

Chapter Five

CHAPTER - 5

S U M M A R Y

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SUMMARY5.1. INTRODUCTION:

The present study was undertaken mainly with a view to studying the impact of inter-generational gap, sex, caste, and residential area of the respondents on some personal beliefs, social attitudes, and values. The need for knowing specially how individuals' beliefs, attitudes, and values vary across three generations, caste, and residential area was not so acutely felt than ever before. In India people had adopted a life style which was unique. The specific tasks to be accomplished by a person and his duties at different stages of his life were well defined and this was done by keeping in mind the various kinds of changes in thoughts and relationships with increasing age. When, for example, a child enters the adolescent stage, he is to be treated differently than when he was a child. Similarly a very different kind of relationship and attachment was contemplated especially when the adolescent boy entered into adulthood and had children. Should the relationships among family members were managed in a most effective way by prescribing duties and responsibilities of each member in relation to each other and also in relation to work to be done. The joint family system had certain distinct advantages. With the development of science and technology, every aspect of

human life was affected. Industrialization brought rapid changes in the lives of people. Huge factories employing hundreds of people came into existence. People migrated from their villages to the city areas for employment. They had to work and stay with different kinds of people. Some of their values, and ideas were profoundly influenced due to a very different kind of interaction. Life more or less was being shaped by machines. Ideas in relation to family members, other people, etc. were also changed profoundly. With further development of technology and science many established things were shaken up. People, for example, started living in a society which was very different. Nuclear families replaced the traditional joint families and the thread which was binding family members and others together was cut off. Consequently the gap between generations was widened. People became increasingly more individualistic and self centered. In city areas, mass society came into existence. People became more impulsive and present oriented. The male female relationship was also changed considerably. The gap between upper and lower caste was narrowed down due to the impact of science and technology. In the present investigation an attempt is made to study how some beliefs and social attitudes and values vary across generations. An attempt is also made how beliefs,

attitudes, and values are also affected by sex, caste, and residential areas of the respondents.

5.2. HYPOTHESES :

Several hypotheses were postulated concerning the impact of the major independent variables on the dependent variables. It was expected that younger generation would tend to have more progressive attitudes towards and beliefs pertaining to various areas of social life than relatively older generations. It was, for example, hypothesized that younger generation compared to older generation would be more inclined towards granting freedom to females. Similarly younger generation compared with older generation would tend to believe certain things or support certain ideas only if they are backed by empirical facts. Hypotheses were also developed concerning the influence of other independent variables. Concerning male-female differentiation it was expected, both boys and girls would be at the same level of thinking in terms of various beliefs and attitudes. It was also thought that caste and residential areas would have a differential impact on beliefs and attitudes.

5.3. METHODOLOGY:

A questionnaire was prepared consisting of thirteen areas of attitudes with twelve statements

in each of the areas for data collection. The questionnaire consisted of thirteen areas with twelve items in each area. The total number of items was one hundred and fifty six. Of these items seventy eight were worded positively and the remaining seventy eight were worded negatively. The scoring in case of negative items was reverse. The higher total score based on summation of the scores of respective items indicated modernism, progressivism or individualistic bent of mind. Separate scores were obtained for the groups of respondents based on the main variables. A (3 X 2 X 2 X 2) factorial design was used in order to study the main and interaction effects of four independent variable, that is generation gap at three levels, sex at two level, caste at two level, and residence at two level. Forming in all 24 cells or sub-groups with 30 subjects in each cell, thus the totalling the whole sample to $24 \times 30 = 720$ subjects (n) in all as shown in the design sampled from a wider sample of different school/colleges and community.

For this purpose in all 720 adolescent boys and girls (age level of 15 to 20 years), parents (age level of 35 to 45 years) and grand parents (age level of 60 and above) from the community in general were widely and randomly sampled to get the required subjects under study.

Responses on different beliefs and values etc., of 720 subjects forming a (3 X 2 X 2 X 2) factorial design was scored as per procedure and analysed by the statistical technique of analysis of variance as well as Least Significant Difference (LSD) test. The results thus analysed were tabulated in appropriate tables and figures and discussed in the main body of the thesis. Based on the analysis of results the following conclusions were inferred:

5.4. CONCLUSIONS:

- 1) In general generation gap is a significant determiner of attitudes towards all the thirteen areas of attitude objects. The first generation boys and girls appeared to hold a more progressive and less traditional or conservative outlook in comparison with second generation. The third generation was found to be relatively more traditional and conservative. In general relatively younger generation was found to be having more progressive outlook.
- 2) In the area on religion, child rearing, social values, family planning, social customs and traditions, structure of family and marriage both males and females, possessed more or less similar progressive outlook. However, in the areas on fashion, young-old relationship, social beliefs or attitudes, caste system and sex and sex education, females

tended to have a more progressive outlook in comparison with males. It is only in case of status of women in society that males possessed a more progressive outlook than females.

- 3) So far as the effect of caste is concerned, there was a significant variation between the upper and the lower castes in the areas on child-rearing, social values, family planning, status of women, customs and tradition, marriage, social beliefs, caste-systems, and sex and sex education. In these areas lower caste group was found to possess a more progressive outlook than the upper-caste. This finding suggest that there is a far greater awakening among respondents of lower caste group. It is only in the area of fashion that Higher Caste group turned out to be more progressive than the Lower caste group. Both the upper and the lower caste groups possessed similar progressive outlook in the areas of young-old relationship, and family structure.
- 4) In the attitude areas of social values, status of women, social customs and tradition, young-old relationship marriage, social beliefs or attitudes, caste system, and sex and sex education, rural group was found to possess a more progressive outlook than the urban group. Rural-Urban variation

in attitudes was not found in the areas of religion, child-rearing, fashion and family structure. Both rural and urban groups were comparable in respect of their attitudes towards these areas. In the area of family planning, urban group was found to be possessing a more progressive outlook in comparison with the rural group.

- 5) Respondents of relatively younger generation were found to hold the view that religion was not needed for progress and development. This view was significantly influenced by sex and residential area of the respondents. Similar influences of sex and residence were found to operate in the attitude areas of family planning, status of women, customs and traditions, young-old relationship, family structure, marriage, social beliefs, caste system, and sex and sex education. In the areas of child-rearing, values and fashion, the effect of generation gap was found to be significantly influenced by both caste and residential area of the respondents.

Some of the more specific conclusions are as under:-

- 1) The first generation females were found to be strongly in favour of adoption of family planning practices by all.

- 2) Both males and females of the first as well as the second generation seemed to be greatly concerned about enhancement of the status of women in society.
- 3) The first generation males and females were found to be strongly in favour of change in customs and traditions so as to make it more appropriate to the present context. The females of second generation were also found to be in favour of changing customs and traditions.
- 4) In the matter pertaining to young-old relationship, The first generation males and females were found to be greatly concerned about their independence and freedom from interference from elderly persons.
- 5) In the view of first generation males and females and second generation females nuclear family system was considered to be the best. The third generation respondents were in favour of joint family system.
- 6) With regard to the views regarding marriage and related matters, it was found that both boys and girls of first generation compared with respondents of second and third generations deviated substantially from the traditional norms.

- 7) Both boys and girls of first generation held a more progressive view in such matters as traditional social beliefs and attitudes, prevalent caste system, sex and sex education, etc.
- 8) The view that children should be brought up in a more permissive and not in a restrictive way is more strongly held by the respondents belonging to lower caste.
- 9) The lower caste respondents of the first generation felt more strongly for the maintenance and preservation of some of the more basic and traditional values.
- 10) Respondents belonging to the lower caste were on the side of giving more freedom to women. They were also of the opinion that women should be liberated from various bondages.
- 11) Both upper and lower caste members appeared to be relatively more conservative in regard to fashion adoption.
- 12) So far as the joint effect of generation and residence is concerned the urban respondents of the first generation were found to possess a more progressive outlook towards various issues related to social life. In case of second generation, rural respondents had a more progressive outlook.

5.5. IMPLICATIONS:

Generation gap was found to influence practically all the areas of behaviour under present investigation. Young boys and girls of the first generation were found to possess a much more radical outlook in comparison to respondents of second and third generation. The third generation respondents who were above sixty years of age were more conservative. The significant gap between the first and the second generation should therefore be taken into account while dealing with young boys and girls. Most of the conflicts between young adolescents and their parents and between young adolescents and teachers as elderly persons could be meaningfully related to the attitudinal gap that exists between them.

Adolescent boys and girls are more strongly inclined towards accepting existing religion, rearing practices, family planning, customs and traditions, and marriage practices only on rational or scientific basis. In contrast, members of second generation are inclined towards accepting the practices as they have been passed on to them by the preceeding generation. This attitude of accepting things on scientific basis on the part of young adolescents has a significant impact in shaping their life especially as they deal with parents and other elderly persons. This tendency among young

adolescents if properly understood and dealt with by significant, other will lead to more harmonious relation and fruitful developments in the society. It is perhaps the negligence on the part of parents and other elderly persons that young adolescent boys and girls fall victim to undesirable habits and practices. The need for properly understanding, boys and girls and the need for dealing with them on that basis is more strongly felt and realized now than ever before. The recent emphasis on promoting personality development among the youth in terms of various youth programmes, perhaps reflects this recognition. However, the various types of programmes on youth should be based on realistic assessment of the needs rather than on what elderly people feel it proper.

It was also observed in the investigation, that girls tended to have a more progressive outlook in the matters related to fashion, young-old relationship, social beliefs and attitudes, caste system, and sex related things in comparison to boys. This type of awareness should also be taken into account while planning for action for the development of women. This awareness may be a sort of reaction against the age old suppression to which, females were subjected in a male dominated society. Care needs to be taken to see that these reactions do not turn into hatred to see that these

reactions do not turn into hatred,. Now-a-days there has been a greater awakening and traditions. Many courses and centers for women studies have been set up in many universities. Many other women welfare agencies are working to help the women in coping various problems and difficulties. Increasingly more and more female students are now coming forward to do the jobs which were not available to them previously. Women have entered practically all occupational fields and have tried to prove their worth. The progressive outlook that has been observed among females may act as a counter force against many social evils.

It has also been found that lower caste respondents believe in rearing children in a more permissive atmosphere. They are concerned about maintenance and preservation of some of the universal values. Finally they believed that women should be given more freedom so as to enhance their status in the society. These observations are contrary to normal expectation that lower caste people are more restrictive and more conservative. The change in their outlook will have far reaching consequences in the molding or restructuring the entire society.

The general finding about rural/urban residence was that at the first generation urban respondents are more progressive than rural respondents. In case of second generation there is a far greater awakening among rural

than among urban respondents in such areas as religion, status of women, customs and traditions, young-old relationship, family structure, marriage, social beliefs, caste system, sex education, etc. This is a very significant trend of development. This would lead to similar changes in outlook among young boys and girls in the years to come. The gap between the urban and the rural would become narrow with the passage of time. This will have a significant impact on the life of both rural and urban people.

Finally, it could be said that all the promotional or developmental activities to promote growth and development among the youth, caste groups, sex groups, and groups based on residential area, need to be reassessed and planned in light of findings of the type reported in this thesis.