

Man, with the traits of lion and goat: courage and compassion in Sikhism

Poonam Mehta^{1*}

ABSTRACT

Humans and animals have some common dimensions of personality which induce them to behave similarly. Considering this present study is aimed to determine that man from Sikh community are composed of personality traits which are similar to the lion and goat, namely, courage and compassion respectively. For conducting a study cross-sectional survey has been performed on 1207 Sikhs living at India. For hypothesis testing structural equation modeling on Amos with SPSS has been performed. Results have revealed that Sikh man have personality of lion and goat as they are courageous and compassionate in personality. Further present study has also highlighted the profound role of religion which contributes in raising personality of individual.

Keywords: *Compassion, Courage, Personality, Religion, Mindfulness, Altruism*

Religion and Spirituality are important in making personality of an individual (Rejaei, 2010; Wade et al., 2007; Koenig, 1999; Koenig & Cohen, 2002; Pargament, 1997). Various researchers have mentioned that practices and teachings involved in religion have the potential to influence the attitude, inner feeling, behaviour and perception of an individual which further frames their personality (Vahidi-Motlagh, 2011; Koenig, 2001; Tarakeshwar et al., 2005). Alike all the religions Sikhism has also has contributed a lot in making a personality of its followers (Singh, 1994). Sikhs have evolved themselves and their personality very optimistically in spite of facing various hurdles from time to time. Whenever they are questioned over their identity, they have portrayed themselves as compassionate and gentle beings of this world who have sacrificed their individuality for the wellbeing of community and their nation. And, when world needs them to save humanity, they fought fiercely like a courageous lion to protect every human irrespective of their caste and creed (Nesbitt, 2016).

LITERATURE REVIEW AND HYPOTHESIS FORMATION

Previous literature has mentioned that animals and humans shared some common dimensions of personality due to which every human possess certain features which are similar to animals (Gosling & John, 1999). In this context it has been highlighted that humans and animals have similar cognitive abilities due to which they have common process of memory formation,

¹Research scholar, School of Business, Shri Mata Vaishno Devi University, Katra, J & K, India

*Responding Author

Received: March 7, 2020; Revision Received: March 15, 2020; Accepted: March 31, 2020

Man, with the traits of Lion and Goat: Courage and Compassion in Sikhism

learning and emotions like love, sympathy, compassion, anger etc. (Michel, 2017). Considering this present study has highlighted the Sikh man with a trait of lion as well as goat who have adequate courage to fight for the right and compassion to hold suffering of others.

Sikhism is the most modern religion of this world which has been originated when India was suffering from inequalities due to the presence of different societies and caste issues (Oberoi, 1994; Purewal & Lallie, 2013). Community has faced various difficulties which has surfaced their various images and personalities. From time to time they have emerged with heroic images, spiritual images, artistic images etc. Spiritual image has highlighted the compassion, humility, love, care and piety for all. They believe on the ideology of optimism, hope and faith. Their compassionate image emphasised about their gentleness, spirituality, calmness, maturity and sensitivity towards humanity which is similar to the features of goat. In fact, their spiritual/ compassionate images are the first which has been witnessed by world with the emergence of first guru "Nanak ji". They are always on top in serving communities with brotherhood, have ethics of sharing and keeps others over to their own self. In this context, "langar" service is very prominent example where community is engaged in serving food to all irrespective of their class, religion, creed, colour and origin. Further, Sri Guru Granth Sahib ji has glorified the compassion as the significant principal of Sikh religion where daya or dayau (compassion) along with other four principals, such as, Truth (Saty), Contentment (Santokh), Humility (Nimrata) and Love (Pyaar) are considered as five strong founded pillars of Sikhism. Compassion has been considered as very important quality to have before reciting and meditating Gurbani. A small community with a composition of 2 percent feeds the most of the nation with their agricultural capacity (Rahi, 1999).

Likewise, heroic images have emphasised about their bravery, valour and strength (Kapur & Misra, 2003). Sikh preachings have mentioned that after baptism Sikhs used to take the surname as Singh which itself means lion (Tatla, 2005). Like lion, one cannot marginalise their presence in crowd due to their appearance and style which mainly includes turban, uncut beard and moustache. Studies have mentioned that Sikhs keep their hair long in urge to look distinctive in terms of identity as lions have (Singh, 2010; National Geographic, 2016). Their following towards Sikh symbols, well-built physic, decently and smartly attired outfits with turban provides them exclusive and towering personality. World has witnessed their warrior attitude and skills who fought fiercely for the right against all evils. In the context, sacrifice of one of the legendary gurus, Guru Gobind Singh is always remembered who has sacrificed himself and his entire family for humanity. Sikhs are bold who always carries kirpan with them to give defence to weaker. History has mentioned several warriors, such as, Bhai Bachittar Singh, Hari Singh Nalwa, Jassa Singh Ramgariya, Baba Deep Singh, Guru Teg Bahadur and many more who fought like one-man army. Their bravery can be seen in the most decorated regiment of Indian army as Sikh regiment.

On the basis of existing literature, theoretical model has been framed to explore the courage and compassion as main traits of Sikh man which has been presented in Figure.1. Model presents that Sikh man are compassionate as goat and courageous as lion

Accordingly, hypothesis framed for the study are:

H_{0.1}. Sikhs are courageous as lion.

H_{0.2}. Sikhs are compassionate as goat.

Man, with the traits of Lion and Goat: Courage and Compassion in Sikhism

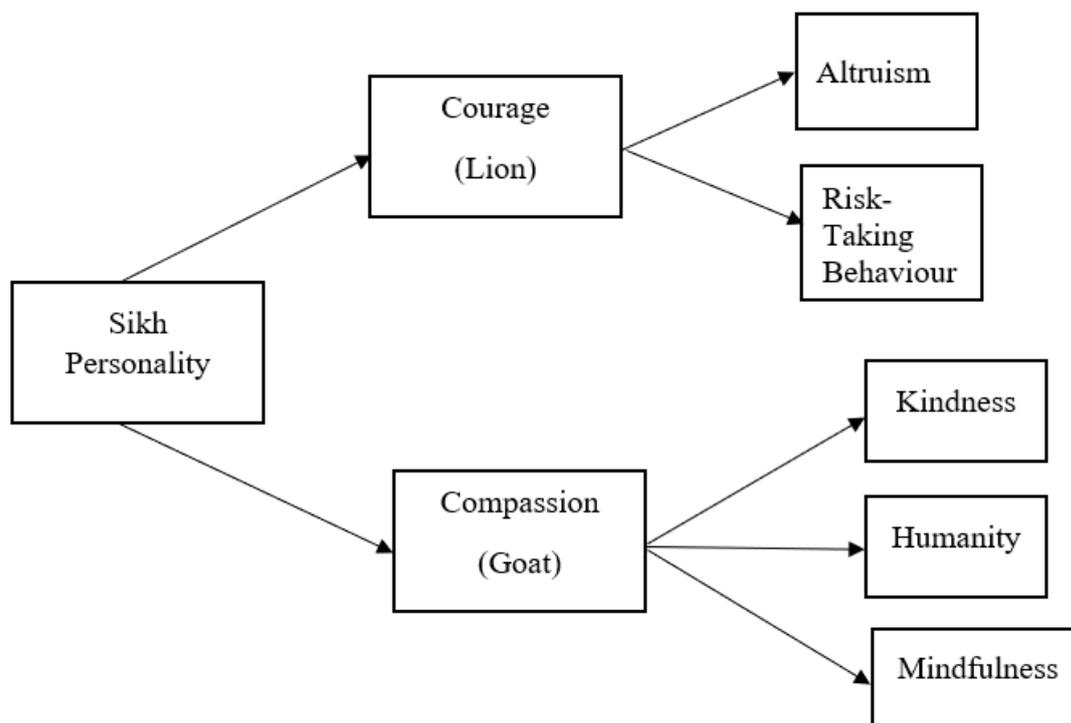


Figure 1: Theoretical model of Sikh personality

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Participants and data collection

For conducting a study 1207 Sikhs have been contacted from July, 2018 to September, 2019. Further before contacting them, only those Sikh men have been contacted who follows 5 K's of sikh symbols very strictly, namely, Keshas (unshorn hair), Kangha (a comb), Kara (a steel brace let), Kachahra (a pair of shorts), and Kirpan (a sword). For getting a right and mass samples visitor of 6 major gurudwaras of India have been covered. These gurudwaras, include, Shri Harmandir Sahib Ji/The Golden Temple, Amritsar (Punjab), Gurdwara Shri Keshgarh Sahib Ji, Anand Pur Sahib (Punjab), Gurdwara Kiratpur Sahib ji, Ropar (Punjab), Shri Dukh Niwaran Sahib ji, Patiala (Punjab), Takht Shri Harmandir Sahib Ji/Takht Shri Patna Sahib Ji/ Patna Sahib ji (Bihar), Bangla Sahib Ji (Delhi).

Although inside the gurudwara no respondent has been contacted as there is no intention to come in between devotion of the community. Visitors outside the gurudwaras who have completed their darshan and are willing to become a part of survey has been contacted. Further, data has been collected with the help of pretested questionnaire which takes 05-07 minutes to fill. Further population with no English literacy has been provided with the Hindi and Punjabi translation of questions by translator.

Measures of the Study

Lions have always been considered as the bravest and courageous of all animals. In present study Sikhs have been considered as lion as they are courageous enough for possessing a right action for right purpose. Courage is determined as a core quality which defines about the capacity of an individual to defend for the right things even when one is fearful (O'Byrne et al., 2000; Osswald et al., 2010; Rate et al., 2007; Woodard, 2004; Woodard & Pury, 2007). Literature have mentioned that courageous person take risk for their life for the wellbeing of

others (Goud, 2005). In present study, scale given by Chapa and Stringer (2013), has been referred to measure construct of courage. Scale includes 13 items with two sub constructs namely, altruism (“*I would be willing to experience seeing horrific things if it meant I could help someone*”) and risk-taking behaviour (“*I sometimes like to do things that are frightening*”). Scale is rated over 5-point Likert scale where 5 represents “almost always” and 1 represents “almost never”. Some of the statements are negative for which reverse coding has been done.

The next personality trait used to portray the image of the Sikhs is compassion and gentleness like goat do have. Present study has referred the 24 items compassion scale developed by Raes et al., (2011). Scale is further divided into three sub constructs, namely, kindness (“*If I see someone going through a difficult time, I try to be caring toward that person*”), humanity (“*Everyone feels down sometimes, it is part of being human*”) and mindfulness (“*I pay careful attention when other people talk to me*”) which is rated over 5 point likert scale. 5 represents “almost always” and 1 represents “almost never”. Some of the statements are negative for which reverse coding has been done.

Data Analysis

All the constructs used in the present study namely courage and compassion have been tested against the condition of normality assumptions (Hair et al., 2012). Internal consistency of dimensions have been checked employing ‘*if item deletion criterion*’ and final Cronbach value of all the constructs namely compassion and courage is 0.723 and 0.813 respectively (Refer Appendix I). Further, the dimensions of all the aforementioned constructs employed in the present model have been examined applying Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA) approach (Doll et al., 2012; Hair et al., 2012) (refer Appendix I). Further, communality statistics and value of factor loadings of all the constructs have been examined and found to meet the norms (>0.50) (Hair et al., 2012) (Refer Appendix II). Three factors have been extracted from factor structure of compassion namely kindness, humanity and mindfulness. Likewise, two factor structure have been extracted in case of courage such as risk -taking behaviour and altruism. Further, Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA) technique has been employed to examine the structural validity of the above-mentioned constructs. Accordingly, composite reliability (CR), convergent validity, discriminant validity and nomological validity of the courage and compassion construct have been examined. Accordingly, all resulted values have ensured the internal reliability of the constructs as value of CR of each of the constructs is more than 0.60 (Hair et al. 2012). Also, the value of average variance extracted (AVE) of all values have been found to be more than 0.50 presenting good convergent validity of all the mentioned constructs (refer Appendix II) (Byrne, 2010; Hair et al., 2012). Besides, discriminant validity has been assessed applying criterion recommended by Fornell and Larcker (1981). Considering this criterion, it has been found that AVE values of constructs were larger as compared to the values of squared inter-construct correlation of each construct (refer Appendix II). Further, the nomological validity of the constructs has been proved following the criterion suggested by Yang et al. (2004) and Spretitzer (1995), i.e., with the presence of theory-based relationship between constructs.

RESULTS

The proposed model presented in Figure 1 was observed for overall fitness by employing Structural Equation Modelling (SEM) approach (Hair et al., 2008; Hooper et al., 2008). Further Z-score statistics of the sum of each of the construct namely altruism, risk taking behaviour, kindness, humanity and mindfulness have been computed. Afterwards, values of parameter estimates have been computed which are found to be statistically significant

Man, with the traits of Lion and Goat: Courage and Compassion in Sikhism

($p < 0.01$) (Refer Table 1). Also, values of model fit indices namely, GFI (0.989), AGFI (0.948), CFI (0.972), NFI (0.993) and TLI (0.983) are found to fulfil the denotative values. Further, the value of $CMIN(x^2/df=4.114)$ and RMSEA (0.055) are also meeting the requirement of referential values proposed by Hair et al. (2008).

Table 1. Standardized Regression weights of the Model

Path	Parameter Estimates	Standard Error	Standardised regression weights	Critical Ratios
SP ← CRG	0.661	0.058	0.595	11.441*
SP ← CMP	1.098	0.035	0.694	21.391*
ALT ← CRG	1.070	0.027	0.982	39.113*
RTB ← CRG	1.200	0.012	0.918	24.221*
SCC ← CRG	1.000	-	0.833	-
KND ← CMP	0.345	0.007	0.656	21.191*
HUM ← CMP	1.000	-	0.657	-
MFN ← CMP	0.884	0.070	0.739	12.718*

Note: * significant at 1 % level of significance
 SP- Sikh Personality; CMP- Compassion; ALT-Altruism; RTB- Risk Taking Behaviour;
 KND-Kindness; HUM-Humanity; MFN- Mindfulness

Source: Author's calculation

Table 1 has presented the standardised regression and critical ratios estimates of variables which are statistically significant and emphasised personality of Sikh man as compassionate and courageous. On the basis of standardised estimates of courage, it has been determined that they are risk takers and altruist in nature. Likewise, they are found to be high on kindness, humanity and mindfulness.

DISCUSSION

Present study has determined that Sikhs personality is composed of two crucial traits, namely, courage and compassion. Table 1 has clearly concluded that compassion and courage are significantly related to Sikhs personality which rejects the null hypothesis of the study. Further, if we look upon the details, result has concluded that Sikhs are altruist who always keep others interest over their own interest. This finding supports the finding of Madnawat (1986) and Ahluwalia et al. (2014) who have determined that Sikhs are altruistic in behaviour who shows bravery for the wellbeing of others. Similarly, studies have determined that Sikhs are risk takers although they risk their own lives for the safety and security of others. This result supports the finding of Jacobsen and Myrvold (2016), who have also determined that Sikhs are risk takers due to which Britishers have also prefer them in their military. Hence, their altruistic and risk-taking behaviour make them courageous. Likewise, Sikhs are found to be high on kindness, humanity and mindfulness. This finding compliments the finding of Jammu (2016), Nesbitt (2016) and Mohanka (2005) who have also confirmed that Sikhs own compassion as a personality trait.

CONCLUSION AND IMPLICATIONS

Present study is an effort to explore the personality of Sikhs as compassionate and courageous which supports the preaching of various gurus and personalities of Sikhs leaders. Study gives an insight that compassion and courage is still alive in the Sikh community of the nation which supports the findings of Chilana (2005) who have mentioned that Sikhs as powerful, courageous warriors as well as affectionate, peace-loving and compassionate community. Also, study has implicated that religion contributes a lot in forming a personality of an individual. Accordingly, various interventions can be formed on the basis of religion which can be used to make an individual compassionate and courageous in personality.

REFERENCES

- Ahluwalia, M. K., Locke, A. F., & Hylton, S. (2014). Sikhism and positive psychology. In Religion and spirituality across cultures (pp. 125-136). Springer, Dordrecht.
- Chapa, O., & Stringer, D. (2013). The path of measuring moral courage in the workplace. *SAM Advanced Management Journal*, 78(2), 17-24.
- Chilana, R. S. (2005). Sikhism: Building a basic collection on Sikh religion and culture. *Reference & User Services Quarterly*, 45(2), 108-116.
- Doll, W. J., Xia, W., & Torkzadeh, G. (1994). A confirmatory factor analysis of the end-user computing satisfaction instrument. *MIS quarterly*, 453-461.
- Fornell, C., & Larcker, D.F. (1981). Evaluating Structural Equation Models with Unobservable Variables and Measurement Error. *Journal of Marketing Research*, 18 (1), pp. 39-50.
- Gosling, S. D., & John, O. P. (1999). Personality dimensions in nonhuman animals: A cross-species review. *Current directions in psychological science*, 8(3), 69-75.
- Goud, N. H. (2005). Courage: Its nature and development. *The Journal of Humanistic Counseling, Education and Development*, 44(1), 102-116.
- Hair, J.F., Black, W.C., Babin, B.J., Anderson, R.E., & Tatham, R.L. (2008). *Multivariate Data Analysis*, Pearson Education Inc. Publisher, Taj Express, New Delhi.
- Hooper, D., Coughlan, J. & Mullen, M. (2008). Structural equation modelling: Guidelines for determining model fit', *Articles*, 2.
- Jacobsen, K. A., & Myrvold, K. (2016). *Young Sikhs in a Global World: Negotiating Traditions, Identities and Authorities*. Routledge.
- Jammu, D. S. (2016). Compassion in Sikhism: A Scriptural, Traditional and Historical Perspective. *Compassion in the 4 Dharmic Traditions*, 266.
- Kapur, P., & Misra, G. (2003). Image of self in the Sikh community: Continuity of the core and global presence. *Psychology and Developing Societies*, 15(1), 103-116.
- Koenig, H. G. (1999). The healing power of faith: Science explores medicine's last great frontier.
- Koenig, H. G., & Cohen, H. J. (Eds.). (2002). *The link between religion and health: Psychoneuroimmunology and the faith factor*. Oxford University Press.
- Koenig, H. G., Mccollough, M., & Larson, D. B. (2001). *Handbook of Religion and Health*, New York: Oxford University.
- Lei, P. W., & Wu, Q. (2007). Introduction to structural equation modeling: Issues and practical considerations. *Educational Measurement: issues and practice*, 26(3), 33-43.
- Madawat, A. V. (1986). Altruism in Hindus and Sikhs. *Indian Psychological Review*. 30(3), 26-31
- Michel, A. (2017). Humans Are Animals, Too: A Whirlwind Tour of Cognitive Biology. *APS Observer*, 30(5)
- Mohanka, P. S. (2005). Religion and conflict in India: A Sikh perspective. *The Round Table*, 94(382), 589-598.
- National Geographic (2016) Accessed from, <https://www.nationalgeographic.com/animals/mammals/a/african-lion>.

Man, with the traits of Lion and Goat: Courage and Compassion in Sikhism

- Nesbitt, E. (2016). *Sikhism: A very short introduction*. Oxford University Press.
- O'Byrne, K. K., Lopez, S. J., & Petersen, S. (2000). Building a theory of courage: A precursor to change. In 108th annual convention of the American Psychological Association, Washington, DC.
- Oberoi, H. (1994). *The construction of religious boundaries: Culture, identity, and diversity in the Sikh tradition*. University of Chicago Press.
- Osswald, S., Greitemeyer, T., Fischer, P., & Frey, D. (2010). What is moral courage? Definition, explication, and classification of a complex construct. In C. L. S. Pury and S. J. Lopez (Eds.), *The psychology of courage: Modern research on an ancient virtue* (p. 149–164). American Psychological Association.
- Pargament, K. I. (2001). *The psychology of religion and coping: Theory, research, practice*. Guilford press.
- Purewal, N. K., & Lallie, H. S. (2013). Sikh Kirtan in the Diaspora: Identity, Innovation, and Revivalism. In *Sikh Diaspora* (pp. 381-403). Brill.
- Raes, F., Pommier, E., Neff, K. D., & Van Gucht, D. (2011). Construction and factorial validation of a short form of the self-compassion scale. *Clinical psychology and psychotherapy*, 18(3): 250-255.
- Rahi, H. S. (1999). *Sri Guru Granth Sahib discovered: a reference book of quotations from the Adi Granth*. Motilal Banarsidass Publ.
- Rajaei, A. R. (2010). Religious cognitive–emotional therapy: A new form of psychotherapy. *Iranian journal of psychiatry*. 5(3):81.
- Singh, D. (1994). *Essentials of Sikhism*. Amritsar: Singh Broths.
- Singh, J. (2010). Head first: young British Sikhs, hair, and the turban. *Journal of Contemporary Religion*, 25(2), 203-220.
- Spretitzer, G.M. (1995). Psychological Empowerment in the Workplace: Dimensions, Measurement and Validation. *Academy of Management Journal*, 38(5), 1442-1465.
- Tarakeshwar, N., Pearce, M. J., & Sikkema, K. J. (2005). Development and implementation of a spiritual coping group intervention for adults living with HIV/AIDS: A pilot study. *Mental health, religion and culture*, 8(3), 179-190.
- Tatla, D. S. (2005). *The Sikh diaspora: The search for statehood*. Routledge.
- Vahidi-Motlagh, L. (2011). The effectiveness of cognitive-behavioral and religious cognitive therapy on anxiety in students”. *International Journal of Behavioral Sciences*, 5(3), 195-201.
- Wade, N. G., Worthington Jr, E. L., & Vogel, D. L. (2007). Effectiveness of religiously tailored interventions in Christian therapy. *Psychotherapy Research*, 17(1), 91-105.
- Woodard, C. R. (2004). Hardiness and the Concept of Courage. *Consulting Psychology Journal: Practice and Research*, 56(3), 173.
- Woodard, C. R., & Pury, C. L. (2007). The construct of courage: Categorization and measurement. *Consulting Psychology Journal: Practice and Research*, 59(2), 135.
- Yang, B., Watkins, K.E., & Marsick, V.J. (2004), ‘The Construct of the Learning Organization: Dimensions, Measurement and Validation’. *Human Resource Development Quarterly*, 15(1), 1-55.

Acknowledgements

I would like to dedicate this work to all compassionate and courageous Sikhs. Further, I am thankful to the Sardaar reham Singh ji who assist me in communicating with respondents in Punjabi language.

Conflict of Interest

The author declared no conflict of interest.

How to cite this article: P Mehta (2020). Man, with the traits of lion and goat: courage and compassion in Sikhism. *International Journal of Indian Psychology*, 8(1), 792-799. DIP:18.01.098/20200801, DOI:10.25215/0801.098

ANNEXURES

Annexure I: Reliability and Validity of Constructs

Construct	Cronbach Alpha	KMO value	Bartlett's Test of Sphericity
Compassion	0.723	0.765	7017.104*
Courage	0.813	0.813	14294.423*

*Significant at 1% level of the significance

Note: Two item from compassion and 2 items from courage have been deleted after applying 'if item deletion criterion'.

Results of EFA

Construct	Communality Statistics Range (Minimum to maximum)	Factor Loadings Range (Minimum to maximum)
Compassion	0.794 – 0.901	0.631 – 0.877
Courage	0.663 – 0.888	0.741 – 0.833

Annexure II: Composite Reliability (CR), Convergent Validity (CV) and Discriminant Validity (DV) of the Compassion and Courage construct

Construct	Factors	Squared inter-construct correlations			AVE	CR
		Kindness	Humanity	Mindfulness		
Compassion		Kindness	Humanity	Mindfulness		
	Kindness	1			0.960	0.941
	Humanity	0.083	1		0.975	0.985
	Mindfulness	0.159	0.197	1	0.948	0.981

Construct	Factors	Squared inter-construct correlations		AVE	CR
		Altruism	Risk Taking Behaviour		
Courage		Altruism	Risk Taking Behaviour		
	Altruism	1		0.593	0.797
	Risk Taking Behaviour	0.0914	1	0.653	0.828