SUMMARY

CHAPTER VI
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From the Kalhana’s con to the contemporary times, the Kashmiri personality has been assessed, measured and sketched with reference to versatile historical, political, religious and socio-cultural background. The geography of Kashmir has played a significant role in shaping and moulding the social, economic and political history of Kashmir. It developed in them ethnic proclivity and a distinct culture.

A period of independence, isolation and solidarity framed cultural uniqueness that made Kashmir an ever lasting seat of learning and literature. Majority of famous rhetoricians of India belonged to Kashmir. In the words of Nehru, “Kashmir dominated the intellectual scene of the country for almost 2000 years”. This ‘orchard of holymen’ has produced great poets, saints and peers. The cult of Buddha, the teachings of Vedantas and the growth of Islam have all been fostered in the congenial home of Kashmir.

According to Stein, Kashmir can claim the only distinction of being the only region of India which possesses an uninterrupted series of written records, the exemplary of it being Kalhan’s “Rajaragni”. This explains why the Banaras-Hindu Rome of India to the present day, acknowledges the intellectual superiority of Kashmir.

The bio-social and cultural mores evolved during the long course of Kashmir history places Kashmiri personality at a different footing. The remarkable religious tolerance exhibited by the people is a key note of their personality. The etho cultural distinction is reinforced by the religious practices of the people. Kashmiris have embraced several religions one after another. Brahmanism, Buddhism, Shaivisim and finally Islam has resulted in the blending of cultures.

The advent of Islam according to Stein first embraced by a Buddhist king Rinchen shah under the name Sultan Sadru-Din paved the way for Muslim
rule in Kashmir. This development 'Religious Humanism', a new composite culture which emerged as a result of stiff opposition by the orthodox Brahmins.

The innocence of Kashmiri, since the Mughal times has been assaulted. Though the Mughals had promised the return of their kingdom to Kashmiris, they never kept their promises exploiting the traits of innocence and disunity. Akbar considered Kashmir as his 'private garden'. The next 400 years were a period of slavery and misery witnessed by the Kashmiris at the alien rule of Afghans, Sikhs and Dogras tyrannised the society that encouraged social disorder and brutalization.

For the first time in the history of the world, the people of a nation were treated as mere commodified that could be sold and bought. The treaty of Amritsar in 1846 sold Kashmiris to the Dogras for a mere sum of Rs. 75 lacs. by the Britishers, who were known for their justice and fair play through out the world. This shameful act for the first time commodified the integrity and identity of the nation.

Seizure of mosques that were used as godowns and brute killings of the people robbed them off their bravery. The alien rule of the splendid but clever Mughals, brute Afghans, bullying sikhs and rude Dogras did not only distort their personality but painfully bruised it. These conquerors who came in hordes rarely treated the Kashmiris as humans. The oppression of the foreigners not only robbed them off their martial art but of their integrity and honour. The extent of commodification could not even ignite the flames of self respect.

However it is imperative for the researcher to study the character in its entirety. It is unjust to blame a race without probing beneath the superficial reasons of their unattractive characteristics. The subjugation of Kashmiris to the alien rule suppressed their voices but the tormenting state of affairs rendered vices in their character. The absence of legal security and political power inculcated in them the art of flattery and deception. They continued living as self centered, selfish, concealed, clever and conservative people. Their character is timid, yet persistent,
compromising yet resilient, humble and yet intellectual. Despite evil administration of the Pathans, Sikhs and Dogras, the persistent fore fathers of Kashmir still clung to their motherland traditions.

It won't be wrong to say that the Kashmiri personality has developed unique characteristics. On one hand they are too resilient and on the other they are too fearful. Kashmiris are very much superstitious. This attributed to the multiplicity of religions that were nourished on the soil of Kashmir. Crows, Owls and Kites are still considered ominous birds while as Bulbuls and Hoopoes are considered fortunate. The Pandits and Pirs have also reinforced their superstitious nature.

A typical Kashmiri is very much fond of exaggeration but the intellect and distinctive dexterity (Skillfulness) make them one of the best races in the world. A Kashmiri may have equals in the word but probably none superior to him. He is hospitable and entertains his guests most cheerfully, a very generous and adjustable race who are lauded for wit, intelligence and ingenious nature than the Indians.

Despite having some good qualities which are outnumbered by their failings and faults, the Kashmiris have been accused of imbibing the talent of lying with their mother’s milk. The loopholes of Kashmiris are many and they have always compromised with their situations and circumstances to suit their convenience. But this self or forced compromise that labels them as liars—a legacy transmitted with their mother’s milk is absurd. The mother’s milk is an embodiment of love and affection that a child sucks to sire the eternal values of humanity. Mother symbolizes love and patience and her milk is sacred enough to reproduce and imbibe naivety and truthfulness. The habit of lying was developed due to the tyrannical policies of the alien rulers.

Kashmiris are laborious and industrious people but these characteristics are confined to their personal pursuits. This may be branded as selfishness but the fact remains that the catastrophe of fires, flood, famines and cholera made them self centered. Some foreigners have directed slender against the inhabitants
of Kashmir valley, which is not wholly justified. It cannot be denied that a part of criticism is genuine, there is equally no doubt that the greater part of it is based on ignorance of history, restricted contact with local people and trivial experiences as tourists. It is very unfair to the character of Kashmiris to judge them from the isolated experiences of tourists while dealing with boatman known as 'Hanjis' or by haggling with some 'Pheriwalas'. As regard bargaining, it is not confined to Kashmir only but is practised as an art all over the world. Even in Europe, visitors to Greece and Italy have found no fixed prices in the market. It is not an uncommon sight in tourist resorts like the Mediterranean that the vendor asks a price of 2000 dollars for a necklace, which with persuasion and perseverance can be then purchased at a mind boggling price.

The craftsmanship is a strong trait in Kashmir personality. The handicraft artisans wrought magic with their supple fingers. The knotted carpets, the elegant Namdahs and the soft tush shawls and the suave hues of papermachie do not only epitomise their skill and acumen but also reflect their aesthetic sense. The artisans are extremely industrious who live from hand to mouth to satisfy their family needs.

The people of Kashmir have survived in acute poverty. The system of tax levied on a poor man sends chill through one’s spine. The people lived in squalid poverty and the country swarmed with beggars, but the alien Govts. cared a damn about it. Their only interest was to extract as much revenue as possible to render the people of Kashmir impoverished. The system of justice was such that those who could pay could get out of jail any moment, while as the poor lurked in the peripheries of destitution. Such was the fate of the unfortunate inhabitants of Kashmir.

It is evident from the history whenever Kashmiris have left the boundaries of their state, they have carved a niche for themselves and risen to the position of trust responsibility and influence. An atmosphere of their healthy competition is a standing proof of their deliberate exclusion from the governance of their land by their rulers.
Iqbal has very aptly summed it up in the verse:

زيدست اندر حد ساحل خطالاست
ساحل ما ستنگی اندر راه ما است

Living within its boundaries was their misfortune. It stood like a rock in the path of their advancement.

Even in the contemporary times, Kashmiris have proven their worth. Opportunities and exposure have polished their skill. They are also known to be valiant soldiers. During the reign of king Lalitditya, a king of Kashmiri origin, Kashmir army consisted plenty of the hill tribes and partly of the inhabitants of the vale. The valorous army conquered almost whole of Punjab, part of Afghanistan, part of Kashgar, Peshawar and Ladakh. During the reign of Sultan-Shahabud-din- a Sultan of Kashmiri, Kashmir army went as far as Multan and extended the domination to large parts of North India. It is not without historical support that Iqbal spoke with pride:

در زمانی صف شکن یم یوده است
چیره وجانباز وهر دم یوده است

Trans:- Once intrepid, valent and brave, they pierced through the hordes of foe.

To label them as coward is just a cornard. The Kashmiri Muslims who migrated during the Sikh rule, participated in the world wars of 1914 and 1939. They also participated in the last two wars of 1965 and 1971.

No historian, foreign traveller or visitor whether European or English who have lived with Kashmiris not less than 50 years has complained of Kashmiris being rude, mean and cunning. All of them have found Kashmiris a friendly and loveful race. So the Kashmiri people are considered to be a descent of Asiatic origin, kind and loving race.

The Kashmiri identity has demonstrated its viability and its autonomous character on many crucial occasions. So to identify the Kashmiri people as a
definite cultural entity, it is important to understand that these were greatly influenced by its peculiar geo-historical factors. But at the same time they were capable of preserving their identity (Here it is quite proper to mention that identity is a broader concept and personality is an important dimension of it).

In this process, the continuity, stability, and consistency of behavior have emerged candid and clear, therefore substantiating the research investigation that Kashmiris do possess a National Character. Political uncertainty, lack of leadership, poverty, natural calamities, mass illiteracy, and oppression have undone them. After examining all historical geographical socio-cultural facts, it is evident that the Kashmiris were sometimes driven to lie, natural calamities made him selfish and religions made him superstitious and tyranny made him timid.

**Objective:** The main and the only objective of the study was to screen the personality characteristics of Kashmiris, which have been remained a permanent feature with them for ages.

**Hypothesis:** The only hypothesis to be tested was that Kashmiris possess a unique and distinct personality.

**Sample:** The sample was selected on the basis of stratified random sampling which consisted of literate and illiterate youth, adult, old, men, women from rural and urban origin.

The data was not only collected from the sample groups, but the investigator personally lived in different areas to make her personal observation, as to how the people behaved in different situations. This did give some valid ideas about the consistency of personality traits characterizing the Kashmiri personality.
Tools:- Major tools used for the investigation were:-
A. 16 Personality Factor Questionnaire by R.B.Cattell.
B. a) Social Desirability Rating Scale. (Self Developed)
   b) Interview (Based on Social Desirability Rating Scale.)
C. Participant Observation.

Statistical Analysis :- The following statistics were used for the presentation, analysis and interpretation of the data.

  t. test for finding out the significance of mean differences of the two groups. Group to group comparison to 16 Pf questionnaire. The gender and locality differences were also tested by the use of 't' test.

Profile Similarity Coefficient

R.B. Cattell’s test was used to ascertain the differences and similarities the personality characteristics of different groups of sample being compared under this investigation.

Percentage Statistics

Percentage statistics was used to assess the desirability of a selected group of traits with reference to Kashmiri personality. The respondents for this kind of assessment were literate and illiterate persons.

THE FINDINGS

A. Data on 16 PF questionnaire

On the basis of 16 Pf questionnaire results, the following traits were found as hallmarks of Kashmiri personality. Outgoingness, Brightness, Conscientiousness, Venturesomeness, Tindermindedness, Suspiciousness, Imaginativeness, Experimenting on the one hand. Affected by feelings, group dependent and relaxed on the other.
On the basis of social desirability ratings, the Kashmiris most desirable traits are:

Craftsmanship, handsome, intelligence, artistic, hospitality, peaceful courteous, ambitious, pleasing, cheerful and sympathetic.

**B2 Interview**

The most dominant traits which emerged out of consolidated interview statements after analysis of data are:-

Skillful, artistic, intelligent, imaginative, witty, inquisitive, cheerful, pleasing, handsome, self sufficient, suspicious, hospitable, sociable, sympathetic, humorous, industrious, brave, active, ambitious, progressive and trust worthy.

**C. Results of Participant observation:-**

People of Kashmir are generally generous, adjustable, sociable, hospitable, courteous, loving, warm, emotional, imaginative, sympathetic, talented, skillful, intelligent, industrious, peace loving, brave, active, honest, humorous, selfish, dependent, suspicious, relaxed and tolerant.

**CONCLUSION**

A feeling of impatience may be aroused when the reformer sees that the Kashmiris are opposed to changes which were obviously for their good. It should however, be remembered, that if it had not been their essentially conservative nature the Kashmiris would have succumbed to the stern rulers of Mughals, Pathans, Sikhs and Dogras. It is no exaggeration to say that these successive dynasties have left no impression on the National Character that there has been no progress in the ordinary sense of the word, and that the Kashmiris are now very much experimenting and progressive. And they do posses a National Character.

The Kashmiri is essentially inquisitive, imaginative, outgoing, bright, conscientious, venturesome, tenderminded, suspicious, cheerful, brave and
experimenting on the one hand, affected by feelings, group dependent and selfish on the other.

However, the people of Kashmir posses many characteristics both intellectual and physical. including their craftsmanship, artistic nature, hospitality, socialibility, peacefulness, ambitious-conscious, self-sufficiency and handsomeness.

This means their level of adjustment is quite good. They are generous, loving, warm emotional, sympathetic, courteous, brave, active, talented, industrious, relaxed and tolerant.

The above mentioned characteristics are the empirical findings of the present piece of research, getting full support of the old and current literature. Many an eminent foreign writers who have spent a life time in Kashmir and have had the opportunity of closely studying and observing the traits in Kashmiri character have left ample evidence testifying to the fact the Kashmiri is what his ruler and environment has made him

Kashmiri characteristics are often related to the climate and the land, dwelling in a fertile and beautiful valley surrounded by hardy and warlike tribes, they have for ages been subjected to that depression which destroys natural hope and virtue; Kashmir has been conquered and reconquered by invaders, who have murdered, oppressed and enslaved their ancestors and so ground the life and heart out of them that their better selves have been crushed. To quote Biscoe "It is possible that if the Britishers had so undergo what that Kashmiris have suffered in the past, we might have lost our manhood".

On the other hand it must be remembered that these calamities have left scar on Kashmiri people Fires, Earthquakes, Famines and Cholera
occurred and reoccurred rendering Kashmiris fearful and self centered.
The investigator has no means of ascertaining whether the inhabitants of
other countries who are liable to earthquakes and other disasters are less
stable in character than the people of countries freed from such vicissitudes.
But the investigator observe that much that is to be regretted in the
disposition of the Kashmiris arison from the constant fears and doubts which
they felt regarding the terrible forces of nature. The valley is full of
superstitions, which the different religions of the country fostered and
accentuated. The administrators of the past have shaken all faith in the
honesty and benevolence of rulers.

This shows that their is nothing inherently wrong in the character of
Kashmiri, its only a question of opportunity, fortunate circumstances,
advancement and betterment which had been so cruelly denied under foreign
rule. The investigator found Kashmiris negative traits as selfish and ambitious
for wealth. They have more inventive faculties in acquiring it. The money is
lavishly blasted in marriages in the form of "Wazwan" and other Dowry
items. Constructing a huge houses or maintain the old ones.

Suggestions:-

1. Comparative studies of the people under similar conditions be made.
2. Simulated studies be also encouraged.
3. To deal with the negative aspects of Kashmiri Personality a sound
   Educational, Economic and Social Policy must be planned.
4. Comparative study on the people of Ladakh and Jammu to be
   initiated.
5. A detailed study of the caste and religious groups can be taken up.