

A COMPARISON OF PERSONALITY INDICATORS ACROSS THREE CULTURAL GROUPS ¹

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ABSTRACT. The Holtzman Inkblot Test (HIT) was administered to 186 male university students grouped in these ways: Brazilians, fourth generation or more; Nisseis, first generation Brazilians of Japanese descent; and Japanese, studying in Tokyo. The groups were further divided according to the educational level of the father of each subject. Subject scores on 33 variables from the HIT were reduced by means of analyses of variance according to ethnic origin and father's education. The numerous statistically significant differences suggested that the HIT variables differentiate between ethnic groups in the following general ways: with respect to precision and integration of perceptions, creative fantasy, anxiety, oppositional and disphoric affective attitudes, social adaptability, and special interests.

RESUMO. O teste de borrões de W. Holtzman (HIT) foi aplicado a 186 universitários do sexo masculino: Brasileiros de no mínimo quarta geração; Nisseis filhos de Japoneses; Japoneses de Tokyo. Os grupos foram subdivididos segundo o nível educacional dos pais. Trinta e tres variáveis do HIT foram submetidas a análise de variância, sendo as fontes de variabilidades: a origem étnica dos S, o nível de instrução dos seus pais e as intervariações. As numerosas diferenças estatísticas significativas sugerem que as variáveis do HIT diferenciam os grupos étnicos da seguinte maneira geral: na precisão e integração de percepções, na fantasia criativa, na ansiedade, nas atitudes disfóricas e de oposição, na adaptabilidade social e interesses específicos.

Intercultural research is a possible means of separating from other sources of variability those that are culturally induced. Vernon (1965) suggests that one ought to study not only present cultural differences but also the potential effects of controllable environmental factors on the development of aptitudes and of attitudes in a single culture or in contrasting cultures. Brazil provides a uniquely qualified field to perform intercultural studies since its culturally diverse immigrants become acculturated rather quickly in this culturally heterogenous country.

The principal aim of this study was to compare personality indicators across subjects from different ethno-cultural groups. Hopefully, some relationship between some of these personality indicators and certain socio-cultural factors would emerge as a result of these comparisons.

The subjects in this study were 186 male university students ranging in age from 18 to 28 and belonging to one of three ethno-cultural groups: Brazilians, fourth generation or more; Nisseis, first generation Brazilians

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of Japanese descent; and Japanese studying in Tokyo. The subjects were further grouped according to fathers' educational level as determined by the number of years spent in formal study (whether in Japanese or Brazilian schools). (See Table 1.)

TABLE 1
Description of Sample

Educ. level of fathers	N. origin			Total
	Brazilians	Nisseis	Japanese from Japan	
University graduates	18	3	18	39
Secondary school rad.	18	13	18	49
Lower secondary school	18	15	18	51
Elementary school rad.	18	11	18	47
Total	72	42	72	186

METHOD

The groupings were based on data derived from a biographical questionnaire administered to each subject.² The Holtzman Inkblot Test (Collective Form A), reduced to the first 20 slides, was also administered (Hill, 1972; Holtzman *et al.*, 1961). The HIT has been used successfully in earlier cross-cultural studies (e.g., Holtzman, 1964) as well as in a pilot study performed on a smaller sample of Brazilians and sons of Japanese.³ For the Brazilian and Nissei groups, a standardized Portuguese translation of the HIT was used by three trained psychologists. In Japan, Professor Yoshihisa Tanaka and his collaborators used their own translation from the English HIT. The administrative techniques were equivalent between groups of psychologists. The subjects' responses in Japanese were translated to Portuguese by a Brazilian psychologist of Japanese origin.

The author with the verification of two collaborators evaluated the responses of all subjects. With the consent of W. H. Holtzman, a modified evaluation of responses to the HIT was carried out, an evaluation that in-

cluded the uses of some Rorschach indicators as well as two original indicators validated previously (Ginsberg, 1969). The indicators used and their descriptions are found in Table 2.

RESULTS

The data were submitted to numerous analyses of variance (ANOVA), each considering as sources of variance ethno-cultural group and father's educational level (and the interaction between them). Of the 35 indicators, 21 yielded statistically significant differences ($p < .05$) between ethno-cultural groups. Significant differences between fathers' educational levels on certain indicators were also found. (See Table 3.) A greater number of indicators, the scores on which were submitted to ANOVA procedures, yielded significant differences between Brazilian and Japanese groups (20) than between Japanese and Nissei (14) or between Brazilian and Nissei (5).

DISCUSSION

Brazilians and Nissei, to a lesser degree, tend to give more precise, better integrated answers than the Japanese group. In addition, the two Brazilian groups seem to have more creative fantasy and broader interests while giving fewer stereotypic responses than the Japanese group. The Japanese seem to assume critical attitudes toward others while revealing a disphoric mood. They also have greater mental energy and seem more stubborn and persistent. They seem to have greater sociocentric attitudes, less hostility, and less anxiety than the Brazilian groups. In general, their social adaptation seems to be more difficult, yet more superficial, than the Brazilian groups. No *post hoc* explanations for these findings will be given here.

With regard to the Nissei group, their scores tended to fall in between the Japanese group and Brazilian group, but more often were more like the scores of the Brazilian group. The difficulty of finding Nisseis whose fathers had high educational levels seemed not to affect the results of the study to any appreciable extent. Nissei are similar to the Japanese in their tendency to give vague, less integrated responses, in their interest in plants, in disphoric mood, and in sociocentric attitudes. Nissei are similar to the Brazilians in their human interest and in popular responses. On the whole, the Nissei seem well-aculturated to the Brazilian culture as suggested by the similarity of group scores on the personality indicators used in this study. The HIT seemed a sensitive instrument for indicating intra- and intercultural differences.

TABLE 2
Description of Personality Indicators Studied

Description of Personality Indicators Yielding Significant F-values	
Personality Indicator (HIT)	Description
R	Rejection
FA	Form appropriateness
S	Space
I	Integration; capacity for synthesis and abstraction
Ax	Anxiety
Hs	Hostility
P	Popular
FC	Form-color
FC' + C' + C'F	Aromatic color answers
KF + K + k	Noncontrolled, tridimensional shading
FK	Form dominated shading
Sh	Shading
M (num)	Human movement
m	Inanimate object movement
M	General movement
H	Human
A	Animal
At + Sex	Anatomy and sexual
Nat	Nature
Exp. + Rock	Explosion and rockets
Pl	Botanic
AC	Amplitude of content
IA	Index of Anxiety
FM	Animal movement
Description of Personality Indicators Yielding Nonsignificant F-Values	
Personality Indicator (HIT)	Description
FD	Form definitiveness
V	Pathognomic verbalization
Ab	Abstract
Scient	Scientific
Obj	Object
Art	Art
C	Color, general
CF + C	Color dominant
Personality Indicator (Ginsberg)	Description
Neurosis Index	Based on Harrower Erickson index of neurotic signs on Rorschach
Anxiety Index	General anxiety factors [Results no different from isolated Ax(HIT) variable]

TABLE 3

Analysis of Variance Results¹

Variable	His. x Jap.			His. x Braz.			Jap. x Braz.		
	Gr. Et.	F. E.	Int.	Gr. Et.	F. E.	Int.	Gr. Et.	F. E.	Int.
	R	7.67**	1.35	1.95	<1	<1	<1	13.32**	2.20
FA	9.11**	1.18	1.35	4.72*	1.94	1.23	47.93**	<1	2.54
S	2.52	<1	<1	<1	3.55*	<1	5.38*	<1	<1
I	1.82	1.64	<1	2.78	1.94	<1	17.41**	4.03**	<1
Ax	4.94*	3.78*	<1	1.10	1.40	<1	13.98**	1.49	<1
Hb	12.97**	4.02**	<1	1.29	1.15	1.96	25.73**	1.11	1.39
P	40.90**	1.14	1.48	<1	<1	<1	46.08**	2.44	<1
FC	<1	<1	<1	<1	<1	1.10	7.60**	<1	3.07*
FC'+C'+C'/F	4.35*	<1	<1	<1	<1	<1	7.64**	<1	<1
KP+K+k	5.22*	1.17	2.05	1.09	<1	1.98	16.78**	<1	<1
FK	<1	1.88	1.97	<1	4.14**	<1	<1	1.39	2.71*
Sh	8.39**	<1	<1	<1	<1	<1	15.54**	<1	1.11
M (num)	114.53**	3.01*	5.40**	5.53**	4.16**	1.82	48.68**	<1	<1
n	1.67	<1	1.89	<1	2.79*	1.86	5.17**	3.22*	1.20
M	2.34	2.52	8.54**	<1	2.05	1.12	27.56**	1.05	1.00
H	13.62**	<1	2.02	1.49	1.13	<1	41.82**	<1	<1
A	12.38**	<1	<1	3.37	<1	<1	2.41	<1	<1
At+Sex	12.61	1.56	<1	<1	<1	1.27	23.31**	<1	<1
Nat	14.52**	1.68	<1	2.51	1.05	1.96	3.59	1.25	1.67
Expl+Rock	4.26*	4.98**	3.15*	<1	2.48	1.46	6.80**	2.64	1.94
PI	7.59**	<1	2.07	4.36*	12.82**	9.86**	14.55**	2.11	2.55*
AC	2.59	1.57	<1	<1	1.21	<1	7.99**	<1	1.41
IA	9.92**	1.91	<1	<1	1.37	<1	23.68**	<1	2.24
FM	4.23*	<1	1.02	2.50	<1	<1	-	-	-

* p < .05

** p < .01

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FOOTNOTES

1. Based on a paper presented at the XXth International Congress of Psychology in Tokyo in 1972.
2. The questionnaire and instruments in addition to the HIT were administered to these subjects as part of a larger inter- and intracultural study executed in the Institute of Psychology of the Catholic University of Sao Paulo, with the aid of grants received from the FAPESP of Sao Paulo and from the Aquinas Found. of New York.
3. Paper presented in Liege to the International Congress of Applied Psychology in 1971.
4. Table 3 tabulates the F-values for the results of two-way analyses of variance for each of the personality indicators listed. Between group variance is taken respectively as Nissei vs. Japanese, Nissei vs. Brazilian, and Japanese vs. Brazilians, and is referred to in the table as Gr. Et. Within group variance is taken to be level of father's education (F.E.). Reading across the table, for the first column and personality indicator "R," Group Ethnicity contributed a significant amount of variance ($p < .01$). Hence, Nissei and Japanese are assumed to differ significantly with regard to "R," but neither the level of father's education or the interaction between the ethnicity and level of father's education contributes significant variance. See Table 2 for a listing of the symbol for the personality indicator with its description.