



Hate Speech on Mass and Social Media in Pakistan, 2015

Bargad Organization for Youth Development

This report has collected anonymous and confidential information on youth experiences and perceptions with regards to hate speech in media.

In collaboration with the United States Institute of Peace.

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Executive Director's Note

This report reflects a due assessment of how Pakistani youth, currently undergoing tertiary education, experience and perceive hate-speech coming out of mass and social media. It has been partially done to facilitate young volunteers of Bargad in pursuing their advocacy work on countering extremism. The report expands on existing literature on hate-speech in media, which is broader in scale and largely legalistic in nature. In it, the youth understanding, opinion and responses to the hate-speech in media have been explored in a way that (i) their understanding is brought forth; (ii) who they think is responsible for hate-practices; and (iii) how they can and are responding to hate-speech phenomenon.

What further distinguishes this report is that under guidance from a senior researcher all design, field, analysis and writing work of this report have been done by youth themselves. This type of peer exercise is helpful in its utility and communication with research respondents who come from the same age cohorts as members of the research team. Hence, having a larger impact for youth advocacy purpose.

Bargad believes that the report findings will assist civil society and youth groups in articulating forms of youth radicalization and will prove an added resource to clarify contours of the National Plan of Action and cybercrime laws in Pakistan as regards to violent extremism,

A key result of the study indicates high aspirations of the Pakistani youth to counter hate speech and contribute to building a stronger, more pluralistic, more tolerant Pakistan. Nevertheless, it also unfolds that they lack knowledge of ways of tackling hate speech and responding to experiences of hate speech. There is a huge knowledge and practice gaps about legal and procedural tools and practical situations to handle hate-speech. For both government and civil society actors, this points to mass awareness campaigns on extremism and mobilization on critical points that might not be hard core terrorism but are those entry points which lead to perpetuate violent extremism in Pakistan.

Sabika Shaheen

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I. Executive Summary

Bargad is a youth-led and youth-focused organization working for youth development in Pakistan. It has a long and unique standing among civil society organizations in Pakistan that has been working exclusively on youth development since 1997. As part of Bargad's collaboration with the United States Institute of Peace (USIP) on tackling youth extremism in Pakistan, we have surveyed youth attitudes towards hate speech on social and mainstream media. This survey was conducted across 14 universities spread across the provinces of Punjab and Khyber-Pakhtunkhwa, and State of Azad Jammu and Kashmir.

This report aims to explain and analyse anonymous and confidential information on youth experiences and perceptions with regards to hate speech in Pakistani media. This study relates to experiences on both social and mainstream print and electronic media. Due to the wider nature of this project, it is important to gain an idea on the manner in which hate speech is spread and perceived, since it is one of the drivers of extremist rhetoric in the country; especially when much of the youth are exposed to the often unsubstantiated opinion that exists within Pakistani current affairs circles.

The objectives of the survey are as follows:

- To gain an understanding of the way the youth perceive and interact with hate speech.
- To add to the body of work from which further studies on hate speech and extremist rhetoric in media can be carried out.
- To collect data on youth experiences with regards to hate speech.
- To educate the general public about the role of hate speech in spreading extremist, reactionary, and destructive rhetoric and worldviews in Pakistan.

I.I. Key Results

This survey was taken by a total of 125 students from 14 universities across Punjab and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, and the State of Azad Jammu and Kashmir. At a glance, the results and frequencies observed in the study are the following:

- 114 students (91.2%) believed that they were familiar with the concept of hate speech.
- 64 students (51.2%) viewed that they have been the target of hate speech while 50 (40%) believe that they have not. 11 students (8.8%) do not know.
- 19 students (15.2%) believe that they were the victims of hate speech due to their religion. The same number said this about ethnicity and language, while 5 students (4%) believe themselves to be victims due to their gender. 26 students (20.8%) believe that they have been targeted for their opinions. 33 students believe that this question was not applicable to them. The remaining students chose a combination of more than one option or wrote in their own reason. For more information, please see Annex.
- 43 students (34.4%) believe that they have encountered hate speech on social or mainstream print and online media; while 65 of them (52%) said they did not face hate-speech. 17 students (13.6%) were unsure.
- The most common medium for hate speech to spread according to the students was Facebook. For further information, please see Annex.
- 34 students (27.2%) said that they have experienced hate speech from their friends and peers while 20 (16%) experienced it with family and 35 with superiors (28%).
- 74 students (59.2%) believe that hate speech is more prevalent on social media than other forms. 10 believed it to be more prevalent on print media while 13 believed it to be more prevalent online. 15 students said that they did not know.
- 73.3% of students rated textbooks as being at a level 5 or below when it came to propagating hate speech. For more information, please see Section V.

- 79.1% of students rated hate speech at being at a level 5 or above when it came to being harmful to Pakistani youth. For more information, please see Section V.
- 57 students believed the 21-30 year old age group to be the most responsible for hate speech on social media. 27 students believed the 15-20 year old age group to be the most responsible while 28 and 13 students chose the 31-40 and 41-50 year old age groups respectively.
- 39 students rated the 21-30 year old age group as being the most responsible for hate speech on mainstream print and online media. 21 students chose the 15-20 year old age group while 37 students chose the 31-40 year old group.
- Politicians were the most commonly associated professional group with hate speech. For more information, please see Annex.
- 105 students were unaware of Section 153A of the Pakistan Telecommunications Act of 1996. For more information, please see Section III.
- 102 students claimed to not be aware of any laws regarding hate speech that exist in Pakistan.
- The most commonly proposed ways of tackling hate speech among the students were to strengthen regulatory bodies and to provide children in schools with education regarding hate speech. For more information, please see Section V and Annex.

II. Scope of the Study

This study seeks to understand perceptions and experiences of young people in Pakistan in relation to hate speech. Due to media penetration being most powerful among the educated classes in Pakistan, this study focuses on the experiences of students. All of the students surveyed are between the ages of 18 and 25 and their level of study ranges from an undergraduate bachelors degree to post graduate taught and research degrees.

The survey produced by the research team behind this study was administered to 127 students from across two provinces, Punjab and Khyber-Pukhtunkhwa, as well as from the State of Azad Jammu and Kashmir. In total, students from 8 universities from 5 out of Punjab's 9 administrative divisions were surveyed, in addition to students from 5 universities from 3 cities in Khyber-Pukhtunkhwa, as well as students from one university in Azad Jammu and Kashmir.

The students involved come from a total of 35 different academic departments and faculties, which were then grouped into 7 wider disciplinary categories. This is important when it comes to assessing the awareness of the students of broader themes and ideas of hate speech.

The most notable previous work on the topic of hate speech in Pakistan an extensive study by human rights organisation and research think tank Bytes for All, which focuses on Information Communication Technology (ICT) in Pakistan. While that study aimed to "highlight key problem areas and fuel discourse"¹ regarding hate speech on social media, mainly relating to the platforms of Twitter and Facebook, this study mostly focuses directly on the experiences of young people in encountering and dealing with hate speech, as well as their perceptions of the phenomenon in a more general sense. Also, in

¹ Bytes For All, 2014. *Hate Speech: A Study of Pakistan's Cyberspace*. Available at: [https://content.bytesforall.pk/sites/default/files/Pakistan Hate Speech Report 2014.pdf](https://content.bytesforall.pk/sites/default/files/Pakistan_Hate_Speech_Report_2014.pdf). P.4.

terms of platforms and media, this study has a wider reach as it involves mainstream print and online media in addition to social media, which is the primary focus area of the study by Bytes for All.

III. Definitions (General and specific)

There exist many definitions for hate speech in the Pakistani legal system and in associated legislation. While controversial, the Pakistani Blasphemy Laws, expressed in Articles 295-298 of the Pakistani Penal Code, have a very clear and explicit definition of religious hate speech. The laws characterise hate speech as the wilful defiling, damage, or desecration of “a copy of the Holy Qur’an or of an extract therefrom or uses it in any derogatory manner or for any unlawful purpose”, among a host of other religion-related offences, including insulting the Prophet Mohammed (PBUH), for example. Crucially, in a contemporary context, the Blasphemy Laws, in Article 295-A, criminalise “deliberate and malicious acts intended to outrage religious feelings of any class by insulting its religion or religious beliefs”, which is close to hate speech in practical terms today.²

While remaining within the context of the Pakistan Penal Code, Article 153-A, which falls under the section VIII titled “Offences against the public tranquillity”, criminalises the following:

“Promoting enmity between different groups [...] by words, either spoken or written, or by signs, or by visible representations or otherwise, promotes or incites, or attempts to promote or incite, on grounds of religion, race, place of birth, residence, language, caste or community or any other ground whatsoever, disharmony or feelings of enmity, hatred or ill-will between different religious, racial, language or regional groups or castes or communities”.³

² Pakistan Penal Code (Act XLV of 1860). Available at: <http://www.pakistani.org/pakistan/legislation/1860/actXLVof1860.html>. Articles 295-298.

³ Ibid. Article 153-A.

This demonstrates a legal precedent with regards to criminalising speech that can be seen to incite hatred or prejudice towards certain specified sectors of Pakistani society. In an age where much communication is online, it is important to recall the importance of applying such definitions to speech that is not explicitly physical.

While Article 153-A of the Penal Code is explicit and relatively comprehensive in its definition of hate speech, it is restrained in its scope by the vaguely worded section that states that:

“It does not amount to an offence within the meaning of this section to point out, without malicious intention and with an honest view to their removal, matters which are producing, or have a tendency to produce, feelings of enmity or hatred between different religious, racial, language or regional groups or castes or communities”⁴

This passage of text is problematic as it is easily susceptible to manipulation due to difficulties in judging the sincerity of intention. However, it adds an interesting angle to discussing concepts of hate speech by introducing the aforementioned element of intentionality in judging hate speech as inflammatory rather than simply ignorant. This has many further implications when it comes to ways of tackling hate speech at a grassroots level, due to the ethnical and philosophical questions that arise.

More recent Pakistani legislation, such as the Pakistan Telecommunication Reorganization Act of 1996 also specifies in Section 31 that penalties can be imposed on entities that “unauthorisedly (sic) [transmit] through a telecommunication system or telecommunication service any intelligence which he knows or has reason to believe to be false, fabricated, indecent or obscene”.⁵ This is important as it specifically relates to hate speech

⁴ Ibid.

⁵ Pakistan Telecommunications Reorganization Act, 1996. Available at: http://www.pta.gov.pk/media/pta_act_140508.pdf. Section 31.

over electronic media, which has been a game changer when it comes to incidences and the general proliferation of hate speech in recent decades.

With respect to the definition that is to be used throughout this document, the survey that was carried out in the 14 universities defined hate speech, for the participants of the study, as loosely “public statements expressing disapproval, hatred or aggression against ethnic, religious, and other social groups”⁶. The survey directly uses the term hate speech to ensure that the concept is introduced to those that may not have previously heard of it. This definition was included in the survey’s guiding document for enumerators for use in case of the latter situation.

This study uses a loose definition of hate speech in order to promote a dynamic intellectual exchange between all involved personnel in the publishing of this report when it comes to conceptualising hate speech, from the participants, to the enumerators, to the researchers. Furthermore, adopting a loose definition, as we have done, serves to ensure that survey participants’ responses do not get bogged down in questions of technicality.

IV. Methodology

The methodology adopted in analysing and presenting the findings of this survey will be structured in a similar manner to the actual questionnaire document itself. After looking at some of the notable points to be drawn from the respondent demographics, the analysis will follow the following structure.

Firstly, the analysis will go through important points that are to be observed from the general questions relating to hate speech. These questions look at the students direct experiences in encountering and responding to hate speech. This is important because it is vital to primarily ensure that students

⁶ Ivanova, Ivanka. *Public Attitudes Towards Hate Speech in Bulgaria*. Rep. Ed. Georgi Stoytchev. Open Society Institute Sofia, 28 Nov. 2013. Web. 3 Jan. 2015. <http://osi.bg/downloads/File/2013/Hate_speech_report_ENG_interactive.pdf>.

have a good grasp of what hate speech is and how relevant it is to their daily lives.

Following this, the analysis will look at notable results that are to be observed in the second section of the questionnaire, which relates to the participants' opinions on hate speech. This section looks at some of the various ethical and practical implications of the public proliferation of hate speech with respect to the views of the survey participants. More importantly, however, it will look at the sources of hate speech in terms of the participants' experiences and encounters with it. The importance of this is in the relative nature of hate speech; namely that what constitutes hate speech is subjective and open to interpretation.

The third area that will be detailed in this analysis relates to section three of the questionnaire: Responses to hate speech. While this section was the shortest in the questionnaire itself, it is crucial as it both asks the students about their knowledge of current laws and mechanisms for countering hate speech in addition to asking students about their suggested means of adding onto said systems and legislations. This section represents a vital step with regards to understanding how young Pakistanis respond to and plan on responding to hate speech in the future.

Finally, this report will assess the results of the survey in a holistic manner, looking at important results from across the three sections of the survey. In carrying out the analysis in this manner, this study aims to achieve two of its earlier stated objectives; namely that of educating the public on issues of hate speech in Pakistan while also adding to the existing literature on the matter in order to further discourse and debates on approaches to curbing the phenomenon of hate speech.

V. Findings and Analysis

The results of the hate speech survey are predicated on a very interesting set of demographic statistics that build an interesting lens through which the

rest of the results are to be analysed and understood. Although the survey was administered in 14 different universities, the distribution of students across them was not equal. While this has had an inevitable bearing on the results, the results and observations drawn from the survey are still very interesting and paint a fairly clear picture regarding the situation of hate speech in Pakistan. That being said, the largest share of the results came from the University of the Punjab, whose 41 respondents represent 32.3% of the 127 participants in this survey. The universities with the lowest representation are Government College University (GCU) Faisalabad, Islamia University Peshawar, and the University of Central Punjab, each with only one respondent each, making up a combined 2.4% of all respondents.

With regards to disciplines and fields of study, almost every discipline is represented in this survey. Again however, the distribution is not equal, with law and social work representing the most common disciplines among the survey's participants. 19 law students and 21 social work students took the survey, thus making up 15% and 16.5% of the share respectively. It is important to note the high number of law students involved in the survey, as results will show later in this analysis, particularly when looking at responses to section three of the survey. Otherwise, a whole host of disciplines are represented by just one respondent each, including fields as diverse as journalism, Pakistan studies, geography and biochemistry.

Another important demographic result to look at is the gender divide among the survey's respondents. While enumerators strove to ensure as equal a split as possible between male and female respondents, female students slightly edged a majority by making up 53.5% of the results with a total of 68 respondents while male students made up the remaining 46.5% of students with 59 respondents. As was the case with the large proportion of law students taking the survey, there are interesting results in relation to the gender division among respondents. These are visible in the responses to the first section of the survey where respondents disclose their experiences and engagement with hate speech.

With regards to the age of the participants, the range goes from 18-25 years of age, as mentioned earlier in this report. On the survey questionnaire itself, the age groups are split into two groups. The first being the 18-21 year old age group, representing students that are new to higher education, and the second being the students whose ages fell between the ages of 22 and 25 years of age, who have been in higher education for a longer period of time. The former group was made up of 35 students making up 27.6% of respondents while the latter group was made up of 92 students making up the remaining 72.4%.

While the questionnaire did not directly question students on their ethnic backgrounds, the questionnaire did ask students about their native languages. This is important because it illustrates the linguistic reach that the survey has in terms of understanding hate speech as coming from sources that are targeted at and represent different communities. Since the majority of students came from Punjab, as shown by the distribution of students across the fourteen universities, predictably Punjabi was the most common language with 47 students marking it as their native language, making up 37% of the total respondents. Other common languages among the students that participated are Urdu and Pashto, respectively comprising 44 and 23 students making up 34.6% and 18.1% of the respondents.

V.I. The Survey Respondents

- This survey was taken by a total of 125 students from 14 universities across Punjab and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, and the State of Azad Jammu and Kashmir.
- The distribution of students from the universities is as follows:

University	# of Respondents
Abasyn University Peshawar	7
Azad Jammu and Kashmir (AJK) University, Muzaffarabad	5
Bahauddin Zakariya University (BZU) Multan	4
Government College University (GCU) Faisalabad	1
Gift University, Gujranwala	6
Gomal University	14
Islamia University Bahawalpur	9
Islamia University Peshawar	1

Punjab University	39
University of Central Punjab	1
University of Gujrat	3
University of Peshawar	8
University of Sargodha	24
University of Swat	3

- Out of the 125 students that took the survey, 59 were male while 66 were female.
- 35 students fell between the ages of 18 and 21 years while the remaining 90 were between the ages of 22 and 25.
- The distribution of the students' respective native languages was as follows:
 - 1 student spoke Kashmiri.
 - 1 student spoke Pahari.
 - 23 students spoke Pashto.
 - 45 students spoke Punjabi.
 - 9 students spoke Saraiki.
 - 44 students spoke Urdu.
 - 1 student spoke Urdu/Punjabi.
 - 1 student spoke Wakhi.
- The following is the distribution of students across their educational backgrounds:
 - 9 students studied the Arts and Humanities.
 - 13 students studied Business.
 - 13 students studied IT and Management.
 - 25 students studied Medicine/Engineering/Agriculture.
 - 16 students studied Law.
 - 7 students studied the Natural Sciences.
 - 42 students studied the Social Sciences.
- 40 students were bachelors students, 65 were studying for an MA/MSc and its equivalent, and 20 were postgraduate students.

V.II. Section 1: General Questions

The general questions of the survey provide us with some key insights into the direct experiences and engagements of the students that participated in this survey with hate speech both as a concept and as a socio-political phenomenon. This is important because it separates this study from any previous studies done on hate speech in Pakistan as it seeks to paint a clear picture of the condition of hate speech on campuses and in society from the perspective of young, educated Pakistanis.

The first notable result from the survey is the fact that 116 students stated that they were familiar with the concept of hate speech while only 11 did not. This means that 91.3% of the respondents knew what hate speech was, which is a key statistic to keep in mind when assessing the remaining results of the survey. This is a promising development as it means that the vast majority of Pakistani students are aware of the existence of hate speech and are familiar with at least one definition for it, whether a legal or a self-developed. Furthermore, it is deeply positive that a large majority of students approached this survey from a position of awareness rather than one of ignorance.

Another notable result, albeit a more alarming one this time, relates to the proportion of respondents that consider themselves to have been victims or targets of hate speech. 64 out of the 127 students to take the survey consider themselves to have been the targets of hate speech. Making up 50.4% of the total responses, this represents a slight majority thus suggesting that one in every two students has encountered hate speech as a target of the phenomenon. Interestingly enough, this proportion could be larger had it not been for the fact that 11 respondents selected “I don’t know” as their response to this particular question. This is significant because it is the exact same number of students that stated that they are unfamiliar with the concept of hate speech. While it is not conclusive that the same people are unsure of whether they have been the target of hate speech as those that are unfamiliar with the concept altogether, it correspondence between the two results shows that students who were familiar

with the concept of hate speech have a fairly clear idea of their direct relationship to it.

Confusingly, while 52 students did not identify as ever being targets of hate speech, only 35 students, just over a quarter of the total surveyed, listed “not applicable” when it came to discussing their perceived reasons behind being targeted. Of those that did identify a reason, a significant result to note was that gender was only selected by a total of 5 students, making up 3.9% of the total surveyed, while only 2 students specifically wrote in “women”, adding on another 1.6%. This is notable due to the fact that the majority of students surveyed were female, thus showing that gender is not a very common area of attack for perpetrators of hate speech. An important consideration though in relation to this particular statistic is the absence of transgendered respondents in this study, or at least students who openly identified as transgender.

The most common reason for being a target of hate speech was “opinion”, which was selected by 26 students. To add to this number, write-in results included “politics”, which was written in by 3 respondents, “political debates”, “lack of awareness and immaturity of politics” and “hate speech against army”, which were written in by one person each. Altogether, these results made up just over a quarter of the total number of students surveyed, which suggests that political orientation is more important to students than other social markers such as religion and ethnicity or language, which were selected by 19 students each. At 15% of the total number of students each, these jointly represented the second most common reason for being targeted.

A further confusing statistic is that which relates to students observing hate speech in the media, both social and traditional print and electronic. Despite the fact that a majority of respondents claimed to be the targets of hate speech, a slightly larger majority, made up of 65 students, then went on to claim that they have not encountered any forms of hate speech in any form of media, while 17 respondents considered themselves undecided on the matter.

There are some ways however to explain this apparent anomaly in the results. The first possible reason for this situation is that the majority of the hate

speech that the surveyed students have encountered has not been encountered through the media, but rather in person and through direct human interaction and personal exchange. The second reason is that the students do not consume as much media as initially assumed. This is unlikely, however, because Pakistani students are one of the social sectors that have the most access to a very diverse selection of media outlets, both print and electronic, as well as social media. What is more likely than this is that the students surveyed consume media selectively. In other words, Pakistani students interact with forms and outlets of the media that generally reflect their own views and are targeted towards catering to their various communities and identities. This is the most likely scenario because, as illustrated earlier, just over a quarter of the students surveyed feel targeted because of the opinions. Consuming media selectively based on one's views and opinions opens them up to experiencing hate speech directly through direct human interaction and personal exchange.

The places where the students have encountered hate speech, whether related to them or not, saw an almost even proportion exist between Facebook, as the sole leading social media outlet, and general news media. The former was selected by 37 students while the latter was selected by 35 students, thus making up a respective 29.1% and 27.4% of the final results. Among the news media, there was a 12 to 23-student split between newspapers and news channels respectively. This is interesting because despite the news media having far greater scope for being consumed selectively and for holding greater control over, it runs Facebook very close for being a place where hate speech is encountered. An important consideration however is that while the news media includes a large number of outlets in Pakistan, Facebook represents but one social media outlet among many.

When it came to direct personal experiences and engagement with hate speech, a quarter of respondents stated that they experience hate speech at the hands of their friends, while a further 23.6% stated that it comes at the hands of their superiors. Significantly, 14.2% claimed to experience hate speech that came from their own family members. This shows that hate speech is distributed across society and that one can be targeted by it by anybody they know,

including friends and family. This is one of the more worrying trends observed in the study.

Finally, another key trend is that a majority of respondents believe that hate speech is most prevalent on social media, with 70 students indicating this. It is interesting to contrast the observed places where hate speech is encountered, where there is a near even distribution between Facebook alone, with few other social media sources mentioned, and news media, and places where hate speech is believed to exist, with the majority of respondents naming social media. This suggests that Pakistani students are more lenient on the media than they are of average consumers of social media.

V.III. Section 2: Opinions on Hate Speech

The second section of the questionnaire on hate speech, entitled Opinions on Hate Speech, was written the aim of understanding students' perceptions of the hate speech they have encountered, or that they believe they can encounter. This is important firstly because it provides material for peace practitioners to understand how young people understand the roots of hate speech and its existence in society and secondly because it allows individuals to be more introspective regarding their own speech and its socio-political impact.

The first source of hate speech to be assessed in this section was textbooks in schools. The students surveyed did not seem to believe that textbooks were important at all in driving hate speech in Pakistan, with 32 students rating their influence as 1 on a scale of 1 to 10 where 1 meant "not harmful at all" and 10 meaning "critically harmful". A further 7 students went a step further and answered the question with a rating of 0. Interestingly enough, after the 30.7% of students that rated the importance of textbooks in between 0 and 1 on the scale, the next highest frequencies were for 5 and 10, which were each given 16 ratings, amounting to 12.6% each.

When it came to the level of danger that the students felt hate speech posed to the development of Pakistani youth, 59 of the students rated it as 10 on the same scale mentioned above, thus citing it as "critically harmful". A further

one person wrote in the value of 9.9, which together with the 59 that rated the level of danger as 10, make up 47.3% of the total number of students that participated in the survey. Furthermore, only 6 students wrote in a value below 5, thus showing that there is a belief among Pakistani students that hate speech a crucial issue to be tackled in order to build a brighter future.

A notable trend to observe in this section was that the students were highly self-critical of their own role in perpetuating hate speech in Pakistan. It is worth mentioning that the participants of this survey were all between the ages of 18 and 25 years old. With this in mind, 27 students identified the 15-20 year old age group as being that which is most responsible for the proliferation of hate speech on social media. More interestingly, 57 students identified the 21-30 year old age group as being most responsible, thus showing that a total of 66.2% of all the students identifying the youth as being most responsible for this phenomenon, at least when it came to social media.

There is a slight change in result when it came to assessing the age groups most responsible for hate speech in the mainstream print and electronic media. The number of students that identified the 15-20 year old age group remained relatively stable, with 21 students as opposed to 27 previously. This is slightly peculiar however, because young people of those ages are not very well represented in the media, particularly in the news media, which was highlighted as a key problem area in the previous section. The most commonly selected group was, as before, the 21-30 year old group, with 39 students and 30.7%. This shows that the youth are still very self-critical of their role in propagating hate speech throughout Pakistan. Crucially however, a further 37 respondents identified the next age group, that of 31-40 year olds, thus representing 29.1% of all of the students. This shows that the students do recognise that older generations do play a role, particularly in media that they are more accustomed to engaging with, seeing that social media is the domain of the youth.

The students provided an unequivocal assessment of the political establishment's role in perpetuating hate speech in Pakistan. A majority of the students selected politicians as being the professional group most likely to incite

hate speech. An unexpected result when it came to this particular part of the survey was that artists were selected by 30.7% of the respondents as being likely to incite hate speech, placing them above figures that are more likely to be prominent in both news and social media, such as journalists, who were chosen by 17.3% of the respondents and religious leaders and scholars, who were chosen by just over a fifth of the respondents. These results tally well with the reasons that the students believed that they were targets of hate speech, which as demonstrated earlier, showed opinion and political orientation to be the most common cause, followed by ethnicity and religion, whose surrounding discourses are shaped by journalists (as well as politicians) and religious leaders and scholars respectively.

V.III. Section 3: Responses to Hate Speech

The third and final section of the questionnaire related to responses, both existing and proposed, to the spread of hate speech in Pakistan. This section's importance can be seen in how it seeks to gather information regarding both students' knowledge of existing pathways through which hate speech can be countered and pathways that the students believe should exist in order to help pacify speech and public expression in Pakistan.

The most interesting point to note from this section of the questionnaire is that only 17 students out of the 127 surveyed consider themselves to be aware of existing laws and legislation regarding hate speech in Pakistan. This represents 13.4% of the total number of students, and it is significant because 15% of the students that participated in this survey are law students, thus showing that even among the law students, knowledge of hate speech laws in Pakistan is weak.

Among the students that were surveyed, only 16 students responded positively when asked about their knowledge of a specific piece of legislation on hate speech. The students were asked if they were aware of Section 153A of the Pakistan Telecommunications Act of 1996, which is mentioned earlier, in the Definitions section of this paper. This is important because this piece of

legislation presents arguably the clearest and most explicit definition of hate speech, as well as the most obvious legal tool to tackle it, particularly in relation to forms of media in Pakistan. A poor knowledge of this piece of legislation, in addition to hate speech legislation in general, shows a need for further education of young people on how to respond to hate speech should they encounter it.

When asked directly about possible responses to hate speech in Pakistan, the students found two measures to be the most appropriate. The first, chosen by 68 students, was to strengthen the regulatory bodies whose job it is to ensure that the media is free of hate speech. This would include bodies such as the Pakistan Telecommunications Authority (PTA) and the Pakistan Electronic Media Regulatory Authority (PEMRA), for example, and provide them with additional training and wider reaching powers to tackle hate speech. The second popular measure, selected by 60 students, was to provide education in schools about hate speech from a young age. Given that the vast majority of people who took this survey were already aware of the concept of hate speech, one would presume that this relates to education regarding practical and legal methods of responding to hate speech.

V.IV. Conclusions

It is clear from the responses of the very diverse group of students that participated in this survey that hate speech is a huge problem that has a direct impact on the youth of Pakistan and their development. That being said, there are certain conclusions to be drawn from each section of this analysis.

From the first section of the study, it is deeply evident that students in Pakistan believe that they have a clear understanding of the concept of hate speech. In addition to this, they are also clear on if and how they were affected by it. Furthermore, it can be gathered that the students surveyed are very skilful navigators of media outlets, both when it comes to social media as well as traditional print and electronic media. This shows that the students possess very high levels of awareness when it comes to choosing how to engage with the media. The students surveyed possess enough awareness to avoid outlets that may attack them or their respective communities.

The second section of the study showed students to be highly self-critical of themselves, as evidenced by their selection of their own age groups as being key perpetrators of hate speech both on social and mainstream print and electronic media. This demonstrates that the students do view themselves as responsible for their own affliction and thus demonstrates a desire to correct things from within in order to aid the development of Pakistani youth. This can be seen in the high numbers of respondents that identified hate speech as being critically harmful to this endeavour.

The third section, while being the shortest, was a very important part of the study because it showed that knowledge of ways of tackling hate speech and responding to experiences of hate speech is low. This is one of the most alarming results, as it shows that despite the existence of multiple legal means of countering hate speech, little is actually done to address the problem by victims or by law enforcement personnel. In response to this, the students believe that the best approach to the matter is to strengthen the bodies that are in charge of maintaining and monitoring the media in Pakistan and to educate people from a young age on the measures that do exist to counter hate speech.

Finally, the study as a whole shows that there is a desire among the youth to counter hate speech and contribute to building a stronger, more pluralistic, more tolerant Pakistan. This is the largest positive, as it means that the youth want to take advantage of their demographic power. The vital next step is to ensure an environment that enables this desire. In order to do this, three key practical recommendations are to be proposed.

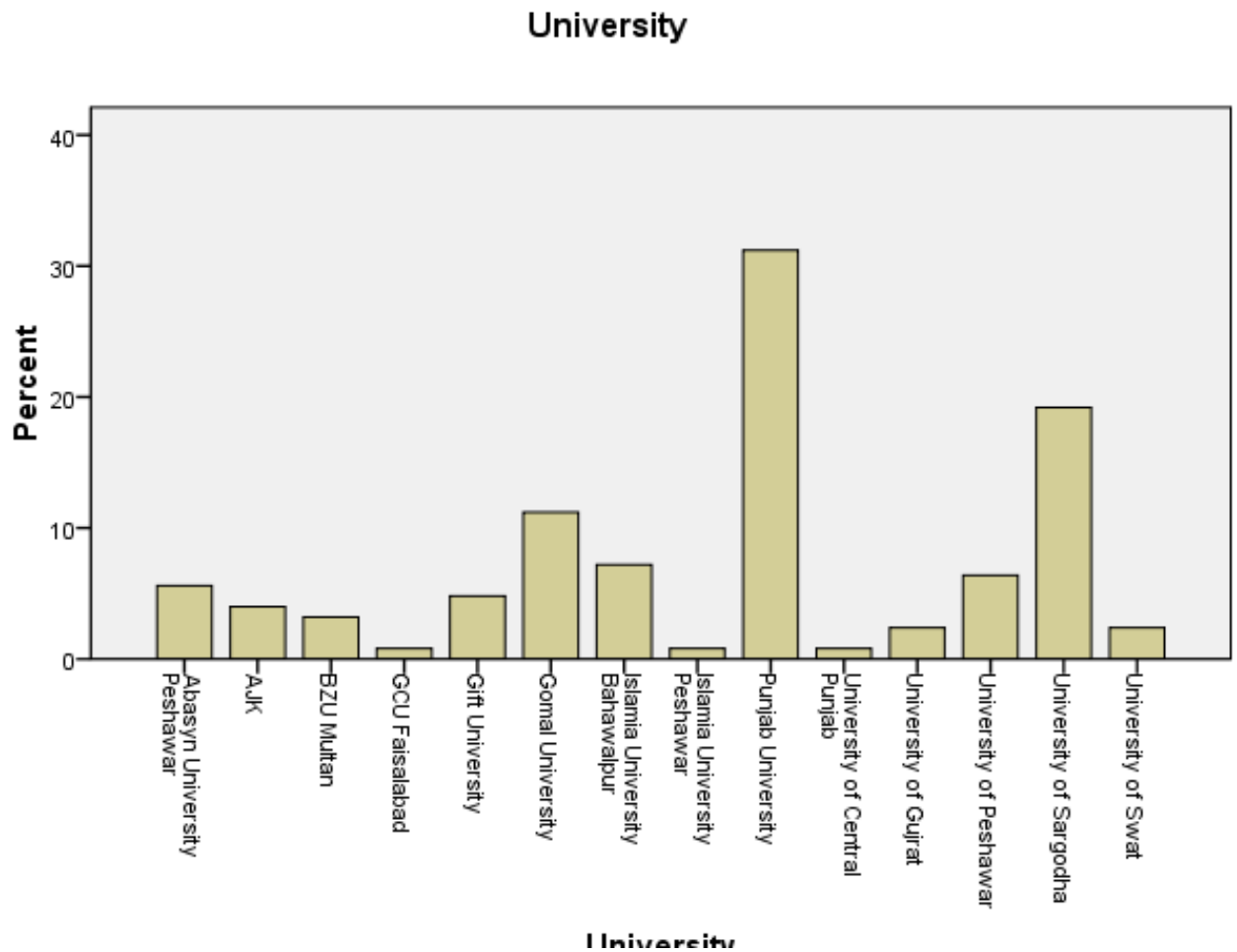
The first recommendation is to ensure that there exists tighter legislation regarding definitions and designations of hate speech. While there exist many definitions for hate speech in the Pakistani legal system, they are intensely malleable and can be manipulated to ensure that forms of hate speech are considered legitimate speech. Primarily, this is based on intention and on loose definitions of public order. Tighter legislation ensures a smoother pathway for the prosecution of those who carry out and propagate hate speech and incite violence both on social as well as mainstream print and online media.

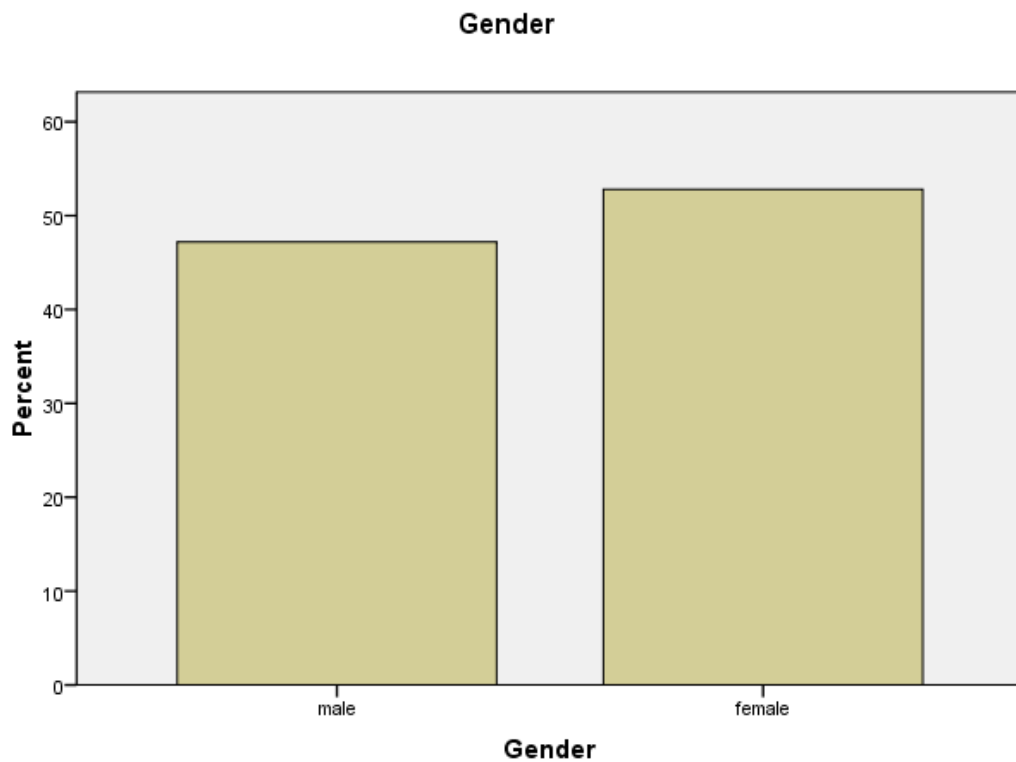
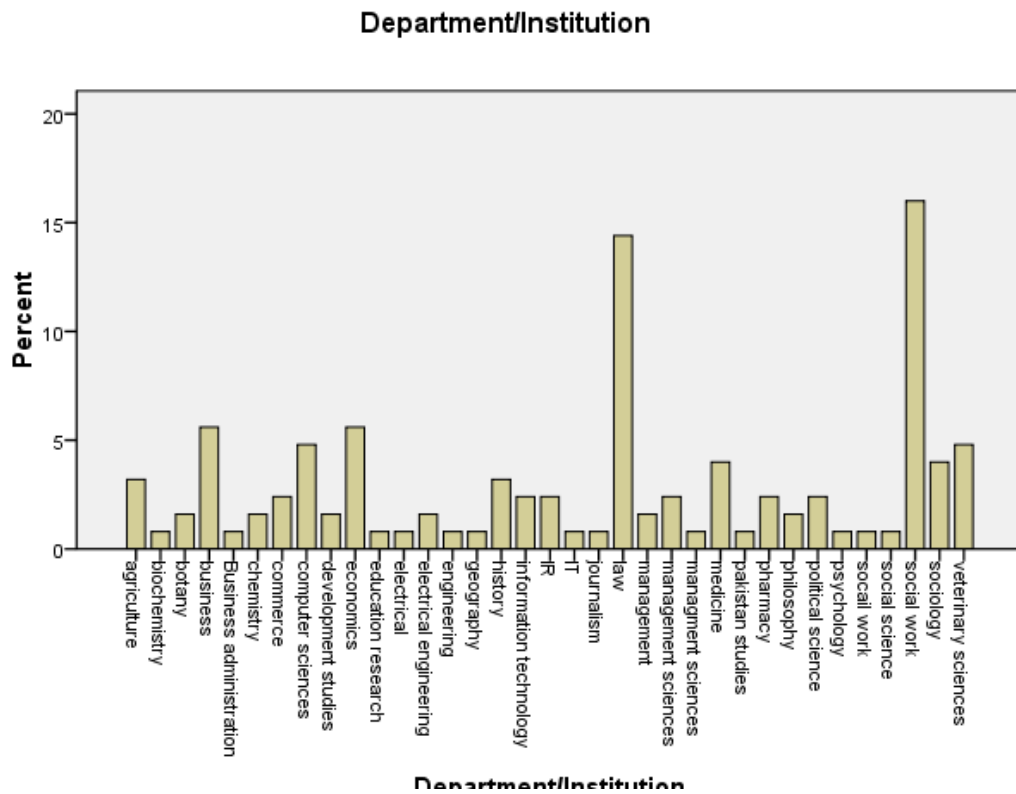
The second recommendation is to ensure that young people are aware of legislation regarding hate speech in the Pakistani legal system. The youth must also be encouraged to act on these forms of legislation. As the third section of the survey demonstrated, the amount of students who are aware of anti-hate speech laws is very low. In order to effectively tackle hate speech, those who are affected by it must be aware of the rights that they possess against people who perpetuate hate speech. This can be done by way of public campaigns, training sessions, orientations, the distributing of pamphlets, for example.

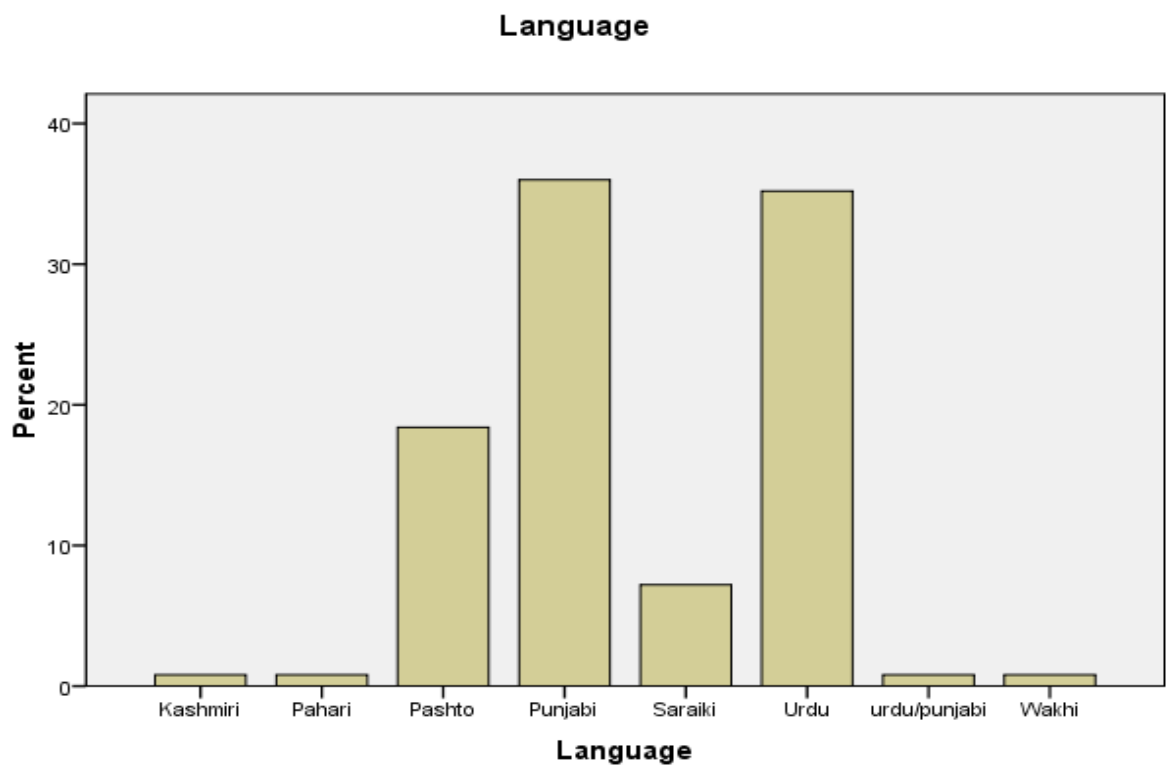
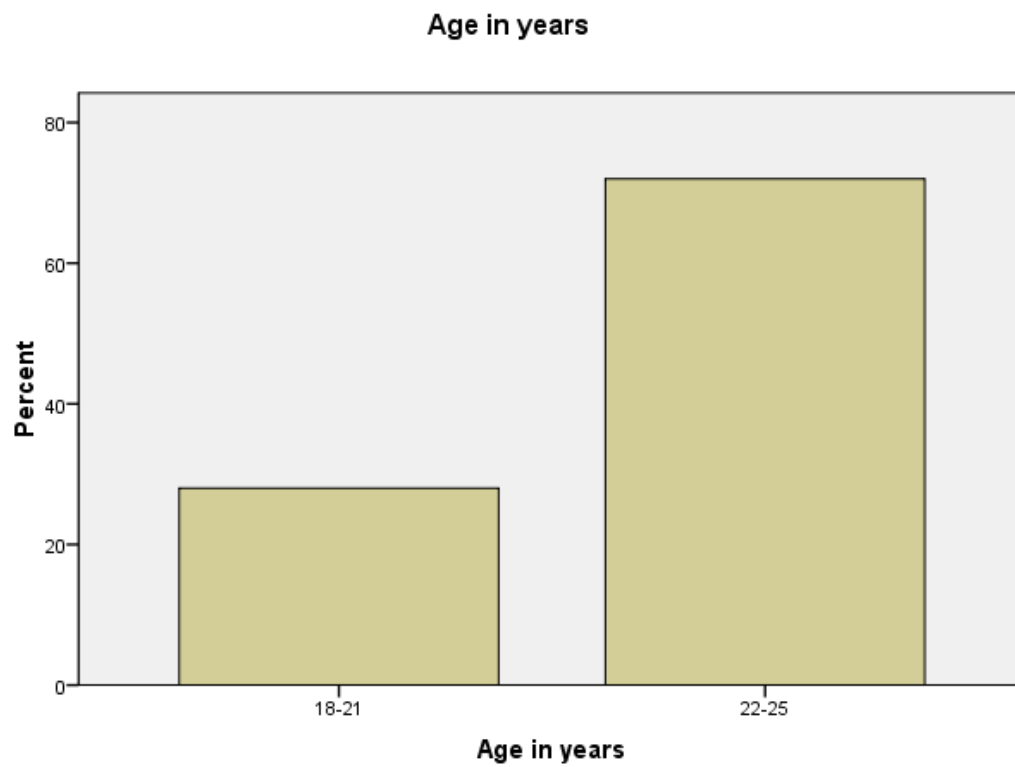
The third recommendation is to follow the advice issued directly by students that partook in this survey. Children should be taught more about the nature of hate speech and how to identify it from a young age. This would involve including sections on hate speech and its consequences in the educational curriculum, as well teaching children how to differentiate between legitimate criticism and hate speech. While most students stated that they were aware of the concept of hate speech, many did not feel it to be relevant to their personal lives. Providing children with a stronger ability to identify hate speech will strengthen their abilities to counter it and use spaces to promote more peaceful narratives, which are needed for the development of youth in Pakistan.

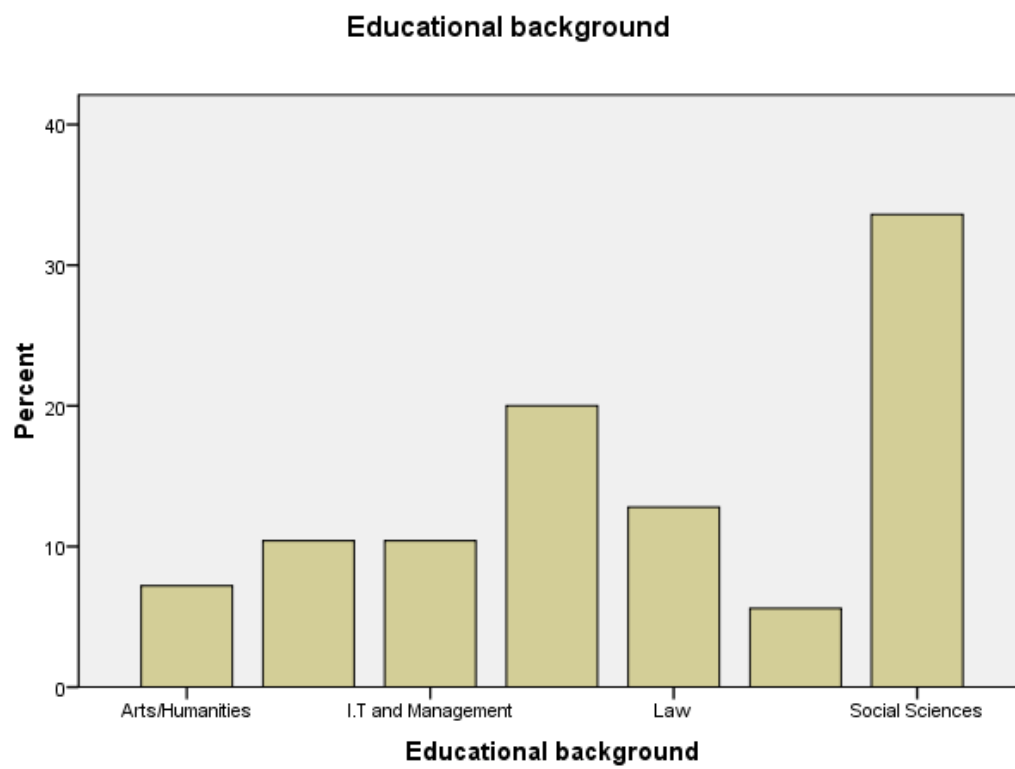
VI. Annex: Survey results

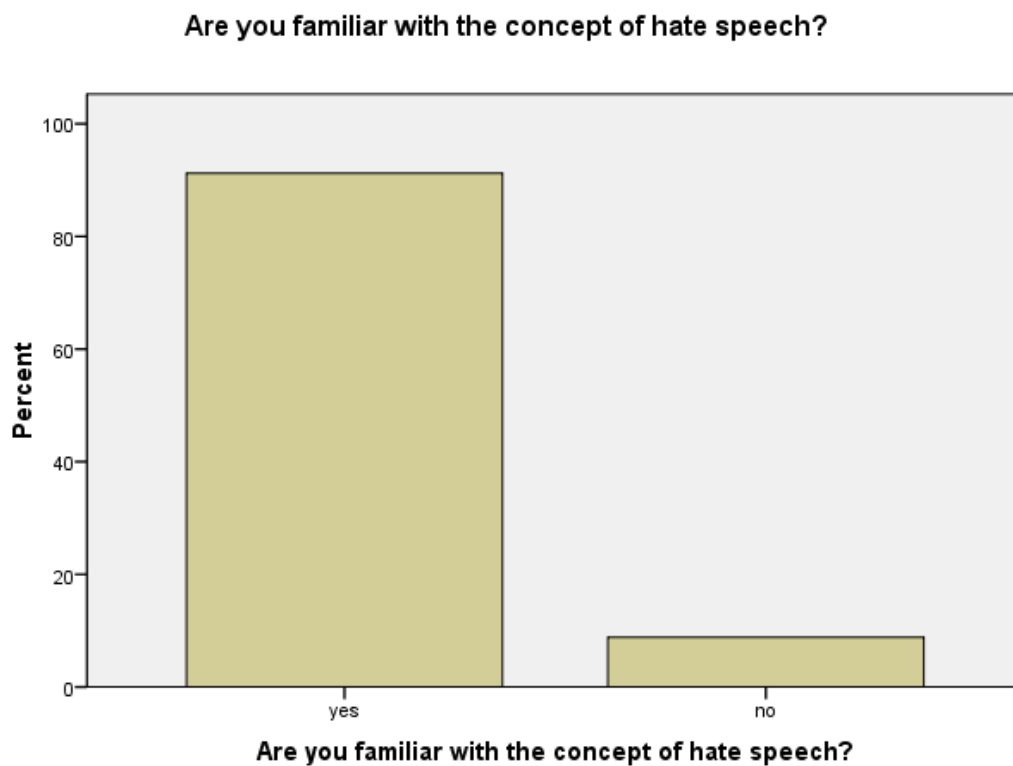
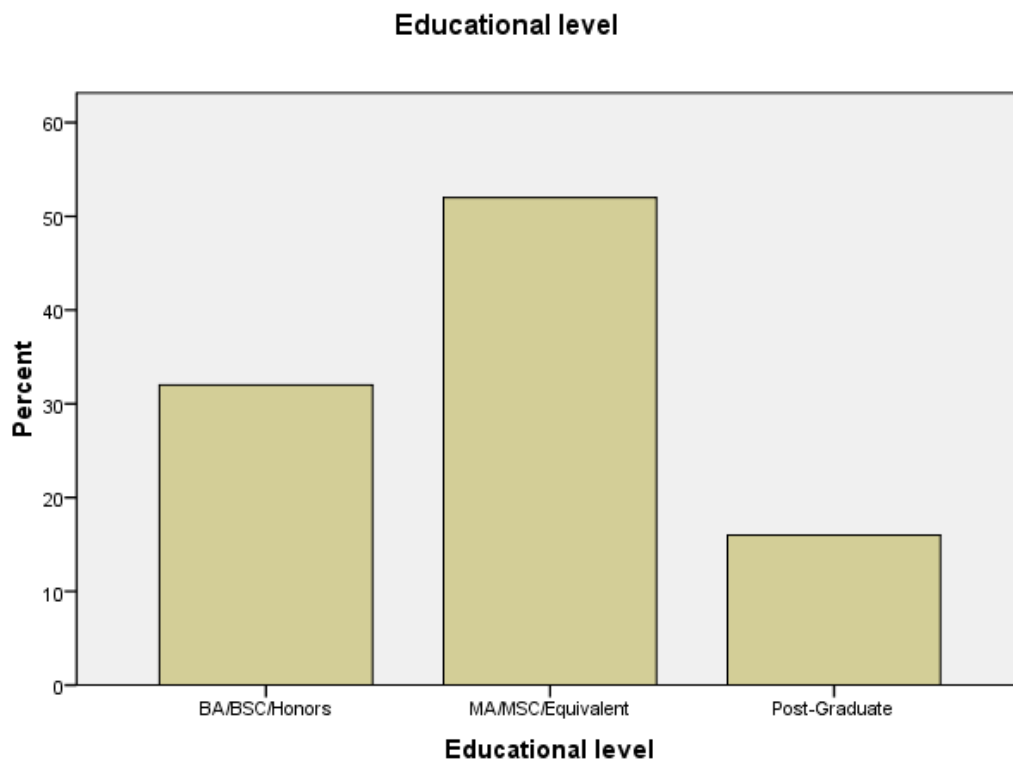
The following bar graphs are visual representations of the results discussed in Part V of this study:



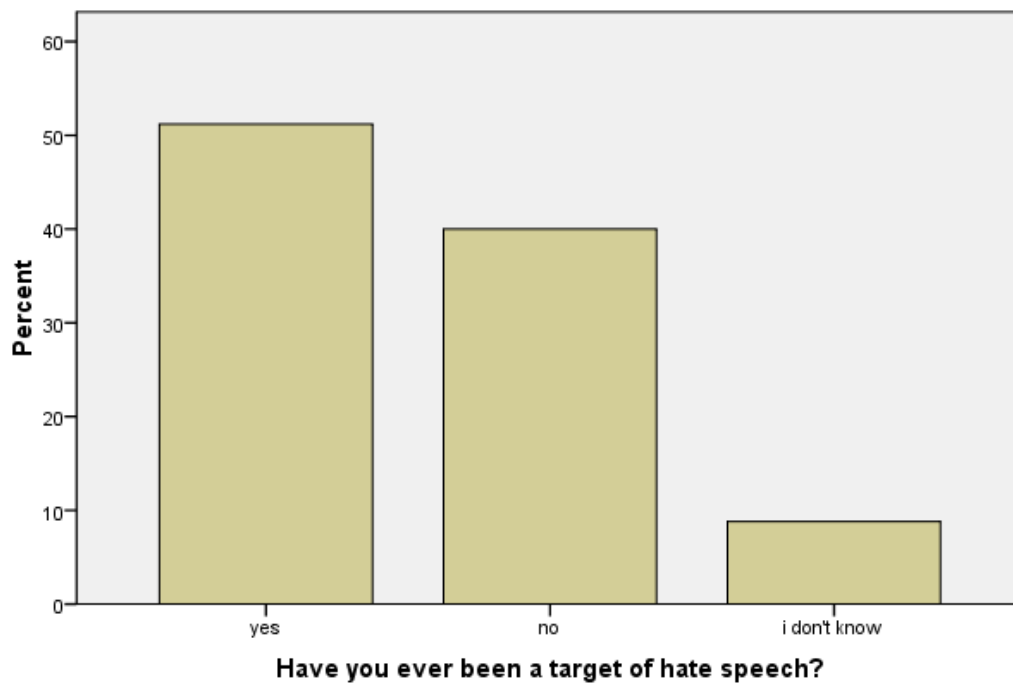




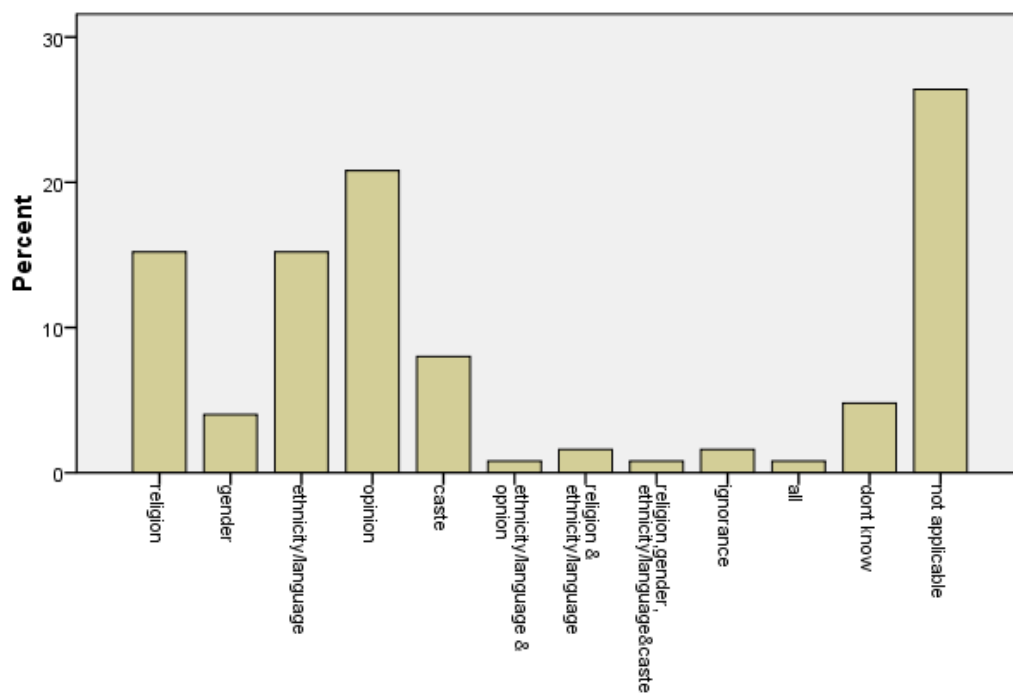


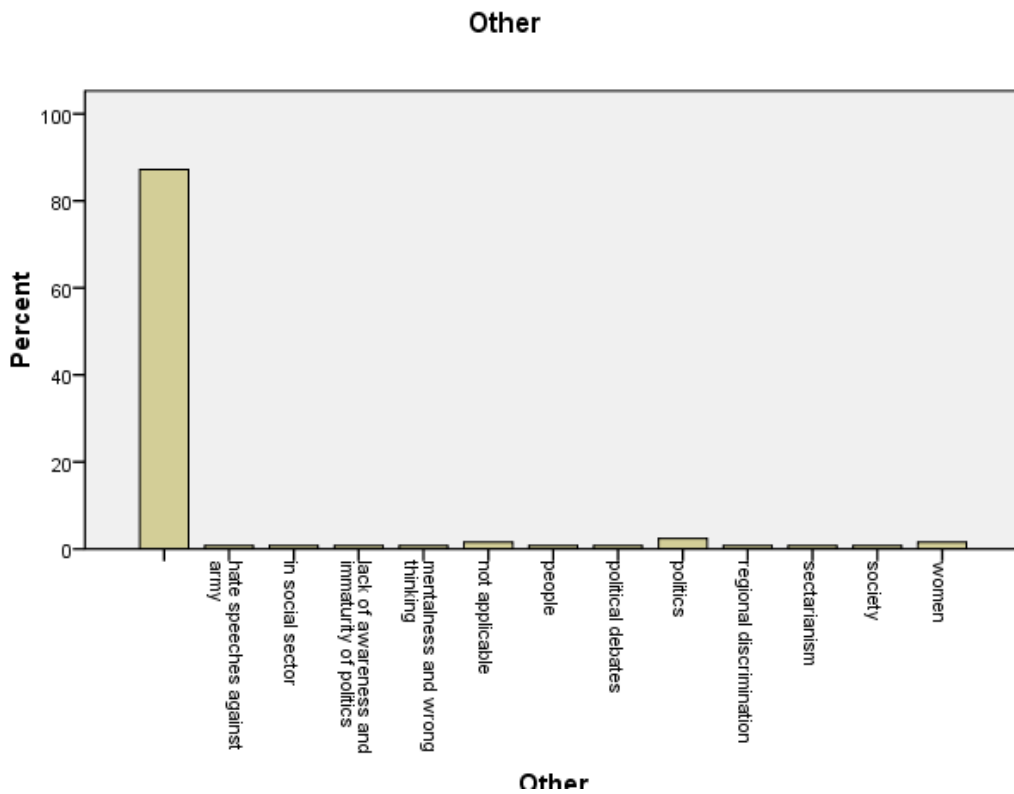


Have you ever been a target of hate speech?

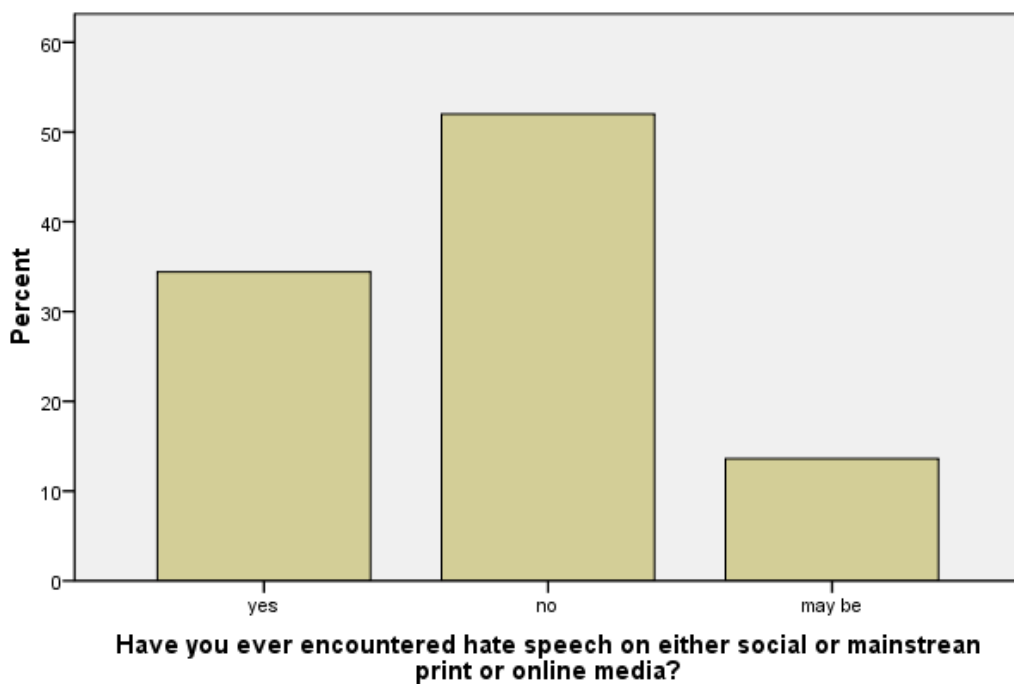


If yes, for what reason do you believe you were the target?

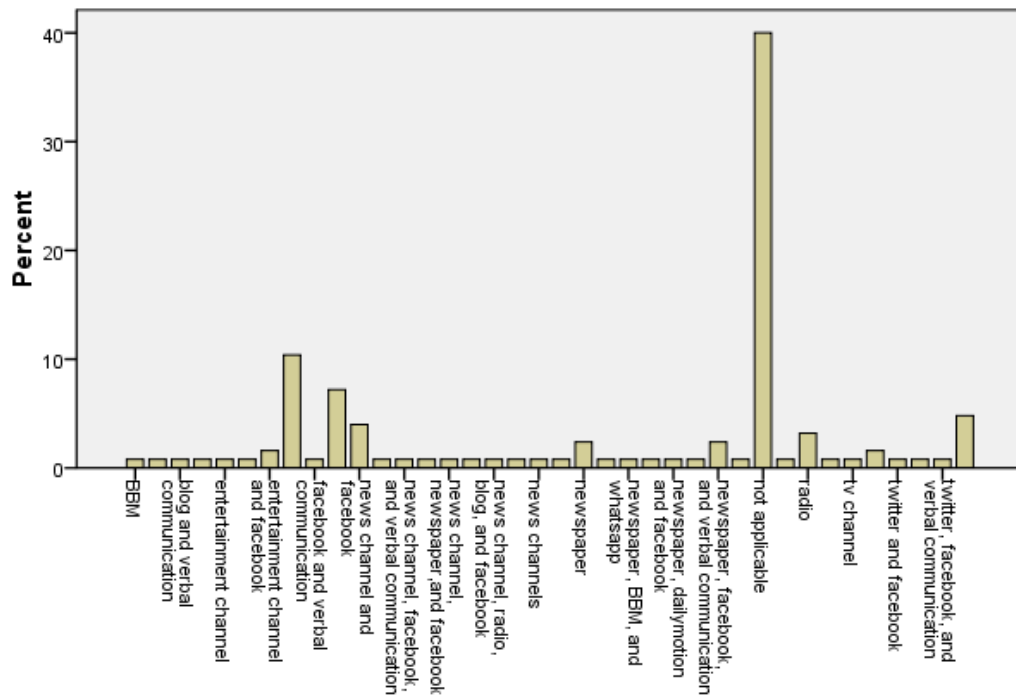




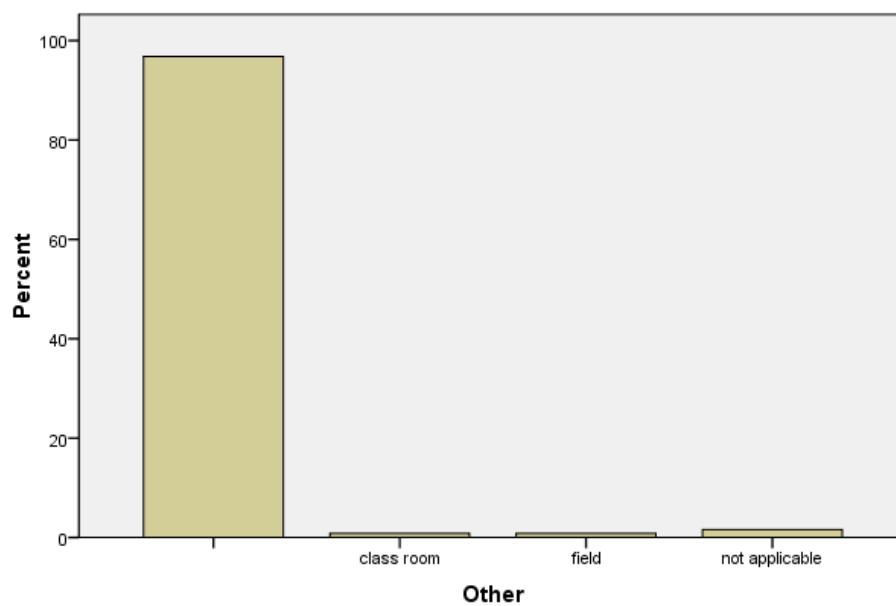
Have you ever encountered hate speech on either social or mainstream print or online media?



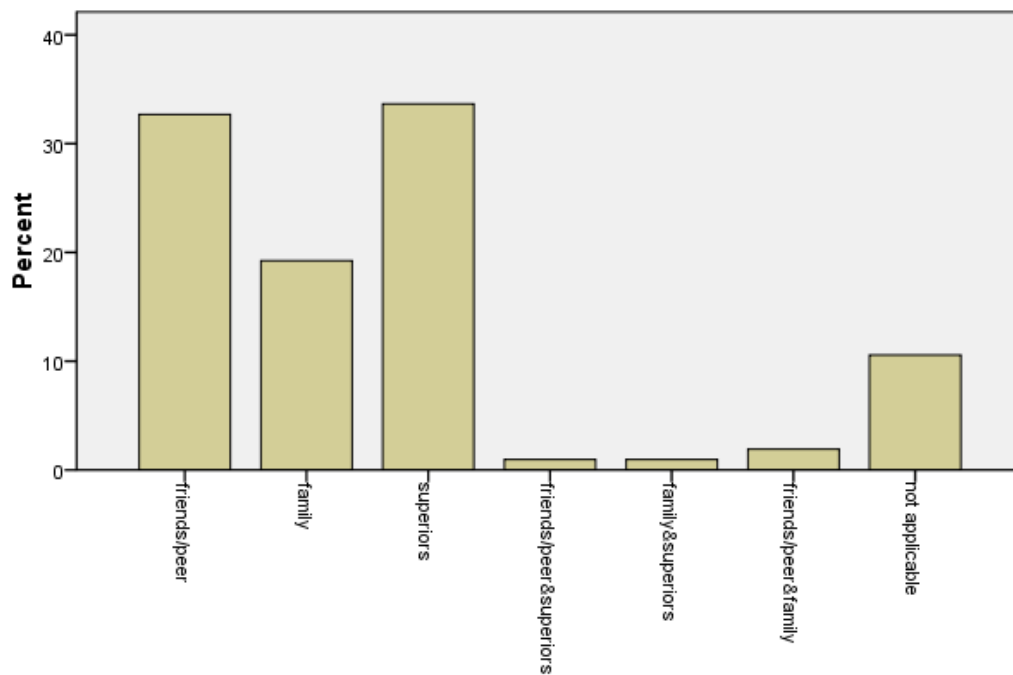
If yes, on which platforms have you encountered hate speech? please check all that apply



Other

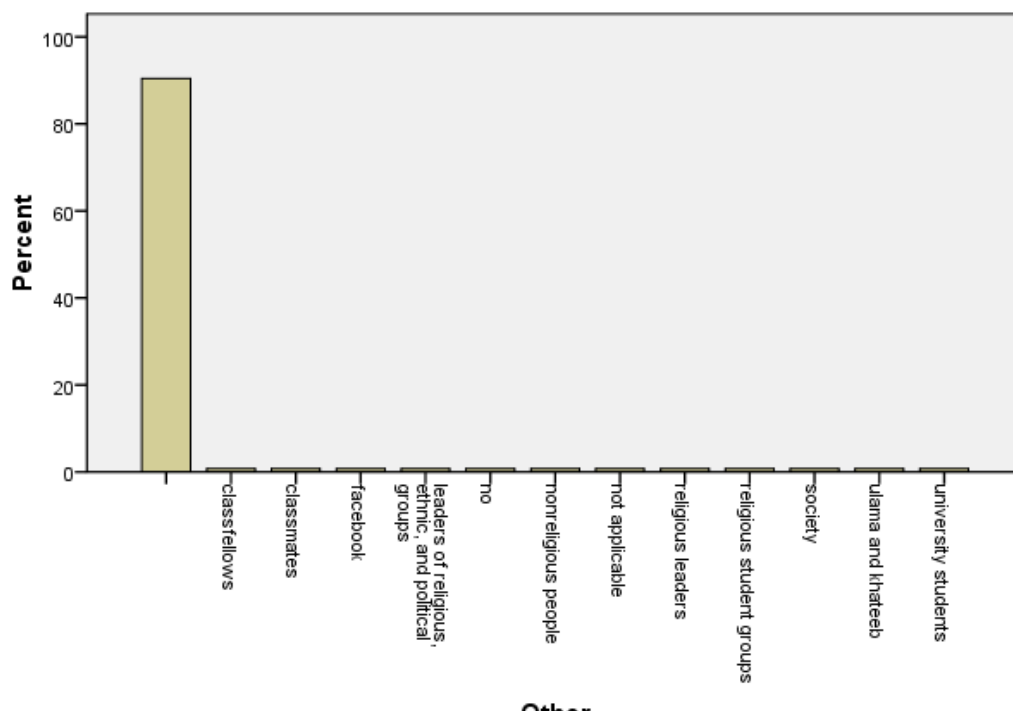


If you have experienced hate speech verbally, from where did it come?

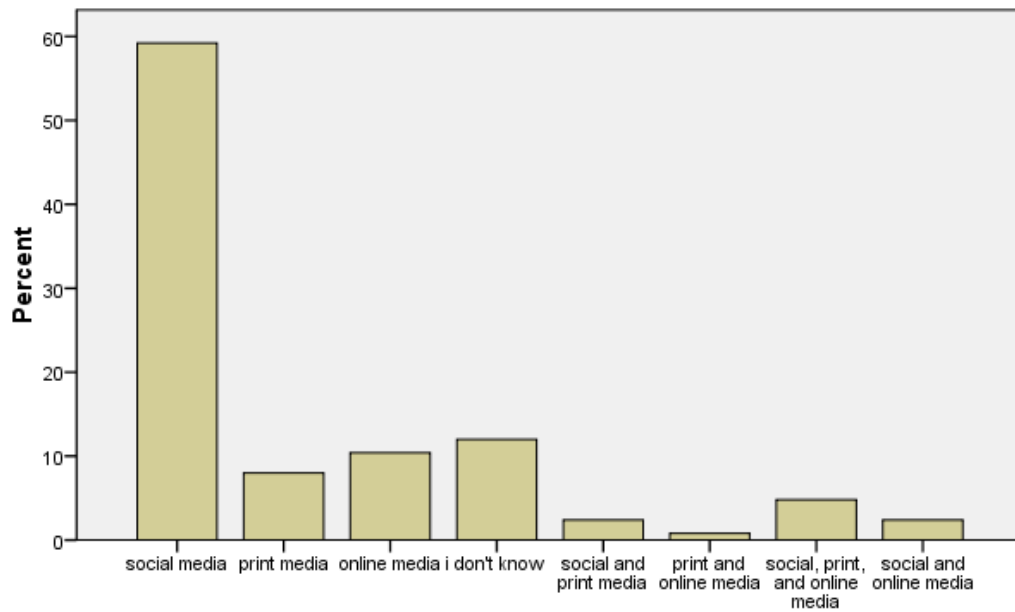


If you have experienced hate speech verbally from where did it come?

Other

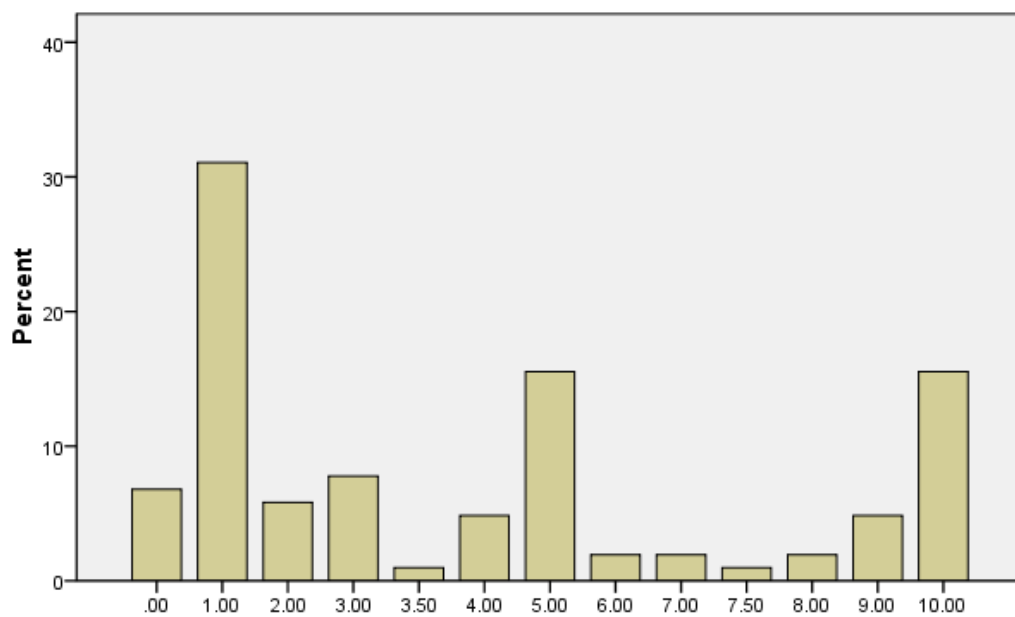


Do you believe that hate speech is more prevalent in social or mainstream print and online media?



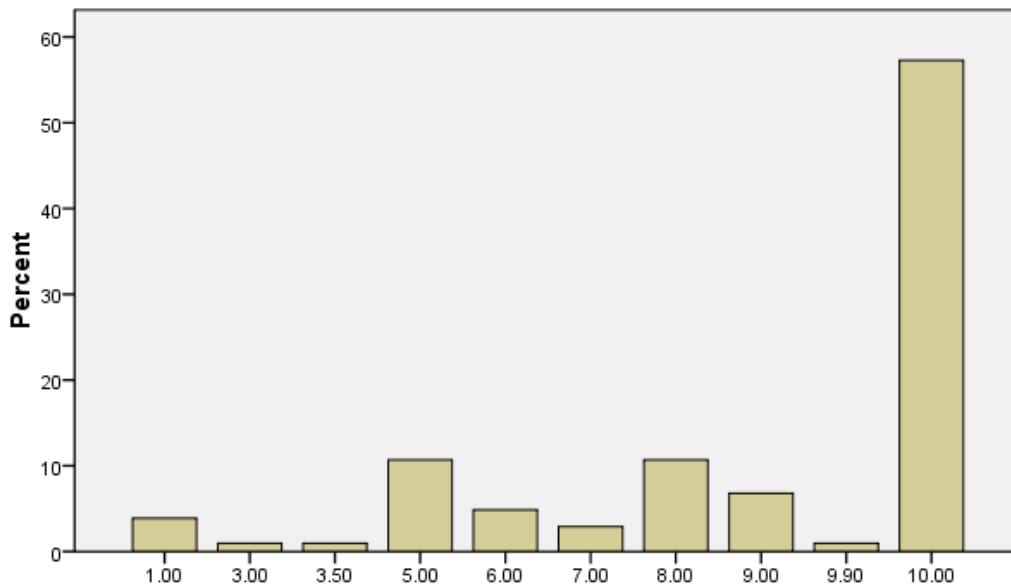
Do you believe that hate speech is more prevalent in social or mainstream print and online media?

On a scale of 1-10, to what extent do you view textbooks as being influencers of hate speech in Pakistan?



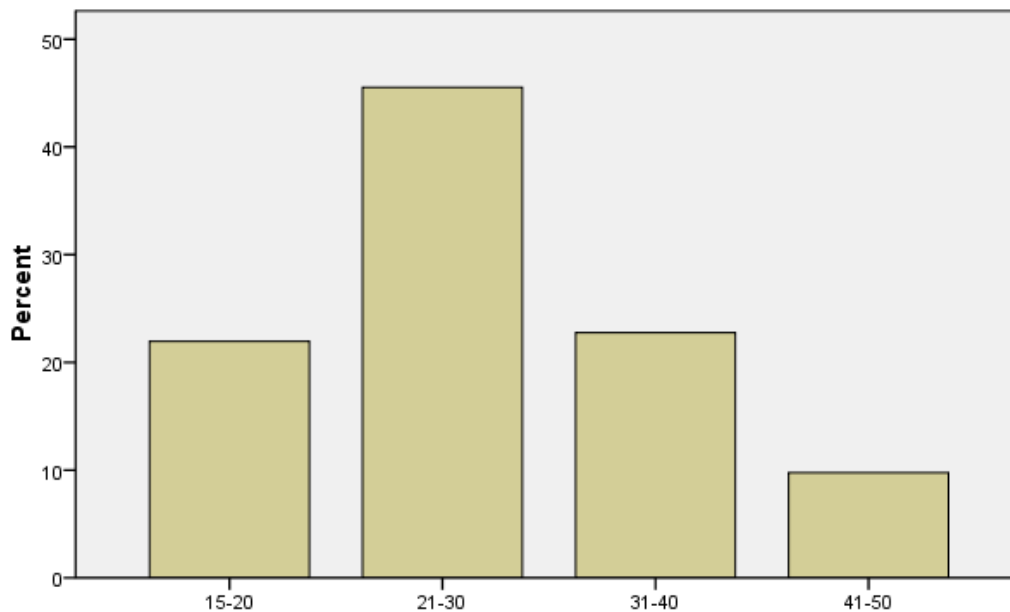
On a scale of 1-10, to what extent do you view textbooks as being influencers of hate speech in Pakistan?

On a scale of 1-10, to what extent do you view the existence and proliferation of hate speech on social and mainstream print and online media as being harmful to Pakistani youth?



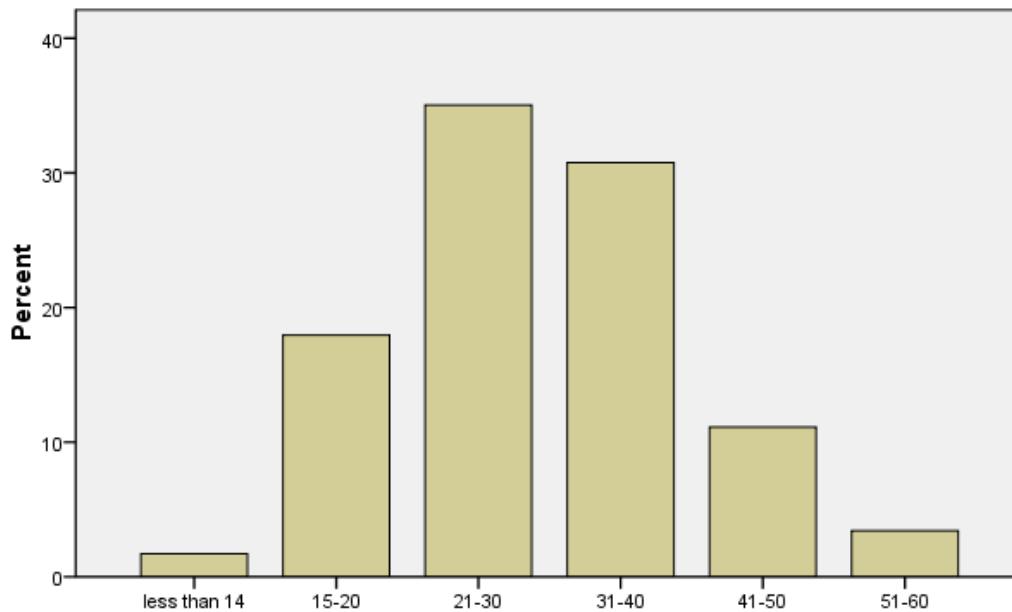
On a scale of 1-10, to what extent do you view the existence and proliferation of hate speech on social and mainstream print and online media as being harmful to Pakistani youth?

What age group do you view as being most responsible for hate speech on social media?



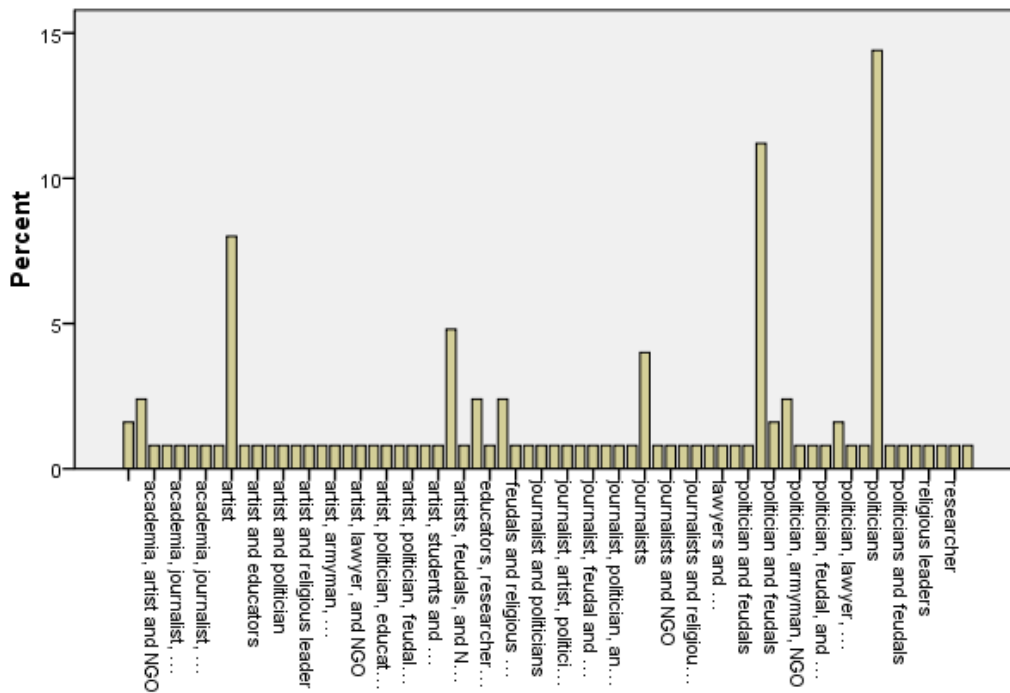
What age group do you view as being most responsible for hate speech on social media?

What age group do you view as being most responsible for hate speech on mainstream print and online media?

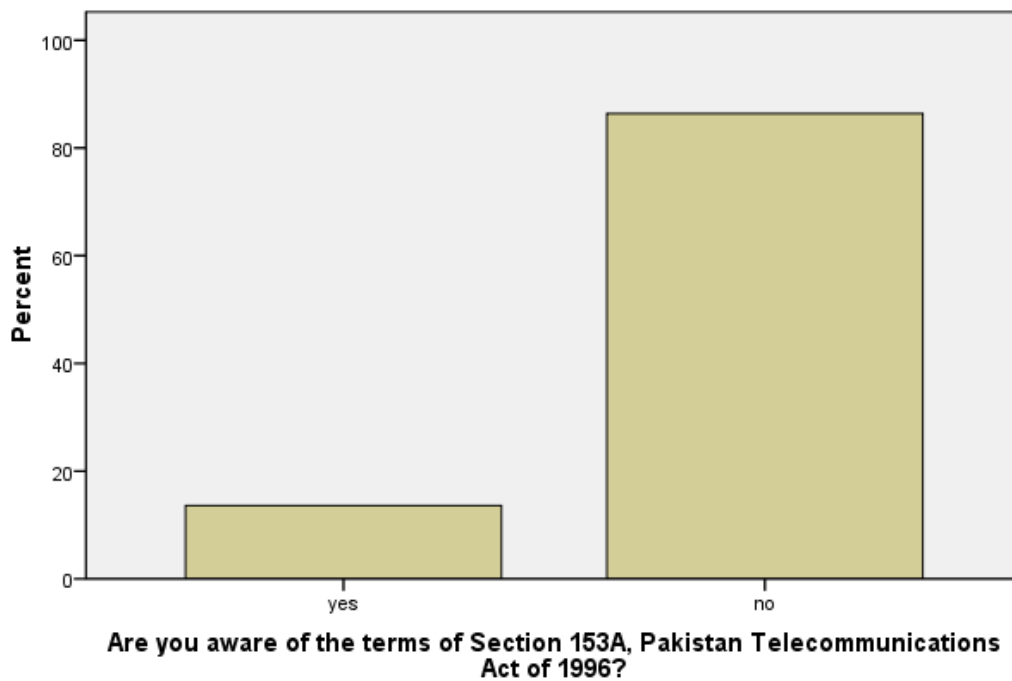


What age group do you view as being most responsible for hate speech on mainstream print and online media?

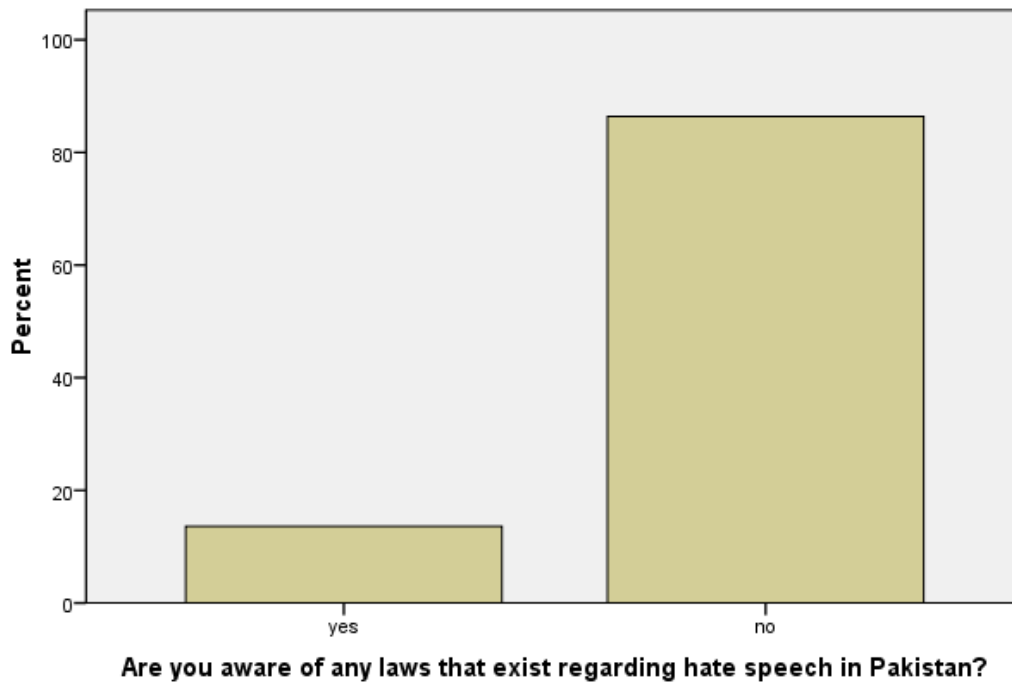
What professional groups do you view as being most responsible for hate speech?



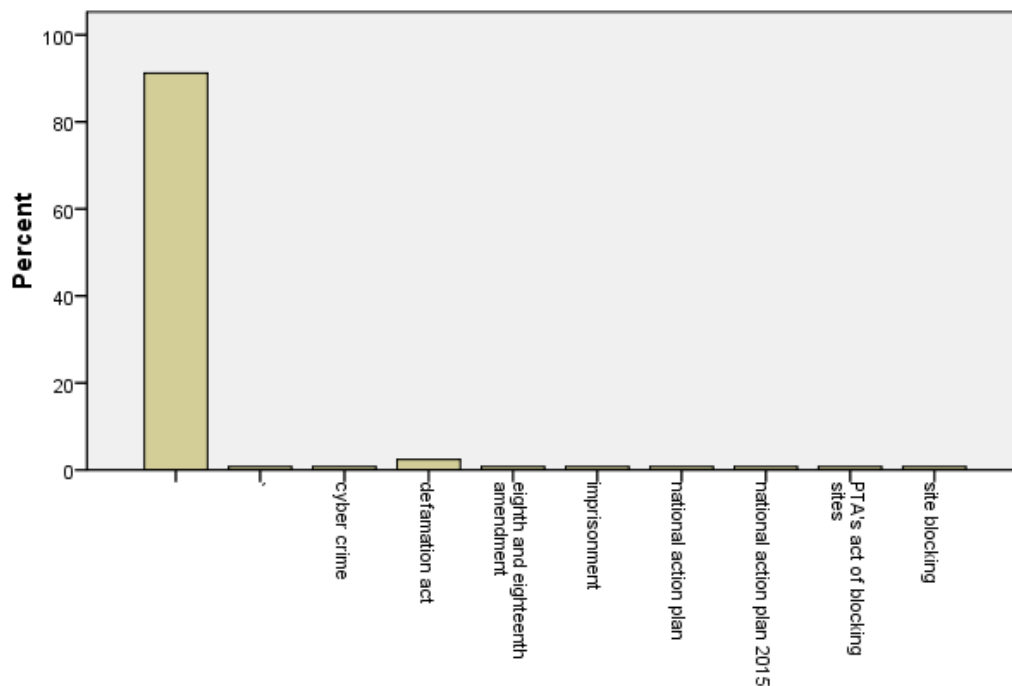
Are you aware of the terms of Section 153A, Pakistan Telecommunications Act of 1996?



Are you aware of any laws that exist regarding hate speech in Pakistan?



If yes, please state?



What do you view as being efficient means of tackling hate speech in Pakistan?

