Indian = Hindu? The Development of Nationalist Attitudes Among Hindu and Muslim Children in India

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Many political movements across the world today define citizenship in exclusionary ethnic or religious terms. This study extends research on ethnic–national associations in adults to children, adding to the relatively sparse literature on the development of national associations in children and in nonwestern contexts. Explicit and implicit religious–national associations were examined in a sample of 160 nine- to sixteen-year-olds (79 Hindu; 81 Muslim) in Gujarat, India. Results suggest that while Hindu children show a strong Indian = Hindu association by age 9, Muslim children appear to be buffered from this association. Furthermore, this association uniquely predicts variance in children's attitudes about social policy and their concept of nationality, above and beyond their age, religion, and intergroup attitudes.

Recently, there has been a rise across the world in populist, nationalist political movements ostensibly aimed at promoting and protecting national prosperity (Cox, 2018; Roth, 2017). Many of these movements—from the United States and Hungary, to the Philippines and India—have promoted exclusionary concepts of nationality, defining nationality in terms of a heritage shared only by individuals of a certain ethnicity or religion, for example, such that Americans are White or Indians are Hindu. This ethnic and religious nationalism has been reflected not only in rhetoric that links nationality with members of some groups while derogating other groups, but also in insular policies toward immigrants and ethnic and religious minorities (Akins, 2017; Bandow, 2012; Liptak & Shear, 2018; Sieff, 2018). Tragically, these movements have also often been accompanied by a rise in hate crimes perpetrated against immigrants and minorities (Grim & Cooperman, 2014; Levin & Reitzel, 2018). While scholars have long been interested in characterizing ethnic and religious nationalism, these global trends underscore the importance of understanding the development of national associations. Specifically, it is critical to understand how children raised in settings characterized by ethnic or religious nationalism—particularly minority children who fall outside of exclusionary nationalistic concepts—develop associations and beliefs about their own and others' nationality. Children's developing attitudes could play an important role in whether tensions between ethnic or religious subgroups are prolonged or subside over time. Furthermore, the conflation of nationality with a majority group could lead minority children to see themselves as second-class citizens, and to either de-identify with the nation or with their own ethnic or religious group, resulting in negative patterns of psychological adjustment (Liebkind, 1996; Nesdale, Rooney, & Smith, 1997; Phinney, Cantu, & Kurtz, 1997; Phinney, Horenczyk, Liebkind, & Vedder, 2001).

This study addresses these issues by exploring how majority Hindu and minority Muslim children in Gujarat, India develop associations and beliefs regarding their national and religious identity, and how this relates to their perspectives on the rights and treatment of different groups within their society. As we review in the following section, the

setting of our study was particularly interesting due to the recent history of Hindu–Muslim conflict in the region (Varadarajan, 2002), as well as the rise of religious nationalism in India over the past two decades, which has effectively promoted a conception of India as a Hindu nation (Jha, 2017; Safi, 2017). Before describing our studies, we first review previous research on beliefs and attitudes regarding nationality in adults and children, and provide a brief history of Hindu nationalism and Hindu–Muslim conflict in India.

Beliefs and Attitudes About Nationality in Adults

In a foundational study, Devos and Banaji (2005) provided evidence for a dissociation between explicit and implicit beliefs about nationality among American adults. In particular, when asked what it meant to be a "true American," Americans across ethnic backgrounds endorsed inclusionary over exclusionary definitions of nationality, emphasizing that holding egalitarian beliefs and civic values were more important to being American than holding affective ties to the nation (e.g., being patriotic), being born in America, or living in America for most of one's life. But despite explicitly endorsing inclusionary criteria for what it means to be an American, implicit association tests revealed that participants of all races strongly associated being American with being White. In particular, participants were faster to respond to White faces paired with American symbols (e.g., the dollar bill, the White House) and Asian and Black faces paired with foreign symbols compared to the reverse, even when the minority faces were well-known Americans such as familiar Olympic athletes. Since Devos and Banaji's study, other researchers have also detected associations between religion and nationality. For example, Americans tend to associate Christian religious groups with being American on both implicit and explicit measures, and this predicts which religious or secular organizations they prefer to allocate resources to (Butz & Carvalho, 2015).

According to the *in-group projection model* (Wenzel, Waldzus, & Steffens, 2016), national associations form when individuals use a core feature of one group identity (e.g., ethnicity) as a heuristic for a higher-order group identity (e.g., nationality). This projection is cognitively undemanding because it uses a familiar subgroup as a heuristic for an otherwise hard-to-define higher-order group, but it may also be motivated. That is, such associations may also arise through political motivation to justify the political or economic power that is in the hands of the dominant ethnic majority. Crucially, the extent of the lower- and higher-order group association is also thought to depend on the cues an individual receives about their higher-order group. For example, an Asian American might be exposed to environmental cues to suggest that Asian individuals are not as prototypical Americans as White individuals, such as by observing that White Americans comprise a large proportion of the population and dominate in political power. In this case, Asian Americans, too, might come to associate being White with being American (Wenzel et al., 2016).

If members of ethnic or religious minority groups associate nationality with the majority group, their ethnic or religious identity is likely to come into conflict with their national identity. For example, it may be difficult for a Muslim Indian to identify as both Muslim and Indian if they have internalized the belief that Muslim Indians are less Indian than Hindu Indians. This idea has been extensively explored in research stemming from Balanced Identity Theory (Greenwald et al., 2002): according to this theory, if you hold one identity (e.g., Indian) and the dominant norms associated with this identity (e.g., a rule against eating beef) also align with another of your identities (e.g., being Hindu, since abstaining from eating beef is a Hindu norm), then you will also identify with the latter identity. On the other hand, if you are identified with a group (e.g., Indian) that does not abide by the same norms as your other identity (e.g., being Muslim and reading Muslim prayers in the morning and evening) then you will tend to deidentify with one of these identities. In support of these predictions, evidence suggests that while majority group members experience little tension between identification with their group and their nationality, minority group members may experience a conflict between these identities. For example, Muslim Israelis—the minority religious group in Israel—who identified strongly with their religion showed less national identification, whereas those who showed strong national identification identified less with their religion (Sidanius, Feshback, Levin, & Pratto, 1997). In contrast, for Jewish Israelis, greater religious identification was linked with greater national identification, suggesting that for majority group members, religious and national identities may actually facilitate one another. Similar patterns have been found in the United States for White Americans compared to Asian, Latino, and Black Americans (Benet-Martínez & Haritatos, 2005; Rodriguez, Schwartz, & Whitbourne, 2010;

Sidanuis et al., 1997). Importantly, however, it is not inevitable for minorities to exhibit this sort of conflict between their identities (Staerkle, Sidanius, Green, & Molina, 2010; Van Oudenhoven & Ward, 2013). For example, Staerkle et al. (2010) found that characteristics of the host nation—such as its level of ethnic diversity and social and economic inequality—affected the extent to which minorities experienced this tension.

This potential conflict between national and ethnic or religious group identities for minority citizens can hold negative consequences for their well-being. A number of studies suggest that individuals who are able to maintain both strong ethnic and national identification show better psychological adjustment (Liebkind, 1996; Nesdale et al., 1997; Phinney et al., 2001) and higher academic achievement (Portes & Schauffler, 1994). The link between national identification and well-being could also be cyclical. For example, a minority child who is perceived as a less prototypical citizen may face more discrimination, leading the child to further de-identify with their nationality and exhibit maladaptive behaviors that conform to negative stereotypes about their group. Indeed, prior research suggests that discrimination can lead to more stereotypically consistent behaviors among those who are discriminated against (e.g., Glover, Pallais, & Pariente, 2017).

Critically, the internalization of ethnic- or religious–national associations (e.g., American = White) is also important because it relates to citizens' attitudes toward social policies regarding immigration and the treatment of minorities (Verkuyten, 2009; Yogeeswaran & Dasgupta, 2010). For example, one study found that White Americans who held stronger implicit American = White associations were also less amenable to hiring Asian Americans for jobs tied to national security, even when these candidates had proof of being born in the country and identical qualifications to White American candidates (Yogeeswaran & Dasgupta, 2010). Individuals with stronger implicit American = White associations also rated immigration policies proposed by Asian Americans more negatively than the same policies proposed by White Americans. A study of Dutch adolescents showed similar results, finding links between participants' ethnic nationalism and their endorsement of exclusionary social policy (Verkuyten, 2009). Together, these and other studies suggest that the internalization of ethnic- or religious-national attitudes could amplify existing intergroup tensions within a nation.

Beliefs and Attitudes About Nationality in Children

Given the potential consequences of ethnic and religious nationalism described earlier, it is crucial to understand how these concepts develop in children. In particular, an understanding of the development of ethnic or religious nationalist attitudes may inform our ability to mitigate national tension and the psychological and physical harm caused to minority group members. While children's ethnic and religious nationalism has not been widely studied, one study suggests that American children exhibit explicit ethnic-national attitudes by ages 5–7 (Brown, 2011). These children—all were White—tended to rate White Americans as being more American than Black Americans, followed by Asian Americans, and finally Latino Americans, and this did not vary with children's age. Interestingly, children's ethnic-national attitudes also predicted their attitudes toward minorities: the more that 8- to 11-year-olds believed that a prototypical American was White, the less they reported wanting to go to school with a Mexican American child. Paralleling findings with adults from Devos and Banaji (2005), children's exclusionary attitudes about nationality co-existed with their seemingly egalitarian beliefs about what it means to be a "true American." In particular, these children indicated that criteria such as loving America and following its rules were more important to being an American than being born in America, living there for most of one's life, or speaking English.

Thus, by ages 8–11, there is evidence that White children hold White-American associations, and that this predicts their attitudes toward non-White citizens. This is important because it shows that ethnic–national associations can be formed early among members of the majority group. However, it leaves open how these associations develop in minority youth, and if these associations might shift as majority and minority children enter adolescence. Some researchers have suggested that adolescence may be a sensitive period for social environmental input, making adolescents more conscious of their social standing and more motivated to fit in with their peers (Blakemore, 2018). Thus, as children enter adolescence, they may become particularly sensitive to potential conflicts between their identities, and may be more likely to internalize this conflict, potentially leading to de-identification from one of their identities. Consistent with this, there is evidence that national identification sometimes diminishes as children enter adolescence, particularly for members of traditionally excluded groups

(e.g., Scottish Brits; Barrett, 2000). In addition, children who believe that social policies that discriminate against their group are fair show drops in self-esteem in early adolescence (Godfrey, Santos, & Burson, 2019). Thus, the transition from late childhood to early adolescence—the focus of this study—is likely to be a particularly important window for understanding how children negotiate their national, ethnic, and religious group identities, with important consequences for their ultimate well-being.

Taken together, while the research reviewed earlier provides insight into the development of ethnic-national attitudes, several important gaps remain. First, most children who have been studied belonged to the majority ethnic group, leaving open how such attitudes develop in minority children. There is reason to suspect that minority children might show a bias to conflate nationality with the dominant group, similar to patterns observed among adults (Devos & Banaji, 2005). To our knowledge, only one study has examined the development of national attitudes among minority children, finding that minority and majority adolescents did not differ overall in their beliefs about what it means to be American (Rodriguez et al., 2016), though this study assessed potential associations between ethnicity and nationality only indirectly, through qualitative analysis of an open-ended question.

Second, existing developmental studies have not independently measured ethnic- or religious–national associations (e.g., whether being American is associated with being White), group attitudes (e.g., preference for one's own group over other groups), and national identification. Thus, it remains currently unknown if and when group and national identities come into conflict for children—particularly minority children—and whether this relates to children's tendency to associate nationality with the majority group. Relatedly, it remains unclear whether children's ethnic- or religious–national associations uniquely predict their attitudes regarding the rights and treatment of immigrants or minorities, over and above intergroup attitudes, because the latter have not been measured in previous developmental studies.

Third, while existing developmental studies have employed explicit measures of children's ethnic-national attitudes, it is important to also employ implicit measures, given previous evidence from adults that implicit measures of ethnic nationalism sometimes appear even in the absence of explicit ethnic-national attitudes (Devos & Banaji, 2005).

This distinction is likely to reflect a difference between controlled, conscious attitudes and more subtle associations that are not under conscious control—measures which tend to be separable in adults, and may begin to diverge around age 10 (Dunham, Baron, & Banaji, 2006). Finally, existing studies have focused on the development of ethnic-national attitudes in the United States, despite the fact that ethnic and religious nationalism is a global phenomenon (Cox, 2018; Roth, 2017); it is therefore important to study how nationalist attitudes develop in other parts of the world. This study begins to address these gaps, focusing on the development of religious–national associations among Hindu and Muslim children in India.

Religious Nationalism and Hindu–Muslim Conflict in India

Although the Indian constitution codifies a commitment toward the protection of diverse religious practices, India has seen a rise in exclusionary construals of nationality in recent years. This has been particularly evident in the recent rise to power of the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) at both the national and state levels (Baber, 2000), led by the current prime minister Narendra Modi. The BJP advocates an "India First" policy and promotes India as a Hindu nation, arguing that Hindu values have long provided a cultural basis for the nation and should continue to do so (Jha, 2017). From this perspective, Islam—practiced by nearly 15% of India's population—is seen as a foreign religion whose influence on India should be diminished.

The effects of the Hindu nationalist movement have been visible in the politicization of religion, and in how religious considerations have informed public policy. For example, although Islam does not prohibit the eating of beef, Hinduism does, and in the name of defending Hindu values, several states have passed bans on cattle slaughter (Safi, 2017), which may be seen as providing legitimacy to Hindu vigilantes who have attacked Muslims for their involvement in the cattle trade (Abraham & Rao, 2017; Jha, 2017). Meanwhile, there have been efforts to protect landmarks and traditions significant to Hinduism. In accordance with the goal of erasing Islamic influences on India, BJP leaders have even attempted to remove the Taj Mahal—the country's most iconic landmark—from the government's tourist brochure, due to its Indo-Islamic roots (Akins, 2017). Consistent with the climate described earlier, there has been a recent upsurge in hate crimes perpetrated against Muslims within

India (Abraham & Rao, 2017). In the state of Gujarat—the site of this study—religious tensions erupted in a violent conflict in 2002, resulting in the deaths of about 1,000 people (mostly Muslims), and the destruction of Muslim property and holy sites (Varadarajan, 2002).

The Present Study

Given the backdrop described earlier, we were interested in how Hindu and Muslim Indian children might develop beliefs regarding nationality. In particular, we were interested in whether they might conflate being Indian with being Hindu, and what the ramifications of this—for children's own identities and for their perspectives on social policy —might be. To address this, we recruited 160 Hindu and Muslim children in late childhood (ages 9–12) and early adolescence (ages 12–16), a potentially critical period for the development of nationalist associations and identity formation. Participants were recruited from a school in Gujarat Province, India, and administered a number of different measures. Following Devos and Banaji (2005), we included both explicit and implicit measures of whether children associate being Indian with being Hindu or Muslim, and probed children's beliefs about what it means to be a "true Indian." We also included measures of children's intergroup attitudes (how much they reported liking Hindus and Muslims), identification with being Indian, beliefs about how Hindus and Muslims should be treated, and support for Hindu, Muslim, or secular organizations.

Our primary question was whether Hindu and Muslim children would show a bias to associate being Indian with being Hindu, and whether this association would be separable from their intergroup attitudes. The in-group projection model suggests that individuals should come to associate their lower order group (e.g., Hindu) with their higher order group (e.g., Indian), but only when this association is supported by cues from the environment. We therefore predicted that Hindu children would exhibit a strong Indian = Hindu association, since this association does not create a conflict between their in-group Hindu identity and their national identity and is in line with the broader sociopolitical context. We were less sure of whether Muslim children would also exhibit an Indian = Hindu bias, as described in the following section.

Our second question was to what extent Indian = Hindu associations might be related to

children's own religious and national identities and their concepts of what it means to be a "true" Indian. We expected that if Muslim children did exhibit an Indian = Hindu bias, they might resolve the conflict this creates between their religious and national identities either by showing less of an in-group Muslim bias or by showing less identification with being Indian (Greenwald et al., 2002), both of which could result in negative effects for their well-being (Liebkind, 1996; Nesdale et al., 1997; Phinney et al., 2001). Alternatively, Muslim children might identify both with their religious group and national identity, and simply not equate being Indian with being Hindu, showing resilience to the effects of Hindu nationalism. Indeed, previous research with children recruited from the same school as this study found that both Hindu and Muslim children show strong explicit and implicit in-group biases in favor of their own religious group (Dunham, Srinivasan, Dotsch, & Barner, 2014), which contrasts with previous reports that children from minority groups often fail to show an in-group bias and sometimes even show a bias in favor of the majority out-group (Jost, Banaji, & Nosek, 2004; Newheiser, Dunham, Merrill, Hoosain, & Olson, 2014; Newheiser & Olson, 2012), and provides evidence for some resilience to societal stigma among these children. Finally, another possibility was that Muslim children would show a reversed bias, to associate being Indian with being Muslim. By this account, children's national associations might reduce to their intergroup attitudes, such that a Muslim child that has a strong, positive religious identity will also show a tendency to view members of their own group as the prototypical Indians.

A final goal of our study was to explore whether children's religious–national associations—that is, their concepts of who is more or less of an Indian— might provide a useful construct for understanding their attitudes toward social policy more generally. Here, we were interested in whether children's explicit or implicit tendency to associate being Indian with being Hindu would have unique explanatory power—over and above children's intergroup attitudes and beliefs about what it means to be Indian—in predicting their beliefs about how Hindus and Muslims should be treated, and their support for Hindu, Muslim, or secular organizations.

Taken together, we had three primary research questions. First, to what extent do Hindu and Muslim children show a bias to equate their own religious group with being Indian? Second, how do Muslim children deal with the potential conflict

between their religious and national identities created by an Indian = Hindu association, and does this relate to their concept of what constitutes a "true" Indian? And finally, do children's religious–national associations uniquely predict their views toward social policy?

Method

Participants

The participants were 160 children (79 Hindu [40 male] and 81 Muslim [39 male]), who were all students at an English-medium school in the city of Vadodara in Gujarat Province, India. Participants ranged in age from 9.58 to 16.00, $M = 12.40$, and were drawn from a younger (fourth/fifth grade: 9–12 years, $M = 10.71$) and an older (eighth/ninth grade: 12–16 years, $M = 14.06$) age group on the basis of their grade in school. All children in the selected age groups were invited to participate, and data were collected in December 2016. There were approximately equal numbers of Hindu and Muslim children in each age group (younger: 38 Hindu, 41 Muslim; older: 41 Hindu, 40 Muslim). This sample size was determined based on previous implicit association task (IAT) studies, with a goal of collecting data from at least 32 children in each religious and age group (Baron & Banaji, 2006; Dunham et al., 2006), giving us 98% power to detect a medium effect when comparing religious or age groups using an independent sample t-test. This study was approved by the institutional review board at the University of California, Berkeley. Parents gave informed consent prior to their child's participation, and each child gave written assent before starting the experiment. Children received a small gift for their participation.

Materials and Procedure

Participants were tested in small groups and seated at rows of desks with small visual partitions between them. All participants completed two tasks in counterbalanced order: (a) an IAT administered on a laptop computer that probed implicit religious nationalist associations, and (b) a paper and pencil survey that probed explicit intergroup attitudes, national identification, beliefs regarding nationality, and religious nationalism (raw survey available on OSF, https://bit.ly/2NasN72). IAT items were also counterbalanced, resulting in four possible task orders. Before taking the IAT and the survey, each group of children heard an explanation of the

procedure, both in English and in Hindi, by experimenters who were fluent in these languages. We took several steps to ensure that children of both age groups understood the questions: (a) All questions were verbally explained in both English and Hindi by researchers who were fluent in each language; (b) challenging vocabulary was written in both English and Hindi on a blackboard; and (c) children were encouraged to ask questions both before and during completion of the questionnaire, in English or Hindi.

Implicit Association Test

The IAT was designed to measure participants' *implicit religious-national attitudes*. Following past work with children (e.g., Dunham et al., 2014; Rae & Olson, 2018) we used shortened IATs. Children completed a familiarization phase, followed by a test phase in which they had to sort stimuli according to one of two mappings between religion and nationality using the same two response keys: (a) "Indian or Hindu" and "Foreign or Muslim," or (b) "Indian or Muslim" and "Foreign or Hindu." For more details on IAT procedures, see the Appendix S1. To provide an index of implicit religious–national associations strength, we computed an effect size D (Greenwald & Nosek, 2003), a variant of Cohen's d in which the mean difference in response latency across the two critical blocks is divided by the pooled standard deviation of both critical blocks. This produces an effect size metric corresponding to the relative facility of pairing Indian with Hindu and Foreign with Muslim, as compared to the facility of pairing Foreign with Hindu and Indian with Muslim, coded so that positive scores indicate a stronger tendency to associate Indian with Hindu. Following standard procedures, one participant was dropped from IAT analyses due to slow trial latencies (see Appendix S1).

Survey

The survey was designed to assess children's intergroup attitudes, religious and national identification, religious–national associations, beliefs about what it means to be a "true Indian," and perspectives regarding the rights and treatment of majority and minority groups. All ratings were done on a 5-point Likert scale, which typically included response levels, "very X," "X," "a little X," "not very X," and "not at all X." These were always scored such that higher scores represented more agreement, liking, or rated importance.

Intergroup Attitudes

The first question asked children to rate how much they liked boys, girls, Hindus, and Muslims, using a previously published measure (Srinivasan, Kaplan, & Dahl, 2018). The question stated, "We are interested in how you feel about different kinds of people. Please tick the box under the word that tells us how you feel about each kind of person." Possible responses ranged from *dislike very much*, which received a score of 1, to *like very much*, which received a score of 5. Comparing responses for groups to which children did or did not belong allowed us to assess children's explicit intergroup attitudes; two children did not provide both answers to the questions about gender and four did not provide both answers to the questions about religion and so were excluded from these analyses.

Religious and National Identification

Next, children rated how important their religion and being an Indian were to who they are as a person (as in Srinivasan et al., 2018). The question stated, "We are interested in what kinds of things are important to who you are as a person. Please tell us how important each thing is to you by ticking the box." Children then rated "my religion" and "being an Indian" on a scale from "very important" to "not at all important," which was coded so that a score of 5 represented the highest level of importance and 1 the lowest level.

Explicit Eeligious–National Associations

The third question probed children's explicit religious–national associations, using a scale adapted

from Devos and Banaji (2005). The question stated, "Think about people who were born in India and who were citizens of India. How 'Indian' are people who belong to the following groups? Please tick the box to tell us your answer." Children rated (a) "Hindu Indians" and (b) "Muslim Indians," on a scale from *very Indian*, which received score of 5, to *not at all Indian*, which received a score of 1.

Concept of Nationality

Next, the survey asked children to think about what makes somebody a "true Indian." The question stated, "What makes somebody a 'true Indian'? Please tick the box that tells us how important each thing is to being a 'true Indian.'" This scale was adapted from past work (Devos & Banaji, 2005), but characteristics were altered to be specific to the current context for this study. Children rated the extent to which 11 possible characteristics (e.g., following India's laws, having parents who are from India, listed in Table 1) were important to being a "true Indian," on a scale from *very important to being Indian*, which received a score of 5, to *not at all important to being Indian*, which received a score of 1. Internal reliability on this scale was reasonable overall, Cronbach's $\alpha = .70$, as well as when considering the age groups separately (younger: $\alpha = .76$; older: $\alpha = .63$).

Beliefs about Rights and Treatment of Different Groups

After this, children rated how much they agreed with 12 statements concerning social policy (e.g., the government should provide more benefits to Hindus/Muslims, Hindu/Muslim prayers should be taught in school, listed in Table 2). This scale

Table 1

Children's Concepts of What It Means to Be a "True Indian," Ordered by Mean Rating of Importance

Item	M	SD	F1	F2	F3	F4
Following India's laws	4.74	0.52	0.11	0.25	0.16	
Treating people of all religions equally	4.51	0.77		**0.49**		0.18
Having Indian citizenship	4.47	0.68		0.23	0.12	
Being patriotic	4.41	0.81	0.21	0.16	**0.96**	
Defending India when it is criticized	4.41	1.06		**0.85**		
Having parents who are from India	4.28	1.00	**0.89**			
Living in India for most of your life	4.27	0.92	**0.64**		0.22	0.15
Being born in India	4.23	1.00	**0.72**	0.13		
Having a certain kind of blood	3.89	1.30	**0.55**			0.17
Celebrating Ramzan	3.73	1.39	0.30			**0.95**
Celebrating Shivaratri	3.46	1.39	0.35	0.12	0.15	

Note. Factor loadings > 0.40 bolded, loadings < 0.1 suppressed.

Table 2

Children's Beliefs About Social Policy, Ordered by Mean Rating of Importance

Item	M	SD	F1	F2	F3	F4
No laws should prevent Hindus from following their customs	3.84	1.26	0.15			**0.79**
No laws should prevent Muslims from following their customs	3.71	1.34				**0.99**
Muslim prayers should be taught in school	3.50	1.25		0.35	**0.93**	
Hindu songs should be performed on Independence Day	3.42	1.29	**0.64**		0.31	
Hindu prayers should be taught in school	3.38	1.29	**0.52**	−0.12	**0.63**	0.19
Muslim songs should be performed on Independence Day	3.08	1.24	0.15	0.18	**0.47**	
Leaders in the Indian government should be Hindu	3.06	1.29	**0.65**	**0.52**	−0.14	0.10
Muslims are the most powerful group in India	3.05	1.31		**0.56**	0.21	
Leaders in the Indian government should be Muslim	3.01	1.23		**0.89**		
Hindus are the most powerful group in India	2.92	1.41	**0.76**	0.10		
The government should provide more benefits to Muslims	2.59	1.41	0.19	**0.68**	0.24	
The government should provide more benefits to Hindus	2.39	1.41	**0.68**	0.35		0.12

Note. Factor loadings > 0.40 bolded, loadings < 0.1 suppressed.

was devised specifically for this study. The question stated, "How much do you agree with the following statements? Please tick the box to tell us." Children rated each item on a scale from *very much agree*, which received a score of 5, to *very much disagree*, which received a score of 1. Internal reliability on this scale was high overall, $\alpha = .80$, as well as when considering the age groups separately (younger: $\alpha = .82$; older: $\alpha = .78$).

Donation to Organizations

Finally, to provide insight into how children's beliefs about social policy might translate into their behavior, we included a question in which children were given an opportunity to support organizations that take different stances on social policy. This question was devised specifically for this study, and stated:

> We are going to give money to an organization. Help us decide who to give money to. You have 10 votes, and you can divide them up, however, you want. We will tally up all the votes to decide which organization to give money to. Please write down the numbers of votes you want to make on each line below (it must add to 10!).

Children allocated their votes to three possible organizations: one that advanced a Hindu mission ("A: . . . Bring to life the all-round glory and greatness of our Hindu Nation"), one an Islamic mission ("B: . . . Establishment of Islamic way of life in all aspects of life"), and one a secular mission ("C: . . .

Strive for establishing and promoting a truly secular, egalitarian, democratic and just society"). One child's votes added to 27 and was excluded from subsequent analyses.

Analysis Plan

Data were analyzed using R version 3.4.0 (R Core Team, 2017). For each variable of interest, we created separate models with terms for religion, age group, and their interaction. For variables with repeated outcome measures within individuals (e.g., children's reported liking of Hindus and Muslims), we used linear mixed effects models to account for the related nature of repeated measures (nlme package in R, version 3.1-131.1; https://CRAN.R-project.org/package=nlme). Effect sizes for linear and mixed models were calculated using the eta_sq function with type 2 error, in sjstats_0.14.3 (Lüdecke, 2018). For variables with only one primary outcome measure per individual, we used simple linear regression. We also calculated difference scores for children's intergroup attitudes (liking of Hindus minus liking of Muslims) and explicit religious nationalism (Indian = Hindu ratings minus Indian = Muslim ratings), to allow for their inclusion as covariates in subsequent models. Preliminary models included gender and task order as covariates, but these variables were dropped from subsequent models if they were not significant. In order to reduce the dimensionality of questions concerning children's concepts of nationality and beliefs about social policy, we used maximum likelihood factor analysis to identify responses across items that were related to one another (psych

package in R, https://CRAN.R-project.org/packa ge=psych). Following past work (Devos & Banaji, 2005), we extracted factors with eigenvalues > 1, rotated them orthogonally using Varimax rotation, and performed separate models predicting each of these factors from our variables of interest. Items that children left blank were interpolated using the mice package in R (version 3.0.0; van Buuren & Groothuis-Oudshoorn, 2011). Missing data included 7.5% of responses to questions about what makes a "true Indian" and 3.2% of responses to questions about children's social policy beliefs, which were interpolated for subsequent analyses, though missing values were excluded in analyses calculating factor means.

Results

There were no effects of survey order or IAT order on children's explicit intergroup or national attitudes, nor their implicit Indian = Hindu associations, ps > .05. Thus, task order was not examined in further analyses. Preliminary analyses revealed that children of both religions exhibited clear ingroup preferences for their own religious groups, Group × Religion interaction: $F(1, 152) = 136.54$, $p < .001$, $\eta^2 = .25$, which were weaker among older children, Group × Religion × Age interaction: $F(1,$

$152) = 14.44$, $p < .001$, $\eta^2 = .03$, but consistent across both Hindu and Muslim children, as further described in Appendix S1. We organize the results section according to the three primary research questions outlined in the Introduction.

Question 1: Religious Nationalist Associations

Our first question was to what extent Hindu and Muslim children would exhibit a bias to associate being Indian with being Hindu or Muslim, on both explicit and implicit measures. While we hypothesized that Hindu children would exhibit a clear Indian = Hindu association, we were less sure of whether Muslim children would exhibit this association. Moreover, we predicted that religious–national associations would not be fully explained by the extent to which children liked their own religious group compared to the religious out-group.

Explicit Religious Nationalism

Figure 1 depicts children's explicit judgments about how "Indian" Muslim Indians and Hindu Indians are, on a scale from 1 (*not at all Indian*) to 5 (*very Indian*). In support of our hypothesis, children rated "Hindu Indians," $M = 4.49$, $SD = 0.74$, as more Indian than "Muslim Indians" on average,
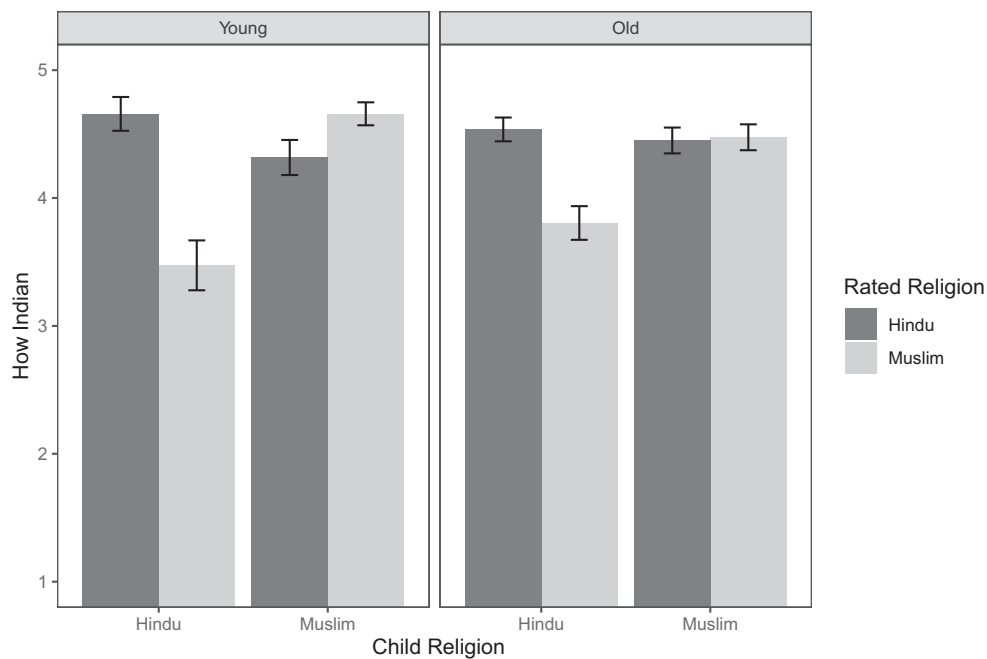

Figure 1. Self-reported beliefs about how Indian Hindus (dark bars) and Muslims (light bars) are (y-axis) by Hindu and Muslim children (x-axis), grouped by younger children (left) and older children (right). Error bars represent standard error of the mean.

$M = 4.11$, $SD = 0.96$; paired $t(159) = 4.30$, $p < .001$, $d = 0.33$ [0.11, 0.56]. However, this association differed for Hindu versus Muslim children, Religion × Group Rating interaction: $F(1, 156) = 59.07$, $p < .001$, $\eta^2 = .10$, and across ages, age group by religion by group ratings: $F(1, 156) = 6.78$, $p = .010$, $\eta^2 = .02$. In particular, while Hindu children showed a strong bias to equate being Hindu with being Indian, Muslim children did not. In fact, younger Muslim children rated Muslim Indians as slightly more Indian than Hindu Indians, $t(40) = 2.33$, $p = .025$, $d = -0.36$ [-0.81, 0.08], a bias that was not present in the older age group, $t(39) = 0.23$, $p = .822$, $d = -0.04$ [-0.48, 0.41]. Hindu children, on the other hand, rated Hindu Indians as considerably more Indian than Muslim Indians at both younger, $t(37) = 6.17$, $p < .001$, $d = 1.00$ [0.52, 1.49] and older ages, $t(40) = 5.41$, $p < .001$, $d = 0.84$ [0.39, 1.30], though this declined slightly with age. In sum, although Hindu children of both age groups explicitly associated being Indian with being Hindu, Muslim children did not exhibit this association, with younger Muslim children even showing a slight Indian = Muslim association.

We next explored whether children's explicit religious–national associations could be explained by their intergroup attitudes: Do children simply report that the group that they like more is more Indian? Both Hindu and Muslim children in this sample reported liking their own religious group more than their religious out-group to a similar degree (see Appendix S1). We found that children's own-religion in-group bias was a significant predictor of their explicit religious–national associations, $F(1, 151) = 117.47$, $p < .001$, $\eta^2 = .12$. However, even with the inclusion of this variable, children's religion significantly interacted with their group preferences, $F(1, 151) = 5.93$, $p = .016$, $\eta^2 = .01$, suggesting that children's religious-national attitudes could not be fully explained by their intergroup attitudes. The interaction was in the same direction as above, suggesting that while Muslim children on average did not differ in their evaluations of how Indian Muslim Indians are compared to Hindu Indians, $t(77) = -1.56$, $p = .123$, Hindu children rated Hindus as considerably more Indian, $t(73) = -6.99$, $p < .001$. These findings indicate that although both Hindus and Muslims showed strong in-group preferences, only Hindus believed they were the prototypical Indians.

Implicit Religious Nationalism

While explicit religious nationalism is likely to reflect conscious construals of nationality, implicit religious nationalism may reflect less controlled associations. Figure 2 depicts children's implicit Indian = Hindu associations, with higher IAT D scores
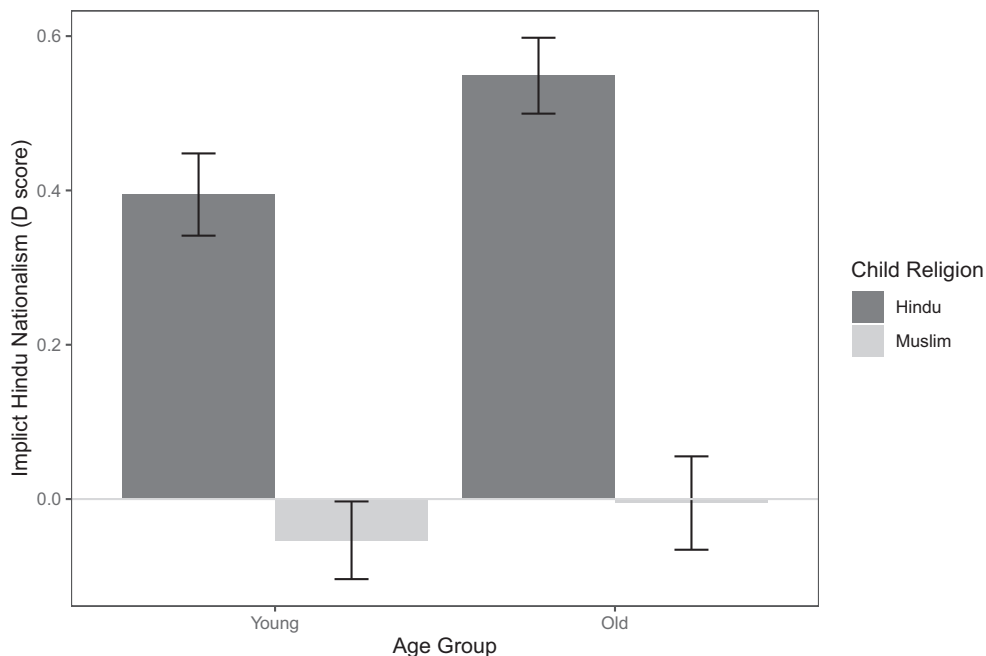

Figure 2. Implicit Indian = Hindu associations among Hindu children (dark bars) and Muslim children (light bars), with younger children on the left. Error bars represent standard error of the mean.

reflecting a stronger Indian = Hindu association. Per-haps unsurprisingly, implicit religious nationalism was correlated with explicit religious nationalism, $t(157) = 5.24$, $B = 0.15$ [0.09, 0.20], $p < .001$, $\eta^2 = .15$, $r = .386$; this did not vary as a function of age group, interaction $p > .10$ (see Appendix S1 for concerns about variable masking in subsequent models). We next conducted a linear model predicting IAT D scores from children's religion, age, gender, and their interaction. As expected, Hindu children showed a greater implicit Indian = Hindu association than Muslim children, $t(154) = -5.87$, $B = -0.44$ [−0.59, −0.29], $p < .001$, $\eta^2 = .36$. Follow-up analyses indi-cated that in contrast to Hindu children, Muslim chil-dren did not show a significant implicit religious–national associations in either age group, younger Muslims: one-sample $t(39) = -1.06$, $p = .296$, $d = 0.17$ [−0.16, 0.05]; older Muslims: one-sample $t(39) = -0.09$, $p = .933$, $d = 0.01$ [−0.13, 0.11], sugges-tive of their resilience against Hindu nationalism. Unexpectedly, we also found a significant effect of gender, $t(154) = 2.37$, $B = 0.12$ [0.02, 0.23], $p = .019$, $\eta^2 = .02$, with males showing a stronger implicit Indian = Hindu association.

Interestingly, in contrast to explicit in-group pref-erences and explicit Indian = Hindu associations, which declined with age (see sections above), impli-cit Indian = Hindu associations were higher in the older children, $t(154) = 2.04$, $B = 0.15$ [0.005, 0.30], $p = .043$, $\eta^2 = .02$, and this did not vary as a func-tion of children's religion, religion by age: $t(154) = -1.05$, $B = -0.11$ [−0.32, 0.10], $p = .230$, $\eta^2 = .00$. Thus, although explicit Indian = Hindu associations were less pronounced among older than younger Hindu children, implicit Indian = Hindu associations were pervasive for Hindu chil-dren, even increasing with age.

We next asked whether children's implicit Indian = Hindu associations could be explained by their intergroup attitudes. Although intergroup attitudes were significant predictors of children's explicit Indian = Hindu associations (see previous section), they did not predict children's implicit Indian = Hindu associations, $t(149) = -0.15$, $B = -0.003$ [−0.05, 0.04], $p = .881$, $\eta^2 = .00$. Furthermore, even with the inclusion of intergroup attitudes in the model, children's own religion was a strong predic-tor of implicit religious–national associations, $t(149) = -4.91$, $B = -0.49$ [−0.69, −0.29], $p < .001$, $\eta^2 = .38$, with Hindus showing stronger Indian = Hindu associations than Muslims. The effect of gen-der also still held, $t(149) = 2.56$, $B = 0.13$ [0.03, 0.24], $p = .011$, $\eta^2 = .02$, with males showing a stronger implicit Indian = Hindu association.

Question 2: Group Identification and Concept of Nationality

Given that Hindu—but not Muslim—children showed strong associations between being Indian and being Hindu on both explicit and implicit mea-sures, we next asked whether this association related to children's own religious and national identities and their beliefs about what it means to be Indian. How do children integrate religious–na-tional associations with these internal concepts?

Religious and National Identification

We first examined the extent to which children identified with their own religion and with being Indian. Children reported strong religious ($M = 4.53$, $SD = 0.82$) and national ($M = 4.46$, $SD = 0.80$) identification. We used separate linear regression models to examine whether religious or national identification varied by children's religion, age, or their interaction. We found that Hindu and Muslim children at both age groups did not differ significantly in their religious identification, reli-gion: $t(156) = 1.74$, $B = 0.31$ [−0.04, 0.65], $p = .084$, $\eta^2 = .07$; age: $t(156) = -1.86$, $B = -0.33$ [−0.68, 0.02], $p = .065$, $\eta^2 = .02$; religion by age: $t(156) = 1.10$, $B = 0.27$ [−0.22, 0.76], $p = .274$, $\eta^2 = .01$. How-ever, trend-level associations indicated that Muslim children tended to report more religious identifica-tion, and both Muslim and Hindu children tended to report less identification in the older age group. Similarly, Hindu and Muslim children across both age groups did not differ in the extent to which they identified with being Indian, religion: $t(156) = -0.18$, $B = 0.03$ [−0.39, 0.32], $p = .856$, $\eta^2 = .01$; age: $t(156) = -0.45$, $B = -0.08$ [−0.44, 0.28], $p = .652$, $\eta^2 = .00$; religion by age: $t(156) = 1.51$, $B = 0.29$ [−0.21, 0.79], $p = .252$, $\eta^2 = .01$. Models including children's intergroup attitudes and explicit and implicit religious nation-alism similarly showed that none of these factors were significant predictors of children's religious or national identification, all ps > .05. Thus, both Hindu and Muslim children across ages showed strong religious and national identification.

Concept of Nationality

Next, we explored what children think it means to be Indian, and whether this was associated with children's nationalist associations. Children rated the extent to which a series of items were important to being a "true Indian" on a 5-point Likert scale.

Following past work (Devos & Banaji, 2005), exploratory factor analysis was used to examine underlying correlations across the items, and factors with eigenvalues > 1 were extracted and rotated orthogonally using the Varimax method. This produced four factors, shown in Table 1. The first factor encompassed nativist conceptions of nationality, including being born in India and having parents who are from India. The second factor emphasized civic/affective aspects, such as equality and defending India. Patriotism primarily made up the third factor, and celebrating Ramzan—or Ramadan, a Muslim holiday—the fourth. To evaluate the relative importance of these factors, we calculated means for the most important items (factor loadings > 0.4) for each subject and entered these into an analysis of variance (ANOVA). Results revealed a significant main effect of factor, $F(3, 622) = 17.9$, $p < .001$. Post hoc Tukey tests revealed that civic values (F2) and patriotism (F3) were rated most important to being Indian, pairwise comparisons $p < .05$, except patriotism-nativist: diff = .24 [−0.05, 0.53], $p = .15$, followed by nativist conceptions (F1), and then celebrating Ramzan (F4), Ramzan-nativist comparison 95% CI [−0.73, −0.15], $p < .001$.

We also performed separate factor analyses for each age group, to explore whether factor structures were similar across the two groups (see Appendix S1). Results suggest that while the first two factors (nativist and civic values) were relatively stable across age groups, there was more age-related variability in the structure of the third and fourth factors. Despite these differences, supplementary analyses suggested that our group-level factor analysis explained variability in item-level data to a similar degree in each age group. Subsequent analyses employ this whole-group factor structure to allow for direct comparisons across age groups.

Next, we asked how children's concepts of nationality might vary by age and religion. Overall, children across age and religious groups tended to agree about what it meant to be a "true Indian," ps for F1, F2, F3 > .05. The only exception was that Muslim children showed higher scores for F4, the Ramzan factor, $t(156) = 5.44$, $B = 1.10$ [0.70, 2.51], $p < .001$, $\eta^2 = .14$, though these were lower in the older Muslim children, age by religion: $t(156) = −2.64$, $B = −0.75$ [−1.31, −0.19], $p = .009$, $\eta^2 = .04$. Thus, aside from placing more importance on celebrating a Muslim holiday, Muslim children held similar conceptions to Hindu children regarding what it meant to be Indian—that is, placing strong emphasis on civic values like treating people

of all religions equally—and this did not change with age.

Next, we asked whether children's intergroup attitudes, explicit and implicit religious nationalism, or identification with being Indian, were linked to their conceptions of what it means to be Indian. For the nativist (F1) and civic/affective (F2) factors, only children's identification with being Indian predicted higher factor scores, $t(147) = 3.84$, $B = 0.35$ [0.17, 0.54], $p < .001$, $\eta^2 = .08$; $t(147) = 3.16$, $B = 0.28$ [0.10, 0.46], $p = .002$, $\eta^2 = .06$, respectively, suggesting that the more children identify with being Indian the more they endorse the importance of nativist and affective/civic conceptions of nationality. Indian identification also predicted higher factor scores for the third factor, patriotism, $t(147) = 3.80$, $B = 0.36$ [0.17, 0.54], $p < .001$, $\eta^2 = .08$, as did explicit Indian = Hindu associations, $t(147) = 2.06$, $B = 0.19$ [0.01, 0.36], $p = .041$, $\eta^2 = .02$. Finally, for the fourth factor, celebrating Ramzan, Indian identification and being Muslim predicted higher scores, $t(147) = 2.27$, $B = 0.20$ [0.03, 0.38], $p = .025$, $\eta^2 = .02$; $t(147) = 2.28$, $B = 0.67$ [0.09, −1.25], $p = .024$, $\eta^2 = .13$, while explicit Indian = Hindu associations predicted lower scores, $t(147) = −2.58$, $B = −.22$ [−0.39, −0.05], $p = .011$, $\eta^2 = .06$. In addition, there was a trend-level Religion × Age interaction suggesting that older Muslim children tended to show less endorsement of this factor than younger Muslim children, $t(147) = −1.93$, $B = −0.57$ [−1.16, 0.02], $p = .056$, $\eta^2 = .02$.

Taken together, the best predictor of children's factor scores was the extent of their identification with being Indian. Thus, despite the fact that Hindu and Muslim children differed in their religious–national associations, they tended to have similar concepts of what it meant to be Indian. Interestingly, however, explicit Indian = Hindu associations predicted greater endorsement of the importance of patriotism to being Indian, suggesting that the national rhetoric linking being Indian with being Hindu may be internalized as patriotism for these children, a point we return to in the discussion. This tendency to explicitly associate being Indian with being Hindu was also linked to children's tendency to state that celebrating Ramadan was less important to being Indian.

Question 3: Beliefs About Social Policy

Finally, we asked whether children's explicit or implicit tendency to associate being Indian with being Hindu would have unique explanatory

power for understanding their attitudes toward social policy more generally. We predicted that these religious–national associations would indeed provide a useful construct for explaining children's developing beliefs about social policy, which might in turn explain their willingness to donate to Islam-, Hindu-, and secular-focused organizations.

Beliefs About Social Policy

We first explored children's beliefs about social policy. Children rated the extent to which they agreed with a series of statements about social policy on a 5-point Likert scale. Factor analysis was performed to identify correlations across items; following the same method as above, four factors were extracted (Table 2). The first two factors were related to agreement with pro-Hindu and pro-Muslim stances (e.g., the government should provide more benefits to Hindus/Muslims), respectively. The third factor related to the practice of religion in nonreligious spaces, including whether Hindu and Muslim prayers should be taught in school, and the fourth factor related to religious freedom (e.g., that no laws should prevent Hindus/Muslims from following their customs). To test the relative importance of these factors, we calculated means for the most important items (factor loadings > 0.4) for each subject and entered these into an ANOVA. Results revealed a significant main effect of factor, $F(3, 622) = 17.9$, $p < .001$. Post hoc Tukey tests revealed that children reported agreeing with items related to religious freedom (F4) the most (pro-Hindu [F1], pro-Muslim [F2], and religiosity [F3] comparisons $ps < .05$), followed by the third factor dealing with practice of religion in schools (comparisons to pro-Hindu [F1] and pro-Muslim [F2] $ps < .05$), and then the pro-Hindu (F1) and pro-Muslim (F2) stances, all pairwise comparisons $ps < .05$; pro-Muslim versus pro-Hindu comparison $p = .999$.

We also performed separate factor analyses for each age group, to explore whether factor structures were similar across the two groups (see Appendix S1). Factors involving religiosity and religious freedom appeared consistently in both age groups. However, while younger children showed a pattern of responding that grouped the pro-Hindu and pro-Muslim policy statements separately, older children tended to group them together. For the older children, one factor included agreement with statements that leaders in the Indian government should be Hindu *and* that they should be Muslim, for example, while another

included agreement with statements that both Hindu *and* Muslim songs should be performed on Independence Day. Despite this interesting difference, supplementary analyses suggested that our group-level factor analysis explained variability in item-level data to a similar degree in each age group. Subsequent analyses employ this whole-group factor structure to allow for direct comparisons across age groups.

Next, we asked how these beliefs vary with age, religion, and their interaction. Hindu children were more likely to agree with items related to the pro-Hindu factor than Muslim children, $t(156) = -6.87$, $B = -1.24$ [−1.59, −0.88], $p < .001$, $\eta^2 = .22$, and agreement with these items was reduced among older children, and older Hindu children in particular, age: $t(156) = -2.63$, $B = -0.47$ [−0.83, −0.12], $p = .001$, $\eta^2 = .00$; age by religion: $t(156) = 2.94$, $B = 0.74$ [0.24, 1.24], $p = .004$, $\eta^2 = .04$. Likewise, Muslim children agreed more with pro-Muslim statements, $t(156) = 4.06$, $B = 0.80$ [0.41, 1.19], $p < .001$, $\eta^2 = .04$, with less agreement in older Muslim, but not older Hindu, children, age: $t(156) = 0.32$, $B = 0.06$ [−0.33, 0.45], $p = .753$, $\eta^2 = .04$; age by religion $t(156) = -3.20$, $B = -0.89$ [−1.43, −0.34], $p = .002$, $\eta^2 = .06$. Participants across religions and age groups expressed similar levels of agreement with the items referring to the practice of religion in nonreligious spaces and religious freedom, $ps > .05$. When national identification, intergroup attitudes, and explicit and implicit religious nationalism were included as predictors, explicit Indian = Hindu associations predicted children's endorsement of the pro-Hindu factor above and beyond intergroup attitudes, religion, and age, $t(147) = 4.41$, $B = 0.32$ [0.17, 0.46], $p < .001$, $\eta^2 = .11$, while explicit intergroup attitudes—more liking of Muslims compared to Hindus—predicted increased agreement with the pro-Muslim factor, $t(-0.25) = -3.75$, $B = -0.25$ [−0.38, −0.12], $p < .001$, $\eta^2 = .09$. Thus, while children who reported more liking of Muslims were more likely to agree with pro-Muslim items, children's religious–national associations—in particular, the extent to which they explicitly associated being Hindu with being Indian—were uniquely predictive of their agreement with pro-Hindu items.

Support for Organizations

Finally, children were presented with descriptions of the missions of three organizations that promoted Hindu, Muslim, or secular agendas, respectively, and were asked to vote on which

organization should be donated to. As a group, children's voting allocations varied systematically as a function of the mission of the organization, F (2, 474) = 34.1, $p < .001$, $\eta^2 = .13$. Post hoc Tukey tests revealed that while there was no difference overall in votes allocated toward the Hindu- and Muslim-oriented organizations, diff = .11 [−0.51, 0.73], $p = .90$, children allocated significantly more votes to the organization advancing secular goals ($M = 4.58$) than those focused on either religion (Hindu $M = 2.65$, Muslim $M = 2.76$), pairwise comparisons ps $< .001$.

We next explored whether children's religion, age, and beliefs about social policy predicted their votes for each organization. Beliefs about social policy were quantified as children's scores on the four factors described in the previous section (Table 2). Interestingly, significant predictors of votes for donation to the Hindu organization included higher agreement with both the pro-Hindu and pro-Muslim statements, $t(151) = 4.45$, $B = 0.70$ [0.38, 1.01], $p < .001$, $\eta^2 = .12$; $t(151) = 3.10$, $B = 0.45$ [0.16, 0.73], $p = .002$, $\eta^2 = .04$, respectively, in addition to being Hindu oneself, $t(151) = -2.43$, $B = -1.04$ [−1.89, −0.19], $p = .016$, $\eta^2 = .13$. Votes for donations to the Muslim organization were also predicted by the pro-Muslim factor, $t(151) = 4.81$, $B = 0.81$ [0.48, 1.14], $p < .001$, $\eta^2 = .10$, and by being Muslim, $t(151) = 2.73$, $B = 1.37$ [0.38, 2.36], $p = .007$, $\eta^2 = .19$, but not by the Pro-Hindu factor. In addition, children who agreed more with statements that religion should be practiced in nonreligious spaces like schools cast more votes for the Muslim organization, $t(151) = 2.06$, $B = 0.31$ [0.01, 0.60], $p = .041$, $\eta^2 = .02$. Finally, the more that children endorsed the pro-Hindu and pro-Muslim factors, the fewer votes they allocated to the secular organization, $t(151) = -3,03$, $B = -0.78$ [−1.29, −0.27], $p = .003$, $\eta^2 = .08$; $t(151) = -5.33$, $B = -1.26$ [−1.73, −0.79], $p < .001$, $\eta^2 = .01$. Although not part of our primary analyses, models predicting votes for the organizations from children's religious–national associations are included in Appendix S1.

Discussion

Many political movements across the world today are attempting to define citizenship in exclusionary ethnic or religious terms. These movements have manifested in negative rhetoric and policy toward immigrants and minorities, and have coincided with a rise in hate crimes against marginalized groups. This study extends prior research on

ethnic–national associations in adults by adding to the relatively sparse literature on the development of national associations in children. Childhood may mark a period of vulnerability to exclusionary messages about nationality, but it may also be an ideal time to intervene. Children's developing national associations could affect their beliefs about the rights and treatment of minorities and thus play a role in whether communal tensions are prolonged or subside over time. Furthermore, the internalization of exclusionary nationalist associations could hold negative consequences for minority children, as it could create a conflict between their national and ethnic or religious identities. Our study addressed these issues in a sample of 9- to 16-year old children in Gujarat, India, a state bordering Pakistan that has been home to a political upsurge in Hindu nationalism and recent outbreaks of religious violence. The age range of our participants was particularly interesting in light of previous evidence that adolescence may be a sensitive period for social development. As we review in the following section, we find that Hindu children in our sample show evidence of a strong Indian = Hindu association by age 9, that Muslim children do not show this association, and that this association uniquely predicts variance in children's attitudes about social policy and their beliefs about what it means to be a true Indian.

In both our younger (9–12) and older age groups (12–16), Hindu children in our sample showed a strong bias to equate being Indian with being Hindu on both explicit and implicit measures. This is consistent with previous findings from White American children, who show an explicit American = White bias (Brown, 2011), and extends the findings of Butz and Carvalho (2015) on implicit religious–national associations to children. Our results suggest that while explicit Indian = Hindu biases decline as children get older, implicit biases may even strengthen. This is in line with work suggesting that explicit preferences for members of one's own group subside as children get older, but implicit preferences do not (Dunham et al., 2006). This may be because explicit associations reflect children's more controlled cognitive appraisals, which older children and adults come to adjust to be more egalitarian, while implicit biases reflect the less conscious internalization of broader environmental cues. It may be that children internalize these cues to a greater degree—leading to the strengthening of implicit Hindu = Indian associations—when they reach adolescence, given that social information becomes more salient during this

developmental time period. Furthermore, we find that these religious–national associations are at least partially distinct from children's intergroup attitudes (i.e., how much they like Hindus vs. Muslims).

Importantly, children's tendency to explicitly link being Indian with being Hindu also uniquely predicted their views about what it means to be Indian, and the rights and treatment of Muslim citizens in their country, consistent with evidence from adults in other countries (Verkuyten, 2009; Yogeeswaran & Dasgupta, 2010). Specifically, the more children equated being Indian with being Hindu, the more they thought patriotism was important to being a true Indian. Furthermore, we found that children who endorsed more explicit Indian = Hindu associations were more likely to agree with pro-Hindu policy statements, such as, "Leaders in the Indian government should be Hindu." Finally, the extent to which children agreed with pro-Hindu statements like this predicted their support of an organization advancing a Hindu mission. Together, these findings suggest that the internalization of religious–national associations in young children could exacerbate communal tensions within the country, and point to the importance of intervention in early childhood.

We were particularly interested in whether Muslim children in our sample, like their Hindu peers, would exhibit an Indian = Hindu bias, and if so, how this might relate to their identification with being Indian and being Muslim. Strikingly, Muslim children did not show an Indian = Hindu bias in either age group, on either explicit or implicit measures. Additionally, Muslim children of all ages strongly identified with both being Indian and their religion, and showed a clear in-group preference for Muslims compared to Hindus. We suspect that the Muslim children that we studied may not experience a conflict between their national and religious identities because they do not internalize an Indian = Hindu association. At the same time, the fact that Muslim children showed a strong in-group preference but did not show a bias to link being Indian with being Muslim—with the exception of younger Muslim children on our explicit measure— may reflect these children's awareness of their minority status within India.

These findings from Muslim children are important because they suggest that Muslim children have not internalized the societal stigma and manifestations of Hindu nationalism that are prevalent in their wider context. Notably, these findings contrast with evidence that members of some minority groups associate nationality with the majority group (e.g., such that Asian Americans associate being American with being White; Devos & Banaji, 2005), as well as evidence that minority individuals experience internal conflicts that lead them to de-identify either with their national or group identity (Rodriguez et al., 2010; Sidanuis et al., 1997), with negative consequences for their well-being and other outcomes. However, the fact that Muslim children in our study maintained strong religious *and* national identities aligns with other evidence that members of minority groups sometimes find ways around identity conflicts—that they may be able to buffer their personal identities, even when they know that their group is stereotyped or stigmatized (Devos & Mohamed, 2014). Furthermore, that the Muslim children in our sample exhibited a strong in-group bias replicates previous findings from this population (Dunham et al., 2014), and contrasts with previous reports that children from minority groups often fail to show an in-group bias and sometimes even show a bias in favor of the majority out-group (Jost et al., 2004; Newheiser et al., 2014; Newheiser & Olson, 2012).

The most pressing question raised by our findings is how children come to develop ethnic- or religious–national associations and what conditions might insulate them from internalizing these associations. Why, for example, did the Hindu children in our study exhibit explicit and implicit biases to equate being Indian with being Hindu? Do such biases inevitably develop in children from any majority group or do they reflect some form of cultural mediation? And what accounts for why Muslim children in our study were buffered from developing an Indian = Hindu bias?

One possibility is that population statistics explain whether children will develop an Indian = Hindu bias. For example, the Hindu children in our sample may believe they are more prototypical Indians because Muslims make up only about 10% percent of the population in their city, and < 15% in India more broadly (Hamid et al., 2006). Indeed, evidence suggests that adults rely on statistical cues when making judgments about who is more likely to be a member of a particular group (Cao & Banaji, 2016; Cao, Kleiman-Weiner, & Banaji, 2018). In this view, Muslim children might be buffered from developing an Indian = Hindu association if they experience a different set of statistics than Hindu children. It is possible that Muslim children live in segregated neighborhoods where they are just as likely to see Muslims and Hindus (Jaffrelot & Laliwala, 2018); furthermore,

the diversity of the school from which we recruited our participants—it enrolls an even proportion of Muslim and Hindu students—may also work against the statistical inference for Muslims that they are the minorities. Future research could assess the role of population statistics by exploring whether diversity in children's schools and neighborhoods relate to the internalization of an Indian = Hindu bias. Given evidence from other work that implicit associations are more likely to follow statistical environmental cues while explicit associations tend to reflect beliefs about fairness (Cao & Banaji, 2016), these cues may be particularly likely to impact on children's implicit—though perhaps not their explicit—religious–national associations.

A second possibility is that internalization of an Indian = Hindu association goes beyond population statistics and is culturally mediated. For example, Hindu children might internalize this bias because of testimony they hear from their friends and family (Harris, Koenig, Corriveau, & Jaswal, 2018). Children may also be sensitive to messages in the media, statements made by political leaders, and evidence of religiously motivated politicization. For example, laws codifying Hindu but not Muslim religious practices (e.g., laws prohibiting cattle slaughter) might lead children to believe that individuals who abide by Muslim rules (e.g., according to which it is permissible to eat beef) are less Indian. Compared to Hindu children, Muslim children may be less exposed to culturally mediated messages that support an Indian = Hindu association, and may receive messages that contest this association (e.g., from their family and community members), helping to explain why Hindu but not Muslim children exhibited this bias in our study. Future studies could begin to tease apart the relative contribution of statistics and cultural mediation by comparing children growing up in settings marked by ethnic or religious nationalism to those growing up in comparably diverse settings free from such tension, or by longitudinally tracing changes in children's religious–national associations in settings where there have been recent political shifts. This more cognitively mediated association may be particularly likely to show up on children's explicit religious–national associations, as explicit associations may be more sensitive to cognitive appraisal. However, there is also evidence that power hierarchies can shape implicit religious–national associations, which in turn reinforce those hierarchies (Devos & Mohamed, 2014).

Finally, both statistics and cultural mediation could interact with children's own cognitive biases to make them particularly susceptible to developing ethnic or religious nationalist attitudes. For example, young children are more likely than older children to think that members of a social group (e.g., Muslims or Indians) share a common underlying fixed and inherent *essence* that causes them to be similar to each other (Taylor, Rhodes, & Gelman, 2009). A consequence of this cognitive bias is that members of different social groups are viewed as fundamentally different in kind. Social essentialism thus draws children's attention to the distinction between groups and not to the considerable heterogeneity within groups and, as a result, the flexibility of group membership itself (Roberts, Ho, Rhodes, & Gelman, 2017). Thus, if children believe that all Indians share an underlying common nature, this may make them susceptible to believing that all Indians will be (or should be) similar in important ways—such as being Hindu. In support of this possibility, studies show that the more that adults essentialize a social group, the more they support the enforcement of prescriptive rules about group membership (Meyer & Gelman, 2016; Roberts et al., 2017), and that adults with higher essentialist biases are less supportive of ethnic nationalist diversity and immigration (Rad & Ginges, 2018), more supportive of assimilation (Bastian & Haslam, 2008) and less willing to help asylum seekers (Pehrson, Brown, & Zagefka, 2009). Recent evidence suggests that children aged 5 to 9 in both the United States and Turkey do essentialize nationality (Davoodi, Soley, Harris, & Blake, 2019). Younger children may be particularly likely to essentialize members of their own nation and other nations, with a reduction in this tendency from ages 5 to 11 (Barrett, 2000). Furthermore, one recent study showed that American children's tendency to essentialize nationality is correlated with their support of global inequalities that favor the United States (Hussak & Cimpian, 2019), providing evidence that essentialism might shape children's developing attitudes about social policy. Future research could directly measure the relation between children's tendency to essentialize their national and religious or ethnic groups and their internalization of ethnic or religious nationalist associations.

Our findings also leave open how the internalization of an Indian = Hindu bias causally relates to children's beliefs about what it means to be a citizen of their country and their attitudes toward social policy. Perhaps believing that Hindu Indians

are more Indian than Muslim Indians leads children to think that Hindus deserve better treatment. It is also possible that the causality goes in the opposite direction, or that these attitudes have a common cause in children's environments or cognitive biases. For example, we find that Indian = Hindu associations are linked to children's attitudes about the importance of patriotism to being Indian. Interestingly, this contrasts with some previous evidence that people high in patriotism have more positive attitudes toward out-group members (e.g., Blank & Schmidt, 2003; Viki & Calitri, 2008). The relation between patriotism and intergroup attitudes seems to depend critically on how nationalism is conceptualized: when people adopt an exclusionary nationalistic view, this leads to an opposite, *negative* relation between patriotism and out-group tolerance (Li & Brewer, 2004), more in line with the current findings. Thus, one possible explanation for this result is that patriotism, as it is promulgated by family, media, or political leaders in India, may also be associated with exclusionary rhetoric linking being Indian to being Hindu. Future research is needed to examine whether believing that one's group is representative of the nation entails support for policy that favors one's group over other national subgroups. Longitudinal studies could also help establish the temporal relations between children's developing Indian = Hindu attitudes and their developing concepts of nationality and beliefs about social policy. Establishing the cause of religious nationalist associations will be an important next step, which could inform new policies toward reducing national tensions.

Regardless of the cause, being in an environment where many of a child's peers believe them to be a less typical member of their own nation is likely to have psychological consequences, above and beyond identification with their religious and national identities. For example, one might expect that there would be less social cohesion between Hindu and Muslim children as a result of the internalization of an Indian = Hindu association among Hindu children. Indeed, ongoing work from the school we studied demonstrates that children's friendship networks are quite segregated on the basis of religion, and that this is in turn related to children's explicit intergroup attitudes and identification with their group (Dunham & Srinivasan, 2019). This presents preliminary evidence that the internalization of religious nationalist associations can co-occur with social segregation of religious groups. Clearly, future work is needed to more directly address how exclusionary concepts of

nationality affect the social cohesion and psychological well-being of members of excluded groups.

We emphasize that our findings should be taken in the context in which our study was conducted. Research suggests that the development of national awareness and identification varies depending on the country in which children live (Barrett & Oppenheimer, 2011). Moreover, the children's school itself may have been an important factor in our results, in its equal representation of Hindu and Muslim students and in its commitment to religious freedom (e.g., Muslim and Hindu prayers are sung each day in school). Our data should not be taken to make any claims about the development of religious–national associations in India as a whole; rather, our findings show that even in a region with a history of religious conflicts, and among children who exhibit intergroup religious bias, it is possible for minority children to develop inclusive associations and beliefs what it means to be a citizen of their country. In addition, while our results suggest that it is unlikely that children of different age groups interpreted our questions differently, this is a possibility that we cannot fully rule out. It is also important to note that although we examined two separate age groups as a proxy for changes over development, our study was not longitudinal and therefore cannot rule out cohort effects, which are plausible given the rapid political changes related to Hindu nationalism in recent years. Exploring how an individual's beliefs change over time—and what developmental or environmental shifts may contribute to these changes—is a crucial next step.

Conclusion

Across the world today, there is a growing trend of political movements that link nationality to the dominant ethnic or religious group, resulting in increasingly exclusionary social policies toward minorities. From the United States and Hungary, to the Philippines and India, examples of governments touting exclusionary nationalistic concepts are widespread. We studied the development of these associations in the state of Gujarat, India, itself a site of recent religious conflict between Muslims and Hindus. This is among the first studies to explore the psychological consequences of ethnic or religious nationalism outside of a western context, and is the first to explicitly probe how exclusionary national attitudes might develop in minority children in particular. We found that while majority Hindu children conflate being Hindu with being Indian by age 9, minority Muslim children appear

to be buffered from developing this association. Moreover, children's explicit religious–national associations uniquely predicted their support of exclusionary social policy and their beliefs about what it means to be Indian, above and beyond their intergroup attitudes. Although our findings suggest that exclusionary concepts of nationality can be internalized by majority children early in life, they also lend hope to the possibility that minority children can maintain healthy identification with both their nationality and their religious or ethnic group even in a region with a history of communal conflict. Future work is needed to understand how religious and ethnic–national associations develop and what factors promote resilience among minority children.

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Supporting Information

Additional supporting information may be found in the online version of this article at the publisher's website:

Appendix S1. Supplementary analyses.