

A Note on "Personality Orientations of Farm, Village, and Urban Boys"

A. O. HALLER AND CAROLE ELLIS WOLFF

**Reprinted from RURAL SOCIOLOGY
Volume 30, No. 3, September 1965
pp. 338-340
*Made in United States of America***

A NOTE ON "PERSONALITY ORIENTATIONS OF FARM, VILLAGE, AND URBAN BOYS"

A. O. Haller and Carole Ellis Wolff¹

Sometime ago we published an article on the subject of rural-urban differences in personality.² The subject is one on which there has been a good deal of disagreement in the literature. On the one hand there has been much speculation, often based on first-hand but unsystematic evidence, to the effect that important personality differences do exist between rural people and urban people. On the other hand the systematic empirical evidence has tended to reject this argument, at least in the United States. The article in question is perhaps of some importance because it presents data which appear to contradict much of the previous empirical evidence, thus tending to support those who have assumed the existence of such personality differences. Moreover, the *pattern* of the observed differences suggests "that many of them may be plausibly interpreted as adaptively functional for the type of social environment in which those possessing them reside."

In a few words, this article seems to show that the theoretical speculation regarding the subject was right, and the previous empirical evidence—which was generally negative—was wrong. Thus, any new information qualifying or denying the conclusions of the article should be presented. A reanalysis of these data shows that in fact a few qualifications are in order.

In the previous article we reported using a statistical device presented briefly by Scheffé.³ However, we failed to note that we modified it slightly.

¹ The authors are, respectively, Professor of Rural Sociology, University of Wisconsin, Madison, and Assistant Professor of Sociology, Sacramento State College, Sacramento, California.

² A. O. Haller and Carole Ellis Wolff, "Personality Orientations of Farm, Village, and Urban Boys," *Rural Sociology*, 27 (September, 1962), pp. 275-293.

³ Cited in *ibid.*, p. 278.

Since then Professor Charles H. Proctor of North Carolina State College recalculated our F tests and noted that we had consistently used a denominator which yields F ratios larger than would have been the case if we had followed Scheffé exactly.⁴

There is a possibility that our use of a smaller, and therefore less stringent, denominator could have been justified, but there is nothing to be gained by trying to do so. Because the conclusions of the article generally differ sharply from those of similar research, it seems to us today (1965) better to err, if at all, on the conservative side. For this reason we are presenting the results of Professor Proctor's reanalysis of our data.

In data to follow, we have used two-tailed tests of hypotheses, with d.f. = 427 and 2 for $P < .05$, and $F = 3.02$. For simplicity, we are omitting the .01 and .001 levels, treating all F values larger than that required for $P < .05$ as "statistically significant". All of the changes concern the F tests; the means and standard deviations presented in the article remain as printed. The new results are as follows:⁵

(1) There were no personality variables not reported in 1962 to be associated with residence which were found to be so associated in the present reanalysis (1965).

(2) In 1962, 14 of 26 personality variables were reported to be significantly associated with residence. The 1965 analysis shows only 8 of the 14 to be so associated. These are:

- X_1 —Culture Free IQ⁶ scores, in which urban > village > farm.
- X_4 —16 P-F Test Factor E, Dominance or Ascendance (+) versus Submission (-), in which urban > village > farm.
- X_6 —16 P-F Test Factor F, Surgency (+) versus Desurgency or Depressive Anxiety (-), in which urban = village > farm.
- X_{19} —WBC-L Belief-value Area 3, Positive versus Negative Evaluation of Physical Mobility, in which urban > village > farm.
- X_{21} —WBC-L Belief-value Area 5, Belief in Internal versus External Determination of Events, in which urban > village > farm.
- X_{23} —Occupational Aspiration Scale scores, in which urban > village > farm.
- X_{24} —College aspiration level (years desired), in which urban > village = farm.
- X_{25} —CTP personality adjustment scores, in which farm = village > urban.

(3) Six of the personality variables reported in 1962 to be associated with residence were not found to be in 1965. These are:

⁴ We wish to take this opportunity to thank Professor Proctor and his colleagues, especially Mrs. Merrybelle England, for calling our attention to the discrepancy between our reported method and the modifications we actually used, as well as for recalculating the analyses of variance.

⁵ The exact values of the F tests and P values are in the files of the senior author in the Department of Rural Sociology, University of Wisconsin, Madison, and will be made available upon request.

⁶ The abbreviations are identified in Haller and Wolff, *op. cit.*

- X₇ -16 P-F Test Factor H, Adventurous Autonomic Resilience versus Inherent, Withdrawn Schizothymia.
- X₁₀ -16 P-F Test Factor M, Hysteric Unconcern or "Bohemianism" versus Practical Concernedness.
- X₁₂ -16 P-F Test Factor O, Placid Self-confidence versus Anxious Insecurity.
- X₁₈ -16 P-F Test Factor Q₁, Radicalism versus Conservatism.
- X₁₄ -16 P-F Test Factor Q₂, Independent Self-sufficiency versus Lack of Resolution.
- X₁₆ -16 P-F Test Factor Q₄, Nervous Tension.

(4) In 1962, we reported that seven personality variables were related to the effects of the interaction of residence and socioeconomic status. The 1965 analysis showed only one of these relationships to hold, namely X₂₂; Evaluation of Deferred Gratification. The pattern of this relationship is as presented in the article.

(5) Although it was somewhat beside the point of the discussion, we reported in 1962 that 17 personality variables were associated with socioeconomic status. Two of these dropped out in the 1965 analysis. They are:

- X₃ -16 P-F Test Factor C, Emotional Stability, or Ego Strength versus Dissatisfied Emotionality.
- X₄ -16 P-F Test Factor E, Dominance or Ascendancy versus Submission.

Substantively, these findings do not change the overall conclusion of the article, namely that under rigorous research conditions, we have found a number of personality variables to be related to urban, village, and farm residence, and that the pattern of these relationships—while in conflict with most previous research—tends, on the whole, to support the belief that such differences exist even in modern society. Specifically, the personality variables which are most clearly functional for work in urban situations are most characteristic of urban boys and least of farm boys, even when the effects of status have been controlled. On the other hand, previously reported findings concerning personality variables functionally adaptive in sets of complex interpersonal relations presumably characteristic of urban society are not so clear in the 1965 analysis: urban boys tend to score higher in Dominance (X₄) and in Surgency (X₅), yet Self-confidence (X₁₂) and Independence (X₁₄) no longer appear to be related to residence. Moreover, the 1965 findings regarding presumed "personality adjustment" and personality tension effects of urban life are mixed: the previously reported pattern of lower scores on "Personality Adjustment" (X₂₅) for urban boys holds, but the previously reported residence difference in Nervous Tension (X₁₆) does not hold.

The main conclusion to be drawn here is the same as that previously reported. This research seems to show that farm, village, and urban residence exerts an influence on a variety of personality variables. Urban boys tend to score higher on personality measures presumably related to performance in urban work situations; and there is some mixed evidence suggesting that their personalities may be somewhat more attuned to noneconomic aspects of urban life. As indicated in the original article, this "strongly suggests the potential fruitfulness of renewed and refined research in this area."