

A Probe Into Rigidity To Change Among The Students Of Higher Education Coming From The Major Castes And Tribes Of Purulia District

¹Sushanta Mahato, ²Prodip Karmakar, ³Sajal Kumar Char, ⁴Prof. Samirranjan Adhikari
¹Assistant Professor, ²Assistant Professor, ³Professor, Department of Education,
¹Gour Mohan Sachin Mandal Mahavidyalaya,
²Sponsored Teachers' Training College, Purulia,
³Sidho-Kanho-Birsha University, Purulia, West Bengal, India

Abstract - Present study was carried out through descriptive survey method within ex-post-facto research design. To collect the data "Dimensions of Rigidity Scale (DRS)" was administered on a random sample of total 1209 students of higher education coming from four major castes and a tribe of Purulia district. The result showed that the mean of the scores obtained by the students was higher than the mid-value – their moderately high rigidity to change was reflected. Again, Santal students, as well as Bauri students, were more rigid than their Kurmi, Brahman and Tambuli counterparts.

keywords - Descriptive Survey Research, Ex-Post-Facto Research, Rigidity, Dimensions of Rigidity

I. Introduction

The phenomenon of social conservatism is deeply rooted among the people of Purulia. Various castes like Gorain, Mahato, Bauri, Hanri, Dom, Muchi, Goala, Kheria, Karmakar, Tambuli, Brahman, Baidya etc living in the district of Purulia are more or less conservatives in their various social activities. Social conservatism is more prevalent in the backward castes; schedule castes and scheduled tribes. They are very reluctant to any kind of social change.

They are superstitious and rigid in their social behaviour. The conservatism is mostly found in inter-caste marriage, residential places, occupations and various religious matters. It is observed that the marriage between two different castes or religions is opposed by society. They are very much conservative regarding inter-caste marriage. As a result, the transfer of genes is not possible. The people of Purulia are averse to reside with the other caste. They are unwilling to leave their home and work outside. Generally, various castes of people live in clusters keeping a safe distance from each other. Every caste has its own distinct occupation and they have a strong adherence to their own occupation. So, they do not feel to change or to learn the technical skills from the other.

Apart from the above conservatism most of the people are very much reserved in educating their girl child or giving her better opportunity to flourish her potential. The different castes of the district exercise child marriage. The major causes of such conservatism may be related to a lack of scientific attitude (comprehensive modernization) and personal values. It is due to this conservatism that social mobility is very slow and the present scenario is a concern for the researcher of social science to investigate the phenomenon.

The rigid social behaviour of the people of Purulia is characterized by traditional beliefs and customs, dogmatic ideas, closed-mindedness, intolerant to ambiguity, ethnocentric attitude etc. It is a tendency by which human behaviour is restricted to a particular pattern of behaviour. People with this conservative attitude tend to be non-progressive and cyclic in their behaviour. They cannot move further and accept the change in society. They are tied to their old established way of thinking. They hold an extreme belief about something and are unable to change or modify it. Lack of flexibility in their social behaviour prevents their social mobility. It is an inability to accept others' viewpoints. The lives of these conservative people are regulated by the repetition of a set of behaviour that is fixed. So, they find it difficult to cope with the changing world. Their traditional way of living and thinking may make their lives stagnant.

1.1 Specific Objective of the Study

The study is designed to achieve the following specific objective –

To explore the prevailing scenario of different dimensions of Rigidity to change of the students of higher education of Purulia district.

2. Rigidity to Change – Construct of the Study

The term 'Rigidity' is a complicated concept to define it in its truest sense. Some psychologists defined it as a resistance to shifting from old to new discriminations. It has grown out of related topics such as perseveration and the analysis of personality traits. Many psychologists and researchers tried to conceptualise the term rigidity. According to Rokeach (1948), rigidity is the inability to change one's set when the objective conditions demand it. Goldstein (1943) defines it as adherence to present performance in an inadequate way and according to Werner (1946) rigidity is lack of variability of response.

From these definitions we may conclude that rigidity is a preservative tendency to a set of traditional beliefs, customs, habits and a way of living that is outdated. It is an inability to change the pattern behavior.

3. REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE:

A brief review of literature is presented herewith.

Joseph Ciarrochi, Terri Said and Deane (2005) proved that one of the major components of rigidity i.e; (desire for simple structure) was associated with less hopelessness, whereas another component of rigidity (intolerance of uncertainty) was associated with more depression, anxiety, stress, suicidal ideation, and hopelessness. Consequently, rigidity of attitudes would appear to be associated with conduct opposite to adaptable behaviour.

Steinmetz et al. (2011) reported elements of construct validity for rigidity using personal need for structure, cognitive flexibility, and two personality traits: openness and conscientiousness. Personal need for structure is composed of two subscales consisting of the person's desire to have a structured environment, and the person's response to lack of structure in a given situation. Steinmetz et al. (2011) showed that there is a stronger relation between the rigidity scale and the "desire for structure" component than with the "response to lack of structure" component.

4. Method

One of the best ways to get answers for the research questions set is a well-planned, structured research design (Fink, 2003). A descriptive survey method within an ex-post-facto research design was adopted in the present study.

4.1 Variables

In the present study following variables were considered –

- (a) Independent variable: Ethnic groups – four major castes and a tribe of Purulia (viz. Bauri, Brahman, Kurmi, Santal and Tambuli) were considered as the levels of the independent variable.
- (b) Dependent Variable: Rigidity to Change is the dependent variable of the present study.

4.2 Sampling and Representative Sample

A sample is called representative when it reflected an accurate proportional representation of the population under study. To make the sample representative stratified random sampling technique was adopted.

4.2.1 Source

Government as well as Government aided colleges, Sidho-Kanho-Birsha University and teacher education institutions of Purulia, West Bengal were the source of the sample.

4.2.2 Sampling Technique

In the present study "Stratified Random Sampling Technique" was adopted.

4.2.3 Sample Characteristics

Only the students of higher education of Purulia (W.B) were taken.

4.2.4 Sample Size

Finally, total 1209 students participated in the study. The distribution of samples over four major castes and a tribe is presented herewith.

Caste and Tribe	Number of Participants	%
Bauri	108	09
Brahman	276	23
Kurmi	453	37
Santal	220	18
Tambuli	152	13
Total	1209	100

Data were collected randomly from the population of students of higher education; actually, data were collected from total 1813 students. But after computing caste wise frequency distribution this picture was cropped up. Beyond these most populated four major castes and a tribe, there were many other castes; for the simplicity and manageability of the study, only the students of these four major castes and a tribe were considered. Again, this caste wise composition of the sample really is in corroboration with the population structure of Purulia District.

4.3 RESEARCH INSTRUMENT

The following research tool was used in the present study for the collection of data. The tool was selected by applying yardsticks of relevance, appropriateness, reliability, validity and suitability. Brief descriptions of the tool are given herewith.

4.3.1 Dimension of Rigidity Scale (DRS) (Chadha, 2012)

Rigidity is a tendency to persevere and resist conceptual change, to resist the acquisition of new patterns of behaviour and to refuse to relinquish old and established patterns (Schaie, 1955). This definition in the researcher's view is quite broad to cover the whole area of rigidity and also, it permits the deduction of behavioural consequences.

The tool "Dimensions of Rigidity Scale" measures rigidity to change in seven dimensions. There are 75 "yes"/ "No" type items in this scale. So, the highest obtainable value is $75 \times 1 = 75$ and the lowest obtainable value is $75 \times 0 = 0$. So, the mid value is 37.5. We can interpret the mean value in the range of 0 to 18.75 as very low, 18.76 to 37.50 as moderately low, 37.51 to 56.25 as moderately high, 56.26 to 75 as very high.

4.4 Procedure for Data Collection

The relevant data were collected by administering the above-mentioned tool on the subjects under study in accordance with the directions provided in the manual of the tool.

4.4.1 Data Collection

Before the collection of data, permission was taken to conduct the study and granted by the Principal/Teacher-in-Charge of different degree colleges and the teachers training colleges and the Head of the Department of different disciplines of the Sidho-Kanho-Birsha University of Purulia District. Consents were also requested and granted by all participants.

5. Results

The purpose of this study was to probe into the rigidity to change of the students of higher education coming from four major castes and a tribe of Purulia District. After the survey four major castes and a tribe were selected for the study – these are Bauri, Brahman, Kurmi, Santal and Tambuli.

The results of the descriptive, as well as comparative analyses of rigidity, are presented in tabular forms in two sections – Rigidity in Totality and Dimension wise Rigidity.

5.1 Rigidity to Change

In this section, the results of the descriptive, as well as comparative analyses of rigidity in totality, are presented in the following tabular forms.

Table-5.1: Descriptive Statistics of Dimensions of Rigidity Scale Score, in Total, of the Students of Higher Education Coming from four Major Castes and a Tribe of Purulia District

Rigidity	Caste/ Tribe	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Rigidity	Bauri	108	24	51	42.11	5.99
	Brahman	276	32	50	40.94	4.49
	Kurmi	453	27	54	40.66	5.19
	Santal	220	24	51	41.96	5.35
	Tambuli	152	31	47	40.71	4.12
	Total	1209	24	54	41.10	5.05

The results of Table-5.1 show the descriptive statistics of Rigidity scores of the students of higher education of four major castes and a tribe of Purulia district. In rigidity the means of the scores obtained by the students of four major castes and a tribe, and in totality were 42.11, 40.94, 40.66, 41.96, 40.71 and 41.10 respectively.

In the Dimensions of Rigidity Scale (in totality) there are total of 75 "Yes"/ "No" type items. Therefore, the maximum score is $75 \times 1 = 75$, the minimum score is 0 and the mid-value is 37.5. From the results of table-5.1, it is exhibited that the mean of the scores obtained by the students of four major castes and a tribe, and in totality were higher than the mid-value. These reflect their moderately high rigidity to change.

Table-5.1(a): Result of Multiple Comparisons of Dimensions of Rigidity Scale Score, in Total, among the Students of Higher Education Coming from Four major castes and a tribe of Purulia District

Dimensions of Rigidity Scale	(I) Caste	(J) Caste	Mean Difference (I-J)	Level of Significance
Rigidity	Bauri	Brahman	1.17	0.04
		Kurmi	1.46	0.01
		Santal	0.15	0.80
		Tambuli	1.40	0.03
	Brahman	Bauri	-1.17	0.04
		Kurmi	0.29	0.46

		Santal	-1.02	0.03
		Tambuli	0.23	0.65
	Kurmi	Bauri	-1.46	0.01
		Brahman	-0.29	0.46
		Santal	-1.31	0.00
		Tambuli	-0.06	0.91
	Santal	Bauri	-0.15	0.80
		Brahman	1.02	0.03
		Kurmi	1.31	0.00
		Tambuli	1.25	0.02
	Tambuli	Bauri	-1.40	0.03
		Brahman	-0.23	0.65
		Kurmi	0.06	0.91
		Santal	-1.25	0.02

The result of table-5.1(a) shows that according to Dimensions Rigidity Scale score, Santal students, as well as Bauri students, were significantly (statistically) more rigid than their Kurmi, Brahman and Tambuli counterparts. No statistically significant difference was observed between Brahman and Kurmi students and between Brahman and Tambuli students and between Kurmi and Tambuli students and also between Bauri and Santal Students.

6. CONCLUSION

The results reflect the moderately high rigidity to accept any change over time was there among all ethnic groups in Purulia district. Again, Santal and Bauri students were more rigid than their Kurmi, Brahman and Tambuli counterparts. The conservatism in tribal community is very common and this fact might be reflected by the result of the study. The people of Bauri community are forced to remain at the bottom position in social hierarchy in Purulia; hence their long-standing social deprivation may inculcate their rigidity to accept any change.

7. REFERENCES

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