



Examining the Effects of Group Mentality on the Creation or Prevention of Social Violence

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Abstract

This study examines the role of the group mentality in the formation or prevention of social violence in the light of the current literature. Group mentality expresses the tendency of individuals to adapt to the norms, values and purposes of a group, and this phenomenon can be on the basis of both peaceful and violent social behaviors (Tajfel & Turner, 1986). The literature shows that the group mentality has a two-way potential: on the one hand, it can trigger violence through mechanisms such as polarization, separation of us and anonymity; On the other hand, it can prevent violence through common identity construction, establishment of positive group norms and peaceful leadership models (Gaertner & Dovidio, 2000; Reicher, 2001). In the study, social identity theory, mass psychology approach and normative behavior models were used as basic theoretical frameworks (Cialdini & Throst, 1998; Le Bon, 2001). Historical and current case analyzes - for example, the 1994 Rwanda Genocide and Gandhi's Satyagrah Movement - Group mentality clearly demonstrate that violence can be both the provocative and the preventive. The example of Rwanda shows how extreme nationalism and hate speech can shape group norms in the direction of violence; The Satyagraha Movement proves that the same mechanism can enable social change within the framework of peaceful values. The study emphasizes the necessity of taking into account the dynamics of group mentality in strategies to prevent social violence. In this context, among the main strategies proposed for policy makers, security forces and non-governmental organizations; Strengthening group norms based on nonviolence, reducing the othering language, supporting common identity projects and encouraging peaceful leadership models. As a result, the group mentality is an effective social tool in preventing violence when it is directed correctly; When misleading, it can be the feeder of violence.

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Introduction

Social violence is one of the most complex and destructive social phenomena of modern societies. Violence; It can emerge in a wide range of explosions of anger, to organized crime activities and mass conflicts. However, in particular, the violence actions that occur on a mass scale cannot be explained only by individual psychological processes; On the contrary, there are deep effects of group dynamics, collective identities and social context (Reicher, 2001) ^[21]. In this context, the concept of group mentality provides a critical analytical framework in understanding both the formation and prevention of social violence.

The group mentality refers to the tendency to adapt to the norms, values and behavioral patterns of the group to which they belong. According to the theory of social identity (Tajfel & Turner, 1986) [24], people derive a significant portion of their self-perceptions from their memberships to social groups. This may sharpen the distinction between “we” and “them” and prepare the ground for the increase in prejudices, marginalization and even aggression. As a matter of fact, the literature shows that the group mentality can strengthen the tendency of violence through mechanisms such as polarization (Moscovici & Zavalloni, 1969) [18], Anonymity and Responsibility (Le Bon, 2001) [14]. However, group mentality is not only an element that triggers violence; It can also be a strong means of violence. Factors such as joint identity construction, encouragement of positive norms and peaceful leadership can shape the group mentality in the direction of social harmony and peace (Gaertner & Dovidio, 2000) [11]. Historically, examples such as Gandhi's Satyagrah Movement or the Truth and Reconciliation Commission in South Africa have demonstrated the critical role of group mentality in social transformation based on violence. This study examines the two-way effect of group mentality in the creation or prevention of social violence from a theoretical perspective. Research scans the literature within the framework of social identity theory, mass psychology and normative behavior models; It reveals the multidimensional nature of the concept by taking advantage of both historical and current case analyzes. Thus, a comprehensive theoretical ground is presented to understand the role of group mentality in the strategies of violence for policy makers, security forces and non-governmental organizations.

2. Theoretical Framework

Understanding the effects of group mentality on social violence requires not only sociological, but also social psychological theories in a holistic way. In this context, social identity theory, mass psychology approach and normative behavior models form the theoretical basis of the study. These three approaches allow them to understand both violence and anti-violent functions of group dynamics.

The theory of Social Identity is an important theory of social psychology developed by Henri Tajfel and John Turner, which argues that individual's self-perceptions derive not only from their personal characteristics but also from social groups they belong to (Tajfel & Turner, 1986) [24]. According to this approach, people make sense of the world by dividing themselves and others into social categories; These categories are shaped on the basis of the distinction between in-group and “external group” (Out-Group). Individuals tend to evaluate their internal groups positively, and this strengthens their self-esteem. However, the same process can prepare the ground for the development of prejudice, discrimination and hostility towards external groups. The literature shows that this distinction plays a critical role in the context of social violence; Because the positive discrimination in favor of the internal group, the labeling of the external group with negative qualities and even with the dehumanization, aggressive actions may be legitimized (Haslam, 2006) [12]. In many of the social conflicts, especially in ethnic, religious or political-based ones, the identity of group identity has strengthened the psychological infrastructure of violence. However, the theory of social identity offers significant strategic clues for the prevention of violence. The common

upper identity model of Gaertner and Dovidio (2000) [11] shows that creating an inclusive identity between conflicting groups can reduce and increase cooperation. Thus, group mentality can only become a transformative tool in the construction of peaceful social relations, but not only a structure with the capacity to produce conflict and violence. In this respect, the theory of social identity offers a bidirectional framework that reveals both risk factors and solutions in understanding the relationship between group mentality and social violence.

Mass psychology is a social psychology approach that explains that the behaviors of individuals in crowds are shaped differently because they are alone. Gustave Le Bon (2001) [14], who laid the basis of the concept, argued that individuals have temporarily lost their individual identity by anonymous in the crowd and as a result, their thoughts and behaviors were away from rationality and under the influence of emotions. According to Le Bon, this anonymity leads to a decrease in the feeling of personal responsibility and to turn to aggressive or illegal actions that individuals normally do not normally exhibit. It refers to the process of rapid spread of intense emotions such as emotional contagion, anger, fear or enthusiasm, one of the important elements of mass psychology. This mechanism can be observed in many contexts from hooliganism in sports competitions to the transformation of mass protests into violence (Reicher, 2001) [21]. However, mass psychology is not only a framework that explains violence; It also contains strategic tips that can be used to prevent violence. Drury and Reicher's (2005) [8] studies have shown that the discourses and actions of leaders or norm determinants in the mass play a critical role in converting the direction of the crowd to peaceful or violent actions. The effort to shape the inclusive, nonviolent language and intra-group norms used by the leader in this direction may prevent mass anger from turning into violence. Therefore, mass psychology is indispensable for understanding how the group mentality works in a mass dimension; It reveals both the mechanisms of anonymity and emotional intensity that feed violence and how these mechanisms can be re-directed for peaceful purposes.

Normative behavior models are social psychology approaches that explain the tendency to comply with social norms that determine which behaviors are not appropriate or appropriate in social life. As Cialdini and Trost (1998) [5] describe, norms are in two basic ways: descriptive norms (descriptive norms) consist of observations of what the majority is actually doing; Injunctive norms express common convictions about which behaviors the society approves or approves. These norms can strongly direct the behavior of individuals because complying with norms is perceived as a prerequisite for social acceptance, and incompatible is a prerequisite for social exclusion. Normative behavior models in the context of social violence have a two-way effect. If the norms that dominate within the group justify violence - for example, “attacks against the enemy group is honorable” or “justified anger justifies violence - individuals can participate in violence actions to adapt to these norms. This may occur, especially in communities with dense group commitment, even if it contradicts the personal values of individuals. On the other hand, when group norms are focused on cooperation, empathy and peaceful solution, their tendency to violence is greatly reduced. Research shows that consciously redefining and dissemination of norms is an

effective strategy for long-term social transformation (Tankard & Paluck, 2016) [25]. Normative interventions, media campaigns, educational programs and leadership discourses can instill new values to group members. In this respect, normative behavior models are a critical conceptual tool in understanding the relationship between group mindset and violence; Because it allows us to analyze both the social rules that feed violence and how to build new norms based on violence.

Inter-theories interaction is critical to understanding the effects of group mentality on social violence in a holistic way. The theory of social identity stated that individuals strengthen their group belonging by dividing themselves into “we” and “them”; It reveals that this process is decisive in the formation of group norms (Tajfel & Turner, 1986) [24]. At this point, normative behavior models come into play and explain the router power of the norms shaped around these identities on individuals (Cialdini & Trost, 1998) [5]. Group norms may legitimize violence or on the contrary, reinforce peaceful values. Mass psychology allows us to understand how these processes are accelerated and spread in a mass dimension (Le Bon, 2001; Reicher, 2001) [14, 21]. In particular, mechanisms such as emotional contamination, anonymity and disintegration of responsibility cause group identity and norms to strengthen on a mass scale. When these three theoretical approaches are taken together, how the group mentality can trigger violence becomes clear: when a strong internal group identity is combined with norms that support violence and supported by anonymity in the mass environment, violence tendency rapidly increases. However, the same interaction can work in the opposite direction. Construction of common upper identity, strengthening the norms of non-violence and reinforcing these values of the mass leadership can channel the group mentality to peaceful purposes (Gaertner & Dovidio, 2000; Drury & Reicher, 2005) [11, 8, 21]. Therefore, evaluating these three theories together not only understands the causes of violence, but also allows the design of effective violence prevention strategies.

3. Group Mentality's Mechanisms that Trigger Violence

The severity of the group mentality includes the mechanisms of triggering, the dynamics that are frequently emphasized in the literature of social psychology and social conflict. At the beginning of these mechanisms, the phenomenon of polarization is the phenomenon of polarization. As Moscovici and Zavalloni (1969) [18] put forward, intra-group discussions often strengthen the existing tendencies of the members and push them into more extreme views. This may lead to sharpening of violence, especially in environments fed by strong emotions such as anger, fear or insecurity. The second important mechanism is the distinction between us-gentlemen (In-Group, etc. Out-Group Distinction). According to the theory of social identity (Tajfel & Turner, 1986) [24], group members may perceive the external group as a threat element to protect and glorify their own identities. This perception of threat can legitimize aggression both psychologically and morally. The third mechanism is the distribution of anonymity and responsibility. From the perspective of mass psychology, the personal identity of individuals in the crowded environment becomes faded, the sense of accountability weakens and this makes it easier for individuals to perform aggressive actions that they do not

exhibit under normal conditions (Le Bon, 2001; Reicher, 2001) [14, 21]. These three mechanisms often nourish each other: polarization strengthens the distinction between us and them; This distinction leads to the formation of aggressive norms; Anonymity plays a facilitating role in the transformation of these norms into actual violence. Historically, ethnic conflicts, football hooliganism and political mass movements offer striking examples of how these mechanisms can quickly climb violence in the event of interaction. Therefore, understanding the creative potential of violence of group mentality requires in-depth analysis how these mechanisms work both at the individual and social level.

The severity of the group mentality triggers mechanisms, rather than individual tendencies alone, receive power from the combination of social context and group dynamics. At this point, social comparison processes (Festinger, 1954) [9] play an important role. Group members tend to adapt to the general tendency of the group by comparing their position and behavior with other members. If this general tendency is in violence, individuals may adopt aggressive behaviors to get social approval. The polarization process further strengthens this tendency. Radical ideas in the group become normal as a result of group debates and become the center. Especially in times of crisis, fear and uncertainty accelerates this polarization and carries the group to extreme ends (Isenberg, 1986) [13]. This creates a psychological basis that legitimizes both defense and aggressive violence. The distinction of us-on is not limited to identity-based prejudices; It is also fed by resource competition, historical hostilities and political manipulations. According to the theory of Realistic Conflict (Sherif, 1966) [22], the competition on limited sources increases hostility towards the external group. When this perception of competition is kept alive through the discourses of the media or leaders, the potential of violence increases further. The mechanism of anonymity and responsibility distribution is one of the most dangerous elements of mass psychology. The concept of deindividuation is observed not only in crowded environments but also on online platforms (Postmes & Spears, 1998) [20]. Social media can rapidly spread hate speech and digital violence by facilitating the organization of groups in anonymity. This may play a triggering role in the transformation of online violence into physical violence. Historically, the combination of these mechanisms has a critical threshold in the climbing of violence. In the 1994 Rwanda Genocide, the systematic exclusion of the enemy group through radio broadcasts fed both polarization and aggressive norms; It has led to the legitimacy of the violence actions carried out in mass anonymity (Straus, 2006) [23]. Similarly, in some sports competitions, supporters of the supporters of supporters, organized violence against rival groups to protect and glorify their identity, are examples of small but intensive observation of the triggering mechanisms of the group mentality. As a result, understanding the producer potential of the group mentality requires analyzing how these mechanisms work not only in the theoretical framework, but also in historical, cultural and technological contexts. This analysis is also critical to determine which intervention points can be used strategically to prevent violence.

4. Group Mentality's Mechanisms to Prevent Violence

Preventive mechanisms of the group mentality include psychosocial processes that can play a critical role in the construction of social peace. At the beginning of these mechanisms is the strengthening of positive group norms. According to normative behavioral models (Cialdini & Trost, 1998)^[5], group members adapt to group norms to be socially accepted; If these norms are based on non-violence, empathy and cooperation, members tend to avoid violence. The second important mechanism is the Common Identity of Common Identity). This model, developed by Gaertner and Dovidio (2000)^[11], reveals that creating an inclusive identity between conflicting groups encourages peaceful relationships by reducing prejudice and hostility. The third mechanism is leadership and role model effect. Leaders have a strong effect on determining group norms and collective behavior orientations; Inclusive, fair and peaceful leadership understanding can channel the group mentality to unvoyage (Drury & Reicher, 2005)^[8, 21]. These mechanisms take power not only from the change of individual consciousness in the prevention of social violence, but also from the restructuring of intra-group dynamics. For example, the process of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission in South Africa has shown that social peace can be restored even after the experience of heavy violence in the past when the common identity construction and positive norms work together. Therefore, the potential to prevent violence of group mentality, the conscious transformation of norms, strengthening the inclusive identity frames and adopting peaceful leadership strategies can be revealed effectively. Preventive mechanisms of the group mentality are critical not only in terms of protecting social peace, but also in the context of providing long-term social stability. The most decisive factor in these processes is that group members have a social climate that rewarded nonviolent behaviors and punishes violence. According to the theory of social learning (Bandura, 1977)^[11], individuals tend to model the behaviors that they observe and reinforce positively in the group. Therefore, the norms of non-violence should not only be emphasized verbally, but also in the routine practices of daily life. Construction of common upper identity is a powerful tool for ensuring permanent peace in post-conflict societies. The conflict solution literature has shown that in identity-based conflicts, the parties can approach peace not only with interest-oriented negotiations, but also with identity reframing processes (Bar-Tal, 2000)^[2]. In this context, the visible of inclusive symbols, common commemoration ceremonies and shared cultural values reduces hostility by expanding the perception of "we". The leadership factor can be decisive both in short-term crisis management and in long-term norm transformation. The charismatic or transformative leadership style allows group members to redefine their moral values and act for peaceful purposes (Bass & Riggio, 2006)^[3]. Especially in mass protests or crisis periods, the languages and symbols used by leaders are one of the main variables that determine whether collective behavior will evolve in the direction of violence or peace. In addition, it should be noted that media and communication tools have a significant impact on these mechanisms. The dissemination of positive group norms and the support of common identity construction, the use of the media conscious language, the prominence of non-violent stories and the visible examples of social achievement (Paluck & Green,

2009)^[19]. Such communication strategies are particularly effective in achieving wide audiences and accelerating normative change. Finally, in order to sustain the potential of violence of the group mentality, these mechanisms must be supported not only in moments of crisis but also in stable periods. Structures such as educational programs, youth leadership camps, civil society initiatives and local peace networks enable peaceful group norms to transfer inter-generations to gain a permanent place in social memory. Thus, group mentality is not only a reactive means of preventing violence, but a proactive social solidarity and peace building mechanism.

5. Case Analysis

When historical and current events are examined to understand the effects of group mentality on the creation or prevention of social violence, two striking examples stand out: 1994 Rwanda Genocide and Mahatma Gandhi's Satyagrah Movement. These two cases show that the same psychosocial mechanisms can work in different directions and lead to large-scale violence or peaceful social transformation. Rwanda Genocide (1994) is one of the most dramatic examples of how the group mentality can trigger violence. The historical tension between the majority of Hutu and the Tutsi minority has been fed by economic inequalities, colonial heritage and political manipulations over the years; The distinction of "us-them" has been sharpened (Mamdani, 2001)^[15]. Prior to the genocide, the prisoners were systematically defined by non-human terms such as "pest" through radio broadcasts and political discourses, which accelerated the process of dehumanization. Polarization has prepared the ground for the formation of group norms that support violence; The disintegration of anonymity and responsibility paved the way for mass aggression. In about 100 days, more than 800,000 tutsi and moderate Hutu were massacred; This process has shown how the triggering mechanisms of the group mentality can reach fatal dimensions with state support, media propaganda and leadership manipulation (Straus, 2006)^[23]. On the other hand, Mahatma Gandhi's Satyagrah Movement presents a strong example of the potential of the group mindset. Gandhi built his struggle for independence against the colonial administration of the British colonial administration, on the principles of non-violence (Ahimsa) and the commitment to the truth (Satyagraha) (Bondurant, 1988)^[4]. Here, group norms are based on passive resistance, civil disobedience and collective discipline instead of aggression. The construction of common upper identity has been a unifying element not only between Hindus and Muslims, but also between different caste and ethnic groups. Gandhi's charismatic leadership motivated group members to strictly adhere to the norms of nonviolence; Thus, a large-scale national movement was able to create social and political change without being dragged into serious mass conflicts. When these two cases are evaluated together, it is seen that the direction of the group mentality - violence or peace - is largely determined by the leadership style, the content of norms and the use of communication channels. In the case of Rwanda, hate speech and marginalizing language reinforce group mentality in the direction of violence; In the case of Satyagraha, inclusive language and moral values have strengthened the group mentality in peace. This reveals the critical importance of the correct management of factors that

shape the group mentality in the fight against social violence. The examples of Rwanda Genocide and Satyagraha Movement show that the direction of the group mentality is strongly influenced by not only the internal psychological processes, but also from the way of use of historical context, political structure and communication tools. In Rwanda, propaganda tools - especially radio broadcasts - systematically produced hate speech, has made the group mentality in the direction of violence. This reveals how strong the media and communication channels can be not only in the transmission of information, but also in the determination of group norms and in shaping collective emotions (des Forges, 1999) ^[7]. The propaganda not only reinforces the distinction of “we-on, but also made it easier for individuals to participate in the violence of individuals by showing aggression as a moral task. In Gandhi's Satyagraha movement, the same communication tools were used in the opposite direction. Gandhi used press, rallies and directly intra-communal communication channels to spread and reinforce the principles of non-violence. Thus, group mentality is shaped around the demand for justice and solidarity rather than anger against the other party. The role of leadership here was not limited to the charismatic effect, but also led to the continuous reproduction of the collective moral framework. This strategy shows that leadership in social movements may be both the norm producer and the norm reinforcement (Morris, 2000) ^[17]. One of the main differences between these two cases is the institutional context in which the group mentality is shaped. In Rwanda, the state apparatus fed a norm structure that supports hate speech and violence; In Satyagraha, leadership has opened space for the strengthening of peaceful norms with civil society support. This shows that state policies and legal framework play a critical role in determining the direction of the group mentality. When legal mechanisms are deterrent to hate speech and call for violence, group norms can be shaped in parallel. In addition, both cases reveal the effect of group mentality on long-term social memory. While the traumas in Rwanda continue to feed the tensions based on generations of insecurity and identity-based tensions; The principle of non-violence of Satyagraha continues to exist as an important historical heritage in India's national identity. This shows that the group mentality can shape not only short-term collective behaviors, but also the system of values transferred between generations. As a result, case analysis shows that there are three critical intervention areas to change the direction of the group mentality: (1) The quality of leadership and discourse strategies, (2) The use of communication tools and media, (3) The quality of legal and institutional arrangements. These elements are the main factors that determine the fine line between a group of mentality that feeds violence and a group of mentality that prevents violence.

6. Epistemic Resistance and Alternative Knowledge Production

Epistemic resistance refers to the process of sharing with real and fair information against the dominant knowledge regimes, prejudiced narratives and manipulative discourses (Medina, 2013) ^[16]. Considering the effect of group mentality on social violence, the control and transmission of information sources play a critical role in shaping collective perceptions. The dominant groups can direct the flow of knowledge through media, education system and political

discourses; This can feed violence by strengthening marginalizing narratives. At this point, the epistemic resistance serves as a preventive, multi-voice and inclusive information forms in front of false information and prejudiced discourses. Alternative information production is not limited to academic knowledge; The experiences of local communities, field observations of non-governmental organizations and findings of independent journalism are also part of this process. For example, during the Rwanda Genocide, the international media has largely conveyed events inadequate and late, but the independent information networks of local journalists and witnesses delivered faster and realistic information to the outside world (Thompson, 2007) ^[26]. Similarly, in Gandhi's Satyagraha movement, alternative information channels were created against the propaganda device of the British colonial administration through public meetings, manuscripts and independent press. Such strategies prevented the manipulation of the group mentality in the direction of violence, but rather spread the norms of non-violence. Epistemic resistance includes not only the correction of false information, but also the elimination of the epistemic injustice (Fricker, 2007) ^[10]. Information injustice is the process of invalidation or valuation of certain groups - such as ethnic minorities or women - experiences and perspectives. This may lead to shaping the group mentality in a narrow frame, deepening of marginalization and normalization of violence. The production of alternative information makes the sounds and experiences of different social groups visible, diversifying collective perception and reduces polarization. In practice, epistemic resistance and alternative information production can be supported by various tools: strengthening independent media platforms, critical media literacy trainings, community-based research, open data policies and establishment of verification networks on social media. For example, independent radio stations established during the Bosnian War tried to limit the effect of war propaganda by sharing real-time information against disinformation (Cushman, 2003) ^[6]. As a result, the production of epistemic resistance and alternative information is a strategic field of intervention to weaken the mechanisms of the group mentality and to strengthen its preventive mechanisms. To ensure the pluralism of knowledge is a vital necessity not only for the order of democratic society, but also for the sustainability of social peace.

7. Argument

This study revealed that the group mentality has a bidirectional potential both as a trigger and preventive of social violence. Theoretical frameworks such as social identity theory, mass psychology and normative behavior models offer a strong analytical ground in understanding the mechanisms of the functioning of the group mentality. In the literature, although these theories are generally handled separately, this article evaluated these approaches as holistic and emphasized the interaction between them. The interaction between theories is critical in terms of understanding the conditions under which the group mentality can fuel violence and under which conditions it can serve peace. Case analyzes have shown the practical equivalent of theoretical debates concretely. The example of the Rwanda genocide shows how the group mentality can turn into a deadly spiral of violence through mechanisms such

as polarization, separation of us, anonymity and responsibility. In this case, the role of state apparatus and the role of the media organs in the production and spread of hate speech clearly revealed how the direction of the group mentality is shaped by leadership, propaganda and institutional structure (Straus, 2006)^[23]. On the other hand, Gandhi's Satyagrah Movement shows that the same psychosocial mechanisms can create rooted social transformations when they are directed to peaceful purposes - strong group identity, collective norms and mass mobilization. Here, leadership, norm production and communication strategies have been decisive in the mass internalization of norms of nonviolence (Bondurant, 1988)^[4]. The production of epistemic resistance and alternative information serves as an important bridge between these two ends. Right, pluralistic and inclusive information flow can prevent the group mentality from hardening in the direction of violence through manipulative discourses. In this context, the elimination of information injustice and the announcement of the sounds of different social groups contribute not only to the process of democratization, but also to the construction of social peace (Fricker, 2007; Medina, 2013)^[10, 16]. However, the transformation of the group mentality in a preventive direction should not be limited to short-term interventions. The transformation of norms, leadership and information ecosystem should be supported by long-term corporate regulations, educational programs and cultural change strategies. Otherwise, mechanisms that trigger violence during crisis periods may be re-enabled. Furthermore, the capacity of social media to rapidly spread both violent and pro-peace group mentality in the digital age requires that strategies in this field to be designed to include online platforms (Postmes & Spears, 1998)^[20]. As a result, group mentality alone is neither positive nor negative; It is the normative, leadership and epistemic context that determines its direction. Therefore, in order to prevent social violence, these contexts need to be handled with a holistic approach. This study offers a framework that can contribute to both academic literature and the strategic planning of policy makers by revealing the multidimensional nature of the group mentality.

8. Conclusion

This study examined the critical role of the group mentality in the creation or prevention of social violence through theoretical approaches and case analyzes. Social identity theory, mass psychology and normative behavior models have provided a strong conceptual framework to understand the intensity and preventive mechanisms of group mindset. The togetherness of these theories shows that group dynamics shape not only individual attitudes and behaviors, but also the collective movements of violence or peace on a social scale. Case analyzes have shown the two-way potential of the group mentality. The example of the Rwanda genocide shows how violence can be organized on a mass scale through leadership manipulation, hate speech and propaganda; Gandhi's Satyagrah Movement is proof that strong group identity and positive norms can create a violent social transformation. These opposing examples have shown that the factors that determine the direction of the group mentality - the style of leadership, the content of norms, the structure of the information ecosystem and the communication strategies - have strategic intervention areas in preventing violence.

Epistemic resistance and alternative information production stands out as a critical protective mechanism in this context. The elimination of information injustice, the reduction of the effect of manipulative discourses, and the visible of the experiences of different social groups may prevent the group mentality from hardening in the direction of violence. Therefore, media literacy trainings, support of independent journalism, community-based research and establishment of verification networks should be inseparable parts of violence prevention strategies. At the policy level, strategic steps need to be taken in three basic fields to reduce the potential of violence of the group mentality and strengthen the preventive potential: (1) Leadership and discourse management - the encouragement of the understanding of leadership-based leadership -based leadership; (2) Norm Transformation - Dissemination of positive group norms through education, cultural programs and community initiatives; (3) Strengthening the information ecosystem - Prevention of incorrect information, increasing the accessibility of pluralistic and reliable sources of information. As a result, group mentality is neutral by nature; It is the social, cultural and political context that exists in which it exists in the direction of violence or peace. Therefore, the prevention of social violence requires a holistic strategy that includes the dimensions of social psychology, communication, education and policy. This study both contributes to the academic literature and proposes a applicable roadmap for policy makers, non-governmental organizations and international organizations.

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