

PERSONALITY TRAITS OF THE MEITEI MAIBIS OF MANIPUR

L Roshan Singh

Assistant Professor

Department of Clinical Psychology

Regional Institute of Medical Sciences, Imphal

Abstracts

The aim of the present study is to examine the personality traits of Meitei Maibis of Manipur. **Objective:** To study the personality traits of Meitei Maibis of Manipur. **Results:** The highest percentage of personality trait present among the Meitei Maibis according to Rorschach interpretation was restricted awareness to environment (p-value = 0.000) with 88%. It was followed by interpersonal relationship (p-value = 0.000) and insecure and fearful of environment (p-value = 0.000) with 75% each. Passivity was the third highest personality traits present among the Meitei Maibis with 64% and variation also indicated highly significant as manifest by p-value = 0.007. About deviation from social norms, 61% of Maibis were deviated from social norms and found significant as manifest by p-value = 0.020. Regarding extraversion-intraversion, 49% of Maibis were introvert, 35% were ambivert and 16% were extrovert (p-value = 0.000). Most of the Maibis were empathetic (93%) in nature. They were not inferior (71%) towards other people but they have low conformity to social norms (93%). Their ego strength was also found very low with 95%. Many Maibis were having satisfactory interpersonal relationship with a percentage of 91% and 96% of Maibis were having no obsessional thought. **Conclusion:** In the present study it was found that most of the Maibis were unaware of their environment, insecure and fearful; passive in nature, deviation from social norms, have guarded attitude, disturbed thinking and rigidity. Most of the Maibis were introvert in nature but not inferior towards other people. They had low conformity to social norms and suspiciousness. Their ego strength was very low but they were having satisfactory interpersonal relationship.

Index terms: Personality traits, Meitei Maibis, apathy, introversion-extraversion

INTRODUCTION

The study of personality has a broad and varied history in the literature of psychology and clinical psychology, with an abundance of theoretical traditions. Moreover, a number of sharply different theoretical explanations that throw light on the domain of personality studies are in vogue. The major theories, to mention a few, include trait, type, psychodynamic, humanistic, biological, behaviourist and social learning theories (Phares and Chaplin, 1997).

Allport (1937) described two major ways to study personality: the nomothetic and the idiographic. *Nomothetic psychology* seeks general laws that can be applied to many different people, such as the principle of self-actualization, or the trait of extraversion. *Idiographic psychology* is an attempt to understand the unique aspects of a particular individual. Trait theories incorporate at least two dimensions - extraversion and neuroticism, which historically featured in Hippocrates humoral theory (Aluja and Luis, 2004).

Maibis play a vital role in Meitei society that comprises seven exogamous clans. Since the time immemorial, the Maibis have been working for the amelioration of mankind and its supernatural extension. As contended by Memchoubi (2006), anybody whether male or female, child or adult, could become a Maibi, either through the "supernatural possession", i.e., the influence of supernatural being, or spontaneous efforts of the person concerned. Maibi in Manipur as recorded in the oral tradition of people is believed to have been in existence since the time immemorial and has its own distinctive characteristics though it shares certain common features with the other forms of shamanism which are in vogue in different parts of the world. Any person becoming a Maibi either through the influence of supernatural beings or spontaneous efforts has to undergo intensive informal training for many years under a Maibi called "Ima Guru", and only after the meaningfulness of their training he or she can become a full-fledged Maibi.

OBJECTIVE

- 1) To study the personality traits of Meitei Maibis of Manipur

METHODOLOGY

In the present study an attempt was made to study the personality traits of Meitei Maibis of Manipur. The surveying approach under the descriptive method was adopted in the current investigation and information was gathered through administering the Rorschach Test.

Sampling Method

The study samples were selected through simple random sampling technique. Initially, the lists of unit of target population were prepared. Then, the names of the prospective respondents were written on the piece of paper and put it in a container. After mixing all the papers, picked up one by one till the required number of 120 respondents was reached. Out of the 120 samples selected 14 samples were rejected, as they were not willing to co-operate and participate in study. Thus, 106 samples were involved in the study.

Inclusion Criteria

- Maibis who were able to give consent.
- Who had a mother guru or father guru?
- Who were registered?
- Age: 7 to 60 years

Exclusion Criteria: Maibis who were having history of significant head injury, mental retardation, neurological disorders and bed ridden.

Procedure of Data Collection

Necessary permission was sought from the higher authority of three different Boards, viz., Shri Shri Govindaji Temple Board, Ultra Shanglen Sana Konung and Sanamahi Temple Board. They were thoroughly explained about the research programme that the research was taken up to study the personality traits of Meitei Maibis of Manipur. All the Maibis who visited the three divine places coming from various places routinely were convincingly explained about the nature and purpose of the study, interviewing procedure and the method for maintaining confidentiality. Once the oral consent was obtained from each of the participant an in-depth interview was conducted. Rorschach test was then administered to all the participants who had given oral consent.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

With the administering of Rorschach test, 21 different types of personality traits were able to extract from the Meitei Maibis of Manipur in the present study. The statistical analyses were shown in table No. 1.

Table No.1
Showing Personality Traits of Meitei Maibis of Manipur

Personality traits	Frequency	Percentage	Chi-square	d.f.	P-value
Apathy					
No	99	93	79.849	1	0.000**
Yes	7	7			
Total	106	100			
Passivity					
No	38	36	7.396	1	0.007**
Yes	68	64			
Total	106	100			
Feeling of inferiority					
No	77	71	21.737	1	0.000**
Yes	29	29			
Total	106	100			
Feeling of guilt					
No	56	53	0.340	1	0.560
Yes	50	47			
Total	106	100			
Interpersonal relationship					
High	79	75	25.507	1	0.000**
Low	27	25			

Total	106	100			
Anxiety and tension					
No	56	53	0.340	1	0.560
Yes	50	47			
Total	106	100			
Conformity to social norms					
High	7	7	79.849	1	0.000**
Low	99	93			
Total	106	100			
Ego strength					
High	5	5	86.943	1	0.000**
Low	101	95			
Total	106	100			
Suspiciousness and sexual perversion					
No	69	65	9.660	1	0.002**
Yes	37	35			
Total	106	100			
Emotional excitability					
No	93	88	60.377	1	0.000**
Yes	13	12			
Total	106	100			
Intraversion-extraversion					
Introvert	52	49	17.453	2	0.000**
Ambivert	37	35			
Extrovert	17	16			
Total	106	100			
Pathetic					
No	54	51	0.038	1	0.845
Yes	52	49			
Total	106	100			
Insecure, and fearful of environment					
No	26	25	27.509	1	0.000**
Yes	80	75			
Total	106	100			
Unsatisfactory interpersonal relationship					
No	96	91	69.774	1	0.000**
Yes	10	9			
Total	106	100			
Obsessive thought					
No	102	96	90.606	1	0.000**
Yes	4	4			
Total	106	100			
Guarded attitude, disturbed and rigidity					
No	40	38	6.377	1	0.012*
Yes	66	62			
Total	106	100			
Restricted awareness of the environment					
No	13	12	60.377	1	0.000**
Yes	93	88			
Total	106	100			
Excessive somatic concern					
No	58	55	0.943	1	0.331
Yes	48	45			
Total	106	100			
Impulsivity					
No	82	77	31.736	1	0.000**
Yes	24	23			
Total	106	100			
Defensive, repression, denial and fear of losing control					
No	68	64	8.491	1	0.004**
Yes	38	36			

Total	106	100			
Deviated from social norms					
No	41	39	5.434	1	0.020*
Yes	65	61			
Total	106	100			

* Significant at 0.05 levels

**Significant at 0.01 levels

Table No. 1: A personality was a simple description of an individual's characteristic mode of behaving, perceiving, thinking, etc. (Arthur and Emily, 2001). Every trait has three characteristics: uniqueness, degree of likableness and consistency. Uniqueness means that an individual has his or her own quality of a particular kind of behaviour. The second characteristic of trait was likableness. Some traits, such as honesty, generosity and trust worthiness are liked by others, while some are disliked- rudeness, cruelty, geocentricism, etc. The third characteristic of trait was consistency. This means that a person can be expected to behave in approximately the same way in similar situations (Romesh Verma, 2003). Many researchers have developed different trait theories of personality. Gordon Allport talks about secondary traits, central traits and cardinal traits; Raymond Cattell's research propagated a two-tiered personality structure with sixteen "primary factors" (16 Personality Factors) and five "secondary factors". Lewis Goldberg (1993) proposed a five-dimension personality model such as: 1) Openness to Experience: the tendency to be imaginative, independent, and interested in variety Vs. practical, conforming, and interested in routine 2) Conscientiousness: the tendency to be organized, careful, and disciplined Vs. disorganized, careless, and impulsive 3) Extraversion: the tendency to be sociable, fun-loving, and affectionate Vs. retiring, somber, and reserved 4) Agreeableness: the tendency to be softhearted, trusting, and helpful Vs. ruthless, suspicious, and uncooperative 5) Neuroticism: the tendency to be calm, secure, and self-satisfied Vs. anxious, insecure, and self-pitying (Santrock, 2008).

In the present study twenty-one different personality traits were able to extract from the Rorschach responses given by the Meitei Maibis of Manipur. They were: apathy, passivity, feeling of inferiority, feeling of guilt, interpersonal relationship, anxiety and tension, conformity to social norms, ego strength, suspiciousness and sexual perversion, emotional excitability, introversion-extraversion, pathetic, insecure and fearful of environment, unsatisfactory interpersonal relationship, obsessive thought, guarded attitude, disturbed and rigidity; restricted awareness of the environment, excessive somatic concern, impulsivity; defensive, repression, denial and fear of losing control; and deviated from social norms.

The highest percentage of personality trait present among the Meitei Maibis according to Rorschach interpretation was restricted awareness to environment with 88% and it was found to be highly significant as manifest by p-value = 0.000. It was followed by interpersonal relationship (p-value = 0.000) and insecure and fearful of environment (p-value = 0.000) with 75% each. Passivity was the third highest personality traits present among the Meitei Maibis with 64% and variation also indicated highly significant as manifest by p-value = 0.007. 62% of Meitei Maibis were having guarded attitude, disturbed and rigidity personality traits (p-value = 0.012). About deviation from social norms, 61% of Maibis were deviated from social norms and found significant as manifest by p-value = 0.020. Regarding extraversion-intraversion, 49% of Maibis were introvert, 35% were ambivert and 16% were extrovert (p-value = 0.000).

Most of the Maibis were empathetic (93%) in nature and it found significant as manifest by p-value = 0.000. They were not inferior (71%) towards other people (p-value = 0.000) but they have low conformity to social norms (93%) and found significant as evident by p-value = 0.000. There ego strength was also found very low with 95%. 37% of Maibis were having suspiciousness and sexual perversion and 88% of them were not having any emotional excitability. Many Maibis were having satisfactory interpersonal relationship with a percentage of 91% (p-value = 0.000), 77% of them were having no impulsivity (p-value = 0.000) and 96% of Meibis were having no obsessional thought (p-value = 0.000).

Other personality traits such as feeling of guilt (p-value = 0.560), anxiety and tension (p-value = 0.560), pathetic (0.845), and excessive somatic concern (p-value = 0.331) were found to have no significant relationship with respect to Meitei Maibis of Manipur.

CONCLUSION

A personality trait is a simple description of an individual's characteristic mode of behaving, perceiving, thinking, etc. In the present study it was found that most of the Maibis were unaware of their environment, insecure and fearful; passive in nature, deviation from social norms, have guarded attitude, disturbed thinking and rigidity. Most of the Maibis were introvert in nature but not inferior towards other people. They had low conformity to social norms and suspiciousness. There ego strength was very low but they were having satisfactory interpersonal relationship.

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