

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Personality is not static but dynamic. Forces from the environment impinge upon forces within the organism, and the resultant that pulls the rest towards a definite, recurring direction points to the personality of an individual. It is like an acrobat keeping its balance while moving ahead on a tight rope. Freud, in interpreting clinical data, laid stress on the instinctual forces or forces within the organism. He viewed human personality as the resulting force from the interaction of the three systems which are at work at the core of the human person viz., the id, the ego, and the super-ego. The Behaviourists, and the Learning Theorists, on the other hand, overemphasized the role of the forces from the environment in the shaping of personality. As Watson is reported to have said, "give me a baby and I'll make a genius of him".

Dissatisfied with these views, other Psychologists plunged into unexplored areas, and reported very valuable findings. Thus the Gestalt Psychologists basing themselves on field-perception and behavioural or psychological environment, upheld unity of behaviour, whilst the Psychometric Tradition brought into bold relief individual differences.

Along with these new insights into human nature, there was another trend of thought in conceiving personality,

which derived much inspiration from Psychoanalysis, and this was in the direction of the Theory of Self. Williams James kindled a new interest in the concept of self, and this interest has been glowing during the last three decades. It was during that time that Carl Rogers among others appeared on the scene of psychology with his Theory of Self. In the words of Hall and Linzey (3) "Rogers' formulation ... is the most fully developed statement of the self theory ... It represents a synthesis of phenomenology as presented by Snygg and Combs, of holistic and organismic theory as developed in the writings of Goldstein, Maslow, and Angyal, of Sullivan's interpersonal theory, and of the self-theory for which Rogers himself is largely responsible, although he acknowledges a debt to Rainy (1943) and Lecky (1945)."

Previous work of the author in the subject.

It was from Rogers' theory of self as presented in Client-Centered Therapy (4), that the present investigator received the suggestion to study the self concept in relation to ratings and judgments made by others and to adjustment. It is a fact of experience that we place much value on the agreement of our own views of things with the views of other people. The reason is because we feel that such an agreement is an indication of objectivity and of reality. It would seem, then, that congruence of the estimate we entertain of our own selves with the estimate

our friends make of us would point to an objective estimate of self, which is the basis of self-adjustment.

Chodorkoff (1) investigated the relationship between congruence of the individual's self description and an objective description of him, and his personal adjustment, in a group of 30 students. An r of .29 was obtained. The objective descriptions were clinical descriptions obtained from psychologists through the help of projective techniques. The present investigator, in his thesis for the M.A. degree in Psychology from Catholic University, Washington D.C. (2) approached the problem of self in relation to others from another angle. He obtained the "ratings and judgments made by others" not from clinical appraisals, but from the subjects' classmates who had been together in the same school for a long period of time lasting at least three years.

Forty seven male high school seniors at Georgetown Preparatory School, Garret Park, Maryland, U.S.A., sorted 50 self-referent statements according to their self concept. Each subject also performed Q-sorts descriptive of four of his classmates selected at random. These variates were correlated to determine the amount of congruence between the self concept and self as judged by others. The resulting r 's were then compared with the scores on the California Test of Personality. An r of .34 was obtained, which is significant at the five per cent level of confidence. Hence

the conclusion was drawn that, for the population used, the relationship between congruence of the self concept and self as judged by others, and personality adjustment, is positive and statistically significant.

A further study was made to determine the relationship between variability in judging others and measures of adjustment. Four ratings of others were correlated with one another to find out the amount of variability among them, it being understood that a very high correlation would denote a low degree of variability. In terms of Rogers' theory (4) the maladjusted have a more or less constricted view of reality because they deny awareness to significant sensory and visceral experiences which are not consistent with their concept of self. They experience a continuous threat to the structure of self, and hence they try to defend themselves by narrowing more and more the range of experiences that are viewed as potential threats. Since they see others in terms of potential sources of threat to their very constricted self concept, they are handicapped in perceiving them as separate persons. Hence it seems logical to expect that variability in the judgment of others will vary directly with personality adjustment. The results, however, did not support any significant relationship in the population used, between variability in judging others and measures of adjustment. This may be due to the fact that the measure of variability used was not

sensitive enough.

Aim of the present study.

The present thesis is also a study of the self in relation to others. But here the self concept will be studied under the aspect of "self-acceptance". A self-accepting attitude according to Rogers (4) goes together with an attitude of acceptance of others, and is a sign of self-adjustment. Now, an adjusted self is that in which there is a fairly high degree of congruence between the way one views his real self, and the way he contemplates his ideal self. Therefore, the present study will investigate the relationship between congruence of perceived self-acceptance and ideal self-acceptance, and objective acceptance of others. Further, as different cultures may vary in the way they motivate self in his attitude of acceptance of others, the present investigator will make this study in subjects who belong to different culture groups or communities, as they are found in Colleges of the University of Bombay.

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