From Modi's India to Westminster: How Hindu Nationalism Shapes Anti-Muslim Rhetoric Abroad

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Abstract

In today's connected world, migrants remain tied to their origins in ways that allow events abroad to reverberate within host-country politics. We ask whether homeland shocks that target a diaspora's identity can reshape political rhetoric in host countries. To answer this, we assemble a panel of UK parliamentary speeches from 2013 to 2024 and link them to weekly records of religious violence in India, exploiting the timing of violent events. We find that anti-Hindu violence in India leads MPs in Westminster from constituencies with larger Hindu populations to use significantly more anti-Muslim rhetoric. The effect intensifies after the rise of Hindu nationalism in India and holds regardless of whether Hindus are victims or initiators of violence. The effect is driven by diaspora engagement with homeland events, local media amplification, and donor incentives, and is electorally rewarded. Our findings highlight how transnational ties can transmit homeland ideologies into host-country politics, underscoring that debates over migration and integration cannot be understood purely through domestic dynamics.

Key words: Diaspora politics; Hindu nationalism; anti-Muslim; Political rhetoric
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1 Introduction

Migration is often seen as a one-way street of assimilation—where newcomers adapt to the cultural norms of their destination societies. Yet, in an increasingly connected world, this assumption is no longer sufficient. Digital technologies and transnational media have created new channels for migrants to retain strong links with their origins, maintain ideological attachments, and respond in real time to political or cultural developments abroad (Yarkin, 2024). These connections not only challenge conventional narratives of integration but also open new possibilities for migrants to shape the politics and discourse of their host countries (Bazzi and Fiszbein, 2025). Although migrants have long maintained links with their countries of origin, today's digital technologies allow these connections to be more immediate, visible, and politically consequential.

These dynamics are especially salient in liberal democracies, where concerns over the cultural impact of migration have grown sharply. In many majority-white Western societies, public anxieties about non-Western migrants are no longer confined to questions of economic burden but increasingly focus on perceived threats to national identity and cultural cohesion (Alesina and Tabellini, 2024; Hainmueller and Hopkins, 2014). Such fears have fueled the rise of populist politics across Europe and North America, often rooted in the belief that migrants can—and will—reshape domestic norms, values, and policies (Guriev and Papaioannou, 2022; Dustmann et al., 2019). Yet, despite the prominence of these claims, we know relatively little about how such anxieties translate into political rhetoric—especially in response to identity-linked events abroad that resonate with domestic diaspora communities.

This paper takes up that question by examining a context where transnational political identities and diaspora networks converge: the rhetorical response of British politicians to anti-Hindu violence in India. We examine whether violence against Hindus in India triggers changes in the content of political speech in the UK by combining high-frequency MP-level parliamentary speech data with weekly records of religiously targeted violence abroad.

The case of the Hindu population in the UK is particularly salient. This group possesses key advantages to shape local society: ideological intensity and economic and political power, following the framework proposed by Bazzi and Fiszbein (2025). Indians are the largest ethnic minority in the country.[1] Through local festivals, temples, and schools, Hindus have managed to maintain their cultural identity. Moreover, both first- and further-generation Indian Hindus have political leverage through their right to vote—as do all migrants from Commonwealth countries—and enjoy substantive representation in Parliament and local politics. For instance, high-ranked figures in government have been members of this group, including former Prime Minister Rishi Sunak.

Our empirical strategy exploits the exogenous timing of these violent events and tests whether UK MPs from constituencies with larger Hindu populations are more likely to adopt anti-Muslim language in their speeches immediately following such events. We estimate fixed-effects panel models

[1] See Appendix Figure A1. The census does not report statistics for disaggregated ethnic groups and religion. At an aggregate level, more than 80% of individuals declaring 'Asian' or 'Asian-British' ethnicity are Hindu, see Appendix Figure **??**

that control for constituency characteristics and national political cycles, and identify effects through variation in diaspora exposure across space and time.

We find that violent events targeting Hindus in India trigger measurable changes in the content of UK parliamentary speech, especially in constituencies with larger Hindu populations. Using high-frequency panel data and a cosine similarity index capturing anti-Muslim language, we show that MPs representing areas with more Hindus are significantly more likely to use Islam-related frames—particularly those tied to immigration and terrorism—following such violence abroad. A one standard deviation increase in the interaction between the violence indicator and Hindu population share leads to a 0.46 standard deviation increase in anti-Muslim rhetoric. Crucially, there is no corresponding increase in pro-Hindu sentiment or in direct mentions of India, pointing to an implicit rather than explicit form of identity signaling.

To support a causal interpretation, we show that the results are not driven by pre-trends, broader regional shocks, or violence targeting other religious groups. Importantly, the rhetorical shift does not reflect general communal conflict but is specific to violence involving Hindu victims, especially when the perpetrators are Muslim. MPs do not react similarly to violence against Muslims or to events involving Hindu cooperation. The response is not limited to any single political party and appears stronger after 2019, coinciding with the rise of Hindu nationalist politics in India.

We explore five potential mechanisms through which anti-Hindu violence in India influences UK parliamentary speech. First, we establish that diaspora communities in the UK actively monitor and respond to homeland shocks. Using Google Trends data around the April 2025 Pahalgam attack—the deadliest terrorist assault on civilians in India since 2008—we show that constituencies with larger Hindu shares are significantly more likely to search for Indian leaders, media outlets, and locations in the weeks following the attack, while Muslim-majority constituencies display parallel interest in Pakistani content. This sharp geographic divide in information-seeking behavior confirms that the informational conditions for ideological transmission exist at the constituency level.

Second, we show that episodes of violence against Hindus in India generate broader regional and security-related framing in local newspaper coverage. Constituencies with larger Hindu shares are significantly more likely to see increased mentions of Pakistan, Kashmir, and terrorism in the local press following such events. This suggests that the informational shock is not confined to diaspora communities alone but reaches the wider electorate through local media.

Third, we find suggestive evidence that MPs from constituencies with larger Hindu populations receive more UK-based gifts, benefits, and hospitality during months with more anti-Hindu violence abroad. This pattern points to a symbolic or reputational reward structure, where rhetorical alignment with diaspora concerns may be followed by material expressions of appreciation. Importantly, we find no corresponding increase in overseas donations or party-linked support, nor any link between violence events and reported visits to India, though MPs from Hindu-heavy constituencies do report more India visits overall. These findings suggest that local, identity-linked donor responsiveness may reinforce diaspora-oriented rhetoric in UK politics.

Fourth, we assess the hidden identity politics mechanism. The results indicate that the effect is strongest in constituencies where Hindus form the dominant minority and in marginal seats—particularly for Conservative MPs—consistent with strategic mobilization rather than sincere expression. The presence of sizable Muslim populations dampens anti-Muslim rhetoric even when Hindu populations are high, consistent with political caution in more religiously diverse settings. We further show, using British Election Study data, that violence events are associated with reduced warmth towards Muslims among native (non-Indian) respondents in high-Hindu constituencies, as well as increased concern about immigration and a shift in voting intentions towards far-right parties, suggesting that MPs' rhetorical choices generate broader attitudinal spillovers in the electorate.

Finally, we examine whether anti-Muslim rhetoric helps MPs electorally. Contrary to a purely expressive interpretation, we find that higher anti-Muslim rhetoric is associated with a 6.9 percentage point increase in the probability of the incumbent party being re-elected and a 1.4 percentage point increase in vote share in the subsequent general election. These effects do not appear to operate through compositional shifts between parties but rather through increased incumbency advantage, consistent with the interpretation that diaspora-linked identity politics in the UK carries real electoral stakes.

Contribution to Literature *Migration and cultural change.* Our paper contributes to a growing literature showing that migrants do not simply assimilate into host societies but can actively reshape their cultural and political landscapes. The dominant emphasis in this literature has been on long-run processes: either the assimilation of migrants to host-country norms (Abramitzky et al., 2020; Fouka, 2020; Gathmann and Keller, 2018; Bleakley and Chin, 2010), or the transmission of cultural preferences from migrants to their communities of origin, known as cultural or social remittances (Barsbai et al., 2017; Manacorda et al., 2026; Spilimbergo, 2009). A more recent body of work has begun to document long-run cultural transmission from migrant communities to native populations. Giuliano and Tabellini (2024) show that European immigration to the US in the early 20th century fostered enduring support for redistribution; Miho et al. (2023) document the diffusion of gender norms through Stalin's ethnic deportations; and Bursztyn et al. (2024) show that proximity to immigrants shapes native attitudes over extended time horizons. More broadly, prior work has documented long-run ideological change driven by large-scale migration and gradual integration (Knudsen, 2022; Dippel and Heblich, 2021; Cefalà, 2021; Ochsner and Roesel, 2020; Grosjean, 2014), while Bazzi et al. (2023) demonstrate how Southern white migrants spread Confederate cultural norms well beyond the US South.

We advance this literature by identifying a more *immediate*, event-driven mechanism of diaspora-linked political influence. We show that anti-Hindu violence in India prompts rhetorical responses by UK politicians within weeks of a triggering event—far faster than any demographic or cultural shift could operate. This speed is the core of our contribution: the mechanism runs through elite political responsiveness to diaspora-linked cues, not through slow assimilation or intergenerational norm transmission. Methodologically, our approach interacts homeland shocks that are exogenous

to host-country politics with local variation in diaspora density, moving beyond designs that rely on historical settlement patterns or gradual integration to capture acute, short-run political responses to external events. Conceptually, our findings broaden how migrant influence is understood: we highlight symbolic and elite-mediated pathways rather than integration through intermarriage, language acquisition, naming choices, or residential proximity (Abramitzky and Boustan, 2022; Fouka, 2019). This complements work on how identity salience and external shocks shape migrant behavior (Fouka, 2020; Algan et al., 2022), but shifts attention to how host-country elites respond when diaspora identities are activated by foreign events.

Migrants shaping political preferences in host countries. A related strand examines the conditions under which migrant communities successfully shift the cultural and political landscape of receiving societies. Bazzi and Fiszbein (2025) provide a conceptual framework identifying ideological intensity and group size as key preconditions for such influence. Empirical work has documented effects on preferences for redistribution (Knudsen, 2022; Giuliano and Tabellini, 2024), support for far-right movements (Cefalà, 2021; Bazzi et al., 2023), and activist mobilization (Dippel and Heblich, 2021).

Our findings recast the migrant–host relationship as bidirectional: influence does not depend solely on numerical strength or full incorporation but can arise through strategic engagement, political salience, and transnational ties. We show that the transmission of political ideology need not operate through slow demographic accumulation but can manifest rapidly in the speech of elected politicians responding to diaspora-linked cues. In today's digitally connected world, where migrants remain closely tied to their origins through expanding internet access (Yarkin, 2024), political ideologies can be carried and sustained across borders, reinforced by transnational media, social networks, and diaspora platforms, embedding themselves in domestic politics far faster than existing models anticipate.

Globalization and political backlash. Our paper also contributes to a literature documenting how globalization generates political backlash. Existing work in this area has emphasized economic channels: trade shocks (Autor et al., 2020; Colantone and Stanig, 2018), immigration pressures (Dustmann et al., 2019; Tabellini, 2020), and financial crises (Funke et al., 2016). Our paper shows that *ideological* globalization—the transnational diffusion of political identities through diaspora networks—can reshape host-country politics without any economic dislocation. The mechanism operates through the salience of foreign events for domestically enfranchised minority communities, and the political incentives this creates for responsive elites. This extends the scope of globalization-backlash research beyond material grievances and into the domain of transnational identity politics.

Our findings also contribute to debates on integration, challenging the view that it is a one-directional process in which migrants simply adopt host-society norms (Abramitzky et al., 2020; Gathmann and Keller, 2018). They also speak to the literature on migrant transnationalism, which has mostly focused on how diasporas influence politics in their countries of origin, such as institutional development (Docquier et al., 2016) or voting in homeland elections (Wellman, 2021). We show the reverse channel: transnationalism also reshapes host-country politics through the importation of homeland

ideologies that transform local inter-group relations.

Transnational origins of anti-Muslim sentiment. Finally, our evidence offers a new perspective on the roots of anti-Muslim rhetoric and minority prejudice in Western democracies. Existing accounts have documented the rise of Islamophobia and hate crimes (Abdelgadir and Fouka, 2024; Bleich and van der Veen, 2021; Hobbs and Lajevardi, 2019) and have typically attributed these to domestic factors—slow or incomplete migrant integration (Bisin et al., 2008; Dustmann and Preston, 2001) or reactive responses to terrorism and security threats (Ivandic et al., 2024; Gould and Klor, 2016). Our findings suggest these explanations are insufficient on their own. Anti-Muslim rhetoric in the UK is partly fueled by imported ideologies that cast Muslims as adversaries, regardless of whether they have direct ties to India. This perspective helps explain why domestic policies aimed at reducing prejudice sometimes falter (Agan and Starr, 2018)—because the sources of tension are not only local, but global.

Our results also shed new light on Hindu nationalism as a transnational force. While prior work has shown that it has clearly reshaped Indian politics—for instance, Ahmed et al. (2025) demonstrate that mass exposure to the televised epic Ramayan in the 1980s strengthened Hindu identity, fueled communal violence, and boosted long-term support for the BJP (Iyer and Shrivastava, 2018; Rajagopal, 2001; Van der Veer, 1994)—we show that it also functions with global reach. As it moves abroad through diaspora networks, it adapts to new political environments: in the UK, it manifests not as overt pro-Hindu mobilization but as anti-Muslim rhetoric embedded in parliamentary speech, permeating public discourse and shaping the symbolic and policy-making space of the host society.

2 Background

Hindu nationalism in India traces its roots to late 19th-century movements grounded in the belief that Indian national identity and culture are inherently tied to the Hindu religion. Central to its modern evolution is the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS), which promotes the ideology of *Hindutva*—the idea that India is fundamentally a Hindu nation. *Hindutva* portrays Hindus as a historically aggrieved majority under threat from internal and external enemies, particularly Muslims. This ideology has gained increasing traction since the election of Narendra Modi in 2014.

These ideas have traveled beyond India through diaspora networks and transnational organizations. The institutional roots of Hindu nationalism in the UK date back to 1966, when the first overseas branch of the RSS was established.[2] Initially, these societies were informally organized in homes, parks, and community halls in places such as West London, Leicester, and Birmingham, and provided a platform for transmitting *Hindutva* ideals to immigrant communities. By 2021, there were over 80 active branches in Britain with nearly 2,000 weekly participants Anderson (2024, Chapter 1). Through their activities, they served as a transnational ideological bridge between India and its diaspora.

[2] These are the *shakas* of the *Hindu Swayamsevak Sangh*.

These overseas UK branches have often positioned themselves as the authoritative voice of Hindus in interfaith spaces, local education advisory boards, and cultural forums, often providing material and institutional support. A first example is the the defense of *Bhaktivedanta Manor*, an important site of the *Hare Krishna* Movement involved in a planning dispute with local authorities. In another case, these organizations protested against the Department of Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, which had ordered the euthanisation of a temple bull that had tested positive for bovine tuberculosis Anderson (2024, Chapter 4). This activism can sometimes turn into public unrest, escalating into communal tensions. In 2022, clashes between Hindus and Muslims in Leicester were sparked by an India-Pakistan cricket match, bringing long-standing ethnic and religious rivalries into the open. Chants like '*Jai Shree Ram*', associated with Hindu militancy in India, were heard on British streets, highlighting the transnational resonance of *Hindutva* rhetoric.

Today, people of Indian origin are the largest ethnic minority group in the UK (Appendix Figure A1) and enjoy full voting rights prior to naturalization due to Commonwealth membership. Hindu and Hindu nationalist groups have gained increasing importance to politicians in the UK. High-profile moments like the 1989 gathering *Virat Hindu Sammelan* (Great Hindu Assembly) in Milton Keynes has been cited as the largest individual gathering of Hindus even outside India. These events were endorsed by Queen Elizabeth II and then-Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher. More recently, Modi rallied 60,000 people in London's Wembley Stadium, which featured then–Prime Minister David Cameron to warm-up the crowd Anderson (2024, p. 3). Outside of these events, politicians across the political spectrum visit Hindu temples as a regular item in their campaign agendas where they interact with large crowds, often dressed in traditional attire (see Appendix Figures A2 and A3 for photographs of these visits since Tony Blair). In the lead-up to the 2024 general election, Hindu organizations such as the Hindu Forum of Britain and the National Council of Hindu Temples UK co-authored the *British Hindu Manifesto*, a ten-point charter demanding political recognition of Hindu concerns.[3] Several candidates and incumbent MPs publicly endorsed this manifesto irrespective of the Hindu population in their constituencies (Appendix Figure A4). These events underscore both the scale of mobilizations and the political legitimacy that these groups have acquired over time.

Hindus are also the religious minority with the most descriptive representation in the parliament, including prominent figures such as former Prime Minister Rishi Sunak and former Home Secretaries Priti Patel and Suella Braverman. Among the 90 ethnic minority MPs elected in 2024 (Sobolewska, 2025), a third were of Indian origin.

3 Conceptual Framework

We build on the conceptual framework proposed by Bazzi and Fiszbein (2025). We argue that the influence of a migrant group depends on two key factors: the ideological intensity of the group and the structure of power in the receiving society.

[3] More details are available at this link.

'Ideological intensity' refers to the strength and salience of group identity, capturing the likelihood that cultural traits are vertically transmitted within the diaspora (Bisin and Verdier, 2001). Migrants who are highly cohesive and committed to preserving their cultural values are more likely to mobilize in response to external events and transmit those values within their host society. In our context, constituencies with a larger Hindu population are more likely to have visible community institutions, temples, and networks, allowing diasporas in these constituencies to maintain their culture and advocate for shared interests. Similarly, specific events can trigger the salience of these identities, increasing ideological intensity at specific points in time. For instance, communal violence and conflict have been linked to increased group salience (e.g. Fearon and Laitin 2000 and Alesina et al. 2020). In our setting, episodes of violence involving Hindus in India will spark group identification, increasing perceived shared grievances.

However, ideological intensity alone is insufficient. Influence also depends on the group's position within power structures. And this may influence political actors when the group's concerns are seen as electorally relevant. In our case, the Hindu diaspora is enfranchised and may constitute a sizeable group in some constituencies. Moreover, they can express their grievances through political engagement, individual donations, and other forms of civil society engagement (such as those described in Section 2). The diaspora's descriptive representation in Parliament can help increase the substantive representation of their interests. Finally, diaspora interests interact with the openness and ideological leaning of the local demographics (Dancygier, 2017). Political actors may be more responsive these interests, when they align with those of the majority groups and do not affect social cohesion.

4 Data

4.1 Census of England and Wales

We use the constituency-level 'religion tables' from the Census to construct population shares for Christian, Muslim, Hindu, Sikh, Jewish, Buddhist, other religion, no religion, and not stated categories. All variables are taken from the 2011 Census of England & Wales as it precedes the main time period of analysis (2014–2024), and are harmonized to the 2010 parliamentary constituency boundaries to ensure consistency with our parliamentary speech data.

Our main explanatory variable is the share of individuals reporting Hindu religion, the population most likely to respond to Hindu nationalistic rhetoric. We also construct alternative measures of the Hindu diaspora, such as the share of individuals born in India, those reporting a South-Asian language as their main one (Hindi, Punjabi, and Gujarati), and those stating British-Indian ethnicity. Compared to our preferred religious measure, the Indian-born and the language variables exclude UK-born individuals. Similarly, the ethnicity measure includes other religious groups from India.

In 2011, Hindus represented 1.5% of the UK population as compared to Muslims (4.8%) and Chris-

tians (59.3%) (Appendix Figure A5). While the individuals reporting No Religion/Not Stated is high and rising (32.3%), examining ethnic composition by religion reveals that the majority of these individuals belong to the White ethnicity (Appendix Figure A6). This suggests that the majority of individuals of Hindu heritage declare it in the census. Furthermore, the vast majority of Hindus are of Asian/Asian British ethnicity, suggesting that conversion from ethnic groups disconnected from the diaspora is uncommon. Taken together, these facts suggest that our preferred measure accurately captures the diaspora likely to respond to Hindu nationalistic rhetoric.

Appendix Figure A7 maps the spatial distribution of Hindus and Muslims in England and Wales at the constituency level. The overall share of Hindus masks substantial heterogeneity, with some constituencies reporting large fractions of both groups.

4.2 GDELT Database

We use the GDELT 1.0 Event Database provided by Google Jigsaw. GDELT encodes events covered in global news media since 2013, capturing both the occurrence and salience of real-world developments through structured metadata on actor identity, location, and event type.

Our variable of interest focuses on events coded as 'engage in unconventional mass violence' (CAMEO codes 200–2042), which include mass killings, ethnic cleansing, and other forms of large-scale violence. These episodes are likely to trigger emotional or symbolic reactions, including within diaspora communities. We restrict the dataset to those involving Hindus as targets in India between April 2013 and June 2024. For each week, we construct a binary indicator flagging whether any event was reported. On average, a fifth of the weeks report at least one episode of unconventional mass violence against Hindus (Appendix Figure A8).

As additional measures of interest, we construct indicators for violent events involving Hindus as initiators and targets in Europe, Pakistan, and Bangladesh, and those involving Muslims and Sikhs in India. Moreover, we extract material cooperation events (CAMEO codes 060–064), which involve joint economic, military, or legal actions and serve as a counterpoint to violence, capturing more routine or positive inter-group dynamics. Finally, in further analyzes, we examine the intensive margin, counting the number of reports of each type.

4.3 British Parliament

Parliamentary Speeches We collect data on all interventions made in the House of Commons between April 2013 and June 2024, the date of the latest change in Parliamentary boundaries. These interventions are typically called a 'speech'. The data are scraped from *TheyWorkForYou*, which is a UK-based organization that assembles and structures data on British Parliament from Hansard in XML format. Each speech is linked to a speaker identifier, which allows us to match observations to the speaker's constituency and its demographic characteristics, as well as MP-level attributes including ethnic background, party affiliation, electoral outcomes, and registered financial interests.

To represent text as data, we use word embeddings. Word embeddings map each token to a dense

vector in a high-dimensional space such that geometric proximity reflects semantic similarity, enabling computationally efficient analysis of the over one million speeches in our corpus. We rely on *GloVe* embeddings, which are a set of pre-trained, publicly available word embeddings trained on large text corpora; we use Glove 42b, which are trained on a corpus of 42 billion tokens.

To quantify anti-Muslim rhetoric in parliamentary speeches, we compute the proximity of each speech to a predefined vocabulary associated with anti-Muslim sentiment, constructed from prominent political speeches and expanded using large language models. Since we analyze parliamentary debates, overt hate speech targeting Muslims is unlikely to appear with regularity. Instead, anti-Muslim rhetoric by establishment figures tends to operate by activating societal fears that associate all Muslims with a fundamentalist stereotype—"barbaric, intolerant ... fanatical and anti-modern" (Hopkins, 2025, p. 34). Central to materializing this fear are invocations of terrorism and the perceived replacement of Western values by an alien immigrant presence. Appendix Table A1 lists all vocabulary terms.

For each speech, we tokenize the text, remove stopwords, digits, and punctuation, and represent the remaining tokens using GloVe embeddings. We then compute the cosine similarity between each token embedding and the vocabulary terms, retaining the mean similarity score as a continuous measure of thematic intensity. We use the standardized version of this variable as our main outcome variable. This yields time-varying, constituency-level measures of how frequently and intensely anti-Muslim rhetoric appear in parliamentary discourse.

Figure 1 displays the word cloud of the anti-Islam vocabulary we use. The size of the word reflects the share of MPs who use that term in any speech in the period covered in our sample. The word cloud reveals that within the vocabulary, terms that relate to terrorism and radicalization are prominent in parliamentary speeches. Importantly for our analysis, this measure does not exhibit any marked time trend during our period of interest (see Figure A9). Since word embeddings imperfectly capture context, a concern is that our measure may be polluted by positive speeches related to all the terms in the vocabulary. We use R package *sentimentr* to compute the sentiment of each speech accounting for negations and valence shifters and confirm that proximity with our outcome variable has a strong negative correlation with negative sentiment (see Appendix Table B1).

As additional measures of interest, we compute the proximity to other relevant vocabularies. In particular a 'pro-Hindu' vocabulary constructed from terms read in the 2024 *British Hindu Manifesto*, and a 'terrorism' and 'migration' vocabulary, which focuses on the terms directly linked to each of these topics respectively.

General Election Results We compile parliamentary constituency-level results of the UK general elections held in 2010, 2015, 2017, 2019, and 2024 from the House of Commons Library. For each year, we retain information on the total electorate, turnout, vote shares by major parties, winning party, and runner-up party.[4]

[4]In 2024 constituency boundaries were altered. To account for these changes, we map the new constituencies with their closest successor using the official record of changes listed in the Boundary Review 2023 from the House of

Figure 1: Vocabulary of Anti-Islam Rhetoric



Notes: The size of the word reflects the share of MP speeches using the term.

We harmonize constituency and candidate names across years and correct inconsistencies introduced by changes in naming conventions or candidates moving across constituencies. This results in a panel of general election outcomes from 2010 to 2024 with consistent measures of party performance, incumbency, and turnover at the constituency level.

Financial Interests We scrape data on MPs' financial interests from the '*Register of Members' Financial Interests*' for the period 2015–2024. These declarations are publicly available on a biweekly basis, with MPs required to declare any changes within 28 days.[5] They are organized into ten standard categories: (1) employment and earnings, 2 (a) Support linked to an MP but received by a local party organization or indirectly via a central party organization, 2 (b) Any other support not included in Category 2(a), (3) gifts and hospitality from UK sources, (4) visits outside the UK, (5) gifts from non-UK sources, (6) land and property, (7) shareholdings, (8) miscellaneous interests, (9) family members employed using parliamentary expenses, and (10) family members involved in lobbying. We parse the declarations to extract and structure the content of each category.

Our analysis focuses on party-linked support (aggregation of Sections 2 (a) and 2 (b)), donations from UK sources (3), non-UK sources (4), and visits outside the UK (5), as these categories are more likely to capture high-frequency, time-sensitive donations or gifts from voters or overseas interests that may respond to short-term political events. Importantly, these categories will capture small donations reflecting expressive motive to salient contemporary events (Boken et al., 2023; Bouton et al., 2024). For each entry, we extract monetary values, donor names and addresses, and rele-

Commons Library.

[5]See for instance the Register as published in December 2017

vant dates. We also flag visits to India and links with Hindu organizations based on keyword and location searches. We assign missing values as zero and compile this information into a balanced constituency-by-month panel.

4.4 Further Data on Public Engagement and Political Preferences

Google Trends To cross-validate the engagement of Hindu diaspora to homeland events, we analyze Google Searches around the 2025 Pahalgam terrorist attack. The attack occurred on April 22, targeted Hindu pilgrims in Jammu and Kashmir, killing 26 civilians, and generated extensive media coverage. In the days that followed, India and Pakistan exchanged cross-border retaliations and a ceasefire was announced a few weeks later. Its unexpected timing and scale make it a useful natural experiment for testing whether homeland shocks trigger shifts in observable interest among UK residents, particularly those engaging with issues related to either side of the conflict.

We collect city-level Google Trends data between 15 April and 15 May 2025, covering searches related to political leaders, media outlets, and locations. Because Google Trends does not release time-location data, this yields a cross-section database of cities with a binary variable flagging whether any search activity was recorded during the observation window. City-level Google search data were spatially joined to UK parliamentary constituencies using the 2010 boundaries.[6]

Local Newspaper Coverage To further examine the reach of episodes of violence against Hindus in India in constituencies with larger Hindu population, we scrape news articles using a Google Custom Search API (CSE). We extract all articles in a pre-defined list of local newspapers matched to constituencies containing the following keywords: 'India', 'Pakistan', 'Kashmir', and 'Terrorism'.[7] This yields, for each constituency-by-week, an indicator variable for articles referencing the keywords. We use this as a proxy for the local media salience of homeland events.

British Election Survey To examine shifts in voter attitudes, we use the British Election Study (BES) Internet Panel, a nationally representative longitudinal survey of UK adults tracking political attitudes over time (British Election Study, 2024). We use data from Waves 1 to 29, covering the period from 2014 to 2024. Each wave includes approximately 30,000 to 35,000 respondents.

We use two outcome variables from the BES. The first asks respondents to identify the most pressing issue facing the country. These open-ended responses are coded into topical domains. We construct binary indicators for whether respondents cite immigration or terrorism as their top concern. Second, we study stated voting intentions that asks respondents which party they would vote for if a General Election were held tomorrow. We create on a binary indicator for each political party. Appendix Table A3 provides the full text of the relevant questions.

[6] In Google Trends, the 'city' unit refers to Google's internal geographic aggregation, which corresponds to populated localities with sufficient search volume, rather than strictly defined administrative boundaries.

[7] The pre-defined list of local newspapers was curated using an LLM and manually validated by the authors. This list is available in Appendix section **??**.

5 Empirical Strategy

Our empirical design combines high-frequency variation in the timing of violence against Hindus in India with cross-sectional variation in Hindu population shares across UK constituencies to identify differential rhetorical responses to a common external shock. Given that not all MPs get a chance to speak on a given day, and that foreign events may require a few days to diffuse through diaspora networks and media, we aggregate the daily speech data by week. Our baseline specification is described in the question below.

$$\begin{aligned} Y_{cw} = \beta_1 \mathrm{I}(\text{Violence against Hindus in India})_w \times \text{Share Hindus}_c \\ + \beta_2 \mathrm{I}(\text{Violence against Hindus in India})_w + \alpha_c + \delta_{m(w)} + \epsilon_{cw} \end{aligned} \tag{1}$$

Y_{cw} denotes the anti-Muslim sentiment of the speeches, as defined in section 4.3, delivered by the MP representing constituency c during week w, standardized over the full sample. Higher values reflect greater similarity to anti-Muslim language. The key explanatory variable, $\mathrm{I}(\text{Violence against Hindus in India})_w$, is a binary indicator equal to one if at least one event involving unconventional mass violence against Hindus is recorded in India during week w, and zero otherwise. In our baseline specification, we focus on the extensive margin of events and discuss the intensive margin in the following sections.

We interact this indicator with the Hindu population share in constituency c, which captures variation in exposure to the Hindu diaspora across England and Wales. This measure is taken from the 2011 census, prior to our sample period, ensuring the exposure variable is not contaminated by the shocks we study. The coefficient β_1 captures the differential change in anti-Muslim rhetoric associated with a one-percentage-point increase in the Hindu population share in weeks when violence against Hindus occurs, relative to weeks without such events.

The regression includes constituency fixed effects (α_c), absorbing time-invariant characteristics such as baseline religious composition and political preferences, as well as persistent rhetorical styles. Month-year fixed effects ($\delta_{m(w)}$) flexibly control for national shocks, media cycles, and common political events affecting constituencies simultaneously. We further confirm robustness to alternative fixed effects specifications (e.g. MP, week, constituency-by-quarter, etc.). Standard errors are clustered at the constituency level.

Identification Assumptions Our identification strategy relies on the assumption that, conditional on constituency and month-year fixed effects, the week-to-week timing of violence against Hindus in India is orthogonal to unobserved determinants of anti-Muslim rhetoric in parliamentary speeches.

The design assumes that, in the absence of violence against Hindus in India, constituencies with higher and lower Hindu population shares would exhibit parallel trends in anti-Muslim rhetoric. We find support for this assumption using an event-study specification that traces the evolution of

rhetorical responses in the weeks before and after violence events. The regression equation of this event study is given in equation 2.

$$Y_{c,wy} = \sum_{k=-5,k\neq-1}^{4} \beta_k \left(\mathbf{1}_k(t) \times \text{Share Hindus}_c\right) + \gamma_c + \delta_{my} + \varepsilon_{c,wy} \tag{2}$$

The variable $\mathbf{1}_k(t)$ is an indicator equal to one if week w is k weeks relative to the occurrence of a violence event in India, and zero otherwise. As in the baseline specification, the coefficients of interest are the interaction between each relative-time indicator with the Hindu population share in constituency c. We focus on a window spanning five weeks prior to the event and five weeks following the event, where k = -1 is omitted and serves as the reference category. This window captures short-run rhetorical adjustments while minimizing overlap between adjacent violence episodes.

A further concern is that our measure of violence against Hindus captures broader patterns beyond the rise of Hindu nationalism in India. To address this, we examine similar violent episodes involving Hindus in neighboring countries such as Pakistan or Bangladesh, as well as violence targeting Sikhs in India, and confirm that these placebo events do not produce comparable patterns.

A final concern is that the Hindu population share may correlated with other constituency characteristics that could also shape parliamentary rhetoric, most notably the Muslim population share. To address this issue, we verify that the share of Muslims does not drive our results.

6 Results

Table 1 presents the estimated coefficients of the regression equation described in Equation 1. Column 3 is our preferred specification, including both constituency and month-year fixed effects. The interaction coefficient remains positive and statistically significant (0.49, s.e. = 0.16). The results indicate that following episodes of violence against Hindus in India, a one percentage point increase in the share of Hindus in a constituency will lead to MPs increasing their anti-Muslim rhetoric by 0.49 standard deviations. As an example, moving from constituencies in Bristol to Leicester (0.6% and 15% Hindu population, respectively), anti-Muslim rhetoric would increase by 7% of a standard deviation more following episodes of violence against Hindus in India.

The main result is stable in a specification without fixed effects (Column 1) and with month-year fixed effects (Column 2), demonstrating that the estimated relationship is not driven by contemporaneous national-level events coinciding with violence against Hindus in India. Even in the most stringent specification including week-year fixed effects (Column 4), the coefficient is not meaningfully affected.

In addition, the coefficient on violence against Hindus is small and statistically insignificant, suggesting that there is no uniform average shift in anti-Muslim rhetoric across all constituencies in weeks with violence in India. Instead, the anti-Muslim rhetoric is entirely driven by exposure to the Hindu diaspora. The effect of Hindu population share is positive and statistically significant

Table 1: Violence against Hindus in India increases MP's Anti-Muslim rhetoric

	Anti-Muslim Rhetoric (std)			
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
I(Violence against Hindus)	0.0004	0.004	0.004	
	(0.007)	(0.008)	(0.008)	
Share Hindus	2.100***	2.100***		
	(0.590)	(0.590)		
I(Violence against Hindus) x Share Hindus	0.580***	0.560***	0.490***	0.440***
	(0.180)	(0.180)	(0.160)	(0.150)
Month-Year FE		Yes	Yes	
Constituency FE			Yes	Yes
Week-Year FE				Yes
Observations	117,347	117,347	117,347	117,347

Notes: The dependent variable is a standardized cosine similarity between the speeches of each MP during that week and a vocabulary of anti-Muslim rhetoric. The variable of interest is a weekly indicator for the occurrence of violence against Hindus in India, interacted with the 2011 Hindu population share in the MP's constituency (measured on a scale from 0 to 1). Column 1 presents a baseline model without fixed effects. Column 2 includes month-year fixed effects. Column 3 adds constituency fixed effects and serves as the main specification. Column 4 includes week-year fixed effects. Standard errors are clustered at the constituency level. Significance: *** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.1.

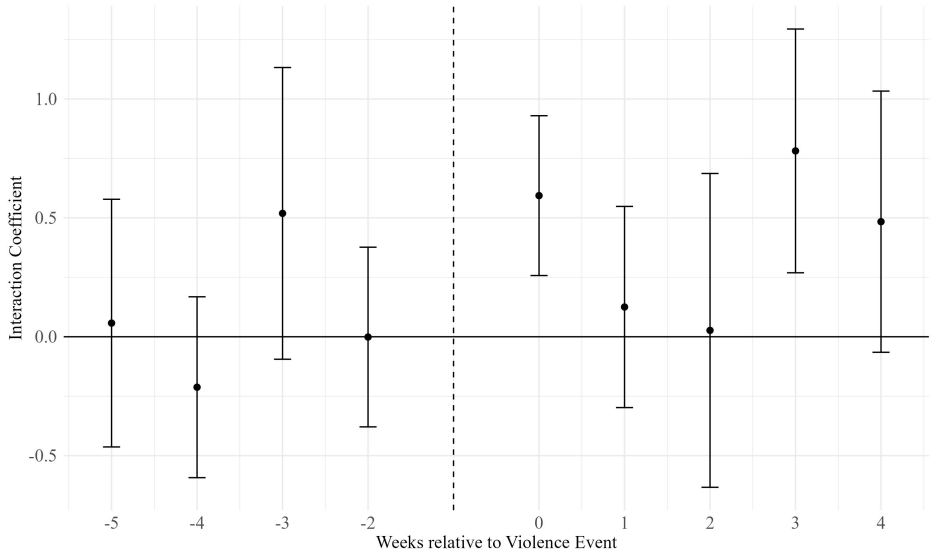
(second line in Columns 1 and 2), indicating that constituencies with larger Hindu populations are associated with higher levels of anti-Muslim rhetoric on average.

Analyzing heterogeneous effects over time reveals that the baseline results are stronger after 2019 (Appendix Table B2). This period coincides with events that could increase the salience of Hindu nationalistic rhetoric in the UK such as (1) an increase in Hindu nationalism in India after the re-election of Modi in May 2019, (2) post-Brexit re-alignment of UK's foreign relations, and (3) Rishi Sunak becoming the first Hindu Prime Minister of the UK. Turning to heterogeneity by ethnic background of the MPs, we find that the effects are present across ethnic categories, but they are stronger among British-India MPs and small and insignificant among Muslim MPs (Appendix Table B3). Finally, anti-Muslim rhetoric of MPs following violence episodes involving Hindus in India does not differ by their party affiliation (Appendix Table B4).

Dynamic Effects and Pre-Trends To examine the timing of rhetorical responses and assess the parallel trends assumption, we estimate an event-study specification that traces anti-Muslim rhetoric in the weeks surrounding violence against Hindus in India. The regression equation is described in equation 2.

Figure 2 plots the estimated β_k coefficients with 95% confidence intervals. The pre-event coefficients are statistically indistinguishable from zero, indicating no evidence of differential pre-trends across constituencies with varying Hindu population shares. The interaction effect rises sharply in the event week and remains elevated in the following weeks.

Figure 2: Event Study Analysis



Notes: The figure plots event-study coefficients from Equation (2), showing the interaction between relative week indicators and constituency Hindu population share. The omitted category is the week immediately preceding the event (k = -1). The coefficients of interest are the interaction between the 2011 Hindu population share in the MP's constituency (measured on a scale from 0 to 1), and indicators for the weeks prior and following episodes of violence against Hindus in India. Vertical bars denote 95 percent confidence intervals. Standard errors are clustered at the constituency level.

Other Demographic Characteristics Our baseline specification interacts violence against Hindus in India with the overall Hindu population share in a constituency. We focus on this measure because it captures the broad local salience of Hindu identity, regardless of migration history or ethnic subgroup.

Table 2 explores the effect of additional local demographic, including other measures of the Hindu diaspora. Columns 1–3 distinguish between overall Hindus, Asian Hindus, Indian Hindus, and non-Indian Hindus. The interaction remains positive and statistically significant for Asian Hindus (Column 2) and is somewhat larger in magnitude when focusing specifically on Indian Hindus (Column 3). In contrast, the interaction with the share of non-Indian Hindus is small and statistically insignificant. This pattern suggests that the response is concentrated among constituencies with stronger ties to the Indian-origin Hindu population, rather than reflecting broader Hindu identification detached from India. We examine Hindi language as a measure of the Hindu diaspora in subsection 6.1.

Column 4 examines the share of Hindu immigrants, isolating the immigrant component of the Hindu population. The interaction coefficient remains positive and significant, but it is smaller in magnitude. This suggests that the baseline result is not entirely driven by first-generation migrants, instead further generations of the Hindu diaspora play an important role in explaining it.

Muslim Communities in the Constituency Muslims are an important group in Britain (4.8% of the population, the largest religious group after Christians, see Appendix Table A4). A sizeable Muslim population in a constituency may affect anti-Muslim rhetoric in two ways. On the one

Table 2: Alternative Measures of Local Demographics

	Anti-Muslim Rhetoric (std)					
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
I(Violence against Hindus)	0.004	0.005	0.005	−0.002	0.010	0.005
	(0.008)	(0.008)	(0.008)	(0.009)	(0.009)	(0.009)
I(Violence against Hindus) x Share Hindus	0.490***					0.890**
	(0.160)					(0.400)
I(Violence against Hindus) x Share Asian Hindus		0.510***				
		(0.170)				
I(Violence against Hindus) x Share Indian Hindus			0.610**			
			(0.250)			
I(Violence against Hindus) x Share Non-Indian Hindus			0.026			
			(1.100)			
I(Violence against Hindus) x Share Hindu Immigrants				0.250**		
				(0.120)		
I(Violence against Hindus) x Share Muslims					0.021	−0.061
					(0.120)	(0.140)
I(Violence against Hindus) x Share Hindus x Share Muslims						−2.000
						(2.100)
Month-Year FE	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Constituency FE	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Observations	117,347	117,347	117,347	117,347	117,347	117,347

Notes: The dependent variable is a standardized cosine similarity between the speeches of each MP during that week and a vocabulary of anti-Muslim rhetoric. The variable of interest is a weekly indicator for the occurrence of violence against Hindus in India, interacted with different demographic measures in the MP's constituency (measured on a scale from 0 to 1). Each column uses a different measure: overall Hindu share (Column 1), Asian Hindus (2), Indian and non-Indian Hindus (3), Hindu immigrants (4), combined Hindu + Sikh share (5), and Muslim share (6). Standard errors are clustered at the constituency level. Significance: *** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.1.

hand, where Hindus and Muslims coexist, identities linked to Hindu Nationalism may become more salient, increasing Hindus' demand for anti-Muslim rhetoric — akin to an increase in 'ideological intensity' in the framework of Bazzi and Fiszbein (2025). On the other hand, MPs in such constituencies may refrain from anti-Muslim rhetoric out of concern for electoral backlash or social cohesion.

Columns 5 and 6 of Table 2 examines these arguments. We do so by adding to our main specification an interaction between violence against Hindus in India and the share of Muslims (Column 5) and the share of Muslims and Hindus (Column 6). MP's anti-Muslim rhetoric is unrelated to the share of Muslims in their constituency, the coefficient is insignificant and close to zero (Column 5).

However, once we account for the share of Muslims and Hindus, the estimated coefficient on the triple interaction term turns negative and large, albeit with larger standard errors (Column 6). The main coefficient on violence against Hindus in India interacted with share of Hindus becomes larger in magnitude (as compared to Column 1). This suggests that in constituencies where both Hindu and Muslim populations are sizable, MPs may be less likely to escalate anti-Muslim rhetoric. Taken together, these results suggest that when deciding to respond to events salient to Hindu diaspora, MPs consider demographic and political forces beyond the share of Hindus among their constituents. We examine this further in Section 7.

6.1 Validation and Robustness Checks

In this subsection, we examine the validity and stability of our results. We use alternative measures of violence involving Hindus and other groups, placebo measures of events, and assess the robustness of our econometric specification.

Alternative Measures of Violence: Victims and Perpetrators Next, we study the effect of different measures of violence involving Hindus, with Muslims as victims or perpetrators. To start, we could expect that episodes of violence by Muslims against Hindus are the ones that heighten Hindu Nationalism the most. Column 2 in Table B8 shows that in the situation where Muslims are clearly identified as perpetrators and Hindus are victims, the effect is larger in size and statistically significant.

Further, events involving Hindus as the perpetrators might not resonate with Hindu nationalism, as its rhetoric focuses on Hindus as victims. At the same time, a large literature links perpetrating violence to strengthening national and ethnic identities (see, e.g. Fearon and Laitin 2000, Alesina et al. 2020). As a result, it is possible that episodes of violence by Hindus also heighten Hindu nationalism sentiment among the diaspora. Column 3 confirms the latter argument in our setting. Column 4 narrows the idea further by examining events where Hindus are perpetrators and Muslims are victims, the effect attenuates but remains positive.[8] Appendix Table B9 further explores the intensive margin effect of the reporting events violence against and by Hindus. Overall, the effects are less conclusive than when analyzing the extensive margin. If any, we observe a positive but marginally significant effect of the number of reports of violence by Hindus on anti-Muslim rhetoric in constituencies with larger Hindu shares.[9]

Validation Exercises An important component of Hindu Nationalistic rhetoric is the threat faced by Hindus from neighboring countries with large Muslim populations, in particular Pakistan and Bangladesh. In Appendix Table B10, we analyze the effect of violence involving Hindus in these countries. Although the effects obtained in Columns 1 and 2 are positive, they are not statistically significant. In Column 3, we study episodes of violence by Muslims in the EU. These episodes do not significantly increase anti-Muslim rhetoric in constituencies with larger Hindu population, suggesting that MPs are responding to events salient to the Hindu diaspora rather than any episodes that could trigger anti-Muslim sentiment.

We also consider events involving Sikhs, another South Asian religious group with animosity against Muslims to whom the Hindu nationalistic message might resonate. Column 4 reveals that in constituencies with larger Sikh population, we find a similar positive but marginally significant effect, which could be due to the small size of that group in the UK (0.7%, see Appendix Table A4).

An ideal setup to validate the plausibility of our result would trace both the location of violence

[8] GDELT collects information on victims and perpetrators from news articles. The information can at times be incomplete, particularly when searching for events reporting both victims and perpetrators.

[9] In addition, we find no systematic difference in MPs probability of making a speech, total number of speeches and words spoken in constituencies with larger Hindu population (Appendix Table B7).

events in India and identify the geographic origin within India of Hindu constituents. However, these data are not jointly available. Instead, the closest proxy of geographic origin reported in the census is the language spoken. We exploit the fact that Hindu Nationalist rhetoric is more prominent in the North of India, where the majority of the population speaks Hindi. Other Southern and Eastern Indian states with distinct linguistic identities such as Tamil, Telegu, Malayalam, and Bengali have resisted Hindu nationalism. We disentangle the effects between Hindi speakers and those speaking other Indian Languages. Since most second generation diaspora report English as their main language in the census, the mean share of Hindi speakers is small, only 0.08 percent, limiting statistical power. The interaction coefficient for Hindi speakers is much larger in magnitude but estimated imprecisely, whereas the interaction for non-Hindi language speakers is small and close to zero (Appendix Table B10, Column 5).

Finally, we ascertain that our results are not driven by constituencies with underlying trends in anti-Muslim rhetoric, irrespective of foreign events. Appendix Table B11 splits the sample with above or below median levels of baseline anti-Muslim rhetoric, measured between 2010 and 2012. In Columns (1) and (4), we find that most of the increase in anti-Muslim rhetoric following episodes of violence against Hindus in India is coming from constituencies with below median levels of this rhetoric before the sample period, ruling out underlying trends.

Falsification Exercise As a falsification exercise, we replace the variable of episodes of violence against Hindus with a binary variable indicating events involving material cooperation with Hindus in India, such as trade or diplomatic engagement. If MPs were responding mechanically to any Hindu-related development abroad, similar interaction effects should emerge. However, Appendix Table B12 shows no comparable effect. This pattern suggests that the observed response is specific to negative, identity-linked events rather than to Hindu-related news from India more generally.

Robustness Finally, we assess the stability of our results to changes in the econometric specification of the baseline regression. First, we re-estimate our main specification after excluding constituencies with more than 10 percent Hindu population (Appendix Table B13). The results remain stable and even increase in magnitude post-2019, suggesting that our findings are not driven by outliers.

Second, we confirm that our results hold under alternative specifications that absorb finer temporal, spatial variation, and unit variation such as week-year fixed effects, constituency-by-quarter fixed effects, and MP fixed effects (Appendix Table B14). These adjustments provide reassurance that our estimates are not driven by unobserved trends at the national or constituency level.

Lastly, we conduct a randomization inference exercise, re-estimating our main interaction coefficient using placebo event timings. As shown in Figure A10, the observed interaction coefficient lies well outside the bulk of the placebo distribution. Similarly, the distribution of p-values is nearly uniform, while the actual p-value lies in the extreme left tail (0.0025). These results suggest that our main estimate is unlikely to be observed by random chance.

7 Mechanisms

We explore different potential channels through which higher violence against Hindus in India may influence the rhetoric of UK MPs: diaspora engagement with homeland events, local political and public engagement, and electoral incentives. These mechanisms reflect different forms of political responsiveness, ranging from informational to local representational pressures.

7.1 Diaspora Engagement with Violence at Origin

To assess whether violent events in India resonate among the UK public, we exploit a natural experiment around the April 2025 Pahalgam terrorist attack. This attack targeted Hindu pilgrims in Jammu and Kashmir, killing 26 civilians and generated extensive media coverage worldwide.

We analyze city-level Google Search activity around the terrorist attack, available as a cross section. The cities are mapped to parliamentary constituencies using the 2010 boundaries. We examine searches related to political leaders, media outlets, and locations on both Indian and Pakistani sides. For leaders, we focus on 'Narendra Modi' (Prime Minister of India) and 'Shehbaz Sharif' and 'Imran Khan' (current and former Prime Minister of Pakistan). Media terms include leading Indian outlets such as '*The Times of India*', '*The Hindu*', '*NDTV*', '*Republic TV*', and '*Zee News*', and Pakistani outlets such as '*Dawn*', '*ARY News*', '*Daily Pakistan*', '*Geo News*', and '*Samaa TV*'. Geographic searches cover 'Pahalgam' in India and 'Bahawalpur', 'Kotli', 'Muzaffarabad', and 'Sialkot' in Pakistan.

Table 3: Diaspora's Engagement with Violence at Origin

	Google Search Activity					
	India			Pakistan		
	Leader	Media	Location	Leader	Media	Location
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
Share Hindus	1.500*	2.400***	2.700**	0.190	0.200	−0.047
	(0.850)	(0.900)	(1.100)	(0.620)	(0.630)	(0.440)
Share Muslims	0.410*	0.062	−0.160	1.200***	1.000***	1.100***
	(0.240)	(0.190)	(0.140)	(0.320)	(0.290)	(0.290)
Mean DV	0.07	0.06	0.06	0.1	0.07	0.05
Observations	573	573	573	573	573	573

Notes: The dependent variable is a binary indicator equal to one if any search for the specified term was recorded within a constituency. Each column reports the result for a different term The variables of interest are the share of Hindus and Muslims in the constituency. Robust standard errors are reported. *** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.1.

For each term, we construct binary indicators capturing whether any search activity was recorded in the constituency, and regress it on the share of Hindus and Muslims, adding the logarithm of population as a control. Table 3 reports the results. Columns 1 to 3 correspond to India-related searches (leaders, media, and locations), while Columns 4 to 6 correspond to the Pakistani side. Constituencies with larger Hindu shares are significantly more likely to search for Indian leaders, media, and locations around the dates of the attack. In terms of magnitude, a one–percentage point increase in

the Hindu population share leads to a 0.015 to 0.027 increase in the searches, which corresponds to 21 to 45 percent of the mean. Similarly, constituencies with larger Muslim populations are significantly more likely to search for Pakistan-related leaders, outlets, and locations.

Taken together, these findings validate that major episodes of violence in the Indian sub-continent are salient to UK audiences, particularly in diaspora-linked constituencies. The stark divide in search behavior by the religious composition of the constituency suggests that diasporas engage with events specific to their origin. These events can thus become seeds of concern that constituents may bring to the attention of their representatives. In following subsections, we examine interactions between constituents and MPs that might shape their anti-Muslim rhetoric, in particular donations, local media, and strategic electoral considerations.

7.2 Donor Influence

To understand why MPs may react to increased interest in foreign events from their constituents, we study donations declared in the 'Register of Financial Interests' as a measure of local political engagement. Constituents may reward politicians with higher donations as an appreciation for successfully raising their concerns in Parliament. These might be small donors who contribute because of the consumption value associated with politics in that moment ('expressive motive' as in Bouton et al. (2024)), or larger interest groups who lobby to influence public policy or legislation relevant to the diaspora, both domestic and foreign.

We examine whether MPs who represent constituencies with larger Hindu populations receive greater financial contributions in months with increased violence against Hindus in India. We focus on four categories of disclosed receipts: (1) party-linked support, (2) gifts, benefits, and hospitality from UK-based sources, (3) those from non-UK sources, (4) travel outside the UK. Since MPs are supposed to register changes in their situation within a month and there might be potential delays between a parliament speech and the donor's response, the analysis is conducted at the monthly level. We use the inverse hyperbolic sine of the donation value as an outcome, as not all MPs report positive donations. The variable of interest is the interaction between the share of Hindus in the constituency and the sum of reports of violent events.[10]

Table 4 shows a positive and statistically significant relationship between the monthly sum of reported events and the value of UK-based gifts, benefits, and hospitality received by MPs belonging to constituencies with higher Hindu population shares (Column (2)). The estimated coefficient is 0.29, following the example used in Section 6, a 10% increase in reports of violence events will lead to a 0.41 percentage point larger growth in donations in Leicester compared to Bristol. On average, MPs report receiving £227 per month, and donations are relatively stable over time, therefore this effect translates into small monetary changes. These patterns are in line with increase in political engagement through small donations with an expressive motive. In addition, there is no evidence of increased donations from non-UK sources or travel outside the UK (columns (3) and (4)) ruling out

[10]Compared to the baseline specification, which uses a binary variable to flag episodes of violence each week, we use the sum of reports of events because of the monthly aggregation in the financial reports.

Table 4: MPs' Reported Financial Interests

	IHS(Donation Value)			
	Party-Linked Support	Gifts, Benefits and Hospitality UK Sources	Gifts, Benefits and Hospitality Outside UK	Travel Outside UK
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
log($\sum$ VAH) x Share Hindus	0.190	0.290***	−0.018*	−0.190
	(0.120)	(0.100)	(0.009)	(0.140)
Month-Year FE	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Constituency FE	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Mean DV (in levels)	342.27	227.46	2.72	119.59
Observations	56,880	56,880	56,880	56,880

Notes: The dependent variable is the inverse hyperbolic sine of the donation value from party-linked sources (Column (1)), gifts, benefits, and hospitality from UK sources (2), gifts, benefits, and hospitality from outside UK (3), and declared travels (4). The variable of interest is the interaction between the share of Hindus in the constituency and the sum of reports of violent events against Hindus in India. The regression also includes constituency and month-year fixed effects. Standard errors are clustered at the constituency level. *** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.1.

transnational political lobbying, and only a noisily estimated positive relationship with party-linked support (Column (1)).

Appendix Table B5 specifically focuses on visits to India. The results show a positive and statistically significant relationship between Hindu population share and an indicator variable for visits to India, suggesting that MPs from these constituencies maintain stronger ties with India, possibly through diaspora outreach, cultural events, or foreign policy engagement. However, in line with column (4) from Table 4, no change is observed during months with more episodes of violence against Hindus in India (Table B5, Column (1)).

7.3 Local Public Discussion

The previous section provides suggestive evidence of an increase in local political engagement, albeit at a small scale. An additional reason that could explain the reaction of MPs to episodes of violence against Hindus in India is that these could become part of the local public discussion. One way to capture this is to examine the local newspaper coverage. We extract all articles in local newspapers for the following keywords using a Google Custom Search API: 'India', 'Pakistan', 'Kashmir' and 'Terrorism'. We estimate the baseline specification using binary variables flagging the presence of articles with each keyword in the newspapers local to the constituency.

Table 5 shows that episodes of violence against Hindus in India lead to an increase in local newspaper coverage for all articles mentioning the keywords among constituencies with higher Hindu population. The increase is significant and large for the term: 'Terrorism' and marginally significant for 'Pakistan'. These patterns suggest that violence against Hindus in India generates increased coverage related to the Indian sub-continent with a security-related framing in the local press.

Table 5: Local Newspaper Coverage and Voters Concerns

	Term in Local Newspaper				Voter Survey: Top Concern	
	India	Pakistan	Kashmir	Terrorism	Immigration	Terrorism
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
I(Violence against Hindus) x Share Hindus	0.074	0.089*	0.050	0.120***	0.150***	−0.022
	(0.081)	(0.049)	(0.043)	(0.044)	(0.041)	(0.022)
Month-Year FE	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Constituency FE	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Individual FE					Yes	Yes
Mean DV	0.04	0.03	0.01	0.03	0.14	0.02
Observations	15,817	15,817	15,817	15,817	396,496	396,496

Notes: The dependent variable is a binary variable equal to one if a newspaper article in the constituency contains the keyword 'India' (Column (1)), 'Pakistan' (2), 'Kashmir' (3), 'Terrorism' (4), and if the *British Election Study* (BES) respondents' main concern is immigration (5) and terrorism (6). All specifications include constituency and month-year fixed effects, and control for individual fixed effects in Columns (5) and (6). Standard errors are clustered at the constituency level. *** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.1.

The increased local news coverage implies that the local public discussion of events in India is not limited to diaspora communities alone, but may reach the wider electorate. We leverage the *British Election Study*, a panel of citizens' political views to test whether episodes of violence in India shift voter concerns among the general electorate in constituencies with more Hindus. We estimate a regression with individual fixed effects, where the outcome is a binary variable equal to one if the respondent mentions immigration or terrorism as their most important issue. Columns (5) and (6) in Table 5 show that following such episodes, respondents in these constituencies are more likely to report that immigration is their top concern. No significant effect is observed for terrorism, which is likely due to the small proportion of citizens who report that issue as their top concern (2% versus 14% for immigration).

Overall, this section shows that episodes of violence in India shape public views in constituencies with a larger diaspora. This shift may then inform how MPs calibrate their rhetoric when considering their stance in the Parliament.

7.4 Strategic Political Considerations: Hidden Identity Politics

In the previous sub-sections, we establish that violence events in India resonate with the Hindu diaspora, and spark political engagement through local donations and local news coverage. In this sub-section, we argue that strategic political considerations help rationalize these findings. We ask under what conditions would MPs respond to these concerns in Parliament, and why would it translate into this specific type of rhetoric.

Hindus are a small minority group, therefore, an outright mobilization of their concerns might not give large political dividends and may generate political backlash from the traditional vote base. Instead, MPs may rely on a rhetoric that resonates with a broader electorate, which we call 'hidden identity politics.' Such an effort is more likely to secure a broad coalition of voters, especially where

Table 6: Alternative Measures of MPs Rhetoric

	Context of Speeches			
	Immigration	Terrorism	Pro-Hindu	I(Mention India)
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
I(Violence against Hindus) x Share Hindus	0.410***	0.510***	−0.220	−0.004
	(0.150)	(0.180)	(0.190)	(0.043)
Month-Year FE	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Constituency FE	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Mean DV				0.02
Observations	117,347	117,347	117,347	117,347

Notes: The dependent variable is a standardized cosine similarity between the speeches of each MP during that week and distinct vocabularies related to immigration (Column (1)), terrorism (2), and pro-Hindu (4). In Column (4), we use an indicator variable for any mention of 'India' in the speeches. The explanatory variable is a weekly indicator for the occurrence of violence against Hindus in India, interacted with the 2011 Hindu population share in the MP's constituency (measured on a scale from 0 to 1). Standard errors are clustered at the constituency level. *** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.1.

Hindus are the dominant minority in the constituency.

This framework generates a few predictions: (a) we should not see a rise in pro-Hindu rhetoric; (b) the effect should be more pronounced in constituencies where Hindus are a dominant minority; (c) MPs could be more prone to activating these strategies where elections are tight and the rhetoric resonates with the vote base.

We start by examining prediction (a). We estimate the baseline regression using outcome variables constructed using different dictionaries proxying for different rhetorics relating to immigration, terrorism, and pro-Hindu topics. The results in Table 6 confirm that following episodes of violence against Hindus in India, MPs representing constituencies with larger Hindu population do not activate a pro-Hindu rhetoric (Column (3)), nor increase references to India (Column (4)). In contrast, they do ignite discourse covering immigration and terrorism (Columns (1) and (2), respectively); which aligns with the shift in the concerns of the broader electorate in these constituencies (see columns (5) and (6) from Table 5).

We next examine prediction (b). We estimate the baseline regression adding an interaction term between the independent variable of interest and a binary variable equal to one if Hindus are the dominant minority in the constituency.[11] The results are reported in Appendix Table B6 and confirm that the effect is driven by these constituencies.

Finally, we examine prediction (c), analyzing whether electoral incentives shape MPs reaction to foreign events. In particular, we ask whether electoral pressure and the concerns of groups needed to secure an electoral coalition help explain our results. Considering electoral pressure, we study

[11]This variable is equal to one if Hindus are the largest *minority* religious group; that means the largest among Buddhists, Hindus, Jewish, Muslims, and Sikhs.

Table 7: Effects stronger for Conservatives with contested elections

	Anti-Muslim Rhetoric (std)			
	All Sample		Conservative MP	Labour MP
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
I(Violence against Hindus)	0.004	0.003	0.008	−0.003
	(0.008)	(0.009)	(0.011)	(0.016)
I(Violence against Hindus) x Share Hindus	0.490***	0.420**	−0.200	0.440***
	(0.160)	(0.210)	(0.210)	(0.170)
I(Violence against Hindus) x Share Hindus x Tight Election		0.440	1.300***	0.480
		(0.430)	(0.390)	(0.840)
Month-Year FE	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Constituency FE	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Observations	117,347	117,347	62,559	39,237

Notes: Standard errors are clustered at the constituency level. *** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.1.

the role of tight elections, our rationale is that as elections become tighter, MPs need to craft messages appealing to a more diverse set of groups, as some minorities become pivotal **RETHINK REF: (Dancygier, 2017)**. We identify tight elections as one where the MP was elected from the bottom 25th percentile of the vote margins across all elections in our sample period. The results are presented in Table 7. Column (2) suggests that, on average, MPs elected with smaller vote margins are more likely to activate anti-Muslim rhetoric, though the standard errors are large. These estimates suggest, albeit with some noise, that electoral pressure play a role in explaining MPs reactions to foreign events.

We now ask whether electoral pressure exacerbates our findings in places where the electoral base of MPs is more attuned to anti-Muslim rhetoric. Note that findings from Column (6) in Table 2 already revealed that the baseline effect attenuates where MPs represent constituencies with large Hindu *and* Muslim populations, suggesting that the concerns from a variety of groups need to be taken into account to secure electoral coalitions. We now estimate the impact of electoral competition separately for Conservative and Labour MPs, since Conservatives have an electorate that may be more attuned to anti-Muslim rhetoric.[12] Columns (3) and (4) of Table 7, confirm that Conservatives are significantly more likely to resort to anti-Muslim rhetoric when elected with a small win margin, the overall effect is in fact entirely driven by these MPs. Labour MPs, in contrast, show no differential response in tight elections, while the baseline effect reported in Column (1) remains stable. This likely reflects Labour candidates' greater reliance on diverse electoral coalitions, including Muslim voters.[13]

[12] Appendix Figure A12 shows that Hindus and Christians and No Religion — a predominantly white group — are much more likely to vote Conservative compared to Muslims.

[13] Appendix Figure A12 shows that Muslims are the religious group most likely to vote for Labour.

7.5 Electoral Incentives

From the previous sections, we learn that MPs tailor their rhetoric when it may consolidate support across different groups of electors. In this sub-section, we ask whether this strategy gives electoral returns. We examine the relationship between incumbent's next election performance and the average anti-Muslim rhetoric used by MPs between one General Election and the next.[14] For each constituency, we analyze the probability of incumbent party re-election and their vote share.

Table 8: Next Election Performance

	Next General Election Outcome	
	I(Incumbent Party Re-Elected)	Vote Share Incumbent Party
	(1)	(2)
Anti-Muslim Rhetoric	0.070***	0.013**
	(0.026)	(0.006)
GE-Year FE	Yes	Yes
Constituency FE	Yes	Yes
Mean DV	0.82	0.49
Observations	2,279	2,279

Notes: The dependent variables are: whether the incumbent party was re-elected (Column 1), and the incumbent party's vote share (Column 2). The independent variable is the average cosine similarity index of the MP representing the constituency between general elections. All specifications include constituency and general election year fixed effects. Standard errors are clustered at the constituency level. *** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.1.

Table 8 shows that a one standard deviation higher average anti-Muslim rhetoric increases the probability that the incumbent party is re-elected by 7 percentage points and increases their vote share by 1.3 percentage points. These results provide suggestive evidence that MPs derive significant electoral rewards from using more anti-Muslim rhetoric beyond purely expressive or symbolic motives. One concern is that unobserved characteristics correlated with anti-Muslim rhetoric lead to higher support for the incumbent party. If underlying trends in anti-Muslim rhetoric were correlated with next election performance, we should observe larger effects among constituencies with *higher* levels of anti-Muslim rhetoric measured before the sample period. Comparing columns (2) and (5) in Appendix Table B11 reveals the effect is more pronounced in constituencies with *lower* initial levels of anti-Muslim rhetoric.

8 Conclusion

This paper examines how religious violence abroad—specifically, anti-Hindu violence in India—shapes domestic political speech in the United Kingdom. We show that UK MPs representing constituencies with larger Hindu populations are more likely to invoke anti-Muslim language in their parliamentary speeches following such incidents. These effects are sizable, robust to a range of em-

[14] General Elections occurred in 2010, 2015, 2017, 2019 and 2024, giving a total of four periods.

pirical checks, and specific to violence against Hindus in India rather than similar events in neighboring countries or involving other religious communities.

The findings highlight a mechanism through which diaspora-linked events abroad resonate within domestic political discourse. Rather than being passive observers, politicians selectively respond to transnational events in ways that reflect the social composition and political incentives within their own constituencies. Our analysis of financial registers and donations further suggests that such rhetorical shifts may be followed by symbolic or material reinforcement from domestic actors, although there is no evidence of direct electoral gains. Taken together, the evidence points to a pattern of constituency-level responsiveness shaped by diasporic ties and political incentives. While these dynamics do not appear to translate into measurable electoral rewards, they reflect how external events can influence parliamentary speech and potentially shape broader narratives around identity, religion, and national belonging.

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Online Appendix

A Data Appendix

Table A1: Vocabulary Terms Used for Speech Classification

Topic	Vocabulary Terms
Anti-Islam*	9-11, alQaeda, anti muslim, arab, asylum, asylum seekers, ayatollah, beheading, bengladesh, bomb, border control, boats, burqa, caliphate, counter terrorism, daesh, deportation, eid, extremist propaganda, extremism, extremism prevention, face covering, fatwa, fundamentalist, grooming gangs, hezbollah, hijab, homegrown terrorism, imam, immigration, insurgency, iran, isis, islamic, islamic state, islamism, jihad, jihadist, jumma, madrasa, martyr, middle east, militant, minaret, migrant crisis, mosque, muslim Brotherhood, national security, niqab, pakistan, propaganda, prophet mohammed, radical, radical ideology, radicalisation, refugee, refugees, salafism, sayyid qutb, sectarianism, seekers, security threat, shah, sharia, shia, shisha, sleeper cells, sovereignty, stabbing, suicide attack, suicide bomb, sunni, syrian, taliban, terrorism, terrorist networks, terrorist recruitment, ummah, visa restrictions, wahhabism, zakat
Terrorism	9-11, akbar, al qaeda, attack, ayatollah, beheading, bomb, burqa, caliphate, counter terrorism, daesh, eid, extremist propaganda, extremism, face covering, fatwa, fundamentalist, grooming, grooming gangs, hezbollah, hijab, homegrown terrorism, hostage, ied, immigration, insurgency, islamic, islamic state, islamism, islamist, isis, jihad, jihadist, martyr, militant, muslim brotherhood, niqab, propaganda, radical, radicalisation, security threat, sayyid qutb, sectarianism, sharia, sleeper cells, suicide attack, suicide bomb, taliban, terror, terrorism, terrorist, threat, zakat
Migration	asylum, asylum seekers, boats, border, border control, citizenship, control, crackdown, deportation, dependent, frontier, immigration, migrant, migrant crisis, migrants, migration, national security, refugee, refugees, seekers, settlement, visa, visa restrictions
Pro-Hindu	advaita, amitabh bachchan, aram, baps, bharat, bhakti, bindi, bollywood, brahma, brahman, curry, cremationA40, dehli, dependent, dharma, dharma traditions, dharmic, diwali, dvaita, gita, hindi, hinduphobia, hindu, hindu priests, hindu temple, hinduism, holi, india, indic, itihasa, kalawa, karma, krishna, mahaparat, mandir, meditation, moksha, mouli, murtis, pranayam, ram, ramayana, sari, saree, sanskirt, sanatana, sanatana dharma, srimad bhagavatam, swayamsevak sangh, tilak, upanishads, vedanta, vedas, vigrahas, yoga

Notes: This table lists the vocabulary terms used to classify speeches into four broad topics: 'Anti-Islam' (*our main topic), 'Terrorism', 'Migration', and 'Pro-Hindu'. The dictionaries are based on publicly available sources and augmented with LLM.

Table A2: Newspapers from Google Search in England and Wales

Newspaper	Location	Newspaper	Location
Birmingham Live	Birmingham	*Hereford Times*	Hereford
Blackpool Gazette	Blackpool	*Hinckley Times*	Hinckley
Boston Standard	Boston	*Horncastle News*	Horncastle
Brighton and Hove Independent	Brighton	*Hull Daily Mail*	Hull
Bristol Post	Bristol	*Keighley News*	Keighley
Bucks Herald	Aylesbury	*Kidderminster Shuttle*	Kidderminster
Burnley Express	Burnley	*Lancashire Telegraph*	Blackburn
Buxton Advertiser	Buxton	*Lancaster Guardian*	Lancaster
Chard & Ilminster News	Chard	*Leamington Courier*	Royal Leamington Spa
Colchester Gazette	Colchester	*Lincolnshire Live*	Lincoln
Cornwall Live	Truro	*Liverpool.com*	Liverpool
Coventry Telegraph	Coventry	*Macclesfield Express*	Macclesfield
Craven Herald and Pioneer	Skipton	*Malvern Gazette*	Malvern
Daily Echo	Southampton	*News Shopper*	Bromley
Daily Post	Llandudno	*Oxford Mail*	Oxford
Darlington and Stockton Times	Darlington	*Oxford Times*	Oxford
Daventry Express	Daventry	*Penarth Times*	Penarth
Derby Telegraph	Derby	*Peterborough Today*	Peterborough
Derbyshire Times	Chesterfield	*Pocklington Post*	Pocklington
Dewsbury Reporter	Dewsbury	*Somerset Live*	Taunton
Diss Mercury	Diss	*South Wales Argus*	Newport
Doncaster Free Press	Doncaster	*St Helens Star*	Saint Helens
Dorset Echo	Weymouth	*Stourbridge News*	Stourbridge
Dudley News	Dudley	*Stroud News and Journal*	Stroud
Eastbourne Herald	Eastbourne	*Surrey Mirror*	Reigate
Gloucestershire Live	Gloucester	*Sutton Coldfield Observer*	Sutton Coldfield
Grimsby Telegraph	Grimsby	*Swindon Advertiser*	Swindon
Halesowen News	Halesowen	*Teesside Live*	Middlesbrough
Halifax Courier	Halifax	*The Echo*	Southend-on-Sea
Hampshire Chronicle	Winchester	*The Northern Echo*	Darlington
Hampshire Live	Southampton	*Times Series*	Barnet
Harborough Mail	Market Harborough	*Watford Observer*	Watford
Harrogate Advertiser	Harrogate	*Wharfedale Observer*	Otley
Harrow Observer	Harrow	*Wiltshire Times*	Trowbridge
Harrow Times	Harrow	*Worcester News*	Worcester
Hartlepool Mail	Hartlepool	*York Press*	York
Hastings Observer	Hastings		

Notes: This table lists the sample of newspapers identified through Google Custom Search with at least one article containing one or more of the following terms: 'India', 'Pakistan', 'Kashmir', or 'Terrorism'. Newspapers for which the search results consisted *exclusively* of references to false positives (e.g. "India Street"), sports-related content, or advertisements, were excluded from the raw data.

Table A3: British Election Study Questions and Options

Survey Question	**Options**
As far as you're concerned, what is the SINGLE MOST important issue facing the country at the present time?	**(1)** Europe; **(2)** Immigration; **(3)** Economy; **(4)** Health; **(5)** Terrorism; **(7)** Inequality; **(8)** Environment; **(9)** Austerity/spending; **(10)** Negativity; **(11)** Other lib-auth; **(12)** Other left-right; **(13)** Other
If there were a UK General Election tomorrow, which party would you vote for?	**(0)** I would not vote; **(1)** Conservative; **(2)** Labour; **(3)** Liberal Democrat; **(4)** Scottish National Party; **(5)** Plaid Cymru; **(6)** United Kingdom Independence Party (UKIP); **(7)** Green Party; **(8)** British National Party (BNP); **(9)** Other; **(11)** Change UK – The Independent Group; **(12)** Brexit Party/Reform UK; **(13)** Independent Candidate; **(9999)** Don't know

Notes: This table lists the full wording of key British Election Study survey questions used in the analysis along with the available response options.

Table A4: Summary Statistics: Census 2011

Statistic	**Obs.**	**Mean**	**SD**	**Min**	**Max**
Share Muslims	573	0.043	0.073	0.001	0.520
Share Hindus	573	0.013	0.030	0.0002	0.320
Share Hindu Immigrants	573	0.052	0.051	0.003	0.490
Share Asian Hindus	573	0.013	0.029	0.0001	0.310
Share Indians	573	0.011	0.020	0.001	0.200
Share Indian Hindus	573	0.010	0.024	0.0001	0.300
Share Hindi Speakers	573	0.001	0.002	0.000	0.014
Share Sikhs	573	0.007	0.019	0.00004	0.220

Notes: Summary statistics for the 2010 Parliamentary Constituencies in England and Wales (573).

B Appendix Tables

B.1 Additional Results

Table B1: Sentiment Analysis

	Sentiment (std)				
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)
Cosine Similarity Index (std)	−0.194***	−0.173***	−0.173***	−0.174***	−0.175***
	(0.001)	(0.003)	(0.003)	(0.003)	(0.003)
Constituency FE		Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Month-Year FE			Yes		
Week-Year FE				Yes	
Date FE					Yes
Observations	606,171	606,154	606,154	606,154	606,154

Notes: The outcome is the standardized sentiment of Hansard House of Commons speeches. Column (1) reports the unconditional specification. Column (2) includes parliamentary constituency fixed effects. Columns (3), (4), and (5) additionally include month-year, week-year, and date fixed effects, respectively. Standard errors are clustered at the constituency level. *** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.1.

Table B2: Effects are larger post 2019

	Anti-Muslim Rhetoric (std)		
	Full Sample	2013 - 2018	2019 - 2024
	(1)	(2)	(3)
I(Violence against Hindus)	0.004	0.017	−0.007
	(0.008)	(0.012)	(0.011)
I(Violence against Hindus) x Share Hindus	0.490***	0.290	0.730***
	(0.160)	(0.220)	(0.270)
Month-Year FE	Yes	Yes	Yes
Constituency FE	Yes	Yes	Yes
Observations	117,347	59,289	58,058

Notes: The table shows a split sample of the baseline effect (Column (1)) over two periods: Columns (2) and (3) for 2013–2018 and 2019–2024, respectively, corresponding to intensification of Hindu nationalism in India and post-Brexit Britain. Standard errors are clustered at the constituency level. *** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.1.

Table B3: Effects by Ethnic Background of MP

	Anti-Muslim Rhetoric (std)			
	White MPs	Ethnic Minority MPs	British Indian MPs	Muslim MPs
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
I(Violence against Hindus)	0.010	−0.079**	−0.150***	−0.033
	(0.008)	(0.030)	(0.046)	(0.093)
I(Violence against Hindus) x Share Hindus	0.500**	0.810***	1.100***	0.180
	(0.200)	(0.190)	(0.250)	(4.400)
Month-Year FE	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Constituency FE	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Observations	102,415	8,898	2,608	2,911

Notes: The table shows a split sample of the baseline effect (Column (1)) by MP ethnic background (Bhatiya, n.d.). MPs are classified as White (Column (1)) and ethnic minorities (Column (2)). For the latter, Columns (3) and (4) reflect British Indian and Muslim, respectively. Standard errors are clustered at the constituency level. *** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.1.

Table B4: Effects are similar across Conservative and Labour MPs

	Anti-Muslim Rhetoric (std)		
	Labour MPs	Conservative MPs	Other Party MPs
	(1)	(2)	(3)
I(Violence against Hindus)	0.0001	0.006	0.023
	(0.015)	(0.011)	(0.025)
I(Violence against Hindus) x Share Hindus	0.460***	0.270*	0.720
	(0.170)	(0.160)	(0.650)
Month-Year FE	Yes	Yes	Yes
Constituency FE	Yes	Yes	Yes
Observations	39,237	62,559	9,517

Notes: The table shows a split sample by MP affiliation. Columns (1)–(3) correspond to Labour, Conservative and 'Other Party' MPs, respectively. Standard errors are clustered at the constituency level. *** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.1.

Table B5: MPs visiting India

	I(Visited India)		
	(1)	(2)	(3)
Share Hindus		0.082**	0.083**
		(0.040)	(0.042)
log($\sum$ VAH) x Share Hindus	0.0003		
	(0.012)		
Month-Year FE	Yes	Yes	Yes
Constituency FE	Yes		
Controls			Yes
Mean DV	0.001	0.001	0.001
Observations	56,880	56,880	54,036

Notes: Standard errors are clustered at the constituency level. *** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.1.

Table B6: Effect is larger where Hindus are a sizeable Minority

	Anti-Muslim Rhetoric (std)
I(Violence against Hindus)	0.011
	(0.008)
I(Violence against Hindus) x Share Hindus	0.100
	(0.320)
I(Violence against Hindus) x I(Hindu Largest Minority)	−0.051
	(0.033)
I(Violence against Hindus) x Share Hindus x I(Hindu Largest Minority)	0.750*
	(0.400)
Month-Year FE	Yes
Constituency FE	Yes
Observations	117,347

Notes: Standard errors are clustered at the constituency level. *** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.1.

B.2 Robustness checks

Table B7: Overall Engagement in Parliament

	Engagement in Parliament		
	I(Any Speech)	IHS(Total Speeches)	IHS(Total Words)
	(1)	(2)	(3)
I(Violence against Hindus) x Share Hindus	−0.020	−0.160	−0.490
	(0.066)	(0.150)	(0.460)
Month-Year FE	Yes	Yes	Yes
Constituency FE	Yes	Yes	Yes
Mean DV	0.47	2.41	373.94
Observations	260,715	260,715	260,715

Notes: Standard errors are clustered at the constituency level. *** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.1.

Table B8: Differentiating the Type and Target of Violence

	Anti-Muslim Rhetoric (std)			
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
I(Violence against Hindus) x Share Hindus	0.490***			
	(0.160)			
I(Violence by Muslims against Hindus) x Share Hindus		0.600**		
		(0.280)		
I(Violence by Hindus) x Share Hindus			0.310**	
			(0.140)	
I(Violence by Hindus against Muslims) x Share Hindus				0.120
				(0.240)
Month-Year FE	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Constituency FE	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Mean Violence	0.2	0.08	0.26	0.07
Observations	117,347	117,347	117,347	117,347

Notes: Standard errors are clustered at the constituency level. *** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.1.

Table B9: Intensive Margin of Violence Events in India

	Anti-Muslim Rhetoric (std)	
	(1)	(2)
Violence against Hindus	−0.034	
	(0.050)	
Violence by Hindus		0.015
		(0.029)
Violence against Hindus x Share Hindus	−1.000	
	(1.100)	
Violence by Hindus x Share Hindus		0.200*
		(0.120)
Month-Year FE	Yes	Yes
Constituency FE	Yes	Yes
Observations	23,411	30,272

Notes: Standard errors are clustered at the constituency level. *** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.1.

Table B10: Validation Exercises

	Anti-Muslim Rhetoric (std)				
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)
I(Violence against Hindus in PK or BG) x Share Hindus	0.130				
	(0.210)				
I(Violence by Hindus in PK or BG) x Share Hindus		0.270			
		(0.180)			
I(Violence by Muslims in EU) x Share Hindus			0.120		
			(0.200)		
I(Violence against Sikhs) x Share Sikhs				0.790*	
				(0.470)	
I(Violence against Hindus) x Share Hindi Speakers					6.700
					(7.500)
I(Violence against Hindus) x Share Non-Hindi Speakers					0.044
					(0.310)
Month-Year FE	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Constituency FE	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Observations	117,347	117,347	117,347	117,347	117,347

Notes: Standard errors are clustered at the constituency level. *** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.1.

Table B11: Heterogeneity by Baseline Levels of Anti-Muslim Rhetoric

	Baseline Anti-Muslim Rhetoric					
	Above Median			Below Median		
	Anti-Muslim Rhetoric (std)	I(Incumbent Party Re-Elected)	Vote Share Incumbent Party	Anti-Muslim Rhetoric (std)	I(Incumbent Party Re-Elected)	Vote Share Incumbent Party
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
I(Violence against Hindus) x Share Hindus	0.280*			0.760***		
	(0.170)			(0.270)		
Anti-Muslim Rhetoric		0.035	0.013		0.110***	0.014*
		(0.034)	(0.008)		(0.038)	(0.008)
Month-Year FE	Yes			Yes		
GE-Year FE		Yes	Yes		Yes	Yes
Constituency FE	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Mean DV		0.84	0.5		0.8	0.49
Observations	57,671	1,100	1,100	59,300	1,172	1,172

Notes: Standard errors are clustered at the constituency level. *** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.1.

Table B12: Violence vs Cooperation Events in India

	Anti-Muslim Rhetoric (std)	
	(1)	(2)
I(Violence against Hindus)	0.004	0.029
	(0.008)	(0.022)
I(Cooperation with Hindus)		−0.006
		(0.009)
I(Violence against Hindus) x I(Cooperation with Hindus)		−0.028
		(0.024)
I(Violence against Hindus) x Share Hindus	0.490***	1.300***
	(0.160)	(0.460)
I(Cooperation with Hindus) x Share Hindus		0.230
		(0.280)
I(Violence against Hindus) x I(Cooperation with Hindus) x Share Hindus		−0.910*
		(0.540)
Month-Year FE	Yes	Yes
Constituency FE	Yes	Yes
Observations	117,347	117,347

Notes: Standard errors are clustered at the constituency level. *** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.1.

Table B13: Drop Constituencies with more than 10% Hindus

	Anti-Muslim Rhetoric (std)	
	Full Sample	2019 - 2024
	(1)	(2)
I(Violence against Hindus)	0.005	−0.012
	(0.009)	(0.012)
I(Violence against Hindus) x Share Hindus	0.580	1.300**
	(0.540)	(0.500)
Month-Year FE	Yes	Yes
Constituency FE	Yes	Yes
Observations	114,438	56,618

Notes: Standard errors are clustered at the constituency level. *** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.1.

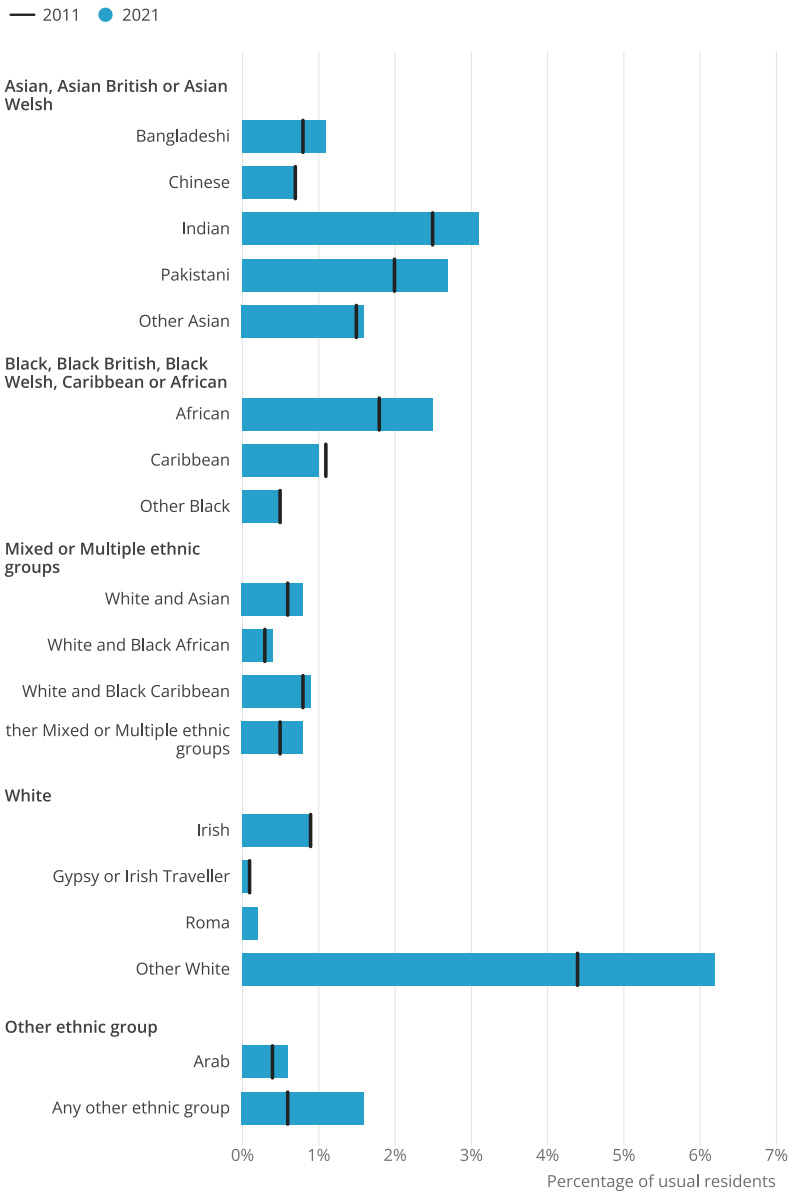
Table B14: Including more granular fixed effects

	Anti-Muslim Rhetoric (std)				
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)
I(Violence against Hindus)	0.004	0.004		0.003	
	(0.008)	(0.008)		(0.008)	
I(Violence against Hindus) x Share Hindus	0.470***	0.410**	0.360**	0.460**	0.410**
	(0.170)	(0.170)	(0.170)	(0.180)	(0.180)
Month-Year FE	Yes	Yes		Yes	
MP FE	Yes				
Week-Year FE			Yes		Yes
Constituency x Year FE		Yes	Yes		
Constituency x Quarter-Year FE				Yes	Yes
Observations	111,313	117,347	117,347	117,347	117,347

Notes: Standard errors are clustered at the constituency level. *** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.1.

C Appendix Figures

Figure A1: Distribution of Ethnic Groups, Disaggregated



Notes: The figure shows the share of each group across England and Wales. Source: ONS, 2011 and 2021 Census

Figure A2: PMs Visit to Hindu Temples



Figure A3: Hindu Temple Crowd Interactions



Figure A4: Support for Hindu Manifesto



Carlisle (0.3% Hindus)



Mid Buckinghamshire (1.4% Hindus)



Basingstoke (3% Hindus)



Linlithgow and East Falkirk (0.3% Hindus)

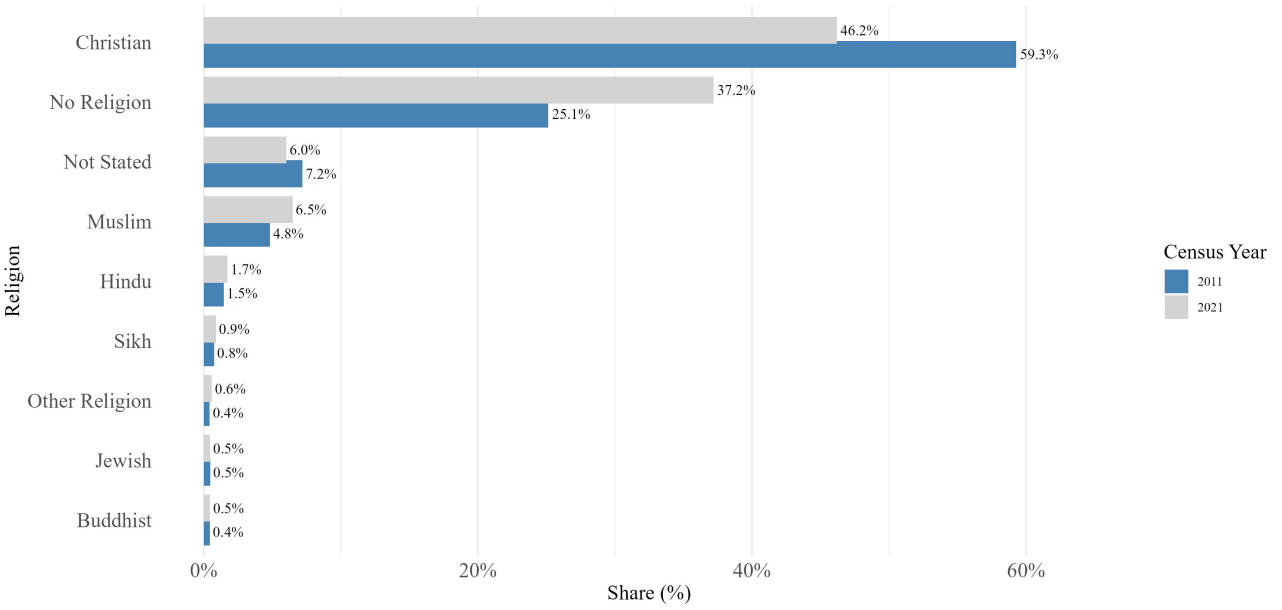


Liverpool Wavertree (0.8% Hindus)



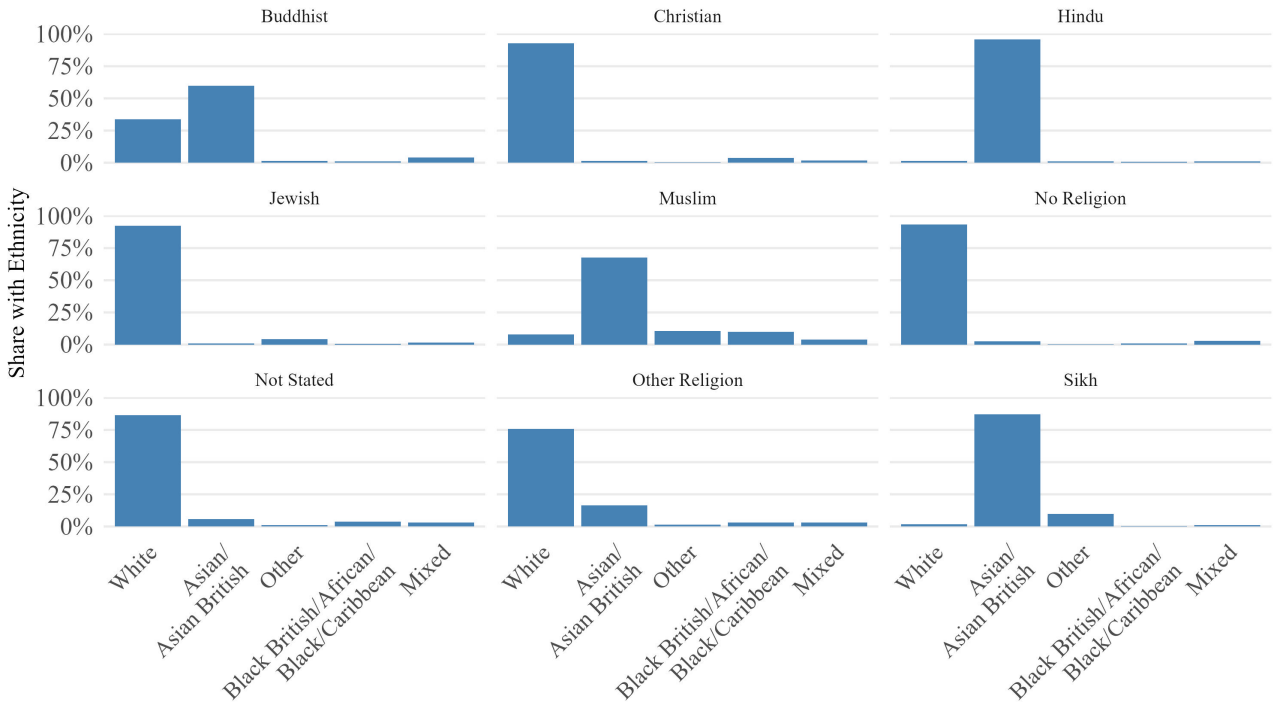
Aylesbury (2.6% Hindus)

Figure A5: Population Composition by Religion: Census 2011 vs 2021



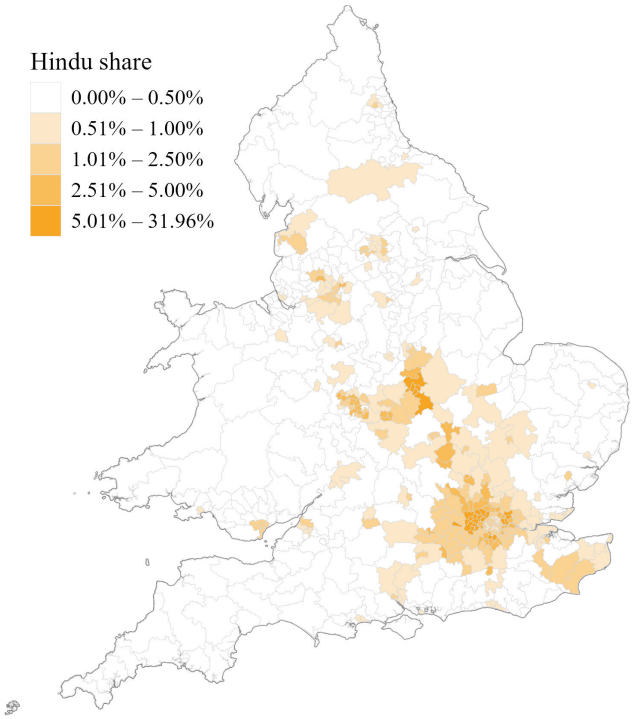
The figure shows the shares of different religious groups in England and Wales in 2011 and 2021, ranked in descending order according to their 2011 shares. Source: ONS, 2011 and 2021 Census

Figure A6: Ethnic Composition by Religion: Census 2011

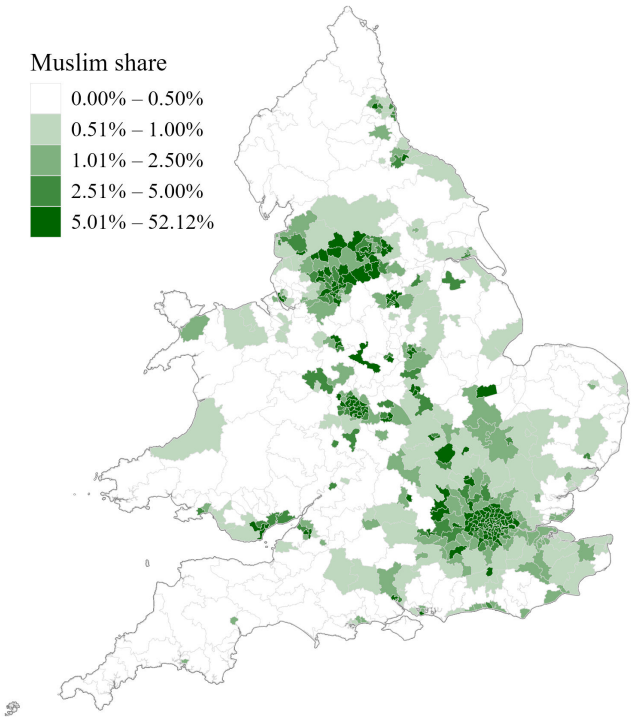


Notes: The figure shows the ethnic composition by religion for England and Wales. Source: ONS, 2011 census

Figure A7: Spatial Variation of Hindus and Muslims (Census 2011)



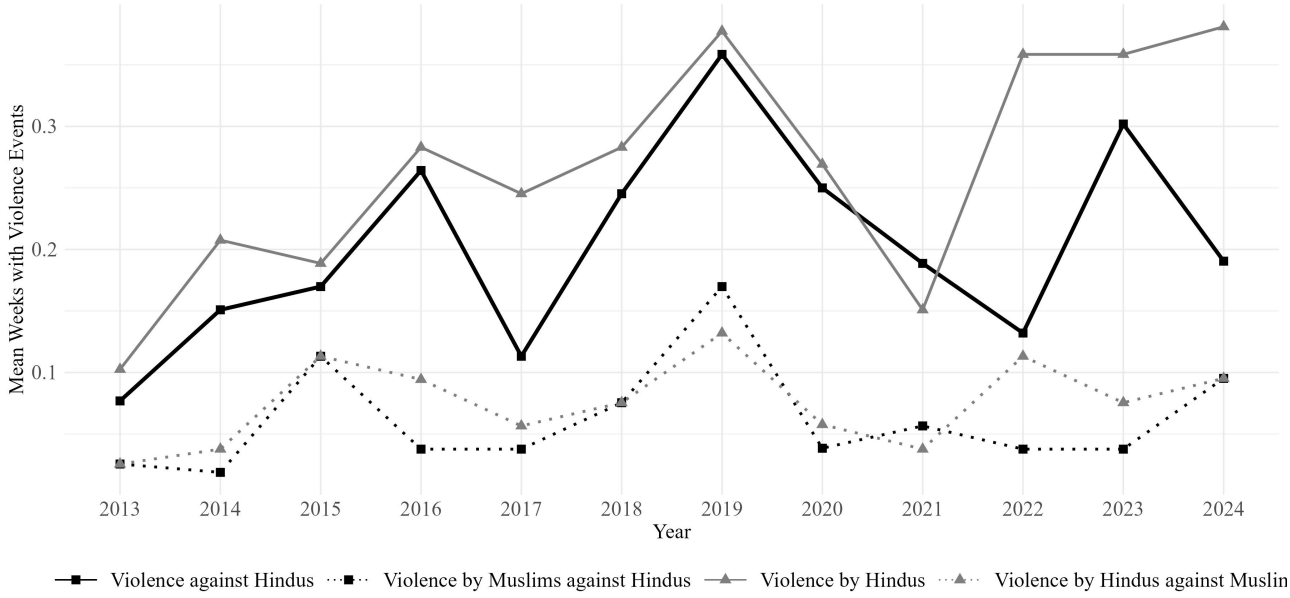
(a) Hindu Religion



(b) Muslims Religion

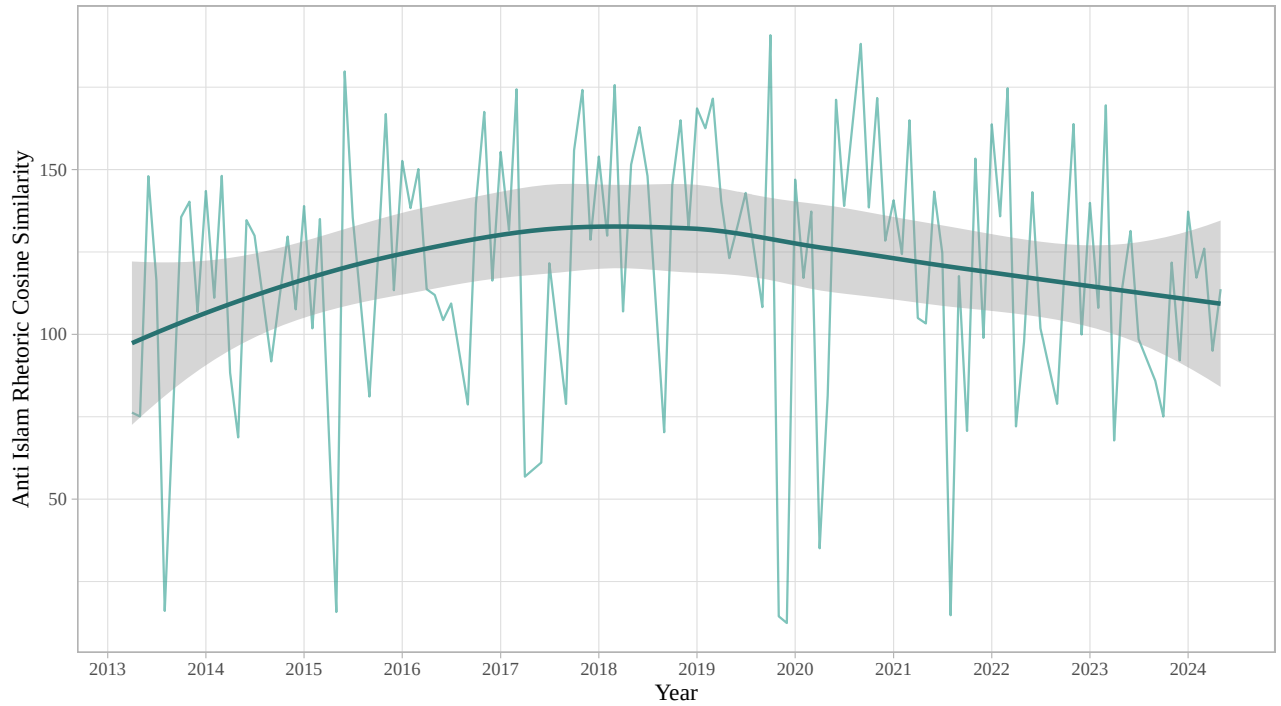
Notes: This figure maps the 2011 distribution of Hindus and Muslims across constituencies in England and Wales.

Figure A8: Violent Events by Type Over Time



Notes: The figure shows the distribution of violent event types over time. Source: GDLET 1.0 Event Database

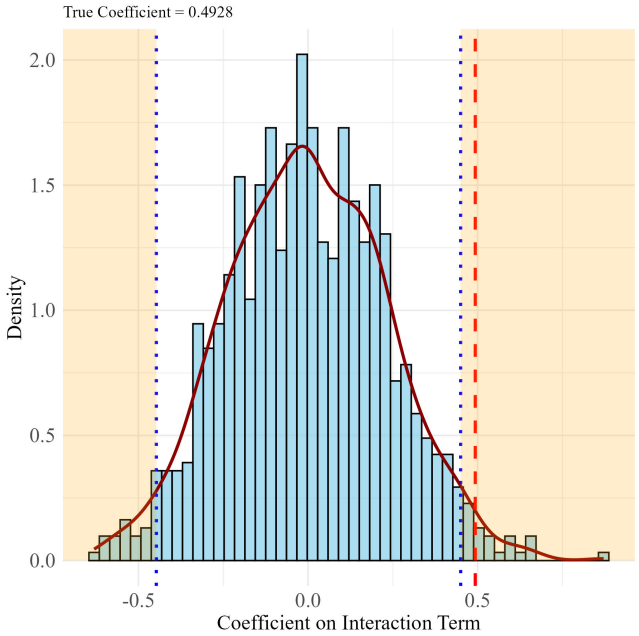
Figure A9: Anti-Muslim Rhetoric Over Time



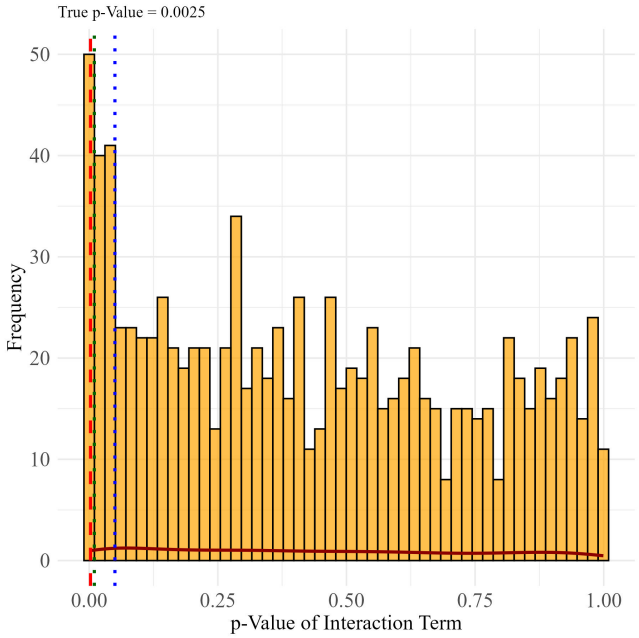
Notes: The figure shows the distribution of the main outcome variable, the standardized cosine similarity of MP anti-Muslim rhetoric on a 12-month moving average.

C.1 Additional Results

Figure A10: Randomization Inference

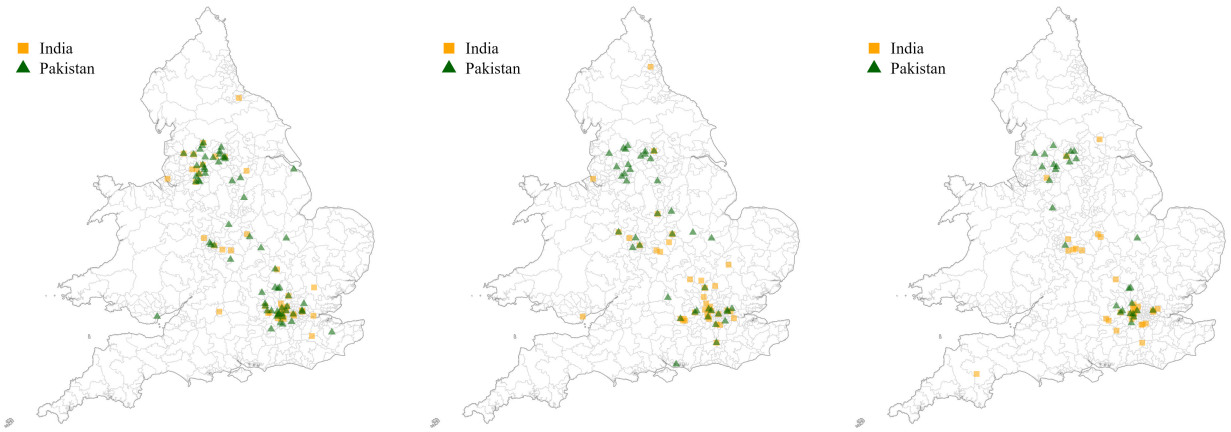


(a) Estimated coefficients



(b) Randomization inference p-values

Figure A11: Google Trends by Main Topics



(a) Leaders (b) Media (c) Locations

Figure A12: Voting Intention across Religious Groups

