Effect of Sex, Urbanisation and Caste on Anxiety

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In this study an attempt was made to investigate the nature of anxiety in different groups formed on the basis of Sex, Caste and Urban-rural background etc. A Hindi version of Sinha's Anxiety Scale, consisting of 100 "Yes-No" type items was used to measure the anxiety level of the subjects. The result shows that females usually possessed higher anxiety levels than the males. Urban-origin individuals suffered more due to anxiety than the individuals with rural background, wherous caste had no significant effect upon this variable. The third order interactions were found to be significant which indicated that two of the factors differed in magnitude at different levels of the third factor.

INTRODUCTION

About five decades ago, Freud pointed out anxiety as one of the main causes of emotional and behavioural disorders. Further development of Psychoanalysis has strengthened his proposition. Now it is recognised that anxiety is the basis of neurosis or the dynamic centre of neurosis. Moreover, it is further observed that under the influence of modern social set up, the incidence of anxiety is much higher than that observed earlier. Hence, anxiety has a unique and important role to play under the present social system.

"Anxiety is a chronic complex emotional state with apprehension or dread as its most prominent component characteristics of various nervous and mental disorders" (2). From the view point of dynamic psychology anxiety functions as a drive and goads the organism to various sorts of adjustment mechanisms which help in reducing the tension generated by anxiety and thus overcoming anxiety temporarily or for a longer period. However, probably everyone agrees that anxiety is not a unidimensional trust residing within the individual but is a complex behavioural event that is influenced by situational personality and mode of response factors and their interactions Endler et. al. (1962), Haywood et. al. (1964), Endler et.al. (1962) extracted three situational anxiety factors (viz., interpersonal, inanimate and ambiguous) and three mode of responses factors (viz. distress, exhilaration and autonomic). This provided some empirical evidence for the multidimensional nature of anxiety. Factorial study of Sinha's Anxiety scale also supports the multidimensional nature of anxiety Sinha (1965).

Several studies have been made investigating the effect of anxiety on various aspects of human behaviour. Endler and Bain (1966) made an attempt to find out the relation between social class and anxiety and observed negative or inverse relationship between the two variables for a sample of male respondants. This result is in accordance with the findings of Haywood and Dobbs (1964) where it was observed that individuals with low socio-economic background were characterised by high anxiety score and individuals with high socioeconomic background showed a reverse trend. Studies of Dutt (1968) Lotsof and

Centers (1959) showed that anxiety reactions were uncorrelated to socio-economic status in the general population. Singh (1968) found insignificant difference between boys and girls using the "Key" items of Taylor's Manifest Anxiety Scale (without the "buffer" items). This finding contradicts the result of Devi (1969) who found females having significantly greater anxiety as compared to males. Dutt and Brar (1972) indicated that anxiety is to be found more among submissive people than among ascendants.

Against this background, a comparative study was made to investigate the nature of anxiety on different groups which were formed on the basis of sex, caste and urban-rural background. Instruments :— A Hindi version of Sinha's Anxiety Scale was used to measure the anxiety level of the subjects. There were 100 items in this inventory and all the items were of "Yes - No", type. For each "Yes" response, a credit of "one" was given and the total anxiety score of a subject was the sumtotal of these credits obtained by him. Hence, the anxiety score of an individual could vary from zero to hundred. It may be mentioned here that this test has been found to successfully differentiate the psychiatric group from the general population and the patients suffering from anxiety obtained extremely high score on this scale. Moreover, the present scale has been found to be considerably related with Taylor Manifest Anxiety ($r = 0.73$) scale.

Sample

Here the samples were drawn from the population of Hindu students enrolled in different colleges at Ranchi. Total sample size was 320, which was divided into two groups of same size viz, (i) male and (ii) female. The 160 students in each group were so selected that there were equal number of students in each of the following four categories and thus there were 40 students in each of the following sub-groups:

(a) Upper caste rural origin.

(b) Upper caste urban origin.

(c) Lower caste rural origin.

(d) Lower caste urban origin.

The same grouping was done for the male as well as for the female respondents.

Analysis of the data

First of all the mean values and standard deviations of the anxiety score were separately calculated for each of the possible groupings based on sex, caste and urban-rural background. The obtained values are presented in table-1

A first look at the mean values presented in Table 1, gives the following impressions.

(a) Males consistently scored lower on the anxiety scale than the females in all the groups.

(b) Caste seems to have no effect on the male group as the difference of means is very little. But this is not true for the female group.

(c) Urban groups, both male and female. scored more on the anxiety scale than the corresponding rural groups.

(d) Urbanisation increased the anxiety score of both the upper caste as well as lower caste students. This trend was observed both in male and female groups.

Next in order to test the significance of the observed differences and to have a better understanding of their implications, analysis of variance was used in this case. A three dimensional factorial design of type $2 \times 2 \times 2$ seemed to be appropriate for the data. The analysis of variance table is presented in Table 2.

TABLE 1

Showing mean & standard deviation for each group concerned

	MALE			FEMALE	
	Mean	S. D.		Mean	S. D.
Total (N = 160)	41.47	16.04		47.41	12.16
Urban (N = 80)	44.00	15.87		49.62	11.86
Rural (N = 80)	38.94	15.79		45.19	12.03
Upper caste (N = 80)	41.06	16.46		45.91	11.65
Lower caste (N = 80)	41.87	15.60		48.90	12 46
Upper caste Urban origin (N = 40)	42.97	15.30		46.00	11.79
Upper caste Rural origin (N = 40)	39.15	17.34		45.82	11.49
Lower caste Urban origin (N =40)	45.02	16.38		53.25	10.77
Lower caste Rural origin (N = 40)	38.72	14.09		44.55	12.71

TABLE 2

Showing the result of the analysis of variance

Source	d. f.	s. s.	m.s.s.	F-ratio
Sex	1	81376.90	81376.90	896.52**
Urbanisation	1	976.50	976.50	10.76**
Caste	1	111.62	111.62	1.23
Sex X Urbanisation	1	71.24	71.24	0.78
Caste X Urbanisation	1	62.14	62.14	0.68
Sex X Caste	1	261.01	261.01	2.87
Sex X Urbanisation X Caste	1	914.63	914.63	10.08**
w cell	312	28320.43	90.77	
Total	319	112094.47		

** Significant at 1% level.

Conclusions

(a) Females suffer more due to anxiety than the males. This result supports the findings of G. B. Devi (1969) and also that of Dutt and Brar (1972) in the sense that generally females can be taken to be more submissive than the males.

(b) Urban-origin individuals have more anxiety than the individuals with rural background. This may be due to the complex nature of urbanisation which increases anxiety.

(c) Caste has no effect on anxiety. This is quite understandable as there is not much reason for upper caste people to become more anxious than the lower caste people or vice versa.

(d) The simple effect of urbanisation was the same for both the sex groups and also for both the upper caste and lower caste groups. Similarly the simple effect of caste was the same for the sex groups. All these are shown by the insignificant values of all the second order interactions.

(e) The third order interaction was found to be significant, which indicates that two of the factors differ in magnitude from level to level of the third factor. This is also equivalent to saying that there is a simple interaction between the sex factor and the urbanisation caste interaction or between the urbanisation factor and the sex caste interaction etc. in the present case.

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