

Personality Patterns of Higher Secondary Boys across Different Demographic Groups

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The *raison d'être* of the study is to unravel and make a comparative study of the personality patterns of SC, ST and non-backward higher secondary boys. The prolonged social discrimination has produced an adverse impact on the development of the personality of these downtrodden, which is a severe stumbling block in providing 'social justice' and 'social equality' to the masses. By making a comparative study, the differences in personality patterns between backward and non-backward classes can be highlighted which will enable us to understand and eliminate not only the economical but also the educational, social and political backwardness of the society as a whole. For the study, on a sample of 600 rural and urban male students of XI standard from Jaipur district belonging to SC, ST & non-backward classes, the Cattell's High School Personality Questionnaire (HSPQ), Form A by Kapoor, Srivastava and Srivastava was administered. Results revealed significant differences in personality patterns among SC, ST and non-backward boys. These differences were more prominent in rural areas in comparison to urban areas.

Keywords: Personality patterns, Scheduled castes (SC), Scheduled tribes (ST), Non backward class boys.

It is well known that personality plays an important role in determining not only the behavior of an individual but also his overall success and prosperity in life. Allport (1937) has defined personality as "a dynamic organization within the individual of those psychophysical systems that determines his unique adjustment to his environment." Interest in personality is as old as civilization: Ancient philosophers and poets often speculated about why individuals were unique and why they differed from each other in so many ways. For ages person-situation interaction has played an important role in the development of an individual's personality. In this context not only the family environment but also the society and the culture in which the children are brought up becomes all too important. In every culture and society children and adolescents are subjected to various kinds of pressures, both

personal and social. These pressures exert great influence on the personality development of the children, which ultimately influences not only the all-round development of that particular society but also affects the future development of the country. In other words, personality of the individual determines the nature of the society and the society in turn influences and nurtures the personality of an individual; thus, mutually reinforcing each other.

According to Cattell (1950) "the personality of an individual is that which enables us to predict what he will do in a given situation." Mischel and Shoda (1995) identified personal styles or strategies of individuals in dealing with the situations and found that these styles or strategies remain consistent over the years and they in turn, become a kind of behavioral signature of their personalities. These personality patterns or

styles are determined largely by experiences of an individual, which develop within a socio-cultural world. The surroundings and the various interacting patterns that the child faces from the beginning of life determine the dynamics of personality.

Indian society and culture is unique, and has the credit of being one of the oldest civilizations of the world. It has developed a social system, which is unique in the world. The "Varna Vyavastha" of 'Vedic' times produced a caste division determined by birth and was an important aspect of Hindu Dharma. The divisions persisted through the ages, ossified and became rigid. With the passage of time, society as a whole not only started losing flexibility but also it obstructed the progress of the scheduled castes (SC) and scheduled tribes (ST) in innumerable ways. In the medieval period the caste system became a tool of discrimination and oppression against the scheduled castes (SC) and scheduled tribes (ST). This tendency not only blocked the development of the society as a whole but also impeded the overall personality development of children belonging to scheduled castes (SC) and scheduled tribes (ST). Ultimately, it led to the evolution of various stereotypes pertaining to these classes, further reinforcing the prejudices about the personality characteristics of these scheduled castes (SC) and scheduled tribes (ST). With the advent of independence many social, economical and political reforms were initiated for the upliftment of the downtrodden. A policy of 'protective discrimination' was initiated in the constitution to safeguard the interests of SCs and STs. The founders of the Indian democracy realized that without providing educational and occupational facilities, there could not be a 'dynamic democracy'. The ultimate goal of this 'protective discrimination' was to provide 'social justice' and 'social equality' to the masses so that all the factors hampering the personality development of children

belonging to lower castes can be removed. But even today, it is argued that though there are regional variations, the caste system in fact represents a uniform and universal ideology when applied to an understanding of Indian society (Dirks, 2001). The socio-cultural and economic challenges that individuals of certain sections of society have and had to face over the years have made a deep impact on their personalities.

Due to this segregation from the mainstream society disadvantaged children have been found to possess negative self-image (Witty, 1967; Tannenbaum, 1969). Jiloha and Kishore (1998) found that SC and ST students are high on depressive tendency, emotional instability and low on social desirability traits. Similarly Agarwal (1975) found that SC students have more external locus of control (believing in systems, luck and chance for its accomplishments) than non-scheduled caste group. Effect of caste on Intelligence has always remained a matter of controversy with studies conducted, both in support and against. Bhargava and Arora (1982) revealed that caste has significant influence on intelligence. On the other hand Sinha, Tripathi and Mishra (1982) revealed that there is no significant difference in basic intelligence of the two groups.

Vansteelandt and VanMechelen (1999) found that although personality factors play a significant role but our behavior in any given situation is a complex function of both our personality and situational factors in the world around us. This interactionist perspective is in vogue. Society and the culture, to which an individual belongs, always play a major role in shaping the personality. Adler (1934) postulated that human society is crucial not simply for the development of individual personality but also for the orientation of all behavior and emotions in a person's life. He further observed that there is an urge in human nature to adopt oneself to the conditions of the social environment. Similarly Erich Fromm (1955) also emphasized the role

that society plays in structuring, shaping and limiting personality.

Deshpande (1984) found that tribal students were more emotionally stable than non-tribal students. Some other factors including parent and peer's relationship have also an impact on personality. Ara (1986) found that parent's personality was strongly associated with their adolescent children's personality. Aggressive and authoritarian parents had aggressive and authoritarian children. Similarly neurotic parents had anxious children. Looking at all this, the present investigation was carried out to make a comparative study of personality pattern of scheduled caste (SC), scheduled tribe (ST) and non-backward boys to unravel the differences between these classes.

Method

Sample:

The sample of 600 male students consisted class XI. The sample was drawn from eight Hindi medium Government Senior Secondary Schools of Jaipur District and representing both urban and rural areas. These schools were affiliated to the Board of Secondary Education, Rajasthan. Out of the 600 students, 150 were from SC category (75 urban and 75 rural), 150 were ST students (75 urban and 75 rural) and 300 from non-backward (150 urban and 150 rural) class category. The age of the students ranged between 15 to 17 years.

Tools:

The personality pattern of the subjects was studied by using Hindi version of "Cattell's High School Personality Questionnaire" (HSPQ), Form 'A', prepared by Kapoor, Srivastava and Srivastava (1980).

Procedure:

The subjects were administered Cattell's High School Personality Questionnaire" (HSPQ), Form 'A', (Kapoor, Srivastava and Srivastava (1980).) in classroom setting. Further, the personality pattern or profile of

subjects is seen by his scores on fourteen traits of HSPQ. In order to get the raw score, the response obtained on HSPQ were scored as per manual, taking the help of stencil keys. Mean, SD and t-ratios of the scores obtained were calculated.

Results and Discussion

The results show that rural SC and rural non-backward boys differed on factors 'A', 'C' 'F', and 'H' (Table 1 and 2) indicating that rural SC boys were more reserved, affected by feelings, sober and shy than rural non-backward boys who were more warmhearted, emotionally stable, enthusiastic, venturesome and socially bold. However urban SC and urban non-backward boys did not have much difference. They differed only on Factor 'J' (Table 1 and 2) indicating that urban SC boys were more vigorous and zestful in their behavior than urban non-backward boys, who were more obstructive and individualistic. When an overall comparison pertaining to SC boys is made, it is found that SC boys differed significantly from the non-backward boys on factors 'A', 'C' 'F' and 'J'. (Table 3 and 4) This shows that SC boys are generally more reserved, detached, affected by feelings, emotionally less stable, sober, serious, and zestful in comparison to non-backward boys, who are more outgoing, warmhearted, calm, emotionally stable, happy-go-lucky, enthusiastic and individualistic. The reason for this difference may be due to the fact that SC's are scattered and isolated, particularly in rural areas. Their condition has not improved much even after 55 years of constitutional benefits. It is presumed that constitutional safeguards like abolition of untouchability, provisions of reservation, scholarships etc have not permeated to the rural areas vis-à-vis the urban areas. Resultantly, the personality of rural SC boys are still characterized by introvert tendencies and attitudes such as shyness, reserve nature, affected by feelings etc that makes them socially inhibited. Their inability to take initiative in dealing with the social environment

causes a sense of low esteem and inferiority, which poses a serious threat to their path of upliftment.

Results further revealed that rural ST and rural non-backward boys differed on factors 'E', 'H' and 'Q2' (Table 1 and 2) indicating that rural ST boys are more

obedient, socially dependent, shy, restrained and timid than rural non-backward boys who are generally more dominant, self-sufficient, venturesome, socially bold and uninhibited. Whereas, urban ST and non-backward boys differed only on factor 'F' (Table 1 and 2) showing that urban ST boys were more

Table 1 Mean and SD of rural SC(n-75), urban SC(n-75), rural ST (n-75), urban ST(n-75), rural NBC(n-150) and urban NBC(n-150) boys on 14 factors of HSPQ

Factors	Rural		Urban		Rural		Urban		Rural		Urban	
	Mean	SD	Mean	SD	Mean	SD	Mean	SD	Mean	SD	Mean	SD
A (Reserved – Outgoing)	7.92	2.91	9.68	2.80	9.65	2.26	9.82	3.04	9.95	2.16	10.01	3.05
B (Less intelligent – Bright)	4.40	1.31	4.41	1.28	4.32	1.39	4.52	1.45	4.37	1.33	4.48	1.32
C (Easily upset – Emotionally Stable)	7.37	2.83	8.21	2.85	8.28	2.39	8.11	2.66	8.57	2.84	8.30	3.03
D (Phlegmatic- Excitable)	8.12	2.34	8.20	3.27	8.28	2.52	7.93	2.58	8.07	2.42	8.11	2.19
E (Obedient - Assertive)	6.77	2.99	6.93	3.14	6.24	2.78	6.84	3.04	7.15	2.78	7.13	2.83
F (Sober – Enthusiastic)	6.83	2.37	8.09	2.75	7.97	2.74	8.83	2.62	8.18	2.41	7.89	2.53
G (Expedient - Conscientious)	10.0	2.75	10.28	3.03	10.13	2.96	10.01	2.56	10.29	2.55	9.93	2.52
H (Shy - Venturesome)	6.41	2.74	8.39	3.40	7.16	3.00	7.76	2.79	7.98	2.96	7.91	2.63
I (Tough minded–Dependent)	7.36	2.96	7.29	2.61	6.96	2.59	7.33	2.89	7.43	2.62	4.47	2.62
J (Vigorous - Doubting)	7.15	2.96	6.27	2.45	7.24	2.42	7.04	2.77	7.64	2.68	7.05	2.41
Q1 (Placid - Apprehensive)	7.15	2.80	7.29	2.95	7.23	2.75	7.19	2.99	7.34	2.94	7.13	3.07
Q2 (Group Dependent – Self Sufficient)	-7.27	2.46	7.17	2.78	6.52	2.61	6.71	2.65	7.23	2.14	7.09	2.22
Q3 (Undisciplined- Controlled)	10.21	2.53	10.24	2.94	10.28	3.07	9.81	2.83	10.05	2.79	10.34	2.46
Q4 (Relaxed - Tense)	7.80	2.86	6.87	2.89	7.57	2.62	7.19	2.73	7.21	2.82	6.88	2.83

SC=Scheduled caste ST= Scheduled tribe NBC=Non backward class

Table 2: t ratio among rural SC, urban SC, rural ST, urban ST, rural NBC and urban NBC boys on 14 factors of HSPQ

Factors	t-ratio					
	RSC vs	USC vs	RSTvs	UST vs	RSC vs	USC vs
	RNBC	UNBC	RNBC	UNBC	UST	RST
A (Reserved – Outgoing)	5.88**	0.78	0.94	0.42	4.07**	0.31
B (Less intelligent – Bright)	0.39	0.36	0.80	0.21	0.36	0.48
C (Easily upset – Emotionally Stable)	2.99**	0.21	0.77	0.47	2.12*	0.24
D (Phlegmatic- Excitable)	0.14	0.19	0.59	0.42	0.40	0.55
E (Obedient - Assertive)	0.94	0.47	2.32*	0.70	1.13	0.18
F (Sober – Enthusiastic)	3.98**	0.56	0.58	2.04*	2.74**	1.21
G (Expedient - Conscientious)	0.77	0.91	0.40	0.22	0.29	0.58
H (Shy - Venturesome)	3.83**	1.15	1.96*	0.40	1.59	1.23
I (Tough minded –Dependent)	0.17	0.49	1.26	0.37	0.88	0.09
J (Vigorous - Doubting)	1.26	2.28*	1.08	0.02	0.21	1.81
Q1 (Placid - Apprehensive)	0.47	0.39	0.28	0.14	0.18	0.22
Q2 (Group Dependent – Self Sufficient)	0.10	0.25	2.19*	1.13	1.80	1.05
Q3 (Undisciplined- Controlled)	0.63	0.27	0.42	1.44	0.14	0.92
Q4 (Relaxed - Tense)	1.48	0.03	0.94	0.78	0.51	0.70

*p<.05 **p<.001

enthusiastic, impulsive, lively and happy-go-lucky than urban non-backward boys who were rather sober, prudent and serious. However, no other significant difference in personality patterns was found between urban ST and urban non-backward boys. Overall, ST and non-backward boys differed significantly on factors 'E' and 'Q2' (Table 3 and 4). Schedule tribe boys were found to be more obedient, mild, conforming, socially group-dependent and a sound follower than non-backward boys, who were rather more assertive, independent, aggressive, stubborn, self-sufficient and resourceful.

The existent differences in the rural areas may be accounted to the progressive social changes taking place within the rural community have not been able to break the rigid social structure of ancient times. But contrary to this, urban ST boys are at par with urban non-backward boys except for

factor 'F'. It seems that urban SC boys have been able to gel well with the prevalent practices and learnt to strive against the odds by bearing an 'easy-going' personality. Mehta(1996) in her study on ST boys mainly 'Meenas' , argued that they may have developed 'easy going personality' due to the new reservation policy in education and employment sector which may have made them perceive that they can achieve their goals without much hazard. Attainment of vocational goals seem easy to them, therefore they have developed 'easy going personalities' in comparison to non-backward boys who are rather very serious, particularly in urban areas.

The results of comparison between rural SC and rural ST boys revealed that, they differed on factors 'A', 'C' and 'F' (Table 1 and 2) revealing that rural SC boys are more reserved, detached, sober, prudent, serious,

Table 3: Mean and SD of scheduled caste, scheduled tribe and non backward class on 14 factors of HSPQ

Factors	SCn=150		STn=150		NBCn=300	
	Mean	SD	Mean	SD	Mean	SD
A (Reserved – Outgoing)	8.80	2.98	9.74	2.67	9.98	2.64
B (Less intelligent – Bright)	4.40	1.30	4.42	1.42	4.48	1.32
C (Easily upset – Emotionally Stable)	7.79	2.86	8.19	2.52	8.43	2.94
D (Phlegmatic- Excitable)	8.16	2.83	8.11	2.55	8.09	2.83
E (Obedient - Assertive)	6.85	3.06	6.54	2.92	7.14	2.80
F (Sober – Enthusiastic)	7.46	2.64	8.30	2.69	8.03	2.47
G (Expedient - Conscientious)	10.14	2.89	10.07	2.76	10.11	2.54
H (Shy - Venturesome)	7.40	2.23	7.46	2.65	7.95	2.80
I (Tough minded –Dependent)	7.33	2.79	7.15	2.74	7.45	2.61
J (Vigorous - Doubting)	6.71	2.74	7.14	2.63	7.34	2.56
Q1 (Placid - Apprehensive)	7.22	2.86	7.21	2.87	7.23	3.00
Q2 (Group Dependent – Self Sufficient)	7.22	2.85	6.61	2.63	7.16	2.18
Q3(Undisciplined- Controlled)	10.23	2.73	10.05	2.95	10.40	2.63
Q4 (Relaxed - Tense)	7.33	2.90	7.38	2.67	7.04	2.82

SC=Scheduled caste ST= Scheduled tribe

NBC=Non backward class

Table – 4: t ratio among scheduled caste, scheduled tribe and non backward class on 14 factors of HSPQ

Factors	t-ratio		
	SC vs NBC	ST vs NBC	SC vs ST
A (Reserved – Outgoing)	4.26**	0.89	2.88**
B (Less intelligent – Bright)	0.53	0.42	2.08
C (Easily upset – Emotionally Stable)	2.21*	0.87	1.28
D (Phlegmatic- Excitable)	0.24	0.05	0.17
E (Obedient - Assertive)	0.99	2.11*	0.91
F (Sober – Enthusiastic)	2.27*	1.05	2.73**
G (Expedient - Conscientious)	0.11	0.14	0.20
H (Shy - Venturesome)	1.85	1.72	0.17
I (Tough minded –Dependent)	0.46	1.14	0.56
J (Vigorous - Doubting)	2.43*	0.79	1.40
Q1 (Placid - Apprehensive)	0.05	0.09	0.04
Q2 (Group Dependent – Self Sufficient)	0.26	2.34*	2.01*
Q3 (Undisciplined- Controlled)	0.64	1.28	0.55
Q4 (Relaxed - Tense)	1.02	1.21	0.14

* p<0.05 ** p<0.01

affected by feelings, emotionally less stable and changeable than rural ST boys who were rather more outgoing, warmhearted, emotionally stable, calm, reality facing and enthusiastic. However, no significant difference was found between urban SC and urban ST boys (Table 1 and 2) on any of the fourteen personality traits. Overall, SC and ST boys were found to have significant difference on factors 'A', 'F' and 'Q2' (Table 3 and 4). SC boys were found to be more reserved, detached, cool, sober, prudent, serious, self-sufficient and resourceful in comparison to ST boys, who were found to be more outgoing, warmhearted, participating, lively, enthusiastic and socially group-dependent.

The comparison reveals that SC boys are more prone to depressive tendency and emotional instability which makes them low on social desirability and adaptability traits than the ST boys, particularly in the rural areas. This may be reflection of the arduous prejudices engraved in the hearts of the upper classes due to which they face a fear of rejection such that, they may be driven

out of the village for their petty voices against the majority villagers. Coupled with it, they feel hesitant in standing up for their rights enshrined to them under the Indian constitution and are unable to get benefited by the special provisions provided to them. ST boys on the other hand may face lesser anxiety due to stronger group cohesion and greater social support within their nomadic community.

In urban areas there is not much difference between ST and SC because of the rapid pace of progressive social changes, which could be due to exposure to media, benefits of reservation policy or closed interaction between different communities. Whereas SC and ST boys in rural areas were found to be having more personality problems. This can be due to many socio-economic factors which are adversely affecting the psyche of socially disadvantaged backward caste boys, such as poverty (Jabbi & Rajyalaksmi, 2001), parental illiteracy (Dreze & Kingdon, 2001), social customs prevalent in villages (Sainath, 1996) on day-to-day basis. Due to these

factors, they lack the inner resources needed to tolerate or reduce anxiety aroused by everyday life events. So they perceive themselves as inadequate and unworthy and develop a sense of helplessness and inferiority that in turn adversely affect the self-efficacy. However, in urban areas the differences between SC,ST and non-backward boys are lesser as compared to rural areas because of the fact that progressive social changes are not at such a rapid pace in rural areas as compared to urban areas.

It seems that in rural areas the caste system has its roots embedded deep inside the social structure, which prevents social changes. Hence, educational, occupational, political and other reforms initiated for the upliftment of the downtrodden should have more emphasis on rural areas taking into consideration the underlying psychological difference and needs of individual.

Conclusions

The findings indicate that differences in personality patterns are present among SC, ST and non-backward boys but they are more prominent in rural areas than in urban areas. So a concentrated effort needs to be taken for the overall development of SC and ST boys particularly in rural areas. Not only the teachers in rural schools should be trained to take care of each individual but also the curriculum should be designed in a manner that the leadership qualities in each individual can be nurtured so that the overall development of personality can take place.

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