

A COMPARATIVE STUDY OF CASTE PREJUDICES OF FORWARD AND BACKWARD COLLEGE STUDENTS

DR.DHANANJAY KUMAR SINGH
ASSISTANT PROFESSOR
JAGDAM COLLEGE, JPU CHAPRA.

The main objective of the investigation has been to discover variation in the level of caste-prejudice towards Backward castes and Forward castes as a function of caste-belongingness. In addition to this the investigation proceeded to test the effects of residential area, income level, educational level and sex on the level of caste-prejudice towards Backward castes and Forward castes through comparisons of castes and Forward castes through comparisons of caste-prejudice scores of Forward caste and Backward caste students stemming from differing sub-castes, sex, educational level, income level and residential area.

Human beings categorise the physical and social stimuli encountered by them to cope effectively with varied and complex environmental demands, Categorisation involves acquisition of a common response to dissimilar stimuli. As Bruner, Goodnow and Austin (1956) have stated to categories is to render discriminable different things equivalent, to group the objects and events and

people around us into classes and to respond to them in terms of their class membership rather than their uniqueness''. A category is developed when a set of commonly shared attributes is observed which contains all examples into a given class. Categorical thinking and the concepts which emerge as a consequence of it provide the organism effective tools to process and manipulate the complex and highly differentiated environment. In course of this manipulation of categories, experience are earned from specific categories of individuals and groups which provide the basis for the development of favourable or unfavourable attitudes and prejudiced toward, these specific individuals or groups.

When involuntary social isolation, whether from neglect or rejection, Occures through no fault of the person himself but because he is categorised as a particular racial, religious, sexual, caste or socio-economic group, it is bitter pill to swallow, He develops as Hurlock (1986) has written, a bitter retentment to ward all who have been responsible for his isolation.

Indian caste-system is based on social categorization either on the basis of birth or on the basis of occupation. In verna system different varnas have been assigned different professions, Varnas doing lower level of social services have been discriminated. Against

vernal doing higher level of social service. Higher position has been awarded to Brahmin followed by Kshatriyas, Vaishyas, Shudras and Scheduled caste. From this varno-system caste-system originated which was completely a closed group while varna system is an open system, caste-system is a closed-system caste-system, lodge, different restrictions on individual members with regard to inter dining, marriage, and social-inter courts. This caste-system has been countinuning in india through ages, and different castes have remained satisfied or dissatisfied with their caste lot, Exploitations have also continued for age, in the name of the caste, Upper castes, particularly Brah-min, Bhuminhar, Rajput (Kshatriya) and Kayasthas, have exploited shudaras and Scheduled caste-through their socio-political powrs. Vaishyas have also been regarded socially inferior to Brahmin and Kshatriya, but their economic power has not lowered. Their status so immensely. Howerver. Vashya alognwith shudras conslitude Back-ward castes and Brahmin, Bhumi-har, Rajpur and kayasthas constitute Forward casted in Bihar, Recent spurt in socio-political consciensness among Backward casted has united them to grab political power and to lower Forward castes in socio-political arena. This has increased caste-prejudice among. Backward castes towards Forward castes in higher degree

than what it existed previously. Political lectures by Backward caste-leaders to depress and suppress Forward castes as retaliation against previous vexations and suppressions by Forward caste of backward castes has given birth to new dimensions of caste-prejudice and caste-tension in Bihar.

But all caste/sub-castes have not been influenced by recent political development on caste-line. Likely there exist differences on caste-prejudice due to variation in sex, income level, educational level and residential area. So, the investigator has tried to investigate the effects of caste, sub-caste, residential area, income level, sex and educational level on caste-prejudice towards Backward Castes and Forward castes because prejudices towards each other of these castes stand in the root of inter-discrimination, tensions and conflicts in the name of caste.

(C) MEASURING INSTRUMENTS -

In the investigation the following instruments were used for measuring caste-prejudice and categorisation of subjects into different sub-groups :

- (1) For measuring caste-prejudice 'Prejudice Scale' developed and standardized by Bhardwaj and Sharma (1990) has been used. This is a five point Likert type scale consisting of 36 items. The

scale is comprehensive in nature because the same scale can be used to measure religious caste or communal prejudice Each item of the scale possesses five alternative answers with score values ranging from 5 to 1, Higher score denotes higher level of religious, caste or communal prejudice and lower score denotes low level of religious, caste or communal prejudice, Test-retest and split-half reliabilities of the scale have been reported to be 0.68 and 0.94 respectively while theoretical validity and construct validities have been respected to be 0.83 and 0.66 respectively. Hence, this scale has been selected and use.

- (2) A self made 'Personal Information Inventory was prepared which sought informations from the subjects related to their caste, sub-caste, residential area-rural or urban, income level- above Rs. 1,50,000.00 from Rs. 75,001.00 to 1,50,000.00 or up to Rs. 75,000, Sex male or female and educational level- M.A/M.Sc./M.Com/ or B.A./B.Sc./B.Com in addition to marital status religion and family size. ON the basis of their informations subjects could be classified on Forward caste/Backward caste, Brahmin/Bhumihar/Rajpur/Kayastha/Awadhiya/Yadav etc.

rural or urban, male or female, HIG/MIC/LIG/PG/U.G. and son. It contains 10 statements.

Procedure and design :

In the investigation caste, sub-caste, residential area, income level, sex and educational level have served as independent variables. With the objective of investigating into the-effects of caste, sub-caste, residential area. Income level, sex and educational level on caste-prejudice one scale and on self-made inventory were applied to a sample of 200 subjects of which 100 were Forward caste 100 were Backward caste U.G. and P.G. level students For convenience. The tests were applied to the subjects in small groups of 10 subjects each.

First of all report was established with the subjects. After this the self-made inventory was given to them to fill up their personal informatins-name, age, sex, etc. After completion of this questionnaire self-made inventory was collected from respondents. On the basis of their information with regard to caste/Sub caste, subjects were classified into two groups – Forward caste groups and Backward caste group.They were taken into two separate rooms. In one room only Forward caste students were asked to sit and in other room only Backward caste students were asked to sit. Further it was

made clear to them that they have been separated for research purpose; and report was established with subjects of both groups by turn. Each group of students was given Prejudice scale to respond to respective items of the scale individually. But before responding to respective items, they were asked fill up their personal details as per printed columns on the face leaf of the scale. After they did this, both groups were given separate instructions for responding to the respective items of the scale. Forward caste students were instructed to consider themselves and other Forward castes as in or own groups and Backward caste as out or other groups while responding to different items of the scale. On the other hand, Backward caste students were instructed to consider themselves and other Backward caste as in or own groups and Forward castes as out or other groups. After completion of this session scale booklets were collected from respondents and they were thanked for their co-operation.

Following this rationale, the score on caste-prejudice of the two groups – Backward caste and Forward caste- were calculated separately. Further the scores on this dimension of different sub-groups from Backward caste and Forward caste groups were classified and calculated according to their sub-caste, residential

area, income level, sex and educational level. Means and S.Ds. for caste-prejudice scores of two main groups and other sub-groups in both groups were calculated separately. After this test was run to test the significance of differences between menan caste prejudice scores fo the two main groups and their different sub-groups.

References

- National Publishing House, Delhi. Bansal (1976) : As Quoted by Tiwary , R.K. in Caste . and religious Awareness Among Children’: National Psychological corporation, Agra. P. 11
- Baron, R.A. and Byrne, D. (1993) : Social Psychology : Understnding Human Interation’. Sixth Edition, Prentice-Hall of India Private Ltd. New Delhi.
- Batielle, Andre (1967) : Casted Old and New’: Asia Publishing House, Bombay.
- Bharadwaj. Dr. Rajeevlochan and Sharma, Dr. Harish (1980) : Prejudice Scale’: MAAN, Agra.
- Bhatt. A. (1975) : Caste, Class and Politics’: Manohar, Delhi.
- Blunt E.A.H. (1931) : The caste System in Northern India As quited in Madan, G. R’s. (1990) : Indian Social Problems’: Vol. No. 1, Chapra XVI, Allied Pub lisher Ltd. New Delhi.
- Bruner, J.S. : Goodnow, J and Austin, G.A. (1956) : ‘A study of Thinking’. Newyork : Wiley Chandra. Sushil (1967) : Sociology of Diviation in india’.
- Chatterjee, S. ‘ Mukherjee. M; Chakravarty. S.N. and Hassan, M.K. (1972) : Comparison of social Prejudice and their Correlates for

Male and female college students' Technical Report No.
Psychology 3/72 Calcutta : Indian Statistical.

Clark, K.B. and Clark, M.P. (1947) : Racial Identification and
Preference in Negro Children ‘: In T.M. Newcomb and E.L. Harley
(ed Reading in Social Psychology’; New York Holt.

