Modernization and superstition among female adolescents – a relational study

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Abstract : *The objective of the present study entitled "Modernization and Superstition Among Female Adolescents – A Relational Study" was to explore the relationship between modernization and superstition among female adolescents. Three hypotheses were formulated – (1) There will be a negative correlation between modernization and superstition, (2) The female adolescents of low salaried parents will score low on modernization inventory than the female adolescents of high salaried parents and (3) Superstitious beliefs will be low among the female adolescents of high salaried parents than the female adolescents of low salaried parents. The study was conducted on 200 female adolescents, age ranging from 18 to 20 years of Patna town selected through incidental cum purposive sampling method. The data was collected from four different educational institutions of Patna town. The research tools used were – Ahluwalia S.P. and Kalia A.K. Comprehensive Modernization Inventory (AKCMI) and Dubey L.N. and Dixit B.M. (Undated): Superstition Scale The result was analyzed quantitatively and qualitatively. Bar diagram was also prepared for clear perception of the data. Quantitative results indicate significant negative co-efficient of correlation (r= -0.223 significant at 0.01 level) between the scores of modernization and superstition among female adolescents which proves the first hypothesis. The significant t-values (3.789, 4.037 significant at 0.01 level) are also going in the favour of hypothesis no.2 and 3 respectively. On the basis of qualitative analysis of the data it was found that the sample who were 'Highly Superstitious' and 'Superstitious' were having low modern beliefs. The sample who were 'Highly Non Superstitious' and 'Non superstitious' were having high modern beliefs. Secondly the views of the sample were also analyzed and it was found that sample having good financial condition gave positive views regarding modern beliefs and expressed negative views regarding superstitious beliefs whereas the sample whose financial condition was not good talked in the favour of superstition. The researchers suggested that female adolescents should be encouraged to develop logical and rational thinking over superstition. Parents should not ignorantly pass on their superstition from one generation to another.*

Key Words : *Modernization, Superstition, adolescent, mysterious fear.*

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Introduction :

In popular parlance "to modernize" means "to render something old fashioned up to date" or "to reshape something out of date to suit the requirements of modern times." (Chodak, 1973). Modernization to be precise refers to the deeper change in man's way of thinking and feeling a change in his whole attitude to life's problems, the society and the universe. The term "Superstition" denotes the tendency to direct one's behaviour with irrational and mysterious fear or to gain privilege from the supernatural power.

Purposes :

Since adolescents are moving towards modernization, researchers tried to find out whether they were free from superstitions. This question arose in the mind of the researchers especially for female adolescents, because in the society it is generally observed that women are more superstitious in comparison to men. So, with all these facts in mind the present research was undertaken with the following objectives:-

- To see whether modernization is affecting the superstitious beliefs of the female adolescents.

- To see whether income of the parents has any role to play on superstition.

- To find out the relationship between modernization and superstition.

- To establish a relationship between income of the parents and modernization in the female adolescents.

Hypotheses : The hypotheses formulated were:

- There will be a negative correlation between modernization and superstition.

- The female adolescents of low salaried parents will score low on modernization inventory than the female adolescents of high salaried parents.

- Superstitious beliefs will be low among female adolescents of high salaried parents than the female adolescents of low salaried parents.

Methodology :

Sample: The sample consisted of 200 female adolescents, age ranging from 18 to 20 years of low and high salaried parents. The sample was restricted to only female adolescents of Patna town. The selection of the sample was done by incidental-cum-purposive sampling method.

Research Area: The areas visited for the collection of the data were:-

- Patna Women's College, Bailey Road, Patna
- J.D. Women's College, Bailey Road, Patna
- Government Girls High School, Gardanibagh, Patna
- Government Girls College, Gardanibagh, Patna

Research Tools: The research tools used to measure modernization and superstition were:-

- Ahluwalia S.P. & Kalia A.K.: A.K. Comprehensive Modernization Inventory (AKCMI).
- Dubey L.N. & Dixit B.M.: Superstition Scale (SS).

Procedure of Data collection:

Data was collected from four different educational institutions of Patna town in one session during the college hour in 15 days.

Scoring: Scoring was done on the basis of the method provided in the manual of the two tests.

Result and Interpretation:

The result was analyzed quantitatively by computing statistics like – mean, median, standard deviation (S.D.), critical ratio and product moment co-efficient of correlation. The obtained data were also presented graphically by preparing bar diagrams. For qualitative analysis of the data the personal views of the sample on the two variables-modernization and superstition were analyzed.

The obtained data was analyzed hypothesis wise.

Hypothesis No. I :- "There will be a negative correlation between modernization and superstition."

Table I : Table showing the mean, standard deviation (SD) and coefficient of correlation between modernization and superstition

Variables	N	Total obtained score	Mean	SD	r	df	Level of Significance
Modernization	200	36157	180.785	44.094	-0.223	198	P<0.01*
Superstition	200	12100	60.5	19.751			

* Table value at 0.05 level = 0.159; 0.01 level= 0.208

Table no. I is also presented in the graphical form in fig. no. I for clear perception of the data.

Mean and standard deviation (SD) of modernization and superstition scores of female adolescents
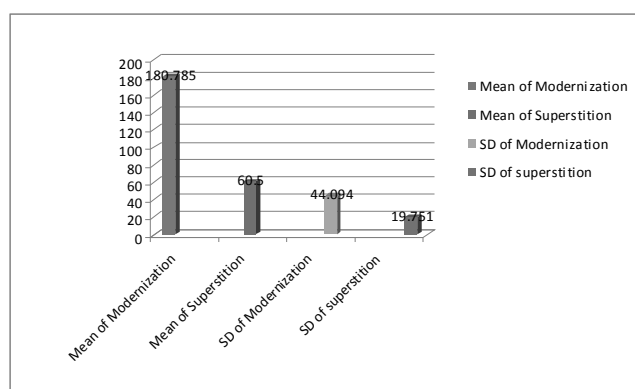

Fig. I

It was hypothesized that when people move towards modernization there would be decrease in the superstitious beliefs of the person. Table no. I is showing the total obtained score on modernization inventory and superstition scale and the co-efficient of correlation between the two sets of score. The r value (-0.223) suggests that there is a negative co-efficient of correlation between the obtained scores of modernization and superstition. The table value on df 198 at 0.05 level is 0.159 and 0.208 at 0.01 level. Thus, the obtained r value is greater than the table value at both the levels of significance. So, there is a significant negative co-

efficient of correlation between the modernization and superstition scores of the sample which supports the first hypothesis. It means higher the modernization lower the superstitious beliefs and vice-versa.

A study was conducted by Asia Culture Academy, Seoul, South Korea on the topic "Superstition or Modernity? On the invented tradition of lucky mobile numbers in China." The findings of the study also suggest a relationship between modernization and superstition. They found that increase in modernity is also increasing superstition. Though the findings of the study establishes a relationship between the two variables but it is not going in favour of hypothesis No. I.

Hypothesis No. II – "The female adolescents of low salaried parents will score low on modernization inventory than the female adolescents of high salaried parents."

This hypothesis is discussed and interpreted on the basis of Table No.II

Table II : Table showing the mean, standard deviation (SD), t-ratio, df and level of significance of modernization scores of female adolescents of low salaried parents and high salaried parents

Group	N	Total obtained score	Mean	SD	t-value	df	Level of Significance
Group – A (Low salaried parents)	127	22559	177.7	15.7	3.789	198	P<0.01*
Group – B (High salaried parents)	73	13598	186.4	15.6			

* Table value at 0.05 level= 1.98; 0.01 level= 2.61

Table No. II is also presented in a graphical form in figure no. II for clear perception of the data.

Mean and Standard Deviation (SD) of modernization scores of female adolescents of Group A and Group B
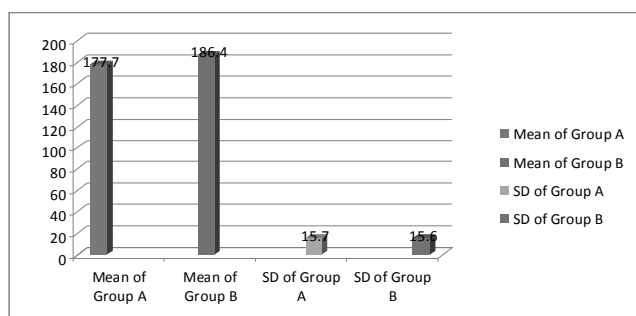

Fig II

In order to decide high and low salaried parents median of the monthly income of the parents of the sample was computed. The obtained median value was Rs. 30,000/per month. It was hypothesized that children of high salaried parents get opportunity to see the world in a larger perspective. Thus, their views and beliefs are directed towards modernization whereas children of low salaried parents are more engaged to meet their basic needs. So those children get less exposure.

Result : Table II clearly reveals that the mean (177.7) of the female adolescents of Group A (Low salaried Parents) is less than the mean (186.4) of the female adolescents of Group B (High salaried parents). High mean is indicating high score on modernization. Thus, the female adolescents whose parents were in the category of high paid salary exhibited more inclination towards modernization in comparison to those female students whose parents were in the category of low salaried parents which is going in favour of the second hypothesis.

The Standard Deviation (SD) of Group – A is 15.7 and of Group B is 15.6. These SD values are quite less to their means (177.7 and 186.4) which suggest internal consistency in their responses.

For further verification of the significance of difference between the two means (177.7 and 186.4) critical ratio (t-ratio) was computed. The obtained t-value is 3.789. On 198 df (degree of freedom), p value at 0.05 level is 1.98 and at 0.01 level is 2.61. Thus, the obtained t-value (3.789) is found to be greater than the table value at both the levels of significance. It indicates that the difference between the mean value of group- A and group – B on modernization inventory is significant. Significant difference between the two means indicates that there is actual difference regarding the modern beliefs of female adolescents of low salaried parents and high salaried parents and it has not occurred due to chance factor. Thus, the t-value is also going in favour of the second hypothesis.

Hypothesis No. III – "Superstitious beliefs will be low among the female adolescents of high salaried parents than the female adolescents of low salaried parents."

This hypothesis is discussed and interpreted on the basis of Table No. III.

Table III : Table showing the mean, standard deviation (SD), t-ratio, df and level of significance of superstition scores of female adolescents of low salaried parents and high salaried parents

Group	N	Total obtained score	Mean	SD	t-value	df	Level of Significance
Group – A (Low salaried parents)	127	8164	64.9	15.1	4.037	198	P<0.01*
Group – B (High salaried parents)	73	3936	57	12.2			

* Table value at 0.05 level= 1.98; 0.01 level= 2.61

Table No. III is also presented in a graphical form in figure no. III for clear perception of the data.

Mean and Standard Deviation (SD) of superstition scores of female adolescents of low salaried parents and high salaried parents
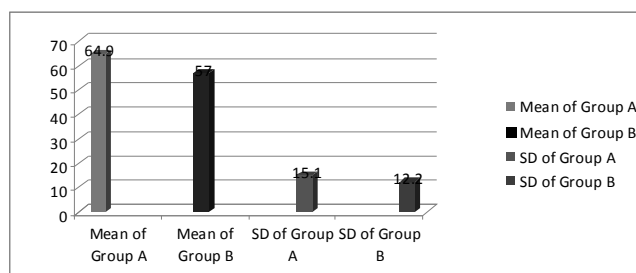

Fig. III

Table no. III shows the total obtained score of Group- A is 8164 and for Group-B is 3936. The mean value of Group-A (Low salaried parents) is 64.9 and of Group-B (High salaried parents) is 57. The difference between the two means is clearly showing difference in the superstitious beliefs of female adolescents of Group A and Group B. High mean value of those female adolescents whose parents were low salaried indicates that they are more superstitious than those female adolescents whose parents were high salaried. Thus, on the basis of mean value it can be said that finding is going in favour of the third hypothesis.

The standard deviation (SD) of Group – A (Female adolescents of low salaried parents) is 15.1 and of Group B (Female adolescents of high salaried parents) is 12.2. These SD values are quite less to their means (64.9 and 57.00) which proves internal consistency in their responses. Hence the obtained result is dependable and reliable. Further it can be said that the SD value of Group A (15.1) is higher than the SD value of Group B (12.2) which suggests that there is more consistency in the responses of Group B.

To test the significance of difference between the two means (64.9 – 57= 7.9) of Group A and Group B critical ratio (t-ratio) was computed. The obtained t-value is 4.037. On df (degree of freedom) 198, P value at 0.05 level is 1.98 and at 0.01 level is 2.61. Thus, the obtained t-value is found to be greater than the table value at both the levels of significance. It indicates that the difference between the mean value of Group A (Female adolescents of low salaried parents)and Group B (Female adolescents of high salaried parents) on superstition scale is significant. Significant difference between the two means indicates that there is actual difference between the superstitious beliefs of female adolescents belonging to low salaried parents and high salaried parents and has not occurred due to chance factor. Thus, the t-value is also going in favour of the third hypothesis.

Qualitative analysis of the data was done in two ways:-

- The superstition scores obtained by the sample were categorized on the basis of categorization given in the manual of superstition scale.

  The modernization scores were also categorized on the basis of its median value (Median= 181). Samples falling on and above median value (181) were categorized as having high modern beliefs. Samples falling below the median value were categorized as having low modern beliefs.

- The personal views of the sample on modernization and superstition were analyzed.

Qualitative analysis of the obtained data was done on the basis of Table no. IV.

Table IV : Table showing categorization of superstition scores, scores range on modernization inventory of female adolescents and their frequencies

Categories of superstition according to the manual	Scores on superstition scale according to the manual	Scores range on modernization inventory	Frequencies
Highly Superstitious	100 and above	237	1
Superstitious	92 – 99	169,170,173	3
Moderate	84 – 91	154 – 181	12
Non Superstitious	72 – 83	182 – 201	48
Highly Non Superstitious	71 and below	184 – 239	136
			N= 200

A glance at the Table No. IV clearly reveals that out of 200 samples only one subject was

categorized under 'Highly Superstitious' on the basis of her obtained score on superstition scale. Her score on modernization inventory was 237 which is more than obtained median value (181). High scores on both the variables (Modernization and Superstition) indicates that the person is highly superstitious in spite of possessing high modern beliefs. Though the sample is only one then also it is not favouring the framed hypothesis no. I.

Three samples were categorized under 'Superstitious'. They had scored low on modernization inventory 169, 170 and 173 respectively which is less than obtained median value (181). This qualitative analysis indicates that the samples who were high on superstition scale scored low on modernization inventory which is going in favour of the framed hypothesis no. I.

Twelve samples were categorized under 'Moderate' on the basis of their obtained scores on superstition scale. It indicates that neither they were superstitious nor non superstitious. They have scored high on modernization inventory their scores ranging from 154 to 181. It indicates that they posses high modern beliefs and their superstitious beliefs are at low level. This is also going in favour of the first hypothesis.

48 samples were found 'Non Superstitious' on the basis of their obtained scores on superstition scale. It means the superstitious beliefs were found very low among them. Their scores on modernization inventory was comparatively high, scores ranging from 182 to 201 which is more than obtained median value (181) which indicates that they posses high modern beliefs and are less directed towards superstition. This is also favouring hypothesis No.1.

136 samples were categorized under 'Highly Non Superstitious'. It indicates that superstitious beliefs were negligible among these samples. These samples have scored very high on modernization inventory. Their scores ranging from 184 to 239 which is more than median value (181). High scores on modernization inventory indicates that these subjects were more directed towards modernization and they do not believe in irrational beliefs and superstitions as their scores on superstition scale is very low. Thus supporting the framed hypothesis No.1.

The personal views of the sample on modernization and superstition were also analyzed. Most of the samples whose financial condition was good talked more about modernization. They gave positive views regarding modern beliefs and expressed negative views regarding superstitious beliefs whereas the samples whose financial condition was not good talked in the favour of superstition. They talked more about lucky days, lucky charm, lucky number, good luck, bad luck and irrational beliefs which they practice in their day to day life. Though their views were not negative regarding modern beliefs yet they showed rigidity in accepting modernity.

Thus, the qualitative analysis of the result is also supporting the hypotheses of the present study.

Conclusions and Suggestions:

In the light of the findings of the present study following conclusions were drawn:

- There is a significant negative co-efficient of correlation (r=-0.223) between the scores of modernization and superstition among female adolescents which indicates that when there is increase in modernization there is decrease in the superstitious beliefs.

- Internal consistency was found in the responses of female adolescents of low salaried parents and high salaried parents on modernization inventory and

superstition scale. Hence the responses of the sample are quite reliable and dependable.

- A significant difference was observed between the means of female adolescents of low salaried parents and high salaried parents on modernization inventory. Significant t-value indicates actual difference on modernization between adolescents of low salaried parents and high salaried parents.

- The superstitious beliefs were found low among the female adolescents of high salaried parents than the female adolescents of low salaried parents on the basis of mean value of the scores on superstition scale.

- Internal consistency was observed in the responses of the female adolescents of low salaried parents and high salaried parents on superstition scale. The SD value of both the groups was very less compared to their means. Thus the responses of the sample of the present study were reliable and dependable.

- On the basis of t-ratio a significant difference was found between the two means of female adolescents of low salaried parents and high salaried parents on superstition scale which indicates actual difference between the superstitious beliefs of female adolescents of low salaried parents and high salaried parents.

- The qualitative analysis of the result is also supporting that increase in modernization decreases superstitious beliefs.

- The views of the sample is also going in favour of the hypotheses of the present study.

On the basis of the conclusions drawn the researchers have suggested the following points:

- The female adolescents should be encouraged to develop logical and rational thinking over superstition instead of being emotional and sentimental so that they could not practice irrational beliefs blindly.

- No hard and fast rule should be made by the parents regarding superstitious beliefs in the family as in the society it has been observed that throughout the generations people ignorantly pass on their superstition from one generation to another.

- Upgrading of the government schools and colleges and appointment of well trained teachers was suggested so that the children could get quality education and can develop critical thinking over irrational thinking.

- Workshops, Seminars and awareness programmes should be organized to enable people to differentiate between superstitious beliefs and religious beliefs as many times people interpret their superstitious beliefs as part of their religion.

- Adolescents should be encouraged to have complete faith in their own good deeds instead of believing in good luck and blindly following the suggestions of astrologers. In this way their life may not be guided by the irrational beliefs.

- As the topic is quite relevant to the present times so it was suggested that the study should be done on a larger sample to get more accurate data and some more valuable findings which will benefit the society at large.

- The findings of the present study as well as the studies done on a larger sample should be made public so that the findings may not remain confined to the reports prepared.

- People should be made aware of managing their stress by different programmes on T.V. channels .

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