096 (0.028)***	-0.377 (0.107)***	0.096 (0.027)***	-0.109 (0.027)***
Divorced				-0.303 (0.257)	0.077 (0.066)	-0.090 (0.067)	-0.279 (0.250)	0.071 (0.065)	-0.083 (0.066)
Living with partner but not married				0.381 (0.106)***	-0.085 (0.021)***	0.137 (0.041)***	0.376 (0.113)***	-0.084 (0.022)***	0.135 (0.043)***
Self-employed	0.018 (0.051)	-0.004 (0.012)	0.006 (0.017)	0.030 (0.051)	-0.007 (0.012)	0.010 (0.017)	0.026 (0.051)	-0.006 (0.013)	0.008 (0.017)
Full-time employed	-0.134 (0.047)***	0.033 (0.012)***	-0.043 (0.015)***	-0.126 (0.047)***	0.031 (0.012)***	-0.041 (0.015)***	-0.130 (0.047)***	0.032 (0.012)***	-0.042 (0.015)***
Unemployed	-0.173 (0.065)***	0.043 (0.017)***	-0.054 (0.019)***	-0.122 (0.068)**	0.031 (0.017)*	-0.039 (0.021)*	-0.138 (0.068)**	0.035 (0.017)**	-0.044 (0.021)**
Student	-0.089 (0.052)*	0.022 (0.013)*	-0.029 (0.017)*	-0.064 (0.055)	0.016 (0.014)	-0.021 (0.018)	-0.072 (0.056)	0.018 (0.014)	-0.023 (0.018)
Buddhist	0.316 (0.213)	-0.071 (0.043)*	0.113 (0.081)	0.327 (0.214)	-0.074 (0.043)*	0.117 (0.082)	0.375 (0.210)*	-0.083 (0.040)**	0.135 (0.081)*
Christian	-0.029 (0.081)	0.007 (0.020)	-0.009 (0.026)	-0.014 (0.080)	0.004 (0.020)	-0.005 (0.026)	-0.048 (0.080)	0.012 (0.020)	-0.016 (0.025)
Jain	-0.151 (0.207)	0.038 (0.053)	-0.047 (0.062)	-0.149 (0.207)	0.038 (0.053)	-0.047 (0.061)	-0.165 (0.206)	0.042 (0.053)	-0.051 (0.060)
Jew	-0.051 (0.098)	0.013 (0.025)	-0.017 (0.032)	-0.065 (0.082)	0.016 (0.021)	-0.021 (0.026)	-0.074 (0.068)	0.018 (0.018)	-0.023 (0.021)
Muslim	-0.161 (0.053)***	0.040 (0.014)***	-0.051 (0.016)***	-0.158 (0.054)***	0.040 (0.014)***	-0.050 (0.016)***	-0.191 (0.054)***	0.048 (0.014)***	-0.059 (0.016)***
Sikh	0.747 (0.186)***	-0.143 (0.024)***	0.282 (0.074)***	0.626 (0.186)***	-0.127 (0.028)***	0.234 (0.074)***	0.572 (0.188)***	-0.118 (0.030)***	0.213 (0.075)***
Importance of religion							0.108 (0.016)***	-0.027 (0.004)***	0.036 (0.005)***
Importance of tolerance							0.155 (0.032)***	-0.038 (0.008)***	0.051 (0.010)***
Age	-0.004 (0.001)***	9*10 ⁻⁴ (3*10 ⁻⁴)***	-0.001 (4*10 ⁻⁴)***	-0.003 (0.001)**	8*10 ⁻⁴ (3*10 ⁻⁴)**	-0.001 (5*10 ⁻⁴)**	-0.004 (0.001)***	9*10 ⁻⁴ (3*10 ⁻⁴)***	-0.001 (5*10 ⁻⁴)**
Second wave	0.344 (0.047)***	-0.081 (0.011)***	0.118 (0.017)***	0.330 (0.047)***	-0.078 (0.011)***	0.113 (0.016)***	0.350 (0.047)***	-0.083 (0.011)***	0.119 (0.017)***
Third wave	0.196 (0.052)***	-0.047 (0.012)***	0.066 (0.018)***	0.154 (0.053)***	-0.037 (0.013)***	0.052 (0.018)***	0.158 (0.053)***	-0.038 (0.013)***	0.053 (0.018)***
Size of town	0.006 (0.008)	-0.002 (0.002)	0.002 (0.003)	0.006 (0.008)	-0.002 (0.002)	0.002 (0.003)	0.010 (0.008)	-0.002 (0.002)	0.003 (0.003)
Predicted Pr(y = n)		0.212	0.268		0.212	0.267		0.210	0.266
Actual Pr(y = n)		0.214	0.273		0.214	0.273		0.214	0.273
Number of observations	4,960			4,960			4,926		
Wald ch ²	231.25			261.62			319.14		
Pseudo R ²	0.0196			0.0227			0.0286		
Log pseudolikelihood	-5,581.10			-5,563.01			-5,492.04		

Table 4. Ordered probit analyses for the whole sample (state dummies included)

	Coefficient	Marginal effects		Coefficient	Marginal effects		Coefficient	Marginal effects	
		(score = 1)	(score = 3)		(score = 1)	(score = 3)		(score = 1)	(score = 3)
Religious	-0.041 (0.041)	0.010 (0.010)	-0.135 (0.135)	-0.049 (0.041)	0.012 (0.010)	-0.016 (0.014)	-0.122 (0.042)***	0.029 (0.010)***	-0.041 (0.014)***
Atheist	-0.145 (0.094)	0.036 (0.024)	-0.045 (0.028)*	-0.149 (0.093)	0.038 (0.024)	-0.046 (0.028)*	-0.120 (0.096)	0.030 (0.025)	-0.038 (0.029)
Income	0.017 (0.007)**	-0.004 (0.002)**	0.005 (0.002)**	0.015 (0.008)*	-0.004 (0.002)*	0.005 (0.002)**	0.017 (0.008)**	-0.004 (0.002)**	0.006 (0.002)**
Complete primary	0.216 (0.056)***	-0.051 (0.013)***	0.074 (0.020)***	0.207 (0.056)***	-0.049 (0.013)***	0.071 (0.020)***	0.216 (0.057)***	-0.051 (0.013)***	0.074 (0.020)***
Incomplete vocational	0.358 (0.087)***	-0.080 (0.017)***	0.127 (0.033)***	0.352 (0.087)***	-0.079 (0.017)***	0.125 (0.033)***	0.365 (0.087)***	-0.081 (0.017)***	0.130 (0.033)***
Complete vocational	0.225 (0.086)***	-0.052 (0.019)***	0.078 (0.031)***	0.220 (0.086)***	-0.051 (0.019)***	0.076 (0.031)**	0.216 (0.086)***	-0.050 (0.019)***	0.074 (0.031)**
Incomplete preparatory	0.348 (0.051)***	-0.080 (0.011)***	0.121 (0.019)***	0.342 (0.087)***	-0.079 (0.019)***	0.119 (0.019)***	0.348 (0.052)***	-0.080 (0.011)***	0.121 (0.019)***
Complete preparatory	0.396 (0.052)***	-0.090 (0.011)***	0.139 (0.019)***	0.396 (0.052)***	-0.090 (0.019)***	0.139 (0.019)***	0.407 (0.052)***	-0.092 (0.011)***	0.143 (0.019)***
Incomplete university	0.359 (0.071)***	-0.080 (0.014)***	0.127 (0.027)***	0.369 (0.071)***	-0.083 (0.014)***	0.131 (0.027)***	0.380 (0.072)***	-0.085 (0.014)***	0.135 (0.027)***
Complete university or higher	0.489 (0.050)***	-0.111 (0.011)***	0.170 (0.018)***	0.496 (0.050)***	-0.113 (0.011)***	0.172 (0.018)***	0.517 (0.051)***	-0.118 (0.011)***	0.180 (0.018)***
Male	-0.069 (0.033)**	0.017 (0.008)**	-0.023 (0.011)**	-0.069 (0.038)**	0.017 (0.008)**	-0.023 (0.011)**	-0.051 (0.034)	0.013 (0.008)	-0.017 (0.011)
Married				0.125 (0.046)***	-0.031 (0.011)***	0.040 (0.014)***	0.098 (0.046)**	-0.024 (0.012)**	0.031 (0.015)**
Widow				-0.173 (0.094)*	0.044 (0.024)*	-0.053 (0.027)**	-0.216 (0.095)**	0.055 (0.025)**	-0.065 (0.027)**
Divorced				-0.129 (0.225)	0.033 (0.058)	-0.040 (0.067)	-0.115 (0.222)	0.029 (0.057)	-0.036 (0.066)
Living with partner but not married				0.290 (0.105)***	-0.066 (0.022)**	0.102 (0.039)***	0.268 (0.110)**	-0.062 (0.023)***	0.094 (0.041)**
Self-employed	-0.009 (0.047)	0.002 (0.011)	-0.003 (0.015)	0.002 (0.048)	-5*10 ⁻⁴ (0.012)	-0.004 (0.015)	-0.004 (0.047)	0.001 (0.012)	-0.001 (0.015)
Full-time employed	-0.179 (0.043)***	0.045 (0.011)***	-0.057 (0.013)***	-0.174 (0.043)***	0.043 (0.011)***	-0.055 (0.013)***	-0.179 (0.043)***	0.045 (0.011)***	-0.056 (0.013)***
Unemployed	-0.180 (0.058)***	0.045 (0.015)***	-0.056 (0.017)***	-0.122 (0.060)**	0.031 (0.015)**	-0.038 (0.018)**	-0.134 (0.061)**	0.034 (0.016)**	-0.042 (0.018)**
Student	-0.115 (0.047)***	0.029 (0.012)**	-0.037 (0.015)**	-0.075 (0.050)	0.019 (0.013)	-0.024 (0.016)	-0.077 (0.051)	0.019 (0.013)	-0.025 (0.016)
Buddhist	0.178 (0.187)	-0.042 (0.042)	0.061 (0.067)	0.171 (0.189)	-0.040 (0.043)	0.058 (0.067)	0.181 (0.187)	-0.042 (0.042)	0.062 (0.067)
Christian	-0.025 (0.081)	0.006 (0.020)	-0.008 (0.026)	-0.017 (0.081)	0.004 (0.020)	-0.005 (0.026)	-0.061 (0.081)	0.015 (0.020)	-0.020 (0.025)
Jain	-0.267 (0.233)	0.068 (0.060)	-0.079 (0.062)	-0.263 (0.232)	0.067 (0.060)	-0.078 (0.062)	-0.278 (0.232)	0.071 (0.061)	-0.082 (0.061)
Jew	-0.604 (0.256)**	0.152 (0.059)***	-0.155 (0.047)***	-0.617 (0.262)**	0.156 (0.060)***	-0.157 (0.048)***	-0.668 (0.243)***	0.168 (0.054)***	-0.165 (0.041)***
Muslim	-0.068 (0.051)	0.017 (0.013)	-0.022 (0.016)	-0.065 (0.051)	0.016 (0.013)	-0.021 (0.016)	-0.106 (0.051)**	0.027 (0.013)**	-0.033 (0.016)**
Sikh	0.506 (0.201)***	-0.107 (0.034)***	0.186 (0.079)**	0.452 (0.201)**	-0.097 (0.036)***	0.164 (0.078)**	0.415 (0.203)***	-0.090 (0.037)**	0.150 (0.079)**
Importance of religion							0.111 (0.014)***	-0.027 (0.004)***	0.036 (0.005)***
Importance of tolerance							0.144 (0.030)***	-0.036 (0.007)***	0.046 (0.009)***
Age	-0.003 (0.001)***	8*10 ⁻⁴ (3*10 ⁻⁴)***	-0.001 (4*10 ⁻⁴)***	-0.004 (0.001)***	9*10 ⁻⁴ (3*10 ⁻⁴)***	-0.001 (4*10 ⁻⁴)***	-0.004 (0.001)***	0.001 (3*10 ⁻⁴)***	-0.001 (4*10 ⁻⁴)***
Second wave	0.320 (0.043)***	-0.076 (0.015)***	0.108 (0.015)***	0.314 (0.043)***	-0.075 (0.015)***	0.106 (0.015)***	0.329 (0.043)***	-0.078 (0.015)***	0.111 (0.015)***
Third wave	0.245 (0.049)***	-0.059 (0.011)***	0.082 (0.017)***	0.215 (0.050)***	-0.052 (0.017)***	0.072 (0.017)***	0.213 (0.050)***	-0.051 (0.012)***	0.071 (0.017)***
Size of town	0.006 (0.008)	-0.002 (0.002)	0.002 (0.002)	0.007 (0.008)	-0.002 (0.002)	0.002 (0.002)	0.009 (0.007)	-0.002 (0.002)	0.003 (0.002)
Predicted Pr(y = n)		0.209	0.262		0.209	0.261		0.208	0.260
Actual Pr(y = n)		0.220	0.265		0.220	0.265		0.220	0.265
Number of observations	6,108			6,108			6,058		
Wald chi ²	506.09			528.77			606.07		
Pseudo R ²	0.0376			0.0396			0.0457		
Log pseudolikelihood	-6,761.21			-6,747.54			-6,651.78		

Table 5. Ordered probit analyses for the religious only sub-sample (state dummies included)

	Marginal effects			Marginal effects			Marginal effects		
	Coefficient	(score = 1)	(score = 3)	Coefficient	(score = 1)	(score = 3)	Coefficient	(score = 1)	(score = 3)
Income	0.014 (0.008)*	-0.003 (0.002)*	0.005 (0.003)*	0.011 (0.008)	-0.003 (0.002)	0.004 (0.003)	0.014 (0.008)*	-0.003 (0.002)*	0.005 (0.003)*
Complete primary	0.202 (0.062)***	-0.048 (0.014)***	0.069 (0.022)***	0.190 (0.062)***	-0.045 (0.014)***	0.065 (0.022)***	0.194 (0.062)***	-0.046 (0.014)***	0.066 (0.022)***
Incomplete vocational	0.367 (0.096)***	-0.082 (0.019)***	0.131 (0.037)***	0.391 (0.096)***	-0.081 (0.019)***	0.129 (0.037)***	0.372 (0.097)***	0.083 (0.019)***	0.133 (0.037)***
Complete vocational	0.225 (0.099)**	-0.052 (0.021)**	0.078 (0.036)***	0.216 (0.098)**	-0.051 (0.022)**	0.075 (0.036)**	0.212 (0.097)**	-0.049 (0.021)***	0.073 (0.035)**
Incomplete preparatory	0.320 (0.057)***	-0.074 (0.012)***	0.112 (0.021)***	0.305 (0.057)***	-0.071 (0.012)***	0.106 (0.021)***	0.311 (0.057)***	-0.072 (0.012)***	0.108 (0.021)***
Complete preparatory	0.372 (0.057)***	-0.085 (0.012)***	0.130 (0.021)***	0.359 (0.058)***	-0.083 (0.012)***	0.125 (0.021)***	0.371 (0.058)***	-0.085 (0.012)***	0.130 (0.021)***
Incomplete university	0.349 (0.084)***	-0.078 (0.017)***	0.124 (0.032)***	0.347 (0.084)***	-0.078 (0.017)***	0.123 (0.032)***	0.359 (0.085)***	-0.080 (0.017)***	0.128 (0.032)***
Complete university or higher	0.487 (0.057)***	-0.110 (0.012)***	0.170 (0.021)***	0.483 (0.057)***	-0.110 (0.012)***	0.168 (0.021)***	0.496 (0.058)***	-0.113 (0.012)***	0.173 (0.021)***
Male	-0.054 (0.037)	0.013 (0.009)	-0.018 (0.012)	-0.070 (0.052)*	0.017 (0.009)*	-0.023 (0.012)*	-0.054 (0.038)	0.013 (0.009)	-0.018 (0.013)
Married				0.062 (0.052)	-0.015 (0.013)	0.020 (0.017)	0.041 (0.052)	-0.010 (0.013)	0.013 (0.017)
Widow				-0.327 (0.107)***	0.084 (0.028)***	-0.096 (0.028)***	-0.364 (0.108)***	0.094 (0.028)***	-0.105 (0.027)***
Divorced				-0.316 (0.262)	0.081 (0.068)	-0.092 (0.067)	-0.296 (0.259)	0.076 (0.068)	-0.087 (0.067)
Living with partner but not married				0.391 (0.114)***	-0.086 (0.022)***	0.141 (0.044)***	0.347 (0.119)***	-0.078 (0.024)***	-0.124 (0.045)***
Self-employed	-0.004 (0.052)	0.010 (0.013)	-0.001 (0.017)	0.007 (0.052)	-0.002 (0.013)	0.002 (0.017)	0.009 (0.052)	-0.002 (0.013)	0.003 (0.017)
Full-time employed	-0.162 (0.048)***	0.040 (0.012)***	-0.052 (0.015)***	-0.153 (0.048)***	0.038 (0.012)***	-0.049 (0.015)***	-0.158 (0.048)***	0.039 (0.012)***	-0.050 (0.015)***
Unemployed	-0.145 (0.066)**	0.036 (0.017)**	-0.046 (0.020)**	-0.104 (0.069)	0.026 (0.017)	-0.033 (0.021)	-0.113 (0.069)*	0.029 (0.018)*	-0.036 (0.021)*
Student	-0.109 (0.053)**	0.027 (0.013)**	-0.035 (0.016)**	-0.091 (0.056)*	0.023 (0.014)*	-0.029 (0.018)*	-0.093 (0.056)*	0.023 (0.014)*	-0.030 (0.018)*
Buddhist	0.317 (0.218)	-0.071 (0.044)*	0.113 (0.083)	0.325 (0.219)	-0.073 (0.044)*	0.116 (0.083)	0.347 (0.214)*	-0.077 (0.042)*	0.124 (0.082)
Christian	0.014 (0.086)	-0.003 (0.021)	0.005 (0.028)	0.030 (0.085)	-0.007 (0.021)	0.010 (0.028)	-0.012 (0.086)	0.003 (0.021)	-0.004 (0.028)
Jain	-0.237 (0.236)	0.060 (0.061)	-0.072 (0.065)	-0.214 (0.235)	0.054 (0.061)	-0.065 (0.066)	-0.226 (0.235)	0.058 (0.061)	-0.068 (0.065)
Jew	-0.238 (0.054)***	0.060 (0.014)***	-0.072 (0.015)***	-0.252 (0.058)***	-0.072 (0.015)***	-0.075 (0.016)***	-0.258 (0.056)***	0.066 (0.015)***	-0.077 (0.015)***
Muslim	-0.110 (0.054)**	0.028 (0.014)**	-0.035 (0.017)**	-0.107 (0.054)**	-0.027 (0.014)**	-0.034 (0.017)**	-0.141 (0.055)***	0.035 (0.014)**	-0.044 (0.017)***
Sikh	0.734 (0.218)***	-0.141 (0.028)***	0.278 (0.086)***	0.624 (0.215)***	-0.125 (0.032)***	0.233 (0.086)***	0.595 (0.216)***	-0.120 (0.033)***	0.221 (0.086)***
Importance of religion							0.097 (0.017)***	-0.024 (0.004)***	0.032 (0.005)***
Importance of tolerance							0.133 (0.033)***	-0.033 (0.008)***	0.043 (0.011)***
Age	-0.004 (0.001)***	9*10 ⁻⁴ (3*10 ⁻⁵)***	-0.001 (4*10 ⁻⁵)***	-0.003 (0.001)**	8*10 ⁻⁴ (4*10 ⁻⁵)**	-0.001 (5*10 ⁻⁵)**	-0.004 (0.001)***	9*10 ⁻⁴ (4*10 ⁻⁵)***	-0.001 (5*10 ⁻⁵)**
Second wave	0.317 (0.049)***	-0.075 (0.011)***	0.108 (0.017)***	0.307 (0.049)***	-0.073 (0.011)***	0.104 (0.017)***	0.325 (0.049)***	-0.077 (0.011)***	0.110 (0.017)***
Third wave	0.152 (0.055)***	-0.037 (0.013)***	0.051 (0.018)***	0.114 (0.056)**	-0.028 (0.013)**	0.038 (0.019)**	0.123 (0.056)**	-0.030 (0.014)**	0.041 (0.019)**
Size of town	-0.002 (0.008)	6*10 ⁻⁴ (0.002)	-7*10 ⁻⁴ (0.003)	-0.003 (0.008)	6*10 ⁻⁴ (0.002)	-8*10 ⁻⁴ (0.003)	8*10 ⁻⁴ (0.009)	-2*10 ⁻⁴ (0.002)	3*10 ⁻⁴ (0.003)
Predicted Pr(y = n)		0.208	0.265		0.208	0.264		0.207	0.263
Actual Pr(y = n)		0.214	0.273		0.214	0.273		0.214	0.273
Number of observations	4,960			4,960			4,926		
Wald ch ²	380.56			405.43			451.03		
Pseudo R ²	0.0363			0.0392			0.0436		
Log pseudolikelihood	-5,485.86			-5,469.09			-5,407.03		

Table 6. Ordered probit analyses including religious shares

	Whole sample			Religious people only		
	Coefficient	Marginal effects		Coefficient	Marginal effects	
		(score = 1)	(score = 3)		(score = 1)	(score = 3)
Religious	0.006 (0.042)	-0.001 (0.010)	0.002 (0.014)			
Atheist	0.005 (0.094)	-0.001 (0.023)	0.002 (0.031)			
Income	0.016 (0.007)**	-0.004 (0.002)**	0.005 (0.002)**	0.013 (0.008)	-0.003 (0.002)	0.004 (0.003)
Complete primary	0.249 (0.057)***	-0.059 (0.013)***	0.085 (0.021)***	0.217 (0.062)***	-0.051 (0.014)***	0.074 (0.022)***
Incomplete vocational	0.396 (0.085)***	-0.089 (0.017)***	0.141 (0.033)***	0.397 (0.095)***	-0.088 (0.019)***	0.142 (0.036)***
Complete vocational	0.267 (0.083)***	-0.062 (0.018)***	0.092 (0.031)***	0.253 (0.095)***	-0.059 (0.021)***	0.088 (0.035)**
Incomplete preparatory	0.365 (0.053)***	-0.085 (0.011)***	0.127 (0.019)***	0.308 (0.057)***	-0.072 (0.013)***	0.107 (0.021)***
Complete preparatory	0.411 (0.053)***	-0.094 (0.011)***	0.143 (0.020)***	0.369 (0.058)***	-0.085 (0.012)***	0.129 (0.021)***
Incomplete university	0.387 (0.072)***	-0.088 (0.014)***	0.137 (0.027)***	0.353 (0.085)***	-0.080 (0.017)***	0.125 (0.032)***
Complete university or higher	0.497 (0.051)***	-0.115 (0.011)***	0.171 (0.019)***	0.467 (0.058)***	-0.108 (0.012)***	0.162 (0.021)***
Male	-0.047 (0.034)	0.012 (0.009)	-0.015 (0.011)	-0.056 (0.038)	0.014 (0.009)	-0.018 (0.013)
Married	0.095 (0.047)**	-0.024 (0.012)**	0.030 (0.015)**	0.056 (0.052)	-0.014 (0.013)	0.018 (0.017)
Widow	-0.216 (0.094)**	0.055 (0.024)**	-0.065 (0.026)**	-0.380 (0.108)***	0.098 (0.028)***	-0.109 (0.026)***
Divorced	-0.075 (0.229)	0.019 (0.058)	-0.024 (0.070)	-0.264 (0.277)	0.067 (0.072)	-0.078 (0.073)
Living with partner but not married	0.252 (0.107)**	-0.059 (0.023)**	0.087 (0.039)**	0.281 (0.116)***	-0.065 (0.024)***	0.098 (0.043)**
Self-employed	-0.009 (0.048)	0.002 (0.012)	-0.003 (0.015)	0.017 (0.052)	-0.004 (0.013)	0.006 (0.017)
Full-time employed	-0.160 (0.043)***	0.040 (0.011)***	-0.050 (0.013)***	-0.130 (0.048)***	0.032 (0.012)***	-0.041 (0.015)***
Unemployed	-0.159 (0.061)***	0.040 (0.016)**	-0.049 (0.018)***	-0.131 (0.069)*	0.033 (0.017)**	-0.041 (0.021)**
Student	-0.030 (0.051)	0.008 (0.013)	-0.010 (0.016)	-0.047 (0.057)	0.012 (0.014)	-0.015 (0.018)
Buddhist	0.218 (0.182)	-0.051 (0.040)	0.075 (0.066)	0.357 (0.213)*	-0.080 (0.042)	0.127 (0.081)
Christian	-0.074 (0.080)	0.019 (0.020)	-0.023 (0.025)	-0.025 (0.086)	0.006 (0.021)	-0.008 (0.027)
Jain	-0.312 (0.231)	0.080 (0.060)	-0.090 (0.058)	-0.291 (0.234)	0.074 (0.061)	-0.085 (0.061)
Jew	-0.538 (0.231)**	0.136 (0.055)**	-0.140 (0.046)***	-0.176 (0.057)***	0.045 (0.015)***	-0.054 (0.016)***
Muslim	-0.107 (0.051)**	0.027 (0.013)**	-0.033 (0.016)**	-0.150 (0.055)***	0.038 (0.014)***	-0.047 (0.016)***
Sikh	0.347 (0.198)*	-0.079 (0.040)**	0.123 (0.075)*	0.494 (0.213)**	-0.105 (0.037)***	0.180 (0.084)**
Importance of religion	0.102 (0.014)***	-0.025 (0.004)***	0.033 (0.005)***	0.100 (0.016)***	-0.025 (0.004)***	0.032 (0.005)***
Importance of tolerance	0.190 (0.030)***	-0.047 (0.008)***	0.061 (0.009)***	0.170 (0.033)***	-0.042 (0.008)***	0.055 (0.011)***
Percentage of Buddhists	-1.791 (1.166)	0.445 (0.290)	-0.577 (0.375)	-1.717 (1.226)	0.424 (0.303)	-0.558 (0.398)
Percentage of Christians	0.214 (0.374)	-0.053 (0.093)	0.069 (0.121)	0.173 (0.398)	-0.043 (0.098)	0.056 (0.129)
Percentage of Jain	11.896 (4.258)***	-2.953 (1.059)***	3.835 (1.373)***	16.496 (4.575)***	-4.075 (1.135)***	5.360 (1.487)***
Percentage of Muslims	-0.993 (0.245)***	0.246 (0.061)***	-0.320 (0.079)***	-0.880 (0.280)***	0.217 (0.069)***	-0.286 (0.091)***
Percentage of Sikhs	0.328 (0.293)	-0.081 (0.073)	0.106 (0.094)	0.196 (0.300)	-0.048 (0.074)	0.064 (0.098)
Age	-0.004 (0.001)***	$9 \cdot 10^{-4}$ ($3 \cdot 10^{-4}$)***	-0.001 ($4 \cdot 10^{-4}$)***	-0.003 (0.001)**	$9 \cdot 10^{-4}$ ($4 \cdot 10^{-4}$)***	-0.001 ($5 \cdot 10^{-4}$)**
Second wave	0.403 (0.043)***	-0.096 (0.010)***	0.136 (0.015)***	0.386 (0.048)***	-0.091 (0.011)***	0.131 (0.017)***
Third wave	0.245 (0.049)***	-0.059 (0.012)***	0.081 (0.017)***	0.182 (0.055)***	-0.044 (0.013)***	0.060 (0.019)***
Size of town	0.011 (0.007)	-0.003 (0.002)	0.004 (0.002)	0.009 (0.008)	-0.002 (0.002)	0.003 (0.003)
Predicted Pr(y = n)		0.215	0.257		0.211	0.261
Actual Pr(y = n)		0.220	0.265		0.220	0.265
Number of observations	5,829			4,794		
Wald chi ²	442.57	iris-AperTO		363.14		
Pseudo R ²	0.0334			0.0334		
Log pseudolikelihood	-6,501.36			-5,323.88		

¹ For the purposes of this paper I wish to highlight that in the case of Germany neither Catholics nor Lutherans can be considered a minority; however, they are very unevenly distributed across the federal territory. This implies that the Catholics are a (strong) minority in some *Länder* (where the Lutherans are dominant), whereas they are dominant in those states where the Lutherans are in a minority.

² Both politically and numerically.

³ Moreover, it must be noted that, if an Israeli citizen belongs to the Hebrew “ethnicity”, the individual attitude towards Judaism does not particularly affect the probability of being killed in a terrorist attack. Therefore this probability can be assumed to be constant across the members of the Hebrew community.

⁴ Verter (2003: 170).

⁵ Actually Hinduism cannot be considered a religion in the sense that Islam, Catholicism, Lutheranism, etc. are. Indeed, as Patel (2007) points out, the Hindu religion is “inherently plural” (p. 44), even if in the late-nineteenth century Swami Vivekananda standardised the principle of Hinduism, and the majority of Hindus today adopt Vivekananda’s doctrinal position.

⁶ I do not aim at providing the reader with a comprehensive review of religious conflicts in India, as this would go beyond the scope of the paper, but those interested in the topic can refer to Wolpert (1989), Stepan (2000) and Sen (2005) for an overview. See also Patel (2007) on religious conflicts in India in general; Baber (2004), Lankala (2006) and Thorat and Attewell (2007) for more details about the causes and the history of the conflict between Hindus and Muslims; see Richter (2009) on the conflict between Hindus and Sikhs, and see Reetz (1993) on Hindus and Christians. On discrimination against the Jews see for instance Numark (2001) and Katz (2009). Last but not least, Hindu nationalism emerged during the colonial period to mark the identity of the Indians (Van der Veer 2008), and was afterwards incorporated in Savarkar’s understanding of what led India to modernisation (Devare 2009). Moreover groups other than the Hindus had established their identity through their traditional cultures before independence (Srinivas 1952, 1997).

⁷ These authors highlight that in a case the federal government created a new federated state from different portions of other territories (today’s Punjab, the core of the Sikhs’ civilisation) to try and settle a conflict. In this specific case the result, so far, gives reason to the Government, as the violent conflicts between Sikhs and Hindus have almost disappeared.

⁸ Incidentally I wish to highlight that the peculiar institutions of the Muslim culture have small influence (if any) on most economic or social performance indicators (Pryor 2007). This suggests that the happiness of the Muslims should not be affected by their specific religion, *ceteris paribus*. Indeed Barro and McCleary (2003) find that the numbers of Hindus and Muslims in the population of a given country have almost the same effect on growth;⁸ this suggests that neither Hindu nor Muslim institutions are likely to decrease happiness by generating differentials in the economic performance of the two groups.

⁹ The caste system has to be acknowledged as a potential source of unhappiness (for a discussion of discrimination based on castes, see Srinivas 1957 and 1994), but its introduction in the analysis would result in a diversion from the focus of the paper.

¹⁰ In reality the results of the last wave are excluded, as data are not yet definitive. Hence the included waves are: 1989-93, 1994-99 and 1999-2004.

¹¹ The original WVS data rank happiness in inverse order (i.e., from 1 = very happy to 4 = not at all happy). For the sake of simplicity I inverted the order and rescaled the answers from zero to three. Re-ranking also allows the ordering of the different degrees of happiness on an increasing scale rather than the opposite: this improves readability and the interpretation of the results.

¹² Performed with STATA 10.

¹³ The original WVS data rank this variable in inverse order (i.e., from 1 = very important to 4 = not at all important). See 11 above.

¹⁴ There is wide discussion about the relationships between happiness and well-being. Happiness can refer to a precise point in time or, more generally, to the global situation of an individual, whereas subjective well-being is viewed as more similar to the second than to the first meaning of “happiness”. Prieto and colleagues (2005) show the strong interconnections between the two concepts. It is not the aim of this paper to provide a discussion about this point. I will use a measure of overall happiness, as measured in the *World Values Survey* by the following question: “Taking all things together, would you say you are: (1) Very happy; (2) Quite happy; (3) Not very happy; (4) Not at all happy?”.

¹⁵ In addition, the household income, being more comprehensive, is also more informative in a study on happiness (see the cited references).

¹⁶ Therefore I prefer to account for education through the introduction of dummies, which represent the highest level attained by the responder, even when he/she claimed to have started but not completed a given level.

¹⁷ Please note that in the preliminary econometric analyses of this study age squared was included, but it turned out not to be **statistically** significant, and was therefore dropped in the subsequent regressions to improve the readability of the tables.

¹⁸ The states included are: Andhra Pradesh, Assam, Bihar, Chhattisgarh, Delhi, Gujarat, Haryana, Jharkhand, Karnataka, Kerala, Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra, Orissa, Punjab, Rajasthan, Tamil Nadu, Uttar Pradesh and West Bengal. The population of these states accounts for 95.90 per cent of the total population of India.

¹⁹ These are not included in the tables for the sake of brevity and readability. Indeed they serve to capture state-related fixed effects and are not relevant to the focus of the paper.

²⁰ “Not very happy”.

²¹ “Very happy”.

²² Where they are still a minority but represent the “economic core” of one of the richest Indian states. From an economic perspective, actually the Christians are not discriminated, differently from the Muslims.

²³ From an ancillary regression, not shown in the paper, to comply with the editorial guidelines. Note that this result offers even more support to the hypothesis.

²⁴ Although it is true that some people try and find psychological support in a religion, it is unlikely that, to reach this goal, one religion is generally preferred to others, generating, in this sense, endogeneity between happiness and affiliations. To my knowledge no author has ever found such a relationship.

²⁵ Given their relative dimensions, the only religious groups which can affect polarisation in any real way are the Hindus and the Muslims. All the others are too small, with the notable exception of the Sikhs in Punjab.

²⁶ This is merely a hypothesis for future research, and goes beyond the scope of this paper.