

## **Genetics of Castes and Tribes of India: Taste Sensitivity**

**M. K. Bhasin**

*Department of Anthropology, University of Delhi, Delhi 110 007, India*

**KEYWORDS** Biological variation; genetic trait; ethnic groups; phenylthiocarbamide

**ABSTRACT** In the present paper an attempt has been made to study the distribution differences in tasting ability in India, which are analysed in relation to ecological, socio-economic and linguistic factors. Among population groups of India, the frequency of the taster allele ( $T$ ) is 0.457 (varies from 0.108 to 0.912). It is present in high frequency among scheduled caste and in low frequency among community. Among the different zones, it is present in high frequency in population groups of Islands followed by North and South India and in low frequency in West and Central India, where it is low in scheduled tribe groups in general. In Himalayan region, its frequency is high (0.533) as compared to non-Himalayan region (0.426). From Eastern Himalayan region the frequency of allele  $T$  is low (0.538) among populations with Mongoloid affinities as compared to the Mongoloid populations of East Asia and Southeast Asia (0.70) which may be due to high frequency of goiter in this region. High frequency is observed in Austro-Asiatic and Tibeto-Chinese families than in Dravidian and Indo-European families.