PERSONALITY TRAITS OF COLLEGE GOING STUDENTS OF KASHMIR DIVISION: A CASTE BASED DYNAMICS

Lokesh Verma
Professor and Head, Department of Educational Studies, Central University of Jammu
Jawaid Ahmad Itoo
Research Scholar, Department of Educational Studies, Central University of Jammu

Abstract

*Caste system may have origins in experiences derived from, what is known in analytical psychology as, "the personal and collective unconscious." India is said to be home of social stratification which is found in the form of caste, based on the birth of the individual in a particular caste/family. In spite of strict religious prohibition of caste system, yet social stratification and caste like features has crept in some Muslim societies and Kashmiri society is no exception. Although, caste system is in Kashmir is not so rigid and complex but we can't deny the fact the kashmiri society is not caste free society (**Irshad, Ahrah and Zubar, 2013**). The present study attempts to study the personality traits of college students of Kashmir division belonging to two dominant upper caste (Syeds and Khan) and five under- privileged lower caste (Hajam, Kumar, Gurjar,Lohar and Teeli,) will be taken into consideration. For this study a sample of 800 was drawn by using cluster sampling technique.*

Keywords: *Crept, dominant, under-privileged,cluster*

A fleeting look at human societies will at once divulge that Human societies are not only divided into groups but there is clear cut inequality and disparity among groups. Though the phenomenon or social stratification is ubiquitous or universal it varies from society to society. As Sorokin observes, "Social stratification means the differentiation of a given population into hierarchically superposed classes. It is manifested in the existence of upper and lower layers. Its basis and very essence consist in an unequal distribution of rights and privileges, duties and responsibilities, social values and privations, social power and influences among the members of a society" (Sookin,1959).

India is said to be home of social stratification which is found in the form of caste, based on the birth of the individual in a particular caste/family. Caste is an endogamous group or a collection of groups having a common name, common origin, possessing a traditional occupation, having the same deity. One of the most important facts is that membership into a caste is only by birth and one remains so till death. Each caste stands for a way of life. Each caste has a set of rules pertaining to endogamy, commensality and social interactions with other caste groups (Srinivas, 1957).

Caste system may have origins in experiences derived from, what is known in analytical psychology as, "the personal and collective unconscious." The personal unconscious arises from the lifetime experiences of the individual. This is distinct from the "collective unconscious", which is described to represent a form of the unconscious common to mankind as a whole and originating in the inherited structure of the brain. This contains inherited primitive cultural, traditional and racial elements. Both the personal and collective unconscious, made from our individual and ancestral experiences respectively, may account for the manifestation of caste system in our society today. Discrimination against members of a social group may persist because of its deep entrenchment within our society by the personal and collective unconscious that has become the automatic response even when no conscious intent is present.

Definition of Caste

There is no universal definition of caste as literature is loaded with plethora of definitions given by noted sociologist and anthropologists. Risley (1908) an eminent scholar of Indian Castes and Tribes defines 'caste' as

a collection of families or group of families bearing a common name; claiming a common descent from a mythical ancestor, human or divine; professing to follow the same hereditary calling; and regarded by those who are competent to give an opinion as forming a single homogeneous community

Castes in Kashmir Valley

In actually, (Dabla, 2012) the Kashmir Muslim society (KMS) maintains caste as s social system but not as a set of traits of stratification. The structure and function of caste in Kashmir is different from its ideal Hindu traits. It has been observed that Kashmir Muslim society compose of following castes:

I. Sayyed Castes; II. Khan Castes; III. Occupational Castes; IV. Service Castes

First, the Sayyeds, as they claim are the descendents of the family of the Prophet Mohammad (PBUH), have converted locals to Islam and consider themselves as custodian of religion. Second, the Khans composed of nobility and their descendents who feel themselves as superior for their foreign origin. Third, the occupational castes composed of different occupational communities- groups dealing with trade and commerce. Fourth, the service castes stand at the lower strata of society which compose groups providing basic and menial jobs to the society. They also include Hanjis and Gujjars.

Significance of the study

The notion of man being a cultural being held by many anthropological studies shows existence of intimate relation

between personality and culture. In every culture, there is a basic personality type which is an outcome of cultural influences on the individual. For Example, In Alorese of Indonesia, the basic personality types are doubtful, quarrelling, cowardly and parasitic which are contrary to ours (Kardiner, 1891- 1981). Human infants went through a stage in which they learnt what they exhibited later in the childhood (1856-1939, Freud's well known hypothesis "critical period hypothesis"). (Kardiner, 1891- 1981) formulated basic personality structure theory which meant a collection of fundamental traits shared by the members of a society acquired by adapting to a particular culture. (Kardiner, 1891- 1981) further argues that basic personality exists in context of cultural institutions or patterned ways of doing things. Mead in her book "Coming of Age in Samoa" (1929/1961) which is based on her nine months fieldwork compares Samoan with American adolescent girls, hypothesized that stresses related to puberty in girls were culturally and not biologically determined.

In the light of social psychology, the caste in which an individual is born and reared has a significant effect on the personality of that individual (Linton, 1936). The child from an upper and dominant caste functions in an atmosphere of positive social acceptance and expectation whereas a child from under-privileged caste is subjected to rejection and operates under a pall of negative social expectations (Hansen et at., 1969; Alden et al., 1970). Such an atmosphere moulds the mental structure of an individual or group of persons so severely that they turn out to be criminals or oblige them to revolt against the society (Stiles and Beverly, 2000). The psychological consequences of this type of life style are a sense of powerlessness, insecurity, socio-cultural exclusion and lack of hope for the better future (Creed and Reynolds, 2001).

In order to face the challenge of diversity, there are no simple recipes and the complexity becomes more severe when the challenge involves meeting of culture. Intercultural activity demands some degree of mediation and negotiation – and classroom learning is, of course, no exception. We may see learning in intercultural classes as simply a collection of compromises – but I think there could be a much more challenging view - to see an intercultural class as an example of a new culture, a salad bowl which retains the individual flavours but also takes on a distinctively new taste. To provide each and every student a barrier free education, teachers should be well versed in culturally relevant pedagogy, which means a pedagogy which makes modifications in instructional materials to account for diversity.

Personality Traits

Literature is witness to the fact that various psychologists have tried to define personality in the different says. No definition can claim to be perfect description of personality. Although there is disagreement in defining personality, but there is consensus on what people do is influenced by their characteristics, that is, their personality. Personality traits refer to characteristics of an individual that are stable over time and determine the behaviour of an individual. Traits reflect who we are and determine affective, cognitive and behavioural style.

Objectives of the study

1) To study effect of Caste on personality traits viz.

1.1) Activity- Passivity; 1.2) Enthusiastic- Non- Enthusiastic; 1.3) Assertive- Submissive; 1.4) Suspicious- Trusting; 1.5) Depressive- Non- Depressive; 1.6) Emotional Instability- Emotional Stability

2) To study effect of income category on personality traits viz.

2.1) Activity- Passivity; 2.2) Enthusiastic- Non- Enthusiastic; 2.3) Assertive- Submissive; 2.4) Suspicious- Trusting; 2.5) Depressive- Non- Depressive; 2.6) Emotional Instability- Emotional Stability

3) To study interactional effect of Caste and income category on personality traits viz.

3.1) Activity- Passivity; 3.2) Enthusiastic- Non- Enthusiastic; 3.3) Assertive- Submissive; 3.4) Suspicious- Trusting; 3.5) Depressive- Non- Depressive; 3.6) Emotional Instability- Emotional Stability

Hypotheses of the study

H1) There will be no significant effect of Caste on personality traits viz.

H1.1) Activity- Passivity; H1.2) Enthusiastic- Non- Enthusiastic; H1.3) Assertive- Submissive; H1.4) Suspicious- Trusting; H1.5) Depressive- Non- Depressive; H1.6) Emotional Instability- Emotional Stability;

H2) There will be no significant effect of income category on personality traits viz.

H2.1) Activity- Passivity; H2.2) Enthusiastic- Non- Enthusiastic; H2.3) Assertive- Submissive; H2.4) Suspicious- Trusting; H2.5) Depressive- Non- Depressive; H2.6) Emotional Instability- Emotional Stability

H3) There will be no significant interactional effect of Caste and income category on personality traits viz.

H3.1) Activity- Passivity; H3.2) Enthusiastic- Non- Enthusiastic; H3.3) Assertive- Submissive; H3.4) Suspicious- Trusting; H3.5) Depressive- Non- Depressive; H3.6) Emotional Instability- Emotional Stability

Sample

At first all the degree colleges of Kashmir division were listed (46). Out of the listed colleges, only one college from each district was selected through randomization. From the selected colleges, all the Students belonging to two dominant upper castes (Syeds and Khan) and five under- privileged lower castes (Hajam, Kumar, Gurjar,Lohar and Teeli,) were taken into

consideration in drawing a sample of 800. The technique that was used for drawing the requisite sample was cluster sampling technique.

Table 1 showing sample size drawn from each caste

S.NO	Caste	Sample Size
1	Kumar	73
2	Teeli	70
3	Hajam	83
4	Gurjar	88
5	Lohar	69
6	Syed	235
7	Khan	181
Total	Lower caste = 383	
	Upper caste = 417	**800**

Tool used

Dimensional personality Inventory by Mahesh Bhargava

Analysis and interpretation of data

The data collected was subjected to analysis by using Multivariate Analysis technique (MANOVA)

Table 2 - showing Effect of Caste on Personality traits of college students of Kashmir division belonging to various castes viz. Kumar, Teeli, Hajam, Lohar, Gurjar, Syed and Khan

Source	Dependent Variable	Type III Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	p value
Caste	Activity-passivity	.202	1	.202	.215	.643
	Enthusiastic-non-enthusiastic	1.058	1	1.058	1.161	.282
	Assertive-submissive	2.553	1	2.553	2.720	.100
	Suspicious-trusting	.746	1	.746	.788	.375
	Depressive-non-depressive	6.245	1	6.245	7.594	.006*
	Emotional instability-emotional stability	.028	1	.028	.032	.857

*Significant at .05 level

Table 3 - showing individual Mean differences along with level of significance of Personality traits with respect to Caste (lower caste= 1, Upper caste= 2)

Dependent Variable	caste	Mean	p value
Activity- passivity	1	2.166	.643
	2	2.200	
Enthusiastic- Non- enthusiastic	1	2.355	.282
	2	2.279	
Assertive- submissive	1	2.652	.100
	2	2.770	
Suspicious- trusting	1	2.494	.375
	2	2.431	
Depressive- Non- depressive	1	2.169	.006
	2	1.984	
Emotional instability- Emotional stability	1	1.916	.857
	2	1.929	

Perusal of table 2 shows that the value of F ratio for personality traits viz. Activity- Passivity, Enthusiastic- Non-Enthusiastic, Assertive- Submissive, Suspicious- Trusting and Emotional Instability- Emotional stability are .215, 1.161, 2.720, .788 and .032 respectively which are insignificant at .05 level (p value> .05). Hence, it can be inferred that there is no significant effect of caste on personality traits -Activity- Passivity, Enthusiastic-Non-Enthusiastic, Assertive- Submissive, Suspicious- Trusting and Emotional Instability- Emotional stability. Therefore, the hypothesis H1 that there will be no significant effect of caste on personality traits Activity- Passivity, Enthusiastic- Non-Enthusiastic, Assertive- Submissive, Suspicious- Trusting and Emotional Instability- Emotional stability (H1.1, H1.2, H1.3, H1.4 and H1.6) is accepted. However, the value of F ratio for personality trait- Depressive and Non- Depressive was found to be 7.594 which is significant at .05 level (p <.05). Hence, it can be inferred that there is significant effect of caste on Depressive and Non- Depressive personality trait. Therefore, the hypothesis H1.5 that there will be no significant effect of caste on personality trait Depressive and Non- Depressive is not accepted. A clear review of table 3 shows that the for Depressive and Non- Depressive personality trait, mean value of students belonging to lower caste was found to be 2.169 which is higher than the mean score of students belong to higher caste (1.984) which indicates that students belonging to lower castes are more depressive as compared to students belonging to upper castes.

Table 4 - showing Effect of Income category on Personality traits of college students of Kashmir division belonging to various castes viz. Kumar, Teeli, Hajam, Lohar, Gurjar, Syed and Khan

Source	Dependent Variable	Type III Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	p value
Income category	Activity- passivity	52.673	1	52.673	56.229	.000*
	Enthusiastic-non-enthusiastic	70.678	1	70.678	77.571	.000*
	Assertive- submissive	44.482	1	44.482	47.389	.000*
	Suspicious- trusting	41.570	1	41.570	43.935	.000*
	Depressive- non-depressive	126.046	1	126.046	153.287	.000*
	Emotional instability-emotional stability	102.949	1	102.949	119.046	.000*

*Significant at .05 level

Table 5 - showing individual Mean differences along with level of significance of Personality traits with respect to Income category (lower Income category= 1, Upper Income category= 2)

Dependent Variable	caste	Mean	p value
Activity- passivity	1	1.915	.000
	2	2.451	
Enthusiastic- Non- enthusiastic	1	2.006	.000
	2	2.627	
Assertive- submissive	1	2.464	.000
	2	2.957	
Suspicious- trusting	1	2.701	.000
	2	2.224	
Depressive- Non- depressive	1	2.491	.000
	2	1.661	
Emotional instability- Emotional stability	1	2.298	.000
	2	1.547	

Perusal of table **4** shows that the values of F ratio for personality traits- Activity- Passivity, Enthusiastic- Non-Enthusiastic, Assertive- Submissive, Suspicious- Trusting, Depressive-Non- Depressive and Emotional Instability-Emotional stability are 56.229, 77.571, 47.389, 43.935, 153.287 and 119.046 respectively which are significant at .05 level (p< .05). Hence, it can be inferred that there is significant effect of income category on personality traits- Activity- Passivity, Enthusiastic- Non-Enthusiastic, Assertive- Submissive, Suspicious- Trusting, Depressive-Non- Depressive and Emotional Instability- Emotional stability. Therefore, the hypothesis H2 that there will be no significant effect of Income category on personality traits (H2.1, H2.2, H2.3, H2.4, H2.5 and H2.6) is not accepted. Further, review of table 5 shows that mean score of first three personality traits- Activity-Passivity, Enthusiastic- Non-Enthusiastic, Assertive-Submissive i.e. 2.451, 2.627 and 2.957 respectively is higher among students belonging to higher income category as compared to students belonging to lower income category i.e. 1.919, 2.006 and 2.464 respectively. Hence, it can be inferred that students with higher income possess more activity, enthusiastic and assertive personality characteristics as compared to their lower income counterparts. However, the table 5 shows that mean score of personality traits- Suspicious- Trusting, Depressive- Non-Depressive and Emotional instability-Emotional stability i.e. 2.701, 2.491 and 2.298 respectively is higher among students belonging to lower income categories as compared to mean score of students belonging to higher income categories i.e. 2.224, 1.661 and 1.547 respectively which means that students with lower income category have more of suspicious, depressive and emotional instability characteristics as compared to students belonging to higher income category.

Table 6 - showing interactional Effect of Caste and Income category on Personality traits of college students of Kashmir division belonging to various castes viz. Kumar, Teeli, Hajam, Lohar, Gurjar, Syed and Khan

Source	Dependent Variable	Type III Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	p value
caste * income category	Activity- passivity	.382	1	.382	.408	.523
	Enthusiastic-non-enthusiastic	.650	1	.650	.714	.398
	Assertive- submissive	.336	1	.336	.358	.550
	Suspicious- trusting	.345	1	.345	.365	.546
	Depressive- non-depressive	.018	1	.018	.022	.881
	Emotional instability-emotional stability	2.338	1	2.338	2.704	.101

*Significant at .05 level

Perusal of table 6 shows that the Values of F-ratio for various personality traits- Activity- Passivity, Enthusiastic- Non-Enthusiastic, Assertive- Submissive, Suspicious- Trusting, Depressive-Non- Depressive and Emotional Instability-Emotional stability are .408, .714, .358, .365, .022 and 2.704 respectively which are insignificant at .05 level (p > .05) and hence it can be inferred that there is no significant interactional effect of Caste and Income category on Activity- Passivity, Enthusiastic- Non-Enthusiastic, Assertive- Submissive, Suspicious- Trusting, Depressive-Non- Depressive, Emotional Instability- Emotional stability. Therefore, the hypotheses H3 that there will be no significant interactional effect of Caste and Income category on personality traits (H3.1, H3.2, H3.3, H3.4, H3.5 and H3.6 respectively is accepted.

Findings and Discussion

From the study it has been found that there exist significant differences in personality traits among students belonging to various castes. This finding is in line with (Shavita, Duhan and Choudary, 2014) who also found that there exist significant differences in personality traits with respect to caste, family income and educational level. While students belonging to higher castes have been found to be higher on Activity, enthusiastic and assertive personality characteristics, students belonging to lower castes have been found to possess more of suspicious, depressive and emotional instability characteristics. The possible reason for this could be due to the fact that children from dominant and privileged caste function in an atmosphere of positive social acceptance and expectation where as children from lower and underprivileged caste caste is subjected to rejection and operates under a pall of negative social expectations (Hansen et at., 1969; Alden et al., 1970). Such an atmosphere moulds the mental structure of an individual or group of persons so severely that they turn out to be introvert type of personality characterised by depression, suspicion and emotional instability. Another reason for the existence of depressive tendencies among students belonging to lower castes could be due to the treatment meet out to them at the hands of dominant and privileged castes e.g. On October 2015, in Jodhpur a 12 year old dalit boy was beaten up by his teacher for allegedly taking a palate from a stack meant for higher castes (Khan, 2015). Education is considered to be the tool of psycho-social, cultural and economical development but the Educational institutions are middle class institutions run by middle class persons along middle class lines and when the lower caste child reaches the educational institution he finds a different world, a foreign environment different from what he has experienced. Due to theses environmental inequalities, students from disadvantaged sections are bound to have repercussions in their adjustment to classroom which in turn has a direct bearing on their personalities and aspirations (Getzel (1970), Soares and Soares (1969) Jenson (1973) and (Eapen 1973).

From the study it has been found that Income category has significant effect on personality traits. This finding is in line with (Shavita, Duhan and Choudary, 2014) who reported that there exists a significant difference in personality with respect to family income. Students belonging to upper Income category have been found to be more active, enthusiastic and assertive as compared to their lower income category counterparts. Moreover, students belonging to lower income category have been found to possess more of suspicious, depressive and emotional instability characteristics. The reason could be due to low economic status (poverty) as it is a significant predictor of physical and mental health outcomes. Poverty adversely influences the whole individuality of the child as it is considered by World health organization (WHO, 1995) as world's most ruthless killer. Poor parents are not able to meet the daily requirements of their children as a result of which children develop symptoms of depression, stress, emotion instability and other mental health related problems. Further, brain imaging research has shown that children from lower income families tend to have smaller hippocampus than children from affluent families (Hanson, Chandra. Wolfe and Pollak, 2011) - a smaller hippocampus has been found to be associated with psychic disorders such as schizphrenia, anti social personality disorder and depression. A child because of his lower economic status is not accepted by the rich ones and hence always remains suspicious and wary about himself as a result of which he becomes the victim of personality disorders. Being suspicious about one's own self, the children from low income families feel hesitant in taking initiative in dealing with the social environment which poses a serious threat to their path of upliftment. A famous kashmiri saying, Aasun chu heshnawan, nah aasun chu mandchawan meaning prosperity improves ones personality, adversity cripples it highlights the importance of economic aspect in one's life. Children from well-heeled families have upper hand in every aspect of their life. They are found to be active, fervent and directive in nature, while as children from underprivileged and hard-up families feel shy, reluctant to participate and are submissive and acquiescent to the commands of the rich ones.

References

Alden, S., Pettigrew, S. and sekiva, E. (1970). The effect of individual contingent group reinforcement upon popularity. *Child development, 41*, 1191-1196.

Creed, peter A. and Reynolds, Judith (2001). Economic deprivation, experiential deprivation and social loneliness in unemployed and employed youth. *Journal of community and applied social psychology, 11(3)*, 167-178.

Geetzel, J.W. (1970). *Social Psychology of Education in Lindzey.* G. and Aranson, 459-523.

Hansen, J., Niland, T. and Zana, L. (1996). Model reinforcement in group counselling with elementary school children. *Personal and guidance journal, 47*, 741- 744.

Hanson, J. L., Chandra, A., Wolfe, B.L. and Pollak, S.D., (201). Association between income and the hippocampus. *PLoS One.6 (5)*.

Irshad, A.W., Ahrar, A.H. and Zuber, S.M. (2013). Revisiting Social Stratification in Indian Society: A Review and Analysis with Focus on Kashmiri Society. *International Journal of Humanities and Social Science Invention*, 2, 2319-7714.

Jensen, Arthur R. (1973). Motivational factors in educability and group differences

Kardiner, Abram 1939 The Individual and His Society. New York: Columbia University Press.

Khan, Mohammad Hafiz (2015, Oct. 9). In Jodhpur, Dalit family lives in fear after boy touches non-Dalit's plate. *The Indian Express.*

Mead, Margaret (1928). *Coming Age in Samoa: A psychological study of primitive youth for western civilization.* New York: Morrow.

Mead, Margaret (1928). *Coming of Age in Samoa: A Psychological Study of Primitive Youth for Western Civilisation.* New York: Morrow.

Mead, Margaret. 1928. Coming of Age in Samoa: A Psychological Study of Primitive Youth for Western Civilisation. New York: Morrow.

Ralph, Linton (1936). *Culture and personality.* London: Transition publishers London

Savita, Duhan,Krishna and Choudary, Krishna (2014). Role of Personal Variables in Personality Development of Adolescents from Disorganized Families. *Journal of Agriculture and Life sciences, 1(1)*.

Soares, A.T. and Soares, L.M. (1969). Self perception of culturally disadvantaged child. *American Education Research Journal*, 31-45

Sorokin, P. A. (1959). Social and Cultural Mobility, Free Press, Glencoe, Illinois

Srinivas, M. (1957). Caste in Modern India. *The Journal of Asian Studies, 16(4)*, 529- 548

Stiles and Beverly (2000). Relative deprivation and deviant adaptations: the mediated effects of negative self feelings. *Journal of Research in Crime and delinquency, 37(1)*, 64-90.

WHO (1995). *World Health Report: Bridging the Gaps.* Geneva: World Health Organization.