

## **GENERATIONAL CHANGES IN ETHNIC STEREOTYPES HELD BY SECOND AND THIRD GENERATIONS OF URDU-SPEAKING YOUTH TOWARD SINDHI-SPEAKING IN PAKISTAN**

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*The study compared the ethnic stereotypes of two succeeding generations of Urdu-Speaking adolescents for self (Urdu-Speaking) and other (Sindhi-speaking) in Shah Latifabad, Hyderabad. 80 male adolescents of second and third generations completed twelve semantic differential scales in 1970 and 1988, respectively. The findings indicated that ratings of the third generation adolescents were more polarized both for self (Urdu-speaking) and other (Sindhi-speaking) than the ratings of the second generation. A number of possible explanations are discussed to understand the extreme judgements of the present generation adolescents. On the basis of data available in this investigation, the approach of selective perception seems most tenable explaining how in times of greater tension images become distorted because of emotions such as hate or love.*

Although a large number of studies on ethnic stereotypes have been conducted in other parts of the world (Brewer & Campbell, 1976; Marjoribanks & Jordan, 1986; Triandis, Lisansky, Setiadi, Chang, Marin, & Betancourt, 1982), relatively a few are available in this part of the world. Indian studies conducted to explore caste stereotypes (Rath & Sircar, 1960a, 1960b; Sinha, 1964; Srinivas, 1954) indicate that the student respondents carry images more or less similar to those existing for decades. The caste stereotypes held by respondents were generally seen to have been determined by traditional roles ascribed to the different castes. Sinha (1964) observed that the caste was the pervasive feature of Indian society so much so that even Indian Muslims, contrary to their Islamic faith, were greatly influenced by this system. In Pakistan,

there are a few studies concerning ethnic stereotypes, the first being that of Sailer (1955) conducted with male and female students of different colleges in Lahore. In that study Punjabis assigned more favourable traits to self than to other ethnic groups, after a lapse of nearly 10 years, Schuman (1966) carried out a research on regional stereotypes in East Pakistan (now Bangla Desh). The results revealed systematic differences between perceptions of "own District" and "other Districts". For example, Barisal man was perceived as "aggressive" and "hot-tempered", while man of Noakhali was described as "pious" but "shrewd".

Most studies of ethnic stereotypes have explored the content (or quality) of stereotypes but there are a few studies available on comparison of stereotypes within the same culture in historical perspective. Gilbert (1951) compared the stereotypes of two succeeding generations of Princeton College students. In that investigation, Katz and Braly's (1933) Princeton study was repeated after a lapse of 18 years. Again, Princeton undergraduates (third generation) were compared with earlier two studies by Karlins, Coffman and Walters (1969). Both the studies provided a broad psychocultural perspective relating to stereotype persistence and change. Buriel and Vasquez (1982) examined generational changes in ethnic stereotypes held by Mexican descent adolescents living in United States who were at different generational stages of acculturation process. They hypothesized that with each successive generation, group stereotypes of Mexican Americans would more closely resemble to those held by Anglo-Americans. In other words, the authors contended that with successive generations of living in the United States, there would be a trend for greater separation from traditional Mexican-American culture and greater integration towards Anglo-American values and norms.

The present study was designed to compare the stereotypes of two succeeding generations (after a lapse of 18 years) of Urdu-speaking adolescents for self and others (Sindhi-speaking) on semantic differential scales.

The second generation subjects completed Semantic Differential Forms in 1970, whereas those belonging to the

third generation did so in 1988. The 1988-Study was conducted after the 30th September massacre when Hyderabad had seen the worst ethnic conflict. The study, therefore, predicted that under communal tensions the third generation Urdu-speaking youth would make greater extreme judgements than the second generation youth.

## METHOD

### Subjects

A total of 80 Urdu-speaking male adolescents of second-and third generations, 40 subjects in each generation, participated in this study. The samples of both the groups were drawn from first-and-second year students of Al-Ghazali Government College, Shah Latifabad. The mean age of the subjects was 18.5 for the second generation and 18.0 for the third generation. The subjects of both the groups belonged to middle-and lower-middle class families. Shah Latifabad Township was built 35 years back for the migrants (*Mohajirs*) from India. Second generation students were those born in Pakistan, but with one or both parents born in India. Third generation students were born in Pakistan and also had both parents born in Pakistan.

### Instruments

Both the second-and third generation subjects completed semantic differential forms with twelve evaluative scales in Urdu language. The Urdu translations of the twelve scales and instructions were accomplished using back translation procedures (Sechrest, Fay & Zaidi, 1972). The scales were: brave—coward, clean—dirty, dependable—unreliable, efficient—inefficient, graceful—awkward, grateful—ungrateful, hardworking—lazy, honest—dishonest, intelligent—dull, kind—cruel, noncommunal—communal, and peaceful—aggressive. Since the order of presentation of scales for each subject was random the instrument provided a better check against individual inconsistency. The advantage of the

semantic differential technique lies in partial non-reactivity (Webb, Campbell, Schwartz, & Sechrest, 1966).

## RESULTS

The means of the twelve scales were computed on the basis of ratings on a 7-point scale so that maximum on positive poles (for example, clean, dependable, graceful, honest, and kind) had scores of 7 and the minimum on the negative poles (for example, cruel, dishonest, etc.) had scores of 1. The mean scores of the second (1970) and third (1988) generations of Urdu-speaking adolescents for self and others (Sindhi-speaking) on twelve evaluative scales are presented in table 1 and figure 1.

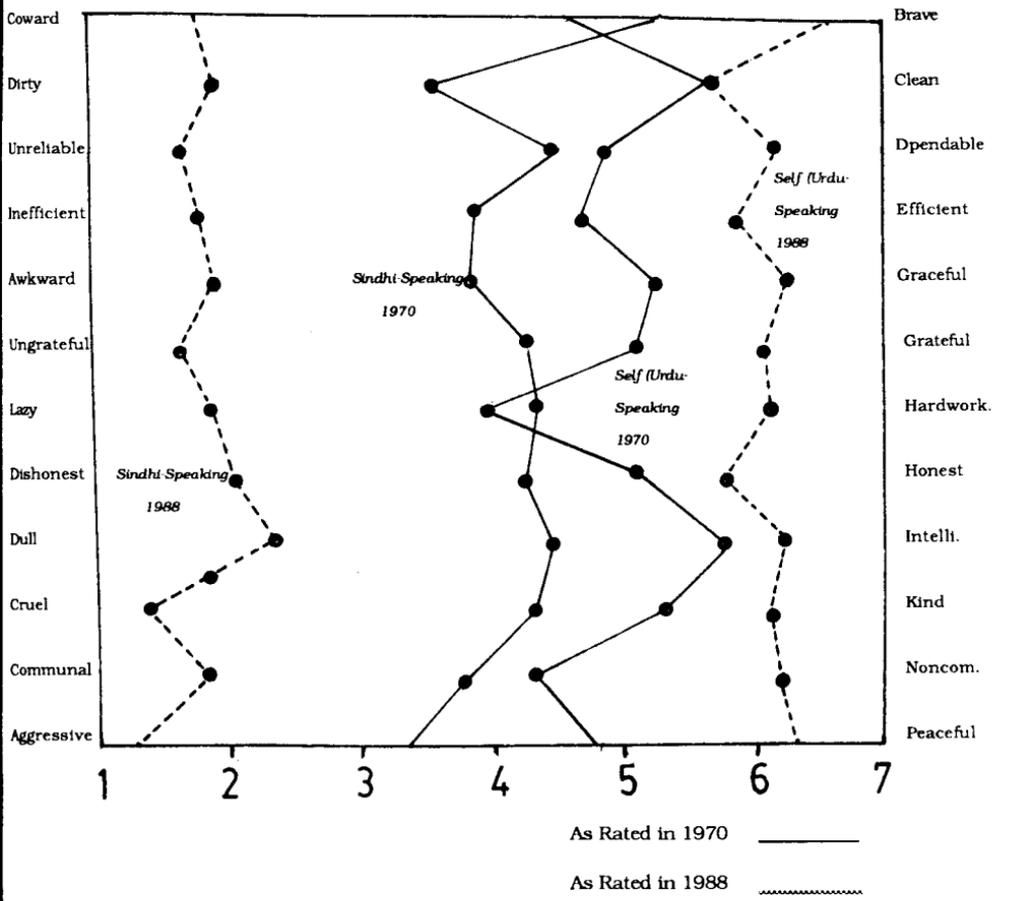
Table 1

*Mean Scores of Second and Third Generations of Urdu-speaking Adolescents for Self and others (Sindhi-speaking) on Twelve Evaluative Scales*

Scale	2nd Generation (1970)		3rd Generation (1988)	
	Self	Others	Self	Others
	(Urdu Speaking)	(Sindhi Speaking)	(Urdu Speaking)	(Sindhi Speaking)
Brave-Coward	4.88	5.23	6.70	1.70
Clean-Dirty	5.70	3.53	5.60	1.80
Dpendable-Unreliable	4.83	4.48	6.10	1.60
Efficient-Inefficient	4.68	3.85	5.80	1.70
Graceful-Awkward	5.20	3.53	6.20	1.80
Grateful-Ungrateful	5.08	4.28	6.10	1.60
Hardworking-Lazy	3.90	4.28	6.10	1.80
Honest-Dishonest	5.08	4.20	5.80	2.00
Intelligent-Dull	5.75	4.43	6.20	2.30
Kind-Cruel	5.25	4.28	6.10	1.40
Noncommunal-Communal	4.28	3.83	6.20	1.80
Peaceful-Aggressive	4.93	3.40	6.30	1.30

# Changes in Ethnic Stereotypes

Negative ← EVALUATION → Positive



Mean Ratings of Urdu-Speaking for Self and Sindhi-Speaking on Twelve Scales

## IMAGES OF THE URDU-SPEAKING

Figure 1

Figure 1 represents graphically the mean ratings of the two succeeding generations of Urdu-speaking respondents for the concepts Self and others (Sindhi-speaking). Examination of the data shows that the third generation adolescents made more polarized ratings both for the Self (high rating) and Sindhi-speaking (low rating), when contrasted with the second generation adolescents. Thus, the third generation assessed in 1988, rated Self very high, while Sindhi-speaking as very low. On the other hand, the second generation ratings tended to be negative but not so polarized.

## DISCUSSION

The findings of the generational study suggest that the ethnic stereotypes of Urdu-speaking adolescents for Sindhi-speaking have a trend to become increasingly less favourable with generational distance. Here, it may be added that the first generation people (i.e., Urdu-speaking born in India and migrated to Sindh) have had very favourable images of Sindhis. They had reputations of being Mehmannaawaz (hospitable), Aman-pasand (peace-loving), and Sadgi-pasand (simple). Now, the question arises as to why third generation Urdu-speaking adolescents tended to be more extreme in their evaluations than the ratings of the second generation. A definitive explanation would be beyond the scope of the data in this investigation. At this stage we can only speculate. The first explanation may be offered in terms of frustration-aggression hypothesis (Dollard, Doob, Miller, Mowrer, & Sears, 1939). According to this approach, the third generation of Urdu-speaking adolescents perceive greater frustration as regards the educational and job opportunities than the second generation adolescents and transfer it to the target group.

Another explanation which might be offered in the Pakistani youth culture in which judgements are characteristically of an all-or-none polarized variety. It is an interesting view but more would have to be known about the present youth culture, including the upbringing of a male child in Pakistani society. The results of a study conducted in Shah Latifabad Township, Hyderabad (Haque, 1987) revealed that boys irrespective of their social class perceived their mothers

to be significantly less warm and more rejecting as compared to girls.

In recent months, the ethnic climate in Sindh has become very tense and the relations between the two ethnic groups are strained. The 1988-study was conducted after the 30th September massacre, when the emotional tension was heightened. According to one report by Hasan (1989), Hyderabad city and Shah Latifabad had been under curfew for about 142 days for the past 16 months and at least 300 persons were killed. Ever since Sindh's politics became divided along ethnic and linguistic lines, there has been segregation in housing (areas of habitation), education, and even hospitals. The public opinion leaders of both the ethnic groups made wild accusations against each other. During the very tense ethnic climate of September, 1989, the writer surveyed one of the most highly circulated newspapers, the daily Jung (Karachi) to explore the attributes which Sindhi-speaking (Jeeya Sindh) and Urdu-speaking (MQM) leaders labelled against each other. The analysis of the public statements of leaders of both the ethnic groups described the opponent in strongly unfavourable terms. Haque (1968) found that the degree of negative stereotyping for the opponent was positively related to the severity of the conflict situation. It appears, therefore, that the extreme public statements of these leaders might have influenced the perceptual processes of the adolescents of the present generation. Thus, the third explanation may be offered in terms of selective perception. Stagner (1967) in his discussion of images and polarized thinking describes how in times of tension the perceptual processes are influenced by motivation. This implies greater tension leading to greater distortion of images for the third generation adolescents. This approach is consistent with the view advanced by Campbell (1967) which says that extreme negative evaluations follow the response pattern associated with "projective perceptions".

The high ratings on their own Self-image seem to indicate the high moral of the third generation adolescents. Following this rationale, the high degree of positive stereotyping Self may be a function of selective perception reinforced by elation and self-confidence. On the basis of information available, this approach seems to be the most tenable to explain the extreme judgements(both positive and negative) of the adolescents.

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