

## Attitudinal Modernity of Tribal Hindu and Tribal Christian: A Study

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### Abstract

In India, several researches have been done mostly on the two religious groups, namely, the Hindus and Muslims and it has been found that both are strongly prejudiced against each other.<sup>3</sup> Singh (1980) found the Hindu school students are the least prejudices compared to the Muslims, the tribal Christians and the Tribal Hindus.

**Key Words:** Attitude, Tribal Hindu, Tribal Christian, Liberal, Society

In the western societies the Catholics have been found to have the most conservative and orthodox religious attitude, the Jews most liberal and the protestants occupying the middle position.<sup>1</sup>

The relationship between religion and social attitudes indicate that the persons with favorable religious attitude tend to hold conservative social attitude relating to various issues, such as, sex, divorce race, capital punishment, political liberty, social welfare and peace.<sup>2</sup>

In India, several researches have been done mostly on the two religious groups, namely, the Hindus and Muslims and it has been found that both are strongly prejudiced against each other.<sup>3</sup> Singh (1980) found the Hindu school students are the least prejudices compared to the Muslims, the tribal Christians and the Tribal Hindus. He has also compared the socio-political attitudes of different religious and ethnic groups in order to study whether prejudice is related with modernity or not. He found that high caste Hindus had the highest modernity of socio-political attitudes; they are also the

least prejudiced. They had also the lowest religiosity. On the other hand, the high caste Muslims had the highest traditional socio-political attitudes; they are also the most prejudiced. They had the highest religiosity.

From all these studies, it can be summed up that a prejudiced person has more conservative, traditional and intolerant attitudes compares to an unprejudiced person who is more liberal modern open-minded and tolerant in his way of life. The most prejudiced persons seem to have the higher religiosity.

### Caste and Attitudinal Modernity:

Indian studies on the caste status have given inconsistent results. Some studies have found that the high caste Hindus to have more modern attitudes than the low caste Hindus, while others have reported opposite results and some have found no differences between the caste groups.

Singh, S. (1971), found the high caste groups having significantly higher modernity in all the four dimensions of modernity than the low caste groups. The higher degree of modernity in the high caste

Hindus has been found to be associated with higher degree of dominance.<sup>4</sup>Rath and Sircar (1960) had also found the high caste people to be more liberal in their socio-political attitudes compared to the low castes. Singh, S.N. (1979) had examined the low and high caste differences in relation to religion, family caste, social customs, change and innovation, politics and aspirations. Sample consisted of farmers & Factory Workers. An examination of caste differences in these groups did not reveal any statistical differences on any one of the seven scales of attitudes.

A few studies have shown caste differences in attitudes. In the Harvard University studying of modernization, the high-caste-Hindus were found to be modern in the overall modernity(OM) scale consisting of psychological, familial, socio-political and inspirational modernity dimensions (Singh, 1979).

Singh (1980) compared caste difference on the total prejudice (a combination of religion, caste sex and class prejudice) of the following groups: (i) high and low caste Hindus and tribal Hindus, (ii) High and low caste Muslims and (iii) low caste Muslims and tribal Hindus and high caste Hindus and between Tribal Hindus and low caste Muslims. On both these comparisons, the tribal Hindus have higher prejudice. It has been concluded that caste status does not seem to influence in the Hindus and Muslim groups.

#### **Rural-Urban Residence and Attitudinal Modernity:**

Several studies have reported that urban samples compared to rural ones, have

more liberal and modern religious and socio-political attitudes.

The rural children develop caste consciousness earlier than the urban children (Singh, Singh and Singh, 1960). Higher frequencies of urban children are opposed to caste system (Anant, 1970). The rural college students, compared to their urban counterparts had more negative stereotypes of other caste-groups. The rural group is more tradition-bound, religious and caste-conscious (Joshi, 1968). They also have more caste prejudice.<sup>5</sup>

The differences between the rural and urban groups are sharper when the ruralness and urbanity are very marked. The absence of rural-urban differences reported by Hassan (1975) and others may be due to the fact that the rural samples were not really very rural because they consisted of college students studying in small town colleges which were labeled as 'rural'. They were, no doubt, relatively rural compared to the other sample groups taken from towns with bigger area, larger and greater density of population.

The students where there are marked differences in ruralness and urbanity, the results have indicated greater modernity for the urban population particularly when the urbanity is accompanied by industrial exposure.<sup>6</sup>

On the whole, most of the studies have reported the urban groups being less conservative and traditional than the rural groups. Only a few students have found urban sample being more conservative than the rural sample.<sup>7</sup>

### **Socio-economic Status and Attitudinal Modernity:**

Socio-economic status usually shows a positive correlation with anti-Semitism.<sup>8</sup> The most common finding is that individuals of low economic status are most likely to have unfavorable attitudes towards Negroes.<sup>9</sup> These correlations suggest that upper class white gentles are more likely to feel threatened by competition with Jews while lower class white individuals are most likely to feel threatened by competition with Negroes (Williams, 1964).

Lewis (1966) had argued that 'The culture of Poverty' was different from the culture of Affluence' To adopt to the harsh realities of life, the poor protests himself with a philosophy of life which is characterized by fatalism, present time orientation impulsiveness' inability to delay gratification, concrete as opposes to abstract thinking' inferiority, aggression and authoritarianism. And then the poor is caught in a vicious cycle. He is trapped. His personality and attitudes which help him to adjust to the realities of his life also chain him to them making a break and emancipation impossible.

Several studies have challenged the thesis of 'The culture of poverty' on empirical evidence. Billings (1974) on the basis of data from a sample of 11,000 families from 20 countries measuring such themes as fatalism, achievement orientation, outlook on future, social identification etc., has rejected the theory that poverty result from traditional cultural values. Cowardet. al (1974) studied 271 black subjects divided into 'poor' and 'non-poor' categories. They

found no support for Lewis. In an interesting comparison Feather (1974) found that Americans, more than the Australians, blame the poor for their poverty. on both America and Australia, the Protestants more than Catholics, considered poverty a personal responsibility.

Weber, in his essay 'The protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism'(Weber, 1958 ), has argued that the motivations and he attitudes are the seeds of economic development. The thesis of Weber, being contradictory, to the Maxian becomes very popular in American (Singh, 1967).

The influence of caste-class status cognitive competence and academic achievement has been examined in several studies.<sup>10</sup> The findings indicate that the caste and class status influences cognitive Competence, high caste income groups being superior.

Thus, Socio-economic status plays important role in making attitude modern.

### **Industrialization and Attitude Modernity:**

Singh (1968) has examined the effect of industrialization-urbanization on rural migrants in his paper entitled, 'What Cities and Factories do rural migrants: Dehumanization or Modernization?', He has compared farmers, urban factory workers and urban non-industrial workers on their religious behaviour, Kinship obligations and satisfaction with present conditions. He has concluded that the data does no support the popular notion. Contrary to popular notion the frequencies of religious activities like praying and fasting are greater among the urban and industrial workers than the farmers. Singh, Y. (1973), has reported that

many Indian cities and its population retain rural characteristics, indemnifications and linkages.

The Harvard study on modernization is one of the most comprehensive study on the effect of industrialization urbanization on modernity. The sample included 1300 cases on which the OM (Overall Modernity) scale was administered. The main findings of this research are:

1. Factory experience has a modernizing effect even in the absence of an urban environment. The village resident rural factory workers were more modern than isolated farmers.
2. Factory experience is more modernizing than unorganized urban experience. The factory colony resident rural factory workers were more modern than urban non-industrial workers, particularly the self-employed ones.
3. An organized work involvement increases modernity. The factory workers Were more modern than the farmers and urban non-industrial workers.
4. The quality of social environment influences modernity. The sub-urban farmers, living near rural factories were more modern than relatively isolated farmers from entirely agricultural villages.
5. Factory experience in an organized urban environment is more modernizing than in an unorganized semi-urban environment ( Singh, Forthcoming).

Singh S.N. (1979, 1983) has compared farmers, rural factory workers and

urban factory workers taking 100 cases from each group. The modernity scale included attitudes towards seven themes, namely, religion, family, social customs, caste, change and innovations, politics and aspirations. His main conclusions are : ( 1 ) industrialization even without urbanization increases attitudinal modernity. ( II ) The industrial urban combination is more effective than only industrialization. ( iii ) The religious attitudes are least influences by urban industrial experience and aspiration and political attitudes influenced the most.

All these studies show that the industrialization has great impact on the attitudinal modernity

#### **Education and Modernity:**

The six-country Harvard study on modernization indicated that education was a more powerful correlate of modernity than industrial urban experience (Inkeless and smith, 1974)' The Indian data of the Harvard Project also establishes education as the most power correlate of modernity. The correlation of modernity with types of one's own education was .63. It was .45 with newspaper exposure, .37 with father's education, .35 with radio exposure and .26 with urbanism of place of residence. R'aghuvanshi (1984) has studied the role of formal education in modernizing rural Youth. He has taken in his sample seven levels of education, namely, illiterate, can read, primary, middle, high school, intermediate and degree levels' He correlated the levels of education with five dimensions of modernity namely, change openness, achievement orientation sense of efficacy, democratic orientation and

empathy. All the correlations were statistically significant at .01 levels' several other Indian studies have shown a positive correlation between level of education and modernity.<sup>11</sup>

Sharma (1979) has studied the modernizing Effects of University Education. He took a sample of 1970 colleges and university students. An attitudinal modernity scale was used measuring the following dimensions: Secular Orientation, Scientific Orientation' Universalistic orientation, Egalitarian orientation, independence Orientation, Achievement Orientation and Civic Orientation. There were five items in each dimension. The results indicated that the undergraduate students had greater modernity than the Post-Graduate students. The educational differences between the Under-Graduate and Post-Graduate students are not much. This probably is the explanation of absence of difference between the two groups on modernity.

Discussing the role of education in modernization, Yongendra Singh has pointed out that ' Education has been one of the most influential instruments of modernization in India. It has led to the mobilization to people's aspirations for nationalism, Liberalism and freedom. It alone has been responsible for the growth of an enlightened intelligentsia which carried forward not only a movement for independence but also a relates struggle for social and cultural reforms. It has created a sub-culture of studies in India which though

not fully modern, contains elements of transition from modernity.' (1973, p. 1 06).

### **Relationship of the Present Research with Gap in Literature :**

Most of the researches of modernity mentioned above, have examined the relationship between tradition and modernity. The factors influencing modernity and the process of modernization. Attitudes towards various issues, such as, family, religion, women, social customs, politics etc., have been studied on an ad-hoc basis. Very few studies have the various aspects of attitudes as inter-linked concepts. The literature is surprisingly inadequate in relation to comparison of attitudes of the various tribal student groups in rural and urban setting.

In previous researches, the dimension of health has been completely ignored. However, there are a very few systematic studies on the modernity of tribal in South Bihar. Probably there is no research which has studied the attitudinal modernity of tribal Hindu and tribal Christian students. The present research has been conducted to fulfill the gaps mentioned above. The present study aims to measure the extent of modernity in tribal Hindu and tribal Christian students of Hazaribag District. The four dimensions of modernity scale will be used in this study. The dimensions are : Personality, Socio-cultural, political and health, The study further attempts to study the impact of religion, residence, sex and income upon the attitudinal modernity of the tribal students.

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