



A CRITICAL STUDY ON RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN LEVELS OF 'DELAYED GRATIFICATION' AND SUPERSTITION

DR VISHWANATH V M,

LECTURER,

DEPARTMENT OF HISTORY, P.G.CENTRE, HEMAGANGOTRI,

UNIVERSITY OF MYSORE, HASSAN

Abstract:

The present study is an attempt to find the extent of relation between the levels of DG and superstition. The study included a sample of 560 secondary school children belonging to three districts of Kerala. The students were of the age-group 13-15 years belonging to standard VIII, IX and X. The results shows that there is no significant difference between boys and girls with respect to their level of DG and a significant relationship between the variables DG and superstitiousness

Key words: Delayed Gratification, Superstitions, personality

1. Introduction:

Advancement in science and technological developments have not been able to wipe out century old superstitions, beliefs and practices from human minds. Men and women of different races and of different cultures still continue to harbour within their minds a certain amount of misconceptions.

Superstitions, in present times, need to be analyzed in the context of social stereotypes dominating the individual's behaviour and self-awareness

'Delayed Gratification' (DG) implies the nature of giving up immediate pleasurable activities for a favourable future. The ability to delay immediate gratification in favour of latter more valuable rewards plays an important role in the socialization process (Mathew: 1979). Preference for delayed rewards has been found to be significantly related to factors like social responsibility, age, intelligence and modeling effects.

Studies by Roberts and Erikson (1968) have revealed a significant relation between DG and adjustment ratings. Studies by Singh (1979) revealed a striking relationship between the levels of adjustment and superstition. This substantiates an underlying relation between level of superstition and DG. Very few studies on DG were cited in India. No study was located which attempted to study the relation between these two variables viz 'DG' and superstitions levels.

The present study is an attempt to find the extent of relation between the levels of DG and superstition. The study included a sample of 560 secondary school children belonging to three districts of Kerala. The students were of the age-group 13-15 years belonging to standard VIII, IX and X.

The tools used were the 'Scale of Delayed Gratification' (John & Abraham 1978), a standardized tool to assess the level of DG and a questionnaire in which a superstitious scale was incorporated. The questionnaire also collected information related to family background.

2. Hypotheses:

The three hypotheses tested were

- i. Boys and girls differ significantly with respect to their DG.
- ii. Rural and Urban subjects differ significantly with respect to their levels of DG.
- iii. There is significant relationship between levels of DG and superstition of secondary school children.

3. Findings:

Of the total population (n=560) only one hundred and seventy three students (30.89%) fall in the high 'DG' group and only sixty six students (11.79%) fall in the Low 'DG' group. The critical ratio was calculated to compare the 'DG' level of various sub-samples. The results are given in Table 1 & 2. With respect to superstitious level one hundred and sixty two students (41%) were found to have high superstitious scores (mean score =45). One hundred and ninety one (34%) students were found to fall in the Low superstitious group (mean score = 20). The chi-square test was used to test the hypotheses. The results are given in Table 3.

Table 1

Comparison of Boys and Girls with respect to their levels of 'DG'

| Group | Boys | | Girls | | C.R. | Level of significance |
|-----------|----------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|------|-----------------------|
| | N ₁ | P ₁ | N ₂ | P ₂ | | |
| High 'DG' | 77 | 27.02% | 96 | 30.89% | 0.56 | P> .05 |
| Low 'DG' | 45 | 15.79% | 21 | 7.64% | 1.31 | P< .05 |

Graph-1: Comparison of Boys and Girls with respect to their levels of 'DG'

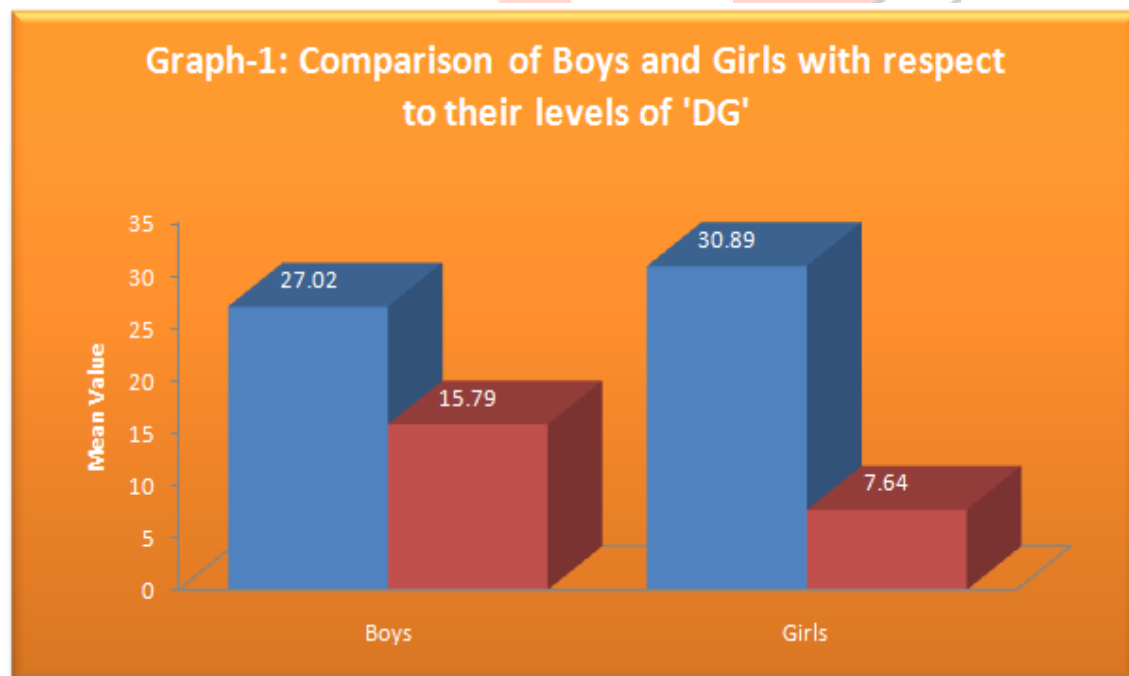
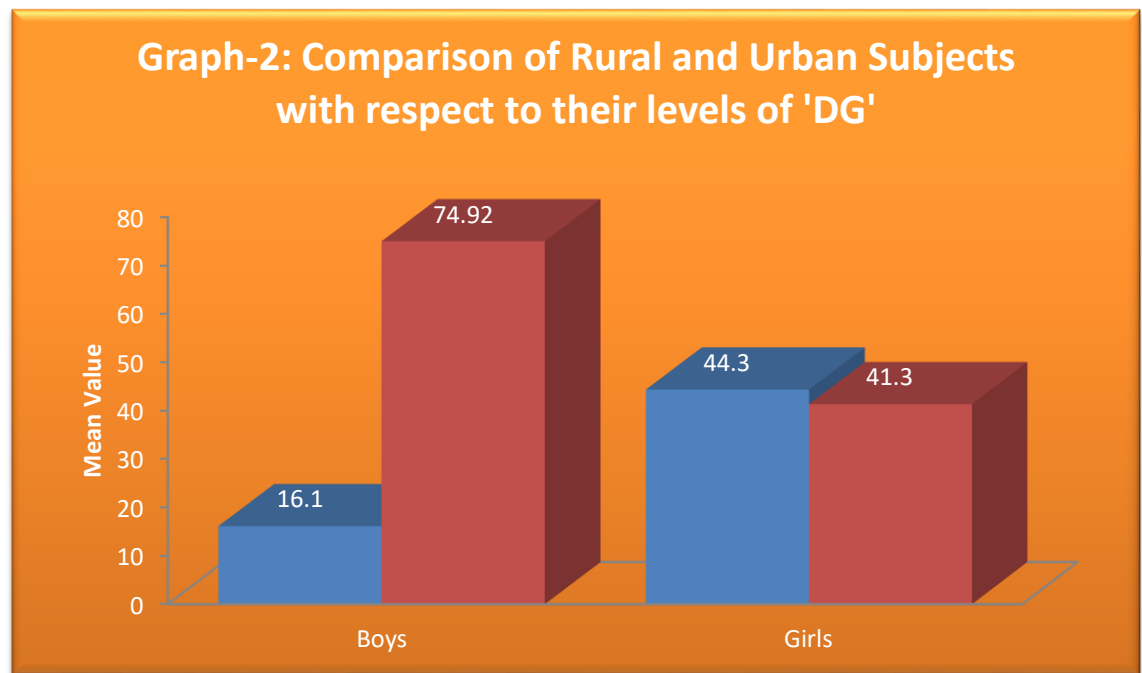


Table 2

Comparison of Rural and Urban Subjects with respect to their levels of 'DG'

| Group | Rural | | Urban | | C.R. | Level of significance |
|-------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|------|-----------------------|
| | N ₁ | P ₁ | N ₂ | P ₂ | | |
| High 'DG' | 43 | 16.10% | 130 | 44.37% | 3.42 | P< .01 |
| Middle 'DG' | 200 | 74.92% | 211 | 41.30% | 6.07 | P< 0.1 |



Result from Table 1 shows that there is no significant difference between boys and girls with respect to their level of DG. However from Table 2, it can be seen that there is significant difference between rural and urban subjects with respect to their DG. The C.R. obtained in this case was significant. This result supports the hypothesis 2.

A 2X3 contingency table was constructed to identify the relation shop between the variables 'DG' and superstitiousness The results are given in Table 3.

TABLE : 3
Relationship between levels of 'DG' and Superstition

| Group | High Delayed | | Average gratification | | Low group | | Total |
|--------------------|--------------|-------|-----------------------|--------|-----------|-------|-------|
| | Fo | Fe | Fo | Fe | Fo | Fe | |
| High Superstitions | 17 | | 102 | | 43 | | 162 |
| | | 38.54 | | 98.66 | | 24.78 | |
| Low Superstitions | 67 | | 113 | | 11 | | 191 |
| | | 45.45 | | 116.33 | | 29.21 | |
| Total | 84 | | 215 | | 54 | | 353 |

X^2 Value = 47.227

The x^2 value obtained from Table 3 reveals a significant relationship between the variables DG and superstitiousness.

4. Educational Implications:

A study of this kind throws light on the personality correlates of a superstitious person. Even in this modern age superstitions persist among the young and the old. Though education has found to reduce such irrational beliefs, it has not been possible to eliminate them. In the present context, it is essential to know more about the superstitious person as this provides an answer as to what makes one superstitious and why such beliefs persist. 'Delayed gratification' has an important influence on academic achievement. A study of this kind helps to investigate indirectly the influence of level of superstition on one's level of 'delayed gratification'.

REFERENCES

1. Roberts, Alan H & Erikson, Robert V. (1968): Delay of gratification and behavioural adjustment in a delinquent group. *Journal of Abnormal Psychology* 73 (5):p449.
2. Singh E. L. (1979): Superstitiousness, its personality correlates among college teachers. In Such, R. L. (Ed). *Third Survey of Research in education*.
3. John pushpita and Abraham. Merch (1978): Scales of Goa/ Perception and delayed gratification. Department of Education, University of Kerala.
4. Mathew, Elizabeth, (1979): Goal perception, delayed gratification and self-effort versus fatalism in relation to under achievement among college students. M,Ed thesis University of Kerala.