

The Gurung Personality Structure

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Problem

The basic objective of this paper is to report on the personality structure of the Gurungs, a preliterate group traditionally inhabiting the mid-western hilly region of Nepal (Pignede 1962, 1966; Macfarlane 1972, Andors 1974, Messerschmidt 1976) and to compare the findings with those reported by some other investigators in other cultures.

Modal Personality

'Modal personality', a concept developed in the psychological literature on national character (Mead 1942; Gorer 1943)¹ refers to the most frequently occurring and relatively stable personality characteristics and behavioural patterns among the adult members of a specific cultural group.

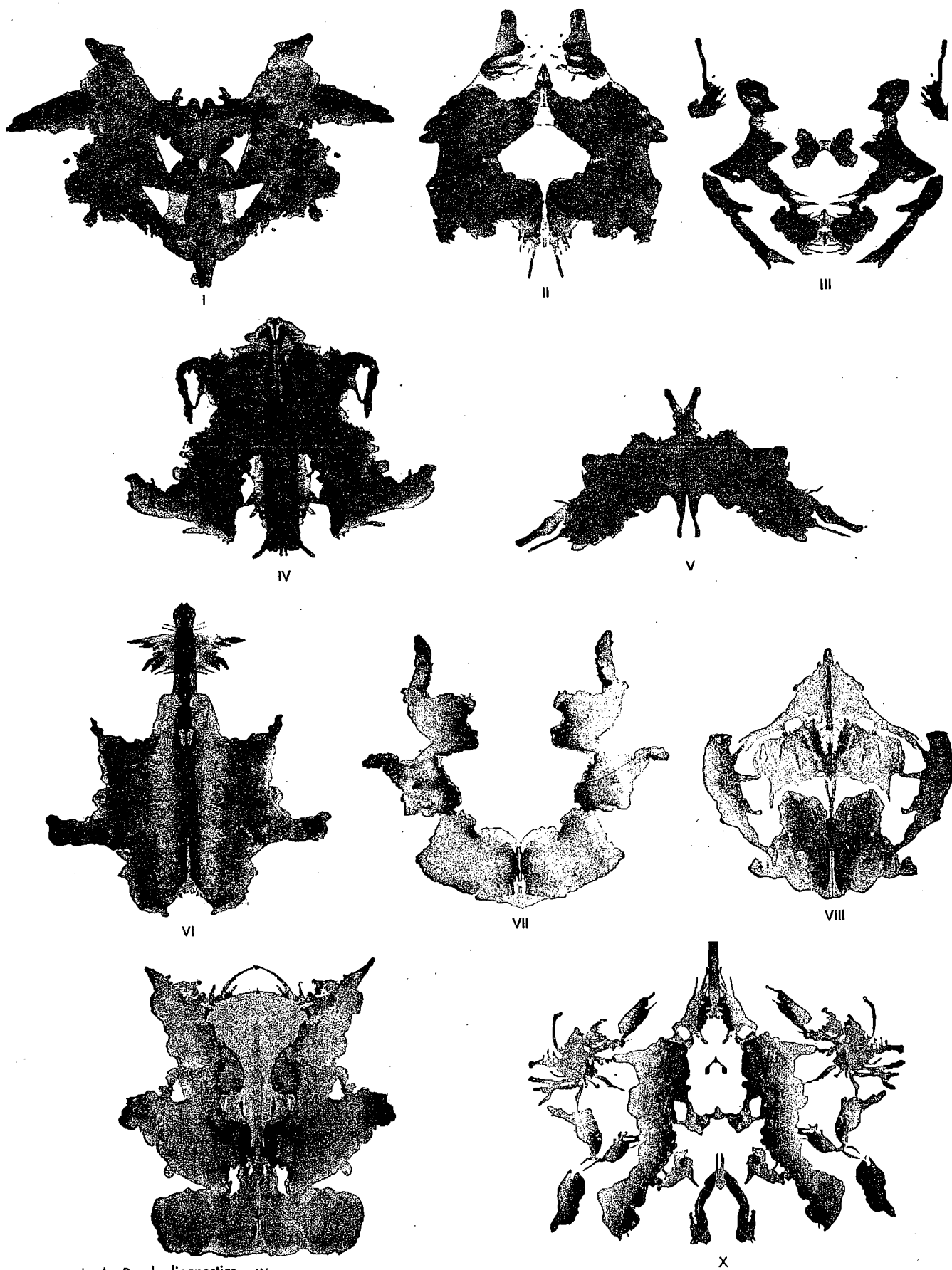
Rorschach Ink Blot Test

The Rorschach ink blots (Figure 1-10) employed in this study have had a worldwide use in modal personality studies (Bleulers 1935, for Moroccans, Henry 1942 for Pilaga American Indians, Asthana 1956 for Indians)².

As the Rorschach has been extensively used as one of the methods of national character research and for studies of modal personalities since it probes into the basic personality structure at a somewhat deeper level it is proposed to use the ink blot test as one of the method in the study of Gurung personality.

The Rorschach test is 'multidimensional instrument'. It purports to yield a global, or overall, assessment of personality, and also because it is difficult to falsify. Klopfer et al. (1954) state that Rorschach can contribute to our understanding of many aspects of personality - particularly perception, association, thinking, and their pathology. Since it utilizes ambiguous, or unstructured, stimuli, the subject cannot easily conceal undesirable personality characteristics. It is developed by Herman Rorschach, a Swiss psychiatrist, in 1921. It consists of ten ink blots, five of the blots are in different shades of black or grey, while the five consist of various colours.

The Rorschach Ink Blots



Sample

One hundred Gurung adults between the ages of 20 and 91 were individually tested on the Rorschach test. The subjects were drawn from Lamjung, Tanahu, Gorkha, Rumjatar, and Chitwan districts of Nepal. Gurungs belong to the upper northern reaches of the Himalayas, at the foot hills of Annapurna, Lamjung Himal, and Himal Chuli, of the Gandaki zone. They belong to Tibeto-Burman stock of Mongoloid race, known for their ethnic cohesion, and they live in remote and relatively inaccessible areas. Apart from the native Gurungs this sample also includes eastern Gurungs of Rumjatar, and the Terai-migrated Gurungs of Sharada Nagar, Chitwan. Thus the present sample includes both males and females, literate and illiterate, educated and preliterate respondents from rural and remote areas. The sample was distributed, as follows:

Sample	N	Age	Sex	
			M	F
Gurungs	100	20-91	71	29
(A) Western	38			
(B) Eastern	33			
(C) Migrated	29			

The scoring system used follows Beck (1948) with additional scoring for animal and inanimate movement responses after Klopfer (1942).

PROCEDURE

All the respondents were administered Rorschach test individually, and their life history and demographic data were also recorded. For collecting life history 60 adult Gurungs were interviewed.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

- a. Life history record: The findings reported here deal with life history of the Gurungs.

All the Gurungs show uniqueness in maintaining harmonious good family life. Their mother-identification is much higher than father-identification. Mother-identification is higher among the native-group than the migrated group chiefly because the males generally move out for work leaving the young ones to the mothers.

Mother's role as the chief disciplinarian decreases as the Gurungs migrate from their native habitat.

Aggressiveness increases as the Gurungs come into contact with others. The native group shows very little aggression. They lead a more tolerant life reporting few problems even in the worst of situations.

Personality Structure: The findings here reported are confined to the Rorschach test analysis only.

- (a) Approach: The Gurungs emphasized W! (D) approach more than the (W) D! (Table 1). They show poor organizational interest, whereas (D % 61.87) they exhibit practical common sense.
- (b) Mental Activity: The sample shows high coartation in M responses. 79% subjects are unimaginative (Table 2) and dull. 20% are characterized by reproductive intelligence, only 1% appear intelligent. Gurungs showing inertness in mental potentiality. Nearly 1/10th M⁻ responses show regressive thinking. 30% subjects did not produce any H responses, and the preponderance of 'Hd' responses over 'H' shows restricted intelligence and 'Intrapsychic Constriction' (Table 6, 14).

85% subjects show clarity of form perception (F⁺) ranging between 4-12. Few (5%) scored below the range 4 showing less stable ego, and some (10%) scored above 12 range indicating obsessive-compulsive trait, and 72% subjects distorted their form perception (F⁻).

A very high percent (95%) subjects show stereotype (A scores range between 3-20) (Table 8). The 'Ad' proportion rises above one fourth of 'A' (Table 14) indicating high anxiety (Piotrowski 1965).

The subjects show hollow ambition as the W:M ratio is 16.1:1. Their productive resources of personality development are unduly low. This equally reflects their hostile life situation with poor resource conditions where potentialities do not grow. They lead a repressive and traumatic life similar to Alorese (Oberholzer 1944).

- (c) The Emotional Life: The sum C value is slightly lesser than 3 signifying unfavourable relationship with the emotional content of the environment. 47% subjects show coartation in affect (C). Only a very small percentage (13%) of subjects (Table 10) show emotional maturity, some 38% subjects are exhibiting uncontrolled emotional responsiveness, and only 2% subjects show a balance between controlled and uncontrolled emotional responsiveness.
- (d) Ties with Inner Life: The Gurungs show lack of inner creativity and maturity ($M < F M$). FM falls between 1 M and 2 M (Table 14). Their life is more oriented to instinctual drives.

The M : sum C ratio (1.238:2.377) clearly indicates extratensive type of experience balance as contrasted with Mukerji's (1960), and Asthana's (1963) Indian samples studies reporting predominance of intratensiveness 49% subjects exhibited $M < C$ pattern, 16% showed $M > C$ pattern, and 2% were ambivalent. 33% subjects

were perfectly coartated (0:0) experience type, and 61% subjects are ranging from 0M:0C to 1M:1C. 78% subjects are totally coartated of M (inner inertness) and 47% are coartated of C responses (affect paralysis). 5% of the highlander's sample show, high egocentric type (0M:xC). The C responses range from 4 to 16. The egocentric extratension appears to increase with the altitude of their places of habitation and communication remoteness, with inaccessibility and remoteness their optimism seems to increase (Regmi and Asthana, 1981).

The low percent of F Y responses show low free floating anxiety (Table 12). Further analysis reveals that 57% subjects out of 64% scored 0:0 (FY:YF+Y). Thus 57% subjects are free from anxiety and passivity.

3/4th subjects are free from inferiority feelings. Only 6% subjects indicate depressive feelings (Table 13).

Comparative Perspectives

A comparison of these findings with similar work elsewhere shows that the Alorese exhibit more uncontrolled emotionality, and passivity than the Gurungs. The latter show more perceptual clarity, creativeness, and emotional control (Appendix II).

The Santhals of Bokrabandh show more instinctive drives, and uncontrolled emotions than the Gurungs whereas the latter exhibit more creativeness, clarity of perception, controlled emotions, and emotions, and impulsivity than the former (Appendix III).

The Indians exhibit more creativeness instinctive drives, controlled emotions, and passivity (Mukerji 1960); and accurate perception (Asthana 1963) than the Gurungs. The Gurungs show more form perception, uncontrolled emotions, overt reactivity, inaccurate perception and inferiority feelings than the Indians (Appendix IV & V).

In sum, the Rorschach findings reveal that the Gurungs show practical common sense in handling life problems, lack inner creativeness similar to Alorese (Du Bois 1944), Baiga (Ray 1957, Appendix V) and Santhals (Ray 1975). Their modal personality is Coartated type (61% subjects). Some show acute depression (6% subjects), and few (5%) highlanders are egocentric extratensives.

The basic personality appears resistant to change ontogenetically, and acculturation seems make very little dent to that structure.

Obviously, a short study of the strategically and remotely located and inaccessible Gurungs with a single tool (the ink blot test) needs supplementing with other methods. Present test findings only seem as preliminary hypotheses requiring verification.

APPENDIX I

TABLE 1
Table showing approach

Approach	W! (D)	(W) D!	W! D!	D! (Dd)	DW! (D)	D _o ! (D)
Theoretical Intelli- gence		Practical Intelli- gence	Normal related mood	Grumblers	Feeble minded	Depressed
	47%	35%	8%	7%	2%	1%

TABLE 2
Table showing M (Human movement) responses

No. of M responses	Percent Frequency
0	79
1-2	20
3-4	1
Total	100

TABLE 3 (i)
Table showing FM (Animal movement) responses

No. of FM responses	Percent Frequency
0	72
1-2	25
3-4	2
5-6	1
Total	100

TABLE 3 (ii)
Table showing m (Inanimate movement) responses

No. of m responses	Percent
0	94
1-2	6
Total	100

TABLE 4
Table showing M+ and M- responses

Card No.	% M +	% M -
3	42.32	-
5	-	3.84
6	3.84	-
7	3.84	-
9	26.92	3.84
10	11.53	3.84
Total	88.46	11.53

M + = Integrated perception.

M - = Distorted perception.

TABLE 5 (i)
Table showing the distribution of F+ (Form perception) responses
in the Normal Sample

F + Responses (Number)	Percent Frequency	F + Responses (Number)	Percent Frequency
0	1	15-16	2
1-2	3	17-18	1
3-4	5	19-20	0
5-6	22	21-22	0
7-8	32	23-24	1
9-10	16		
11-12	11		
13-14	6		
Total			100

TABLE 5 (ii)
Table showing the distribution of F- (Distorted form perception)
responses in the Normal Sample

F - Responses (Numbers)	Percent Frequency	F - Responses (Numbers)	Percent Frequency
1	2	14	3
2	10	15	0
3	16	16	0
4	11	17	0
5	9	18	0
6	10	19	1
7	9	20	0

Contd. (TABLE 5) ii

F - Responses (Numbers)	Percent Frequency	F - Responses (Numbers)	Percent Frequency
8	9	21	0
9	5	22	0
10	5	23	1
11	4	24	0
12	3	25	1
13	1	-	-

TABLE 6

Table showing the distribution of 'H' (Human) responses

H Responses	Percent Frequency
0	30
1-2	61
3-4	8
5-6	1
Total	100

TABLE 7

Table showing the distribution of 'Hd' (Human detail) responses

Hd responses	Percent Frequency
0	57
1-2	29
3-4	8
5-6	5
7-8	0
9-10	0
11-12	0
13-14	1
Total	100

TABLE 8

Table showing the distribution of 'A' (Animal) responses

'A' Responses	Percent Frequency	'A' Responses	Percent Frequency
0	2	11-12	13
1-2	3	13-14	5
3-4	13	15-16	1
5-6	27	17-18	2
7-8	17	19-20	2
9-10	15	-	-
Total			100

TABLE 9

Table showing the distribution of 'Ad' (Animal detail) responses

'Ad' Responses	Percent Frequency	'Ad' Responses	Percent Frequency
0	35	9-10	1
1-2	42	11-12	0
3-4	14	13-14	1
5-6	3	15-16	1
7-8	3	-	-
Total			100

TABLE 10

Pattern tabulation of colour (Emotion) responses

S. No.	Pattern Colour responses	Percent
1	FC > CF + C	13
2	CF+C > FC	38
3	FC = CF+C	49
	Total	100

TABLE 11
The Experience Balance (Intelligence: Emotion) Percent

S. No.	(Pattern) Experience	Percent
1	$M > C$	16
2	$M = C$	2
3	$OM = OC$	33
4	$M < C$	49
Total		100

TABLE 12
Pattern tabulation of (Y) shading responses.

S. No.	Pattern Shading Responses	Percent
1	$FY > YF+Y$	17
2	$FY < YF+Y$	19
3	$FY = YF+Y$	64
Total		100

TABLE 13
Distribution of 'V' (Vista) Responses

No. of V Responses	Percent Frequency
0	37
1	27
2	15
3	13
4	2
5	3
6	2
7	1
Total	100

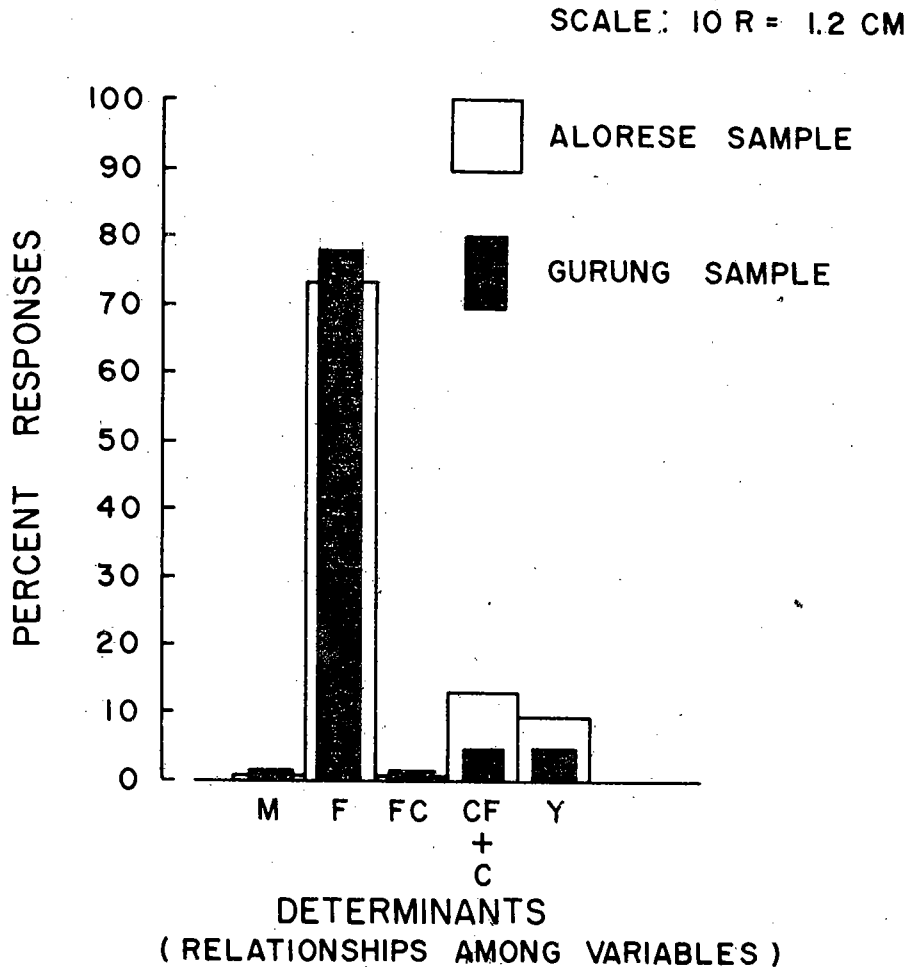
TABLE 14
Structural synopsis of the quantitative findings on Rorschach Variables
of the present sample (N = 100)

S. No.	VARIABLES	MEAN
1	R	18.45
2	% R in VIII, IX & X Cards	34.80
	<u>Location:</u>	
3	W	4.21
4	D	13.34
5	Dd	6.9
6	S	0.9
	<u>Determinants:</u>	
7	M	1.238
8	FM	1.428
9	F	14.7
10	F +	8.19
11	F -	6.51
12	FC (Total)	1.27
13	CF + C	1.62
14	C with blends	2.08
15	FC -	1.6
16	Sum C	2.377
17	Y	1.95
18	V	2

TABLE 14 (Contd.)

S. No.	VARIABLES	MEAN
19	H	1.6
20	HD	2.46
21	Hdx	1.16
22	A	7.62
23	Ad	2.80
24	At	2.1
25	Sex	1.5
26	Ls	2.09
27	Bt	2
28	R1	1.9
	<u>Ratios:</u>	
29	F + %	49.80
30	F %	78.68
31	A %	49.73
32	H %	12.73
33	H+A/Hd+Ad	2.2:1
34	Lambda Index	0.384
35	Affective Ratio	0.559
36	W : M	16.1:1
	<u>Timing</u>	
37	T/R (Sec)	53.65
38	T/1 R (Sec)	31.85
39	T/ (Minutes)	15.81
40	RT (Chrom in Sec)	31.31
41	RT (Achrom in Sec)	33.06
42	Inquiry time (Min)	20.70
43	Blends/R	1.9 : 18.45
44	P	2.2

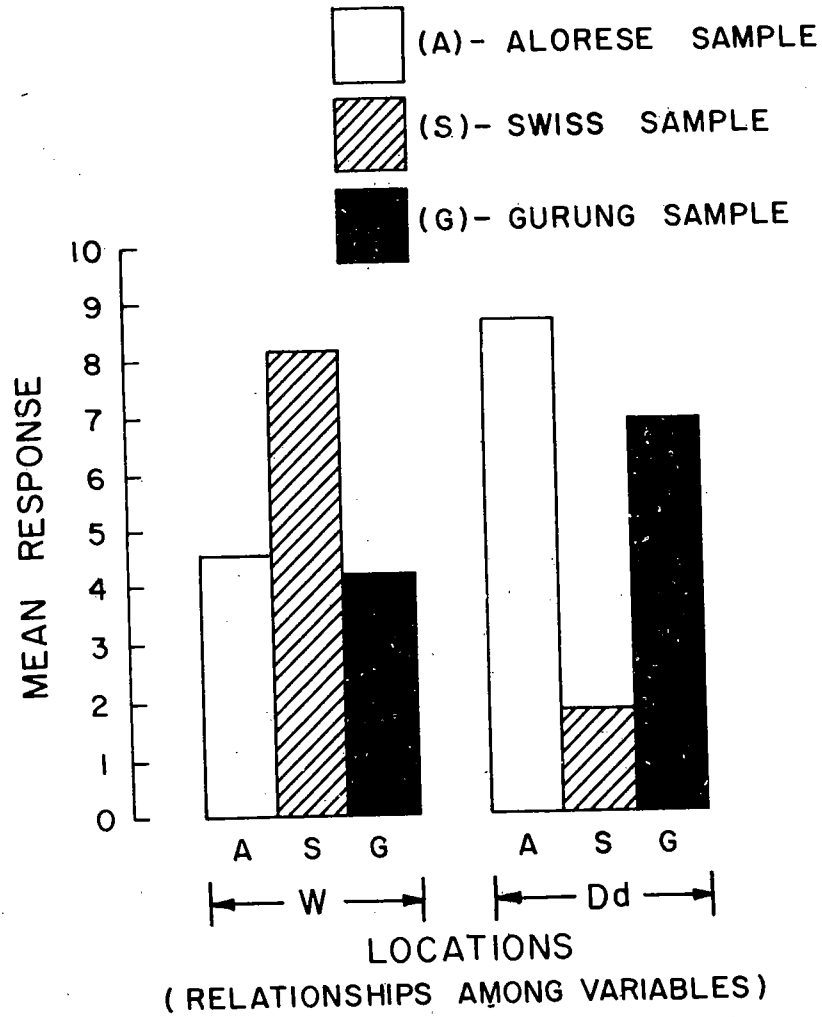
COMPARISON BETWEEN ALORESE AND GURUNG SAMPLES



(Source: Oberholzer in Du Bois's The People of Alor 1944)

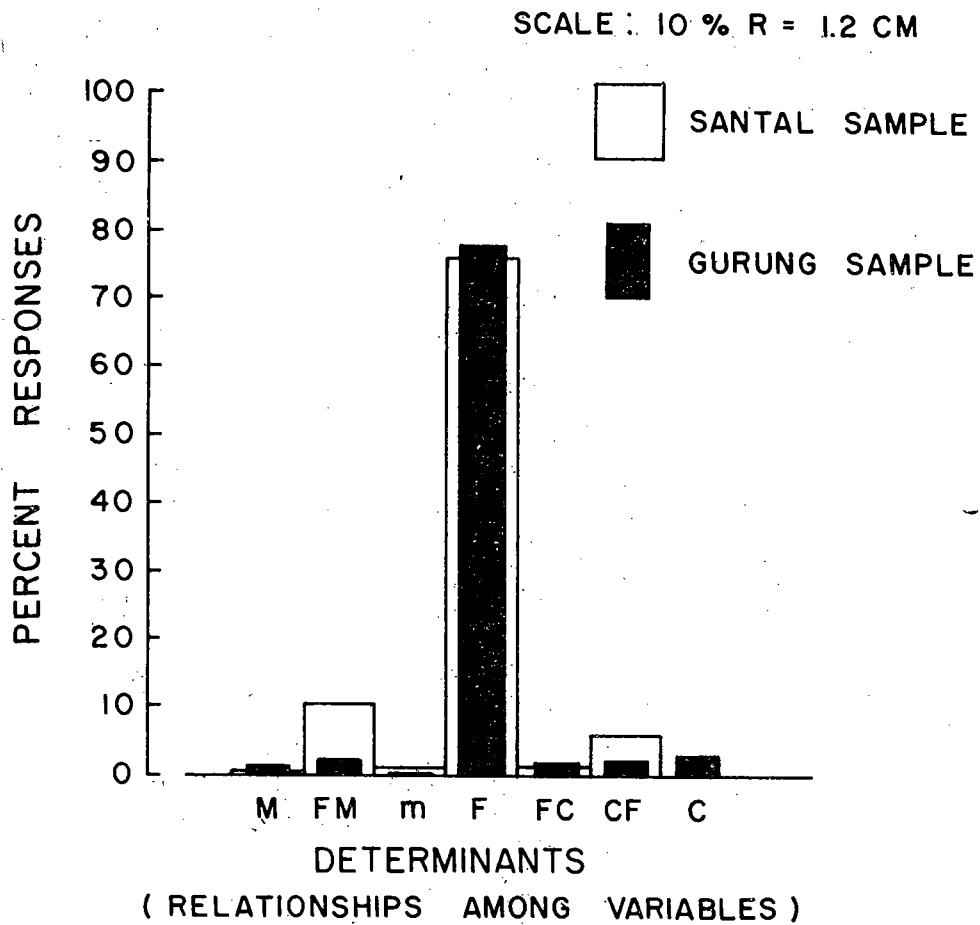
COMPARISON AMONG ALORESE; SWISS AND GURUNG SAMPLES

SCALE : 1 RESPONSE = 1 CM



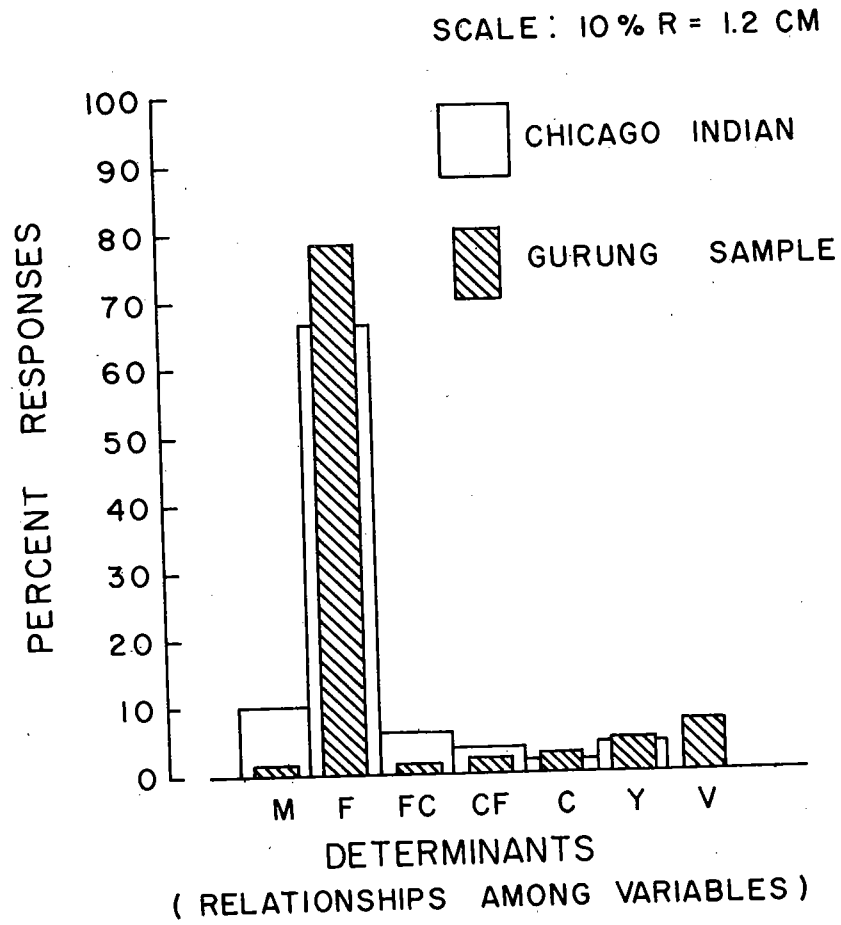
(Source : Du Bois , C. 1944 : 631)

COMPARISON BETWEEN SANTAL AND GURUNG SAMPLES



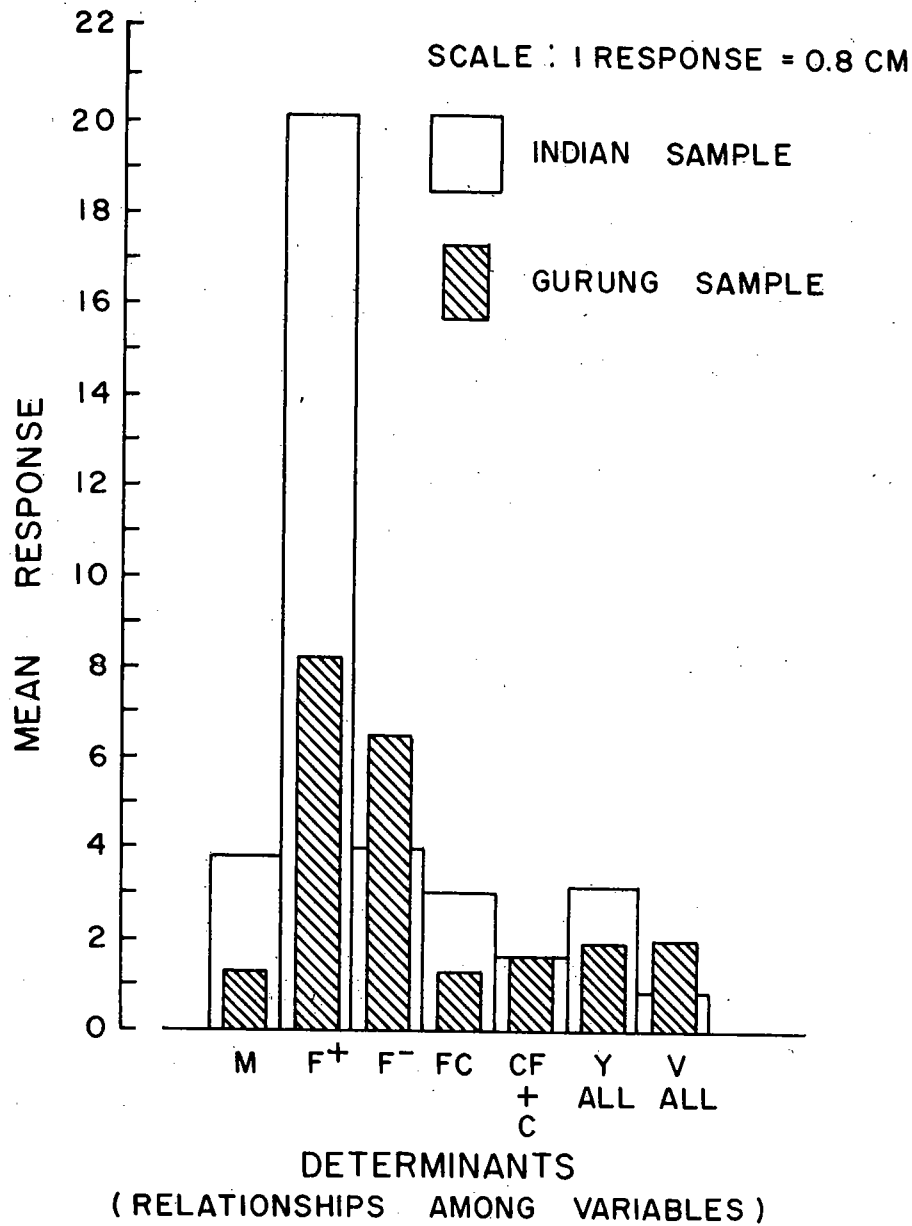
(Source : P. C. Ray 1975 : 83-84)

COMPARISON WITH INDIANS AT CHICAGO



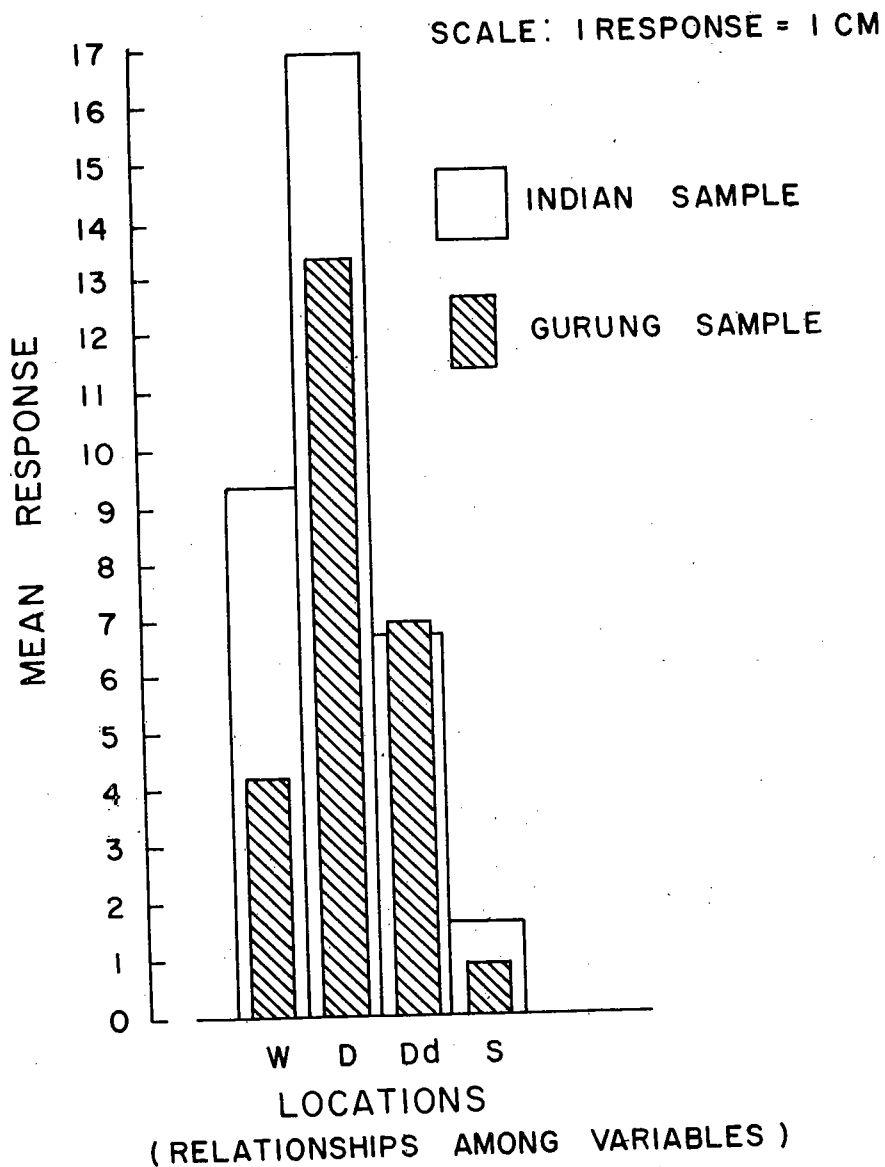
(Source : Asthana , H.S. 1956 : 157)

COMPARISON BETWEEN INDIANS & NEPALESE (GURUNG)



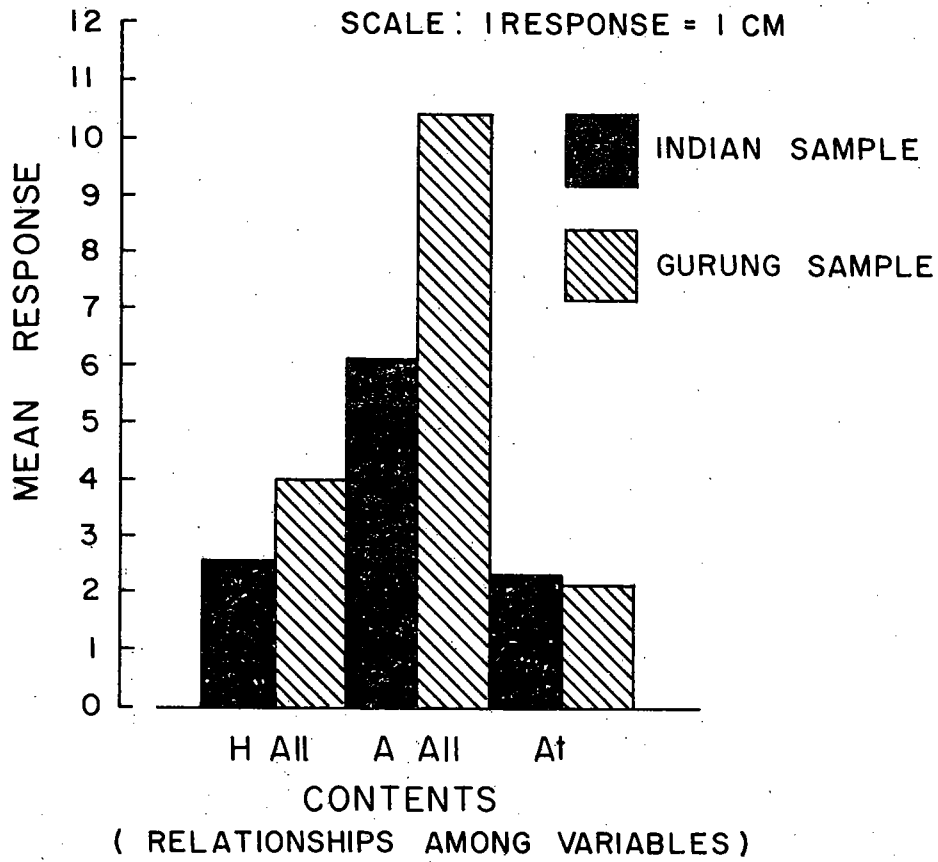
(Source: Prof. H.S. Asthana 1963:283-287)

COMARISON BETWEEN INDIAN AND GURUNG SAMPLES



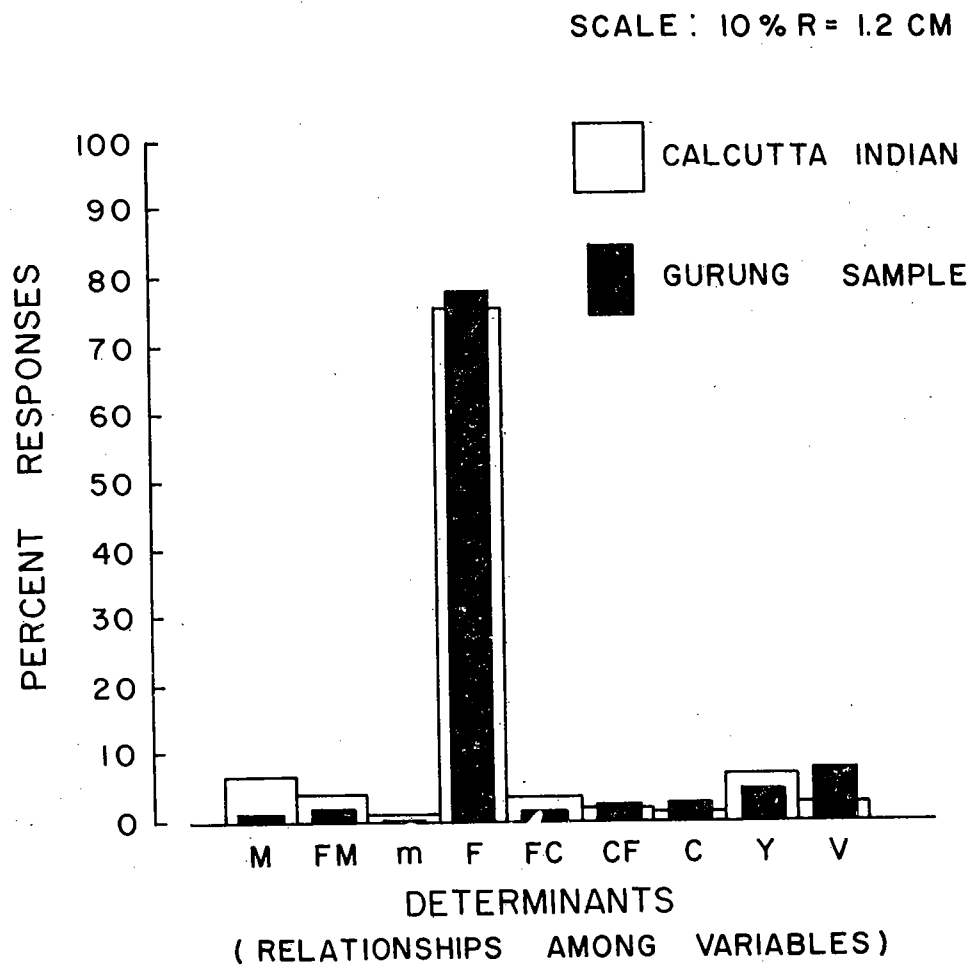
(Source : Asthana, H.S. 1963)

COMPARISON BETWEEN INDIAN AND GURUNG SAMPLES



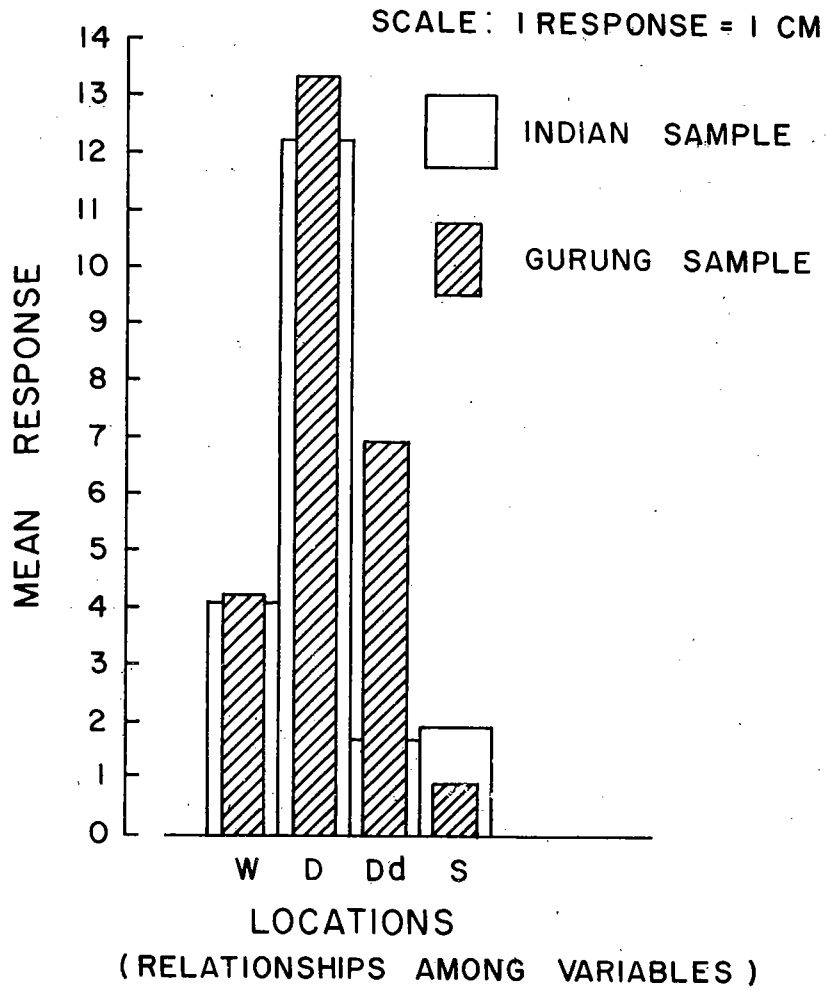
(Source : Asthana , H. S. 1963)

COMPARISON WITH INDIANS AT CALCUTTA



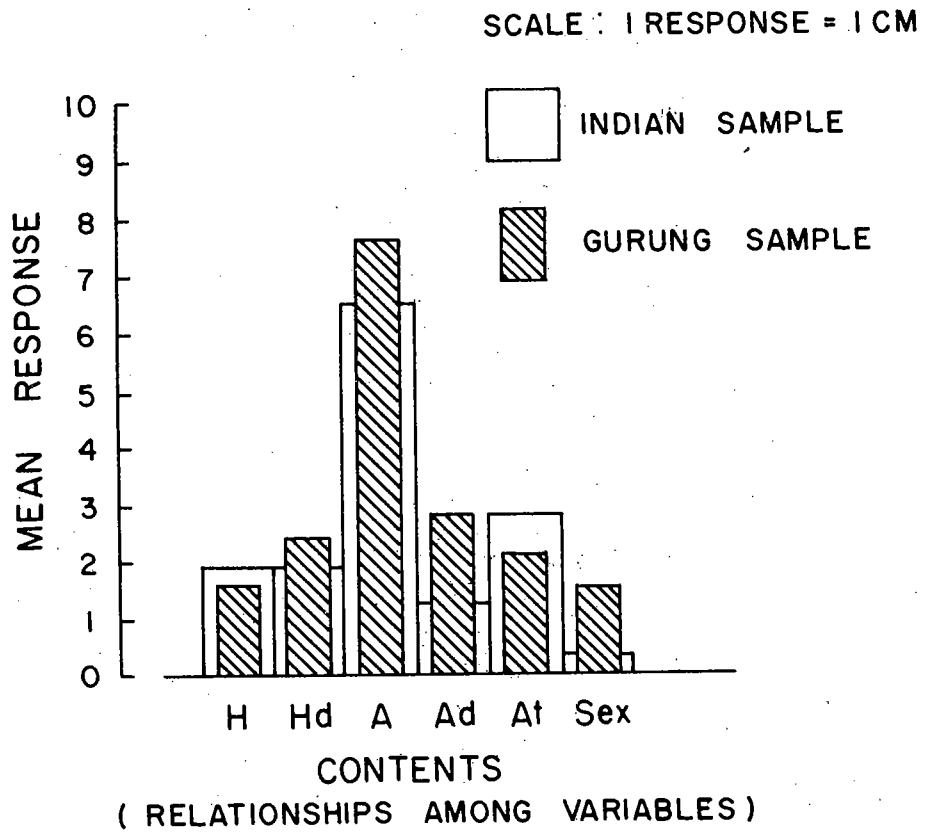
(Source : Mukerji , Maya . 1960 : 234 - 235)

COMPARISON BETWEEN INDIAN AND GURUNG SAMPLES



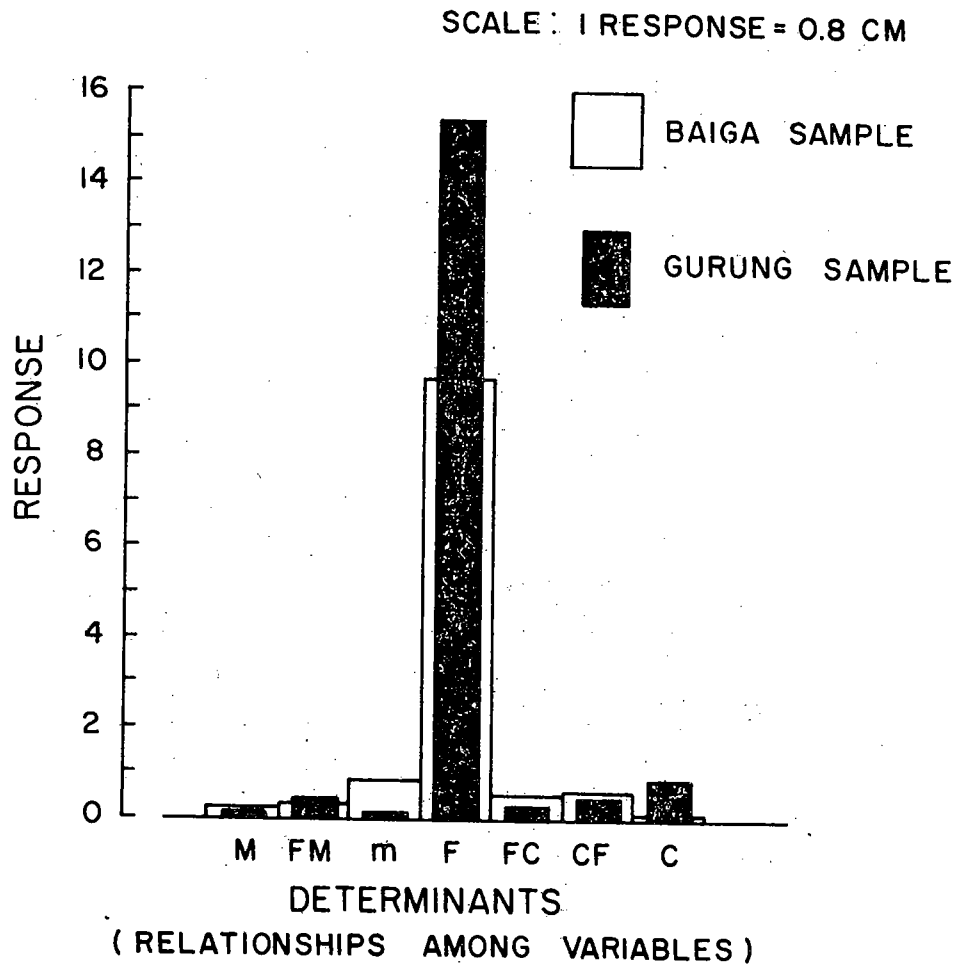
(Source : Mukerji , Maya . 1960 : 237)

COMPARISON BETWEEN INDIAN AND GURUNG SAMPLES



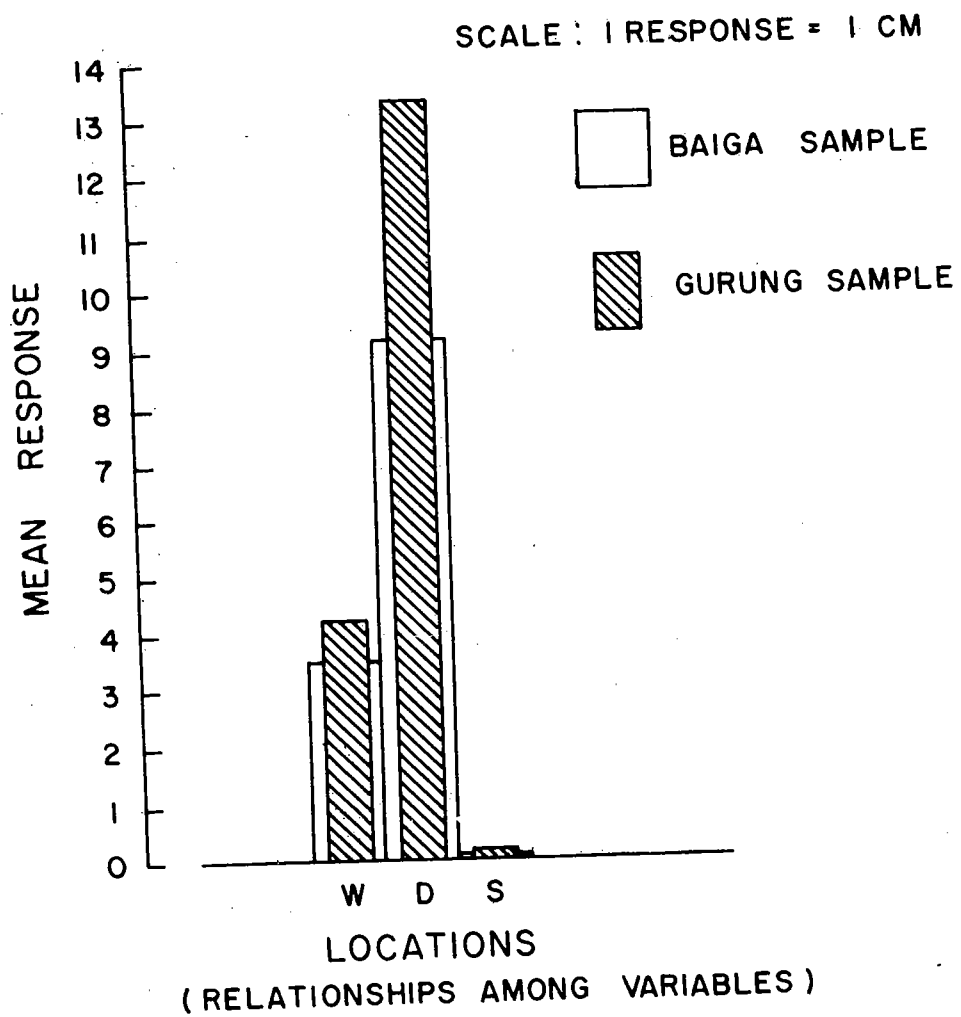
(Source : Mukerji , Maya . 1960 : 237)

COMPARISON BETWEEN BAIGA AND GURUNG SAMPLES



(Source : P. C. Ray 1957 : 52)

COMPARISON BETWEEN BAIGA AND GURUNG SAMPLES



(Source : Ray , P. C. 1957 : 52)

NOTES

1. Inkeles and Levinson (1969:426) define national character as 'relatively enduring personality characteristics (character traits, modes of dealing with impulses and affects, conceptions of self and the like), or it refers primarily to commonalities in adult personality.'

Benedict (1946) emphasized learned cultural behaviour and Mead (1951) stressed on certain learned cultural configurations in any society for the study of national character. Linton (1945) conceived of national character as modal personality structure.

Kardiner (1939, 1945a, 1945b) coined the term 'basic personality structure' with reference to the socio-cultural matrix where the personality structure is most congenial to the prevailing institutions and ethos of the society. For detail see Gorer (1948, 1949), Riesman (1950), Rickman (1949) Mead (1951a); Benedict (1946a), Fromm (1936), Erikson (1950), Bateson (1942), Taylor (1948), Narayan (1957), Asthana (1963), Mukerji (1960), Dhapola (1977), Du Bois (1944), Wallace (1952a), Hallowell (1952), MacGregor (1946) and Spindler (1955).

2. The Rorschach ink-blot test was used by Spiro (1947) for Ifaluk of Microneisa; Wallace (1952) for Tuscarora Indians of USA; Hallowell (1938) for Ogibwa of Canada; Cook (1942) for Samoan males of Polynesia; and Spindler (1958, 1961) for Menomini acculturation.

The Rorschach researches of Sen (1950), Asthana (1963), Carstairs (1957), and Mukerji (1960) are studies of Hindu (Indian) personality.

The responses on the Rorschach test are scored for location, determinants, content, popularity and originality. The location of a particular response, may involve the entire blot, scored as 'W', indicates subjects intellectual ability, a part of the blot, scored as 'D' is regarded as evidence of concrete and practical commonsense; or a small detail, scored as 'Dd', associated with precise and critical mentalities, and the white spaces (S) indicate simplicity or contrariness. The determinants of a particular response may be the shape or form of the blot (F). Clear and accurate form perception (F + or F) indicates firm control. Inappropriate, distorted, or bizarre forms (F -) signify low intelligence. Responses to colour (C) indicates impulsivity and emotional relationships to environment. The colour response is the sole determinant of emotional intensity. The predominance of form colour responses (FC) indicate emotional control and social adaptability. Colour form responses (CF), in which form is secondary, suggest impulsive, egocentric personality, and pure colour

responses (C) signify emotional impulsiveness. Shading responses (FY, YF and Y) are interpreted as related to anxiety, depression, and feelings of inferiority. The vista (V) responses indicate feelings of inadequacy. Human movement responses (M) indicate creativeness, intellectual potency and richer inner potentialities. M > C indicates introversive personality. On the other hand, C > M indicates extroversive personality. OM:X C (zero M: high C) signifies egocentric extratension. OM:OC (zero M: zero C) signifies perfect coartation (innert or low intelligence). Animal movement (FM) indicates instinctive activity rather than the level of creative activity. Movement of non-living objects (m) indicates stereotyped thinking. Popular (P) and original (O) responses indicate intelligence. In connection with contents the most common categories of responses are animal (A), animal detail (Ad), human (H), human detail (Hd), anatomy (At), landscape (Ls), science (Sc), household (Hh) geography (Ge), and mythology (My), etc.

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