



# RANK DIFFERENCES IN IDENTITY AMONG ARMY PERSONNEL

Pragati Chaturvedi ,Aparajita Singh

## *Abstract*

*The purpose of the present study is to find out significant differences in aspects of identity: personal identity, relational identity, collective identity and social identity in between higher and lower rank army personnel. The study is based on a sample of 100 army personnel with a balanced number of army jawans and army officers. Significant differences in relational and collective identity were found in jawans and officers.*

**Key words:** *Personal identity, relational identity, collective identity, social identity*

## INTRODUCTION

### IDENTITY:

The processes of studying identities and their formation and the ways in which they are both shaped by and help to shape wider social and cultural contexts are preoccupied in the discipline of social sciences. Identity orientations are defined as the relative importance of various identity traits in the formation of self-definitions. Some arguments have been made that the term collective identity should be used to capture the parts of self-concept encircle around social identity theory (e.g., Brewer & Gardner, 1996). A fundamental difference in the structure of identity is the distinction between personal identity, i.e. one's private concept of self and subjective feelings of continuance and uniqueness, and social identity, i.e. one's public image as presented through social roles and relationships (Hogan & Cheek, 1983).

The thinking on the self has been recognized to engage multiple components, even since the early days of self research. These orientations or aspects of the self have been described by referring to personal identity, social identity, relational identity and collective identity. Cheek (1989) argues that people have several identity orientations and memberships that are not fixed but vary in relative importance in the self-concept. Depending on the level of importance of these

orientations and memberships, they can have various implications for self-esteem. Several theories have been developed to explain these different identity orientations in order to describe individuals' behaviour in social settings. According to Brewer and Garner (1996), people may prefer different identity orientations at different stages, with the specific preference rooted in the way the focal person defines him/herself. They propose that a personal identity orientation is triggered and reflected when the self is defined as a unique being.

The individual self, also known as the personal, private or idiocentric self, involves the formation of oneself as independent and unique, possessing a definite and clear boundary that distinguishes one from others (Markus & Kitayama, 1991). Gaertner, Sedikides, Vevea and Luzzini (2002) also echo this viewpoint by defining the individual self as consisting of those characteristics that represent the person as unique from fellow in-group members. This view of the self is recognised to be connected with a sense of personal agency. It is seen as autonomous from others and the social milieu, and contains a perception that the self is in general different to others (Triandis, McCusker & Hui, 1990). Identity is the construct that defines who or what a particular person is. The diverse elements that comprise the identity of an individual can be divided into two general categories. One involves a person's social roles and relationships, which may be called *social identity*; the other is one's private conception of self and feelings of continuity and uniqueness, or *personal identity*. Sociologists and social psychologists focus almost exclusively on the social component of identity because they believe that "the shaping one's identity is dependent on the valuations (sanctions, reinforcements) placed on one's public conduct by relevant others" (Sarbin & Allen, 1968). Personality theorists such as Jung (1957) and Maslow (1961), on the other hand, have insisted that people are most authentically themselves and closest to their true identity when experiencing a deep sense of personal uniqueness. For most individuals identity undoubtedly involves both social and personal aspects, although there may be marked individual differences in the relative importance of social identity compared to personal identity. For some individuals the social aspects predominate, and for others the balance is tipped toward the personal aspects of identity. There can be mainly three self described as:

**Individual self:** The individual self reflects a person's subjective uniqueness. This representation comprises characteristics—such as traits and behaviors, hobbies and interests, aspirations and goals—that differentiate the person from others. Also, this type of self is relatively independent of dyadic relationships or group memberships.

**Relational self:** The relational self reflects dyadic bonds or attachments (e.g., romantic liaisons, friendships). This representation comprises characteristics that are shared with close others and may define roles within the relationship. The characteristics differentiate the relationship from the relationships that other people have.

**Collective self:** The collective self reflects membership in, as well as similarity and identification with, valued social groups. This representation comprises characteristics that are shared with in-group members and may define roles within the group. The characteristics differentiate the in-group from relevant out-groups.

## LITERATURE REVIEW

### IDENTITY:

Various aspects of human behavior can be difficult to explain if one does not believe that people comprise of self. If we want to understand personality processes, then the understanding of self is very necessary. These personality processes include processes that cause and regulate thoughts, feelings and behavior. For many centuries self was the main topic for the argument for theorists and psychologists. Self can be understood as a barrier to understand psychological processes (Allport, 1937). On the other hand Skinner argued that for analysis of behavior for a mind or self, there is no scientific place. Whereas, Pinker, 1997 suggested that because humans are not fully evolved, they have difficulty to comprehend self awareness.

Thus identity or self concept can be described as an important role player in psychological theory because of its relevance in cognitive, motivational, affective and behavioral processes (Alicke, Dunning, & Krueger, 2005; Ellemers & Haslam, 2012; Leary & Tangney, 2012).

Many researches are done from past few decades which indicate a common result that self influences individuals thinking and behaving pattern and feelings depending on various situations. Also self plays a prominent role in pursuing the goals in life and various methods to deal with a new environment for an individual.

## A NATURALISTIC VIEW TO DEFINE SELF:

Self was the central focus to conceptualize various universal theories of the individual from early days of scientific psychology. Theorists of the first half of the 20th century like James (1890), Baldwin (1897), Hilgard (1949) and Allport (1955), had done some classical studies from which originated the concept of self. Three mainstream viewpoints regarding self came into focus which was believed in formation of an individual:

1. For understanding of behavior in social settings and processes regarding personality, self was considered as a main factor.
2. Interaction and relationship between social forces and biological forces were given more importance.
3. It was conceptualized that self is evolutionary and functionalist in nature.

After the self concept was conceptualized and explained, there emerged a term called identity. Several theorists defined that identity has many dimensions. Thus identity can be seen as a framework that defines an individual. Identity orientations can be defined as the emphasis or importance a person gives to different identity attributes while constructing their self definition. In the dialectical developmental process of self interpretation, identity orientations indicate where one looks to fulfill identity needs (Cheek, 1989; Hogan & Cheek, 1983). Miller in 1963 categorized the diverse elements which formed the identity of an individual into two parts; firstly social roles and relationships of an individual, which is called social identity. And second one is private conception i.e. feeling of continuity and uniqueness, is called personal identity.

**OBJECTIVE:**

1. To study the difference in social identity between jawans and officers.
2. To study the differences in personal identity between jawans and officers.
3. To study the differences in collective identity between jawans and officers.
4. To study the differences in relational identity between jawans and officers.

**HYPOTHESIS:**

1. There will not be any significant differences in personal identity between jawans and officers.
2. There will not be any significant differences in social identity between jawans and officers.
3. There will not be any significant differences in collective identity between jawans and officers.
4. There will not be any significant differences in relational identity between jawans and officers.

**Rationale:** Army personnel required a lot of rigorous training and hard work in their field. Concept of identity can be correlated with the rank on which an army personnel is working. Rank can have an effect on self identity, relational identity, collective identity and social identity.

**METHOD**

**SAMPLE:** The purposive sample of 100 army personnel with a balance number of 50 Jawans and 50 Officers of 25 to 55 years of age was collected from all over India.

**STATISTICAL ANALYSIS:** Mean and Standard Deviation was calculated as descriptive statistics and independent sample mann whitney u test was used to find out significant differences.

**VARIABLES:**

**1. INDEPENDENT VARIABLE:** High and low rank army personnel.

High rank army officers such as lieutenant, major, lieutenant colonel, colonel were considered as group one. Whereas jawans or soldiers were considered as group two.

**2. DEPENDENT VARIABLE:** Identity (collective, relational, social and relational).

**MEASURES:** 1. Aspects of Identity Questionnaire AIQ-IV (2002): This scale was developed by Jonathan M. Cheek, Shannon Smith and Linda R. Tropp.

**PROCEDURE:**

After selecting the sample of the present study, aspects of the identity questionnaire were distributed among subjects. Person to person contact was made and each individual was separately instructed to read the scale carefully. The respondents were contacted during their free time and in many cases appointments were fixed at their offices. In the beginning, before administration, rapport was established with respondents. Also all the apprehensions and misconceptions of the respondents were removed regarding the study and further, gave assurance of the confidentiality of their responses. Further the respondents were requested to extend their full co-operation in filling the required information in the scale and return them. Likewise, the data from all the respondents was recorded and collected.

## ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

**TABLE 1: Descriptive Statistics**

	<b>Rank</b>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>Std. Deviation</b>	<b>N</b>
PERSONAL IDENTITY	officers	39.28	6.869	50
	Jawan	39.2	6.131	50
	Total	39.24	6.478	100
SOCIAL IDENTITY	officers	24	5.496	50
	Jawan	25.26	5.76	50
	Total	24.63	5.637	100
COLLECTIVE IDENTITY	officers	25.3	6.81	50
	Jawan	29.46	5.222	50
	Total	27.38	6.389	100
RELATIONAL IDENTITY	officers	39	7.861	50
	Jawan	19.34	4.003	50
	Total	20.62	4.861	100

The above table describes the mean values of jawans as well as officers in different aspects of identity. Personal identity in officers is higher with the mean value 39.28 and standard value of 6.869 whereas in jawans mean value is 39.2 and standard deviation value is 6.131. Social identity in officers is lower than the jawans with the mean value 24 and standard deviation value 5.496 whereas jawans are higher with a mean value 25.26 and standard deviation value 5.76. Collective identity in officers mean value is 25.3 and standard value is 6.81 on the contrary jawans with the mean value 29.46 and standard deviation value is 5.222. Relational identity in officers with mean value 39 and standard deviation value 7.861 and in jawans the mean value 35.48 with the standard deviation value 5.088.

Military rank can be defined as the system of hierarchical relationships in the armed forces. Military ranks and the military rank system define among others dominance, authority as well as roles and responsibility in a military hierarchy. The military rank system incorporates the principle of exercising power and authority and the military chain of command – the succession of commanders superior to subordinates through which command is exercised – construct an important component for organized collective action. Thus the aim of the study was to see the difference

and effect of rank order on perfectionism, narcissism and identity on the army personnel. Ranking from colonel, lieutenant colonel, major to jawans were taken.

The mean value in jawans, in personal identity is 39.20 with a standard deviation value 6.131, for social identity is 25.26 with a standard deviation value 5.760, for collective identity is 29.46 with a standard deviation value 5.222, for relational identity is 35.48 with a standard deviation value 5.088.

Thus it can be seen that the personal identity mean is higher in officers i.e. 39.28 than in jawans i.e. 39.20. and relational identity is also be found with higher mean value in officers with a value of 39.00, whereas in jawans the value is 35.48.

**TABLE 2**

**Showing results of independent sample mann whitney U test**

Null Hypothesis	Test	Sig.	Decision
No difference in personel identity	Independent sample mann whitney U test	.868	Retain the null hypothesis
No difference in social identity	Independent sample mann whitney U test	.301	Retain the null hypothesis
No difference in relational identity	Independent sample mann whitney U test	.003	Reject the null hypothesis
No difference in collective identity	Independent sample mann whitney U test	.001	Reject the null hypothesis

Non – Parametric test was applied on the data to find out the significant differences between jawans and officers. as it can be concluded from the table no. 2 of Mann – Whitney U Test, the categorized rank hypothesis in the distribution of collective identity, relational identity was rejected with the significant level of .01. Thus it can be concluded that there are significant differences in collective and relational identity in Jawans and officers.



## DISCUSSION & CONCLUSION:

No study is considered complete unless the researcher justifies the findings of his or her research. Justification for the findings helps in identifying the probable reasons for the hypotheses being accepted or rejected. This chapter includes the discussion regarding the justification for the findings.

Not all the findings have been in correspondence with the hypothesis framed in the beginning of this study. Most of the hypotheses are accepted. One hypothesis was framed that the personal identity of officers and jawans will have no significant differences. Results show that the personal identity does have a significant difference where the officers scored higher than the jawans. Also officers ranked higher in relational identity and self oriented perfectionism and narcissism. Major Michael Russell from U.S Army pointed out the qualities of effective soldiers in which he described the major characteristics constituting narcissism as an influentive character for the soldiers .

Based on the findings of this study it can be concluded that with the increment of rank order in army personnel there is significant addition of tendency of aspects of identity which also can specified as personal identity and relational identity. one's identity as the ranking goes higher there are significant differences in collective and relational identity.

## References

Allport, G. W. (1937). *Personality: A psychological interpretation*.

Allport, G. W. (1955). *Becoming: Basic considerations for a psychology of personality* (Vol. 20). Yale University Press.

Baldwin, J. M. (1897). *Social and ethical interpretations in mental development: A study in social psychology*. Macmillan.

Brewer, M. B., & Gardner, W. (1996). Who is this "We"? Levels of collective identity and self representations. *Journal of personality and social psychology*, 71(1), 83.

Brewer, M. B., & Gardner, W. (1996). Who is this "We"? Levels of collective identity and self representations. *Journal of personality and social psychology*, 71(1), 83.

Cheek, J. M. (1989). Identity orientations and self-interpretation. In *Personality psychology* (pp. 275-285). Springer, New York, NY.

Ellemers, N., & Haslam, S. A. (2012). *Handbook of Theories of Social Psychology*, Vol. 2.

- Gaertner, L., Sedikides, C., Vevea, J. L., & Iuzzini, J. (2002). The "I," the "we," and the "when": a meta-analysis of motivational primacy in self-definition. *Journal of personality and social psychology*, 83(3), 574.
- Hilgard, E. R. (1949). Human motives and the concept of the self. *American Psychologist*, 4(9), 374.
- Hogan, R., & Cheek, J. M. (1983). *Identity, authenticity, and maturity* (pp. 339-357). TR Sarbin & KE Scheibe (Eds.), *Studies in social identity*.
- James, W., Burkhardt, F., Bowers, F., & Skrupskelis, I. K. (1890). *The principles of psychology* (Vol. 1, No. 2). London: Macmillan.
- Jung, C. G. (1957). The undiscovered self (present and future). *Collected works*, 10, 245-305.
- Krueger, J. I., Acevedo, M., Alicke, M. D., & Dunning, D. (2005). The self in social judgment. *Studies in Self and Identity*. New York: Psychology Press, 77.
- Leary, M. R., & Tangney, J. P. (Eds.). (2011). *Handbook of self and identity*. Guilford Press.
- Markus, H. R., & Kitayama, S. (1991). Culture and the self: Implications for cognition, emotion, and motivation. *Psychological review*, 98(2), 224.
- Maslow, A. H. (1961). Peak experiences as acute identity experiences. *The American Journal of Psychoanalysis*, 21(2), 254-262.
- Pinker, S. (1997). Words and rules in the human brain. *Nature*, 387(6633), 547-548.
- Sarbin, T. R., & Allen, V. L. (1968). Role theory: Handbook of social psychology. Reading, Addison-Wesley.
- Triandis, H. C., McCusker, C., & Hui, C. H. (1990). Multimethod probes of individualism and collectivism. *Journal of personality and social psychology*, 59(5), 1006.