

CHAPTER VI

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

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VI SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

During 1950's some half a dozen theories of consistency appeared more or less independently but proposed under various names : balance, congruity, symmetry and dissonances. All theories differing in many aspects had one notion in common that the person behaves in a way that maximizes the internal consistency of his cognitive system; and that groups behave in ways that maximizes the internal consistency of their interpersonal relations. Under the much influence of 'homeostasis' the earlier theorists believed that cognitive inconsistency was a kind of imbalance. Presence of imbalance was thought unpleasant or noxious state which was intolerable. It was further assumed that people will try to reduce inconsistency stage. Most of the works done under consistency theories dealt with respondent's own inconsistency.

The present study, unlike other consistency studies, tries to study reactions of perceiver (or respondents) when he perceives an inconsistent person. In life many a times one has to encounter with other person who behaves inconsistently. Reactions to others' seemingly inconsistent behavior plays a very crucial role in one's life. Sometime the whole relationship may be affected by the way perceiver person reacts to perceived person's seemingly inconsistent behavior. In the present study, an attempt was made to study person perception through

consistency viewpoint.

Statement of the Problem

The exact formulation of the problem is : 'An Experimental Study of Some of the Personality and Situational Determinants of Cognitive Consistency - Inconsistency with Special Reference to Tolerance and Reduction of Inconsistency.'

Objectives

The study was conducted keeping in view the following objectives :

1. To study sex, personality and situational differences in reaction to inconsistency, in terms of, degree of inconsistency felt, degree of botheration and degree of tolerance.
2. To study relationship between degree of inconsistency felt, degree of botheration and degree of tolerance for both third person's inconsistency and relative's inconsistency.
3. To study the degree of inconsistency, after the impressions were written, in terms of, whether it reduces or increases.
4. To compare reactions to inconsistent behavior of third person and relative, in terms of, botheration and tolerance.
5. To study sex, personality and situational differences in reaction to inconsistency, in terms of, inconsistency not felt, acceptance of inconsistency and inconsistency due to change.

6. To study the pattern of inconsistency reduction modes, in terms of, sex, personality and situational differences.
7. To study the level of integration of seemingly inconsistent information.
8. To observe which model is more applicable out of the two models, namely homeostatic and signal-and-search.

Hypotheses

Following hypotheses were formulated :

1. Situation private x public will yield more degree of inconsistency in comparison to other two situations.
2. There will be a positive relationship between degree of inconsistency felt and degree of botheration.
3. There will be a negative relationship between degree of inconsistency felt and degree of tolerance.
4. There will be a negative relationship between degree of botheration and degree of tolerance.
5. More degree of botheration will be felt for relative's inconsistency than third person's inconsistency.
6. There will be no difference in degree of tolerance required for third person's and relative's inconsistent behavior.

Independent Variables :

There were three independent variables : sex, personality and situation.

Sex : Forty eight boys and 48 girls, studying in fourth year in the M.S. University of Baroda.

Personality : The variable personality was studied at four levels, depicted by system I, II, III and IV. The subjects of system I, have fairly undifferentiated and poorly integrated cognitive structure, they rely ^{more} on external sources like God, authority, social norms etc. The respondents of system II are characterized by negativism and anti-rule and anti-authority orientation. The cognitive structure is somewhat more differentiated than the subjects of system I. The respondents of system III are characterized by desire to be liked. Conceptual organization is more differentiated and better integrated than that found in either system I or II. The system IV, most abstract of the four systems, is characterized by high task orientation, information seeking, risk taking, independence without negativism and internal standards of conduct. The conceptual structure is more highly differentiated and integrated than the other systems.

Situation : In all there were three different inconsistent situations depicting behavioural descriptions of three inconsistent persons : private x public ; past private x present private ; and past public x present public.

Dependent Variables :

Following dependent variables were studied in present work :
 (1) degree of inconsistency felt; (2) degree of botheration for

third person's inconsistency; (3) degree of tolerance for third person's inconsistency; (4) degree of botheration for relative's inconsistency; (5) degree of tolerance for relative's inconsistency; (6) under 'modes not used,' (a) inconsistency not felt, (b) acceptance of inconsistency without reasoning (c) acceptance of inconsistency with reasoning (d) acceptance of inconsistency as personality trait, and (e) inconsistency due to change ; (7) under 'modes used', (a) denial, (b) rationalization, (c) bolstering, (d) differentiation, and (e) transcendence ; (8) under level of integration (a) juxtaposition, (b) related together, and (c) integrated;

Sample

The total sample consisted of 96 respondents studying in fourth year in the M.S. University of Baroda. There were 48 boys and 48 girls, representing four different belief systems.

Material : The 'This I Believe' Test (TIB) Test), Test I and Test II were used. (1) The TIB test, prepared by Harvey, was used to classify individuals into one of the four belief systems posited by Harvey et al. (1961). The TIB test is a kind of sentence completion test having nine items, designed to measure concreteness, abstractions. (2) Test I and Test II constructed by the experimenter, was used to measure different

reactions to inconsistency. Both the tests had identical items, but they differed in instructions. In each test, there were three situations. Each situation was a kind of behavioural description of an inconsistent person, presented in two sets of sentences each having five sentences. The Test I measured, reactions to inconsistency in terms of, 'degree of inconsistency felt', 'botheration' and 'tolerance'; while the test II measured, reactions to inconsistency in terms of, 'modes not used', 'modes used' and 'integration'.

Plan and Design

The whole experiment was planned out to be conducted in two phases. In the first phase, 'The TIB test was to be administered and on the basis of it sample was to be selected. In the second phase, the experiment proper was to be conducted in two sessions. In the first session, 'The Test I' was to be administered followed by five minutes intervals. In the second session, 'The Test II' along with 'The Structured Questionnaire' was to be administered.

Sex was manipulated at two levels, personality at four, and situation at three levels, leading to $2 \times 4 \times 3$ factorial design. In each cell there were 12 observations, leading to total 288 observations.

Data Collection

First of all, 'The TIB-Test', 'The Test I' and 'The Test II'

were tried out and needed modifications made. Then the TIB test was administered on some 650 students, studying in IVth year, in the M.S. University of Baroda. Out of 650 students, 96 students were selected in such a way, that the sample represented 48 boys and 48 girls, each representing different belief systems. There were equal number of subjects in each system.

The Test I and Test II, were administered individually, to the selected 96 students, and data were collected, scored and analyzed.

Conclusions

From the results, following conclusions were drawn :

1.0 Degree of Inconsistency Felt

- 1.1 Girls (6.45) in comparison to boys (5.68) perceived more degree of inconsistency.
- 1.2 Subjects of system III (6.51) in comparison to the subjects of system I (5.57) perceived significantly more degree of inconsistency.
- 1.3 Situation I (6.63) and the situation II (6.20) were felt significantly more inconsistent than the situation III (5.38).
- 1.4 Girls of system III (7.58) in comparison to boys of system III (5.36), girls of system I (5.33) and girls of system II (6.16) perceived significantly more inconsistency.
- 1.5 Girls of system IV (7.00) in comparison to boys of system IV (5.66) and girls of system I (5.33) perceived more degree of inconsistency,

- 1.6 Girls perceived situation II (7.20) as more inconsistent than boys (5.27) had perceived.
- 1.7 For boys situation I (6.85) was more inconsistent than situation II (5.27) and situation III (4.87).
- 1.8 Girls felt that situation III (5.88) was less inconsistent than the situation I (6.77) and the situation II (5.58).

2.0 Degree of Botheration for Third Person's Inconsistency

- 2.1 Subjects of system III (5.13) were more bothered for third person's inconsistency than the subjects of system I (4.22) and system II (4.17)
- 2.2 Subjects of system IV (4.99) were comparatively more bothered than the subjects of system II (4.17).
- 2.3 Sex and situationwise there was no significant difference.

3.0 Degree of Tolerance for Third Person's Inconsistency

- 3.1 Subjects of system II (5.17) were comparatively less tolerant than the subjects of system I (5.98), system III (6.01) and system IV (6.12).
- 3.2 There was no sex and situation difference.
- 3.3 Higher order interaction sex x personality x situation was significant.

4.0 Degree of Botheration for Relative's Inconsistency

- 4.1 Girls (5.75) were comparatively more bothered than boys (5.09) for inconsistent relative.
- 4.2 Subjects of system IV (6.01) were comparatively more bothered than the subjects of system I (4.84).

- 4.3 The subjects of system I were more bothered for inconsistent relative of situation I (6.42) in comparison to situation II (4.33) and situation III's (3.83) relative.
- 4.4 The subjects of system IV were more bothered for inconsistent relative of situation I (7.00) than situation II (5.20) and situation III's (5.45) relative.
- 4.5 Relative of situation I was more bothersome to the subjects of system IV (7.00) than to the subjects of system II (5.16) and system III (5.04).
- 4.6 Relative of situation II was more bothersome to the subjects of system I (6.42) than to the subjects of system II (5.16) and system III (5.04).
- 4.7 Subjects of system I (3.83) were least bothered about inconsistent relative of situation III in comparison to the subjects of system II (5.37), system III (5.37) and system IV (5.45).

5.0 Degree of Tolerance for Relative's Inconsistency

- 5.1 Girls (5.40) were comparatively less tolerant than boys (5.59) to inconsistent relative.
- 5.2 Boys of system I (5.58) in comparison to the boys of system III (6.72) and system IV (6.97) were less tolerant to inconsistent relative.
- 5.3 Boys of system II had shown (5.05) degree of tolerance, comparatively less than shown by the boys of system III (6.72) and system IV (6.97).

5.4 Girls of system II (6.01) were more tolerant than the girls of system III (4.83) and system IV (4.72) for inconsistent relative.

5.5 Boys of system III (6.72) and system IV (6.97) were more tolerant than the girls of system III (4.83) and system IV (4.72).

5.6 Situationwise there was no significant difference.

6.0 Inconsistency Felt - Botheration

6.1 The degree of inconsistency felt was positively related with the degree of botheration.

7.0 Inconsistency Felt - Tolerance

7.1 Degree of inconsistency felt and degree of tolerance were negatively related.

8.0 Botheration - Tolerance

8.1 Degree of botheration felt was negatively related with degree of tolerance.

9.0 Change in Inconsistency Felt

9.1 There was no significant change in post ratings for degree of inconsistency felt in comparison to pre ratings.

10.0 Third Person for Relative

10.1 Inconsistent relative in comparison to inconsistent third person was more bothersome.

10.2 For the respondents inconsistent third person and inconsistent relative were equally tolerable.

11. Modes not Used

- 11.1 Overall χ^2 - value was significant for 'Modes Not Used.' The obtained frequencies of different reactions were : inconsistency felt, 27; acceptance of inconsistency without reasoning, 55 ; acceptance of inconsistency with reasoning, 29; acceptance of inconsistency as personality traits, 243 ; and inconsistency due to change, 328.
- 11.2 There was no significant sex difference.
- 11.3 The subjects of system (200) gave highest number of reactions of 'Modes Not Used' type in comparison to the subjects of system I, 176; system II, 132 and system III, 174 reactions.
- 11.4 'Acceptance of Inconsistency as Personality Traits' was used less frequently than expected frequencies by the subjects of system I, and used more frequently by the subjects of system III and IV.
- 11.5 The reaction 'inconsistency due to change' was less frequently used than expected frequencies by the subjects of system II and III, while the subjects of system I and IV used it more frequently.
- 11.6 For situation II 245 reactions to inconsistency of 'Modes Not Used' type were given, while for situation I, 231 and for situation III, 206.
- 11.7 For situation I, reaction 'acceptance of inconsistency as personality traits' was more used; while used of reaction 'inconsistency due to change' was almost negligible.

- 11.8 For situation II and III, reaction 'acceptance of inconsistency as personality traits' was less used than expected frequencies; while reaction 'inconsistency due to change' was used more frequently.

12.0 Modes Used

- 12.1 In total 248 modes were used, χ^2 - value was significant for 'overall'. The obtained frequencies for different modes were : denial, 95 ; rationalization, 76; bolstering, 6; differentiation, 25; and transcendence, 46.
- 12.2 Overall pattern of modes of inconsistency reduction in descending order was : denial, rationalization, transcendence, differentiation and bolstering.
- 12.3 Sexwise and situationwise there was no significant difference. Pattern of modes in all levels of sex and situation remained same as overall : denial, rationalization, transcendence, differentiation and bolstering.
- 12.4 For situation I, 121 modes were used ; while for situation II, 48 ; and for situation III, 79, modes were used.
- 12.5 Personalitywise χ^2 - value was significant. Subjects of system IV had used 81 modes, system III, 70 ; system I, 55 ; and the subjects of system II had used 42 modes.
- 12.6 The pattern of modes for system IV subjects was : denial, transcendence, rationalization, differentiation and bolstering.

- 12.7 The pattern of modes for subjects of system I was : denial, rationalization, transcendence, differentiation ; for system II : denial, rationalization, differentiation, transcendence and bolstering ; for system III : rationalization, denial, transcendence, differentiation and bolstering.

13.0 Integration

- 13.1 More abstract subjects (system III and IV) had integrated inconsistent information at higher level than the more concrete subjects (system I and II).

- 13.2 There were no sex and situational differences.

14.0 Homeostasis or Signal-and-Search

- 14.1 On the whole results favoured signal-and search model.

15.0 General

- 15.1 Majority of the subjects believed that most of us behave inconsistently.
- 15.2 Majority of the subjects, specifically girls, believed that women in general are more inconsistent than men.
- 15.3 Nearly 50 percent respondents did not want to have any relationship with inconsistent persons, 10 percent wanted inconsistent persons as father, 35 percent as friend, 22 percent as neighbour; and 14 percent as relative.

- 15.4 Nearly 53 percent respondents said that they can tolerate inconsistent neighbour ; while 42 percent for relative and friend; and 40 percent said that they can tolerate inconsistent father.

Suggestions

1. Perception of inconsistent person should be studied outside the laboratory with all the human complexities;
 2. The effects of value structure of perceiver person and inconsistencies found between different values in inconsistent perceived person can be an interesting study,
 3. Study dealing with direction and amount of changes in impressions of the perceiver about other person and the way he organizes it, may prove to be of utmost importance in understanding interpersonal relationship,
 4. A whole programme should be set up or a kind of logic for person perception should be evolved to train the perceivers as to how to perceive other person with less errors.
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