ABSTRACT

Throughout the ages attempts have been made to classify individuals on the basis of their psycho-physical characteristics. To a limited extent, these attempts have been found to be successful. The individual differences are found to be so acute that at times, generalizations have been of no avail in finding out a foolproof way of classifying individuals or personalities. Freud (1924), Kretschmer (1925), Allport (1937-47), Sheldon (1942), Cattell (1950-57-65), Guilford (1959), Eysenck (1967) and others have given us elaborate theories and explanations. Today we are fortunate to have numerous tests to measure and evaluate personality structure of each individual in a comprehensive manner.

Contrary to this sociologists cultural anthropologists and social psychologists have presented a qualitative way of looking at the personality phenomenon. The concept like "National Character" "Basic Personality" and "National Identity" have also emerged stressing the need to treat personality as a social reality, influencing and getting influenced by an immediate cultural background.

A combined strategy was adopted for collection of data which includes Historical Method, Participatory observation and objective testing were arranged to arrive at some meaningful conclusion. So the present study combines three methods to study Kashmiri Personality. Some personality traits have been identified to be closely related with Kashmiri personality, being in itself an outcome of bio-physical and social interactions.
A famous proverb “Fur & Fan” must go together undoubtedly represents the true state of Kashmir climate. The changing climate has definitely played its part in the general psychological make up of Kashmiri. The differing attitudes of the people of valley is the result of the ever-varying climatic conditions.

Kashmir has been subjected to foreign invasions since ancient times. But in spite of all these invasions by alien cultures and amalgamation through inter marriages and other means, the Kashmiris maintained their distinct social and cultural identity. They maintained regular traffic with inhabitants of near and far countries.

History has perhaps very few examples of people, numerically so small, who have in the course of long succession of centuries suffering and struggle, have paid so high a price in order to preserve their ancient tradition and culture. The Kashmiris assimilated foreign influences, like the sea receiving wastes of different rivers from distant lands. In spite of the splendid Mughals, brute Pathans, bullying Sikhs and rude Dogras the Kashmiri ever remained the same. The conquerors came in hordes but they scarcely touched the soul of the people.

The assertion of an European traveller seems quite plausible that “the traveller found, himself face to face with three cultures and religious system of Asia living side by side. These are Hindu, Buddhist and Muslim. The distinctive characteristic of Kashmiri is that these three religions are not merely phases in history, but are living as co-extant forces. A scholar finds all these traits and
characteristic in the popular religion practiced by the majority of the common folk.

So for the psycho-physical characteristics of Kashmir are concerned, they are attractive by their appearance. Their physical beauty is unparalleled in the whole sub continent of India. Lovely by looks, brawny by features, catchy by expressions, they are described as almost European in appearance. This is what makes them distinct and strike a difference from their neighbours. Kashmiris are healthy and handsome who have been described as ebullient and pleasure loving people. They are known as good artisans and ingenious mechanics. They are regarded as superior in intelligence to their neighbors like the Punjabis, the Tibetans and the Pathans. Contrary to this Kashmiris have been maligned for many short comings in their character. They are believed to be timid in contrast to their well built bodies. It is unjust to blame a race without probing beneath the superficial reasons of the unattractive characteristics. It can be safely argued that long subjection to alien rule has suppressed the voice of Kashmiris. The tormenting state of affairs naturally resulted in the vices, intrigues, worshipping tyranny (Zulum Parest). Whatever be the failings of Kahmiris, many of these have been attributed to almost to any community in India in one way or the other. A German has rightly argued, “Every oriental people have a certain national aversion to every other”. There can be certain follies in their character and that can be attributed to their poverty, misery & oppression. Which
made their virtues vapid and vices volatile, inciting them to imbibe self-centeredness.

The imagination of the Kashmiri has given some fine poetry to the world, which however, has never been fully appreciated for lack of presentation in a suitable form. In intellect, he is perhaps the superior of any other Indian and is very quick in argument. The commonest Kashmiri can talk intelligently on most of the subjects, and has a great sense of sarcasm. But like other artistic people, he is emotional and panaegetic. The Kashmiri can try his hand at anything. He is skillful, as a fine craftsman, who may have few equals in the World, but probably none superior to him. He is hospitable and entertains his guests most cheerfully. Kashmiris are celebrated for wit and considered much more intelligent and ingenious than the Indians. They are also lively, industrious, gayful and lovely people.

So here we have the Kashmiri character as seen through the eyes of scholars, travellers, foreigners, writers, visitors and historians over the past hundred and fifty years. Among all these, the one who have lived among them have praised and loved them. They have justly argued that why the people of Kashmir have been degraded. So while scanning the pages of Kashmir history, Kashmiri personality has demonstrated its viability and autonomous character on many crucial occasions.
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. Since the study was intended to identify the Kashmir people as definite cultural entity influenced by its peculiar geographical conditions as well as historical factors, but at the same time capable of preserving their identity (personality). Naturally the statements made by various writers over centuries about them had to be examined by relevant personality tests. In this process the nature of their uniqueness/distinction or in other words the behavior of its people which have remained almost same inspite of historical changes, had to be specially scrutinized and understood. For this purpose representation was given to three broader zones of valley i.e. Anantnag, Baramullah and Srinagar.

METHODLOGY

Sample:- The sample for the present investigation was taken on the basis of stratified random sampling technique. The sampling was done in three phases. Phase I included 1000 Rural and 300 hundred Urban college students ranging between 19 and 25 years of age. Phase II (part a) consists 1000 literate commoners and its (part b) included 300 hundred youths, adults and old people all illiterate. These groups were contacted on the interview basis consisting of the items on Social Desirability Rating Scale. The phase III the data was collected by actual participation with the people in different places of the valley.
TOOLS AND TECHNIQUES

TOOL I

The main tool used for the purpose of the data collection was Cattell's 16 personality questionnaire (form A). Since majority of the subjects belonged to rural and urban background the medium of urdu language was preferred. An urdu version of the scale has prepared for its conversant and native tongue and used for the data collection.

The statistical analysis of the data was done by applying 't' test for testing the significance. Mean differences between the rural/urban adolescents and group to group comparison was also undertaken by applying profile similarity coefficient (rp) as recommended by Cattell.

TOOL II a.

Social Desirability Rating Scale (SDRS) was constructed to determine the Social Desirability of the traits measured by 16 PF questionnaire. The purpose was to ascertain the social acceptance of the traits characteristics of group under investigation. This measure helped us in establishing the contemporary relevance of the historical data. The questionnaire of 29 paired items, was administered upon literate adult, group asking them to place the traits to certain ranking order age-group 25-35. Statistical results were analysed by percentage technique.

TOOL II b.

Social Desirability Rating Scale was followed by Interview as a supportive measure. The interview tool was primarily based on the format of the SDRS. The illiterate group was simply interviewed to find out the desirability of each trait in both form postive/negative. A set of Kashmiri people youth, adult and old (men/women) N=300 mostly illiterate were subjected to a comprehensive interview procedure. Keeping SDRS results in mind, the sample
was at times given trait names and asked support (verbally), the extent to which such traits were related with Kashmiri personality. Here again statistics were used to communicate the results more accurately.

**TOOL III**

Participant observation was another important technique to oversee the traits in operation. The investigator personally stayed at different places in valley to observe people behaving, acting and thinking.

**THE FINDINGS**

1. The data on the 16 PF reveals that the Kashmiris in general are; outgoing, bright, conscientious, venturesome, tender minded, suspicious, imaginative, experimental on the one hand and affected by feelings, group dependent and relaxed on the other.

2. Similarly the data on Social Desirability Rating Scale (SDRS) reveals that Kashmiris most desirable traits are craftsmanship, handsomeness, intelligence, artistic, hospitable, peaceful, courteous, ambitious, pleasing, cheerful and sympathetic.

3. The most dominant traits which emerged out of the 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 trustworthy.

4. Results of participant observation. The 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. To conclude it can be said that the Kashmiri personality is really a distinct social phenomena with perennial attributes and more or less a unique life style.