

CHAPTER II

RELATED STUDIES

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- Person Perception
- Primary-Recency Effect
- Impression Organisation and Change
- Average-Summation
- Cognition Tuning
- Developmental Trends
- Individual Differences
 - Conceptual Differentiation
 - Cognitive Complexity
 - Authoritarianism and Dogmatism
 - Belief System
- Development and Relevance of the Problem

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II RELATED STUDIES

Present chapter reviews the literature of person perception more specifically perception of incompatible man. The major work on the issue of perception of incompatible (inconsistent) person has been done by the theories other than consistency. The present chapter, defines the term person perception, and attempts to evaluate critically the trends of researches and emphasizes the need to attempt to study person perception from consistency theories viewpoint.

Person Perception

Person perception refers to the process by which one comes to know and to think about other persons, their characteristics, qualities and inner states. It focuses mainly on the process by which impressions, opinions or feelings about other persons are formed. It includes subjective judgments and inferences that go beyond direct sensory information. According to Taiguri (1958, 1969) the phrase person perception was not very satisfactory. For him, it was used in very loose way, most often meaning apperception and cognition. To add the complexity, the area had been variously named, as social perception, person cognition, interpersonal perception, empathy, insight,

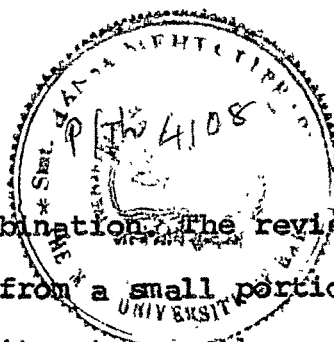
clinical intuition, social acuity and identification with slight varying meaning from each other (Taiguri, 1969).

Taiguri and Petrullo (1958) proposed to use the term 'person perception', whenever the perceiver regards the object as having the potential of representation and intentionality. In other words, observations made by the perceiver about intentions, attitudes, emotions, ideas, abilities, purposes, traits etc. events which are inside the person or about psychological properties.

The process of person perception is different from other processes of perception. It is certainly different to perceive a rock and to perceive a person. In person perception the similarity between the perceiver and the perceived object is greater than in any other case. This unique fact probably enables the perceiver to make full use of his own experience in perceiving, judging or inferring states or intentions of others. While the more general question of how one knows anything at all has concerned thinkers of all times, the process of how one knows other person did not receive formal and separate attention until the latter part of the nineteenth century. Darwin's work (1872) on emotional expressions and their recognition gave scientific impetus to this problem area.

Since the 1930s and after the first wave of interest in recognition of emotions, there seems to have been two major directions of effort in the field of person perception. First, questions were asked about the 'process' of perceiving, of knowing another person, of impression formation, and about stimulus and perceiver characteristics and their interactions - in short about how the synthesis is made by the organism. Second area of interest, focused on the outcome and veridicality of the judgment, on the generality of the ability to be accurate, and, finally on its correlates. In practice, these two areas of investigation blends with each other. (Taiguri and Petrullo, 1958; Cline, 1964; Kaminiski, 1959; Shrauger and Altrocchi, 1964).

The impression that one person forms from observing the appearance and behavior of another is affected by an extensive array of factors. Among these determinants are the attributes that characterize the other person as a stimulus object, the relationship between perceiver and perceived, the significance of the other person, in the perceiver's social world, and the cognitions, motives, belief, intentions, other stable personality characteristics, or transitory psychological states of the perceiver. Studies in person perception have made use of variables from all



these sources, singly and in combination. The review in the present paper will be drawn from a small portion of the total body of the research literature: the integration of potentially contradictory behavior (or information) from descriptions of unknown others. A familiar experimental paradigm presents subjects with information about some person they do not know, and this information is manipulated in such a way as to contain aspects of opposite valence or to describe behaviors that are not typically expected to occur jointly. Asch (1946) was the first to conduct systematic investigations into the organizational characteristics of other persons. Asch read to subjects a list of traits, half socially desirable and half undesirable, in which the positive traits were all presented before the negative traits or vice versa. Asch, concluded that early information tends to set a general evaluative tone that colors the ways in which the perceiver interprets subsequent information - primary effect. His work in the area of the formation of first impression had led him to conclude that such impressions were unified, completed, and rounded. One of the important conclusions drawn by Asch¹ was :

'...we do not simply stop with the perception of inconsistencies. Apparent inconsistencies prompt us to search more deeply for a view that will resolve the difficulty. The presence of contradictory information stimulates us to preserve the unity of the impression.'

¹Asch, S.E. 'Social Psychology.' Prentice Hall, N.Y. 1952, pp. 216-217.

The work of Asch on impression formation attracted attention to processes of person perception and to methods that seemed to open up possibilities for qualitative and systematic approaches. Asch's work raised many important issues, specifically related to primacy-recency effect, and of the organization and changes in impressions.

Primacy - Recency Effect

After Asch (1946), Luchins (1958) varied experimental procedure slightly and produced diametrically opposite results, he was able to obtain recency effect.

Ralph Stewart (1965) found that primacy effect can be prevented by asking subjects to form impressions after each new piece of information.

Rosenkrantz (1961) remarked that none of the studies of primacy - recency effects had included control groups in which the positive and negative informations were

presented together rather than in univalent blocks. In his work, Rosenkrantz found that men high in complexity showed ambivalent impressions under both block and alternating conditions of presentation, while those low in complexity showed strong recency effects under block conditions and somewhat less primacy effects under alternating conditions. Similar results were reported by Mayo and Crockett (1964) ; Rosenkrantz and Crockett (1965).

The various findings of 'primacy-recency' type of the studies indicate that with the special effort primacy-recency effects can be controlled. Individual differences found by Crockett and his colleagues also adds the meaning.

Impression Organization and Change

After Asch's (1946) study, many scholars worked on the way impressions are organized and the way they are changed. Ichheiser (1949) speaks of misunderstanding that arises from overestimation of the unity of the personality, and a refusal to accept and incorporate into the characteristics that are at variance with the previous picture of the person. Once the image of the person is fixed in mind, person tends either to overlook all factors in the other person which do not fit it with preconceived scheme, or else he misinterprets in order to preserve the preformed impressions.

Haire and Grunes (1950) presented to their subjects a description of a typical factory worker who was also said to be 'intelligent'. They concluded that respondents organized their impressions in number of ways : by straight forward denial, by modifying the attributes or reinterpreting it, by allowing the new element to make a real change, or by explicit recognition of the conflict and simultaneous maintenance of the unchanged stereotype. Pepitone and Hayden (1955) attempted to test conflict resolution tendencies, and to describe some of the processes of conflict resolution. Three degrees of conflict were created by manipulating the stimulus persons group membership. In the condition of strong conflict the person was a member of five groups characterized by an upper socio-economic group and simultaneously a member of the communist party. In the weak stimulus condition while a member of the same upper socio-economic groups, the stimulus person was also a member of the socialist party. In the control condition there was no incompatible group membership. The majority of subjects under both stimulus conditions attempted to resolve the stimulus person conflict. Only a minority of the subjects were able to reconcile the two sets of information in their impressions, most of the respondents either ignored one set of information, or if both sets of information were retained, provided no satisfactory means of

relating and unifying the two themes.

Just cited three studies by Ichheicer, Haire and Grunes, and Pepiton and Hayden gave stress on impression formation, its organization and change. They gave to the subjects somewhat discrepant informations about the object person and studied the way subjects reacted to it. Their interpretation was very similar to consistency theory.

Average - Summation

One of the very controversial issues after Asch's work, was whether impressions adds or averages. In other words, given that a stimulus person is described by several exceedingly good traits, what is the effect of ascribing to him several additional traits that are mildly good ? Is an additive model correct, such that the additional (mildly) positive traits result in his being even more favourably evaluated (Abelson, 1961 ; Fishbein and Hunter, 1964 ; Triandis and Fishbein 1963) ? Or is the averaging model more appropriate, so that adding the only mildly positive traits results in an averaging out to a lower net evaluation than would the extremely positive trait alone (Anderson, 1962 ; Campbell, 1961 ; Feldman, 1962 ; Osgood and Tannenbaum, 1955) ? Evidences were presented by both the parties and still it is one of the unsolved issues.

Cognitive Tuning

Zajonc (1960) cited two experiments, to study the cognitive effects of the person's role in the communication process. In the first experiment person expecting to transmit information were compared with others expecting to receive information for the extent of differentiation, complexity, unity and organization. The results showed that transmitters activate cognitive structures which were more differentiated, complex, unified and organized than those activated by receivers. The second experiment involved the anticipation of dealing with incongruent information, and in comparison with groups dealing with congruent information. Those expecting to deal with incongruent information generally showed decrease differences between transmitters and receivers. The results were accounted for an increase in the proportion of specific cognitive components and in the tendency to reject material inconsistent with the person's own opinion.

Cohen (1961) examined the way situational factor (tuning sets) determines how conflicting cognitions concerning a person were organized into a coherent impressions. Lists of contradictory traits describing a person were presented to 120 subjects. Half of the subjects were instructed that they were later to transmit their impression of the person to other students; the remaining subjects were instructed that they would receive the impression from others concerning the person

described by the traits. The groups were further subdivided into those receiving highly contradictory and those receiving moderately contradictory traits. The results showed that those in the transmission condition were more prone than those in the reception condition to suppress contradictory elements in their impressions and the impressions were more polarized in evaluation.

Leventhal (1962) using Zajone's (1960) methodology, failed to replicate Zajone's finding, that transmitters form more differentiated and more highly interrelated impressions than receivers. However, the transmitter and receiver groups differed significantly in the way they reacted to discrepant information. Receivers, when compared to transmitters, showed that they were more intent upon recognizing and interrelating the discrepancies; their second impressions became more differentiated and had more elements that were new and more that were similar to their initial impressions.

Just cited three articles by Zajone, Cohen and Leventhal suggests that the effect of set (cognitive tuning) had differential effect on the formation of impressions.

Developmental Trends

Methodologically freeing the concept of development from the concept of time, Werner (1961) considered that the characteristic ways of doing things determine whether an organism is developmentally more primitive or advanced , irrespective of when these modes of operation are brought into play.

Gollin (1954) presented college-age adults with five film shots in which a particular girl was shown alternatively engaged in a socially condemned, socially admired or socially neutral activity. The task of the subjects was to form an impression of the girl on the basis of the information presented in the various shots. Using a Wernerian framework, Gollin subjected written impressions to a developmental analysis, and distinguished three modes of resolving inconsistency. In the most primitive mode (simplified), one of the qualities was ignored, and the impressions were build exclusively either to the positive or negative material. In the intermediate mode (aggregation), the positive and negative aspects were differentiated, but no constructs were introduced to bring them into a coherent system. In the advanced mode (integration), the information was not only differentiated, but in addition, there was a transcendence

to make the varied behavior more consistent with each other.

In a subsequent study, using an appropriately modified but essentially similar kind of presentation for children of various ages, Gollin (1958) demonstrated that simplified modes of resolution characterized the impressions of the younger children, while integrated modes were manifested more often by the older children.

Dinnerstein (1951) utilized sets of remarks about hypothetical people and obtained findings similar to Gollin's (1954) motion picture study. She reported that impressions were not always unified, completed and rounded.

Kaplan and Crockett (1958) criticized the way the developmental framework was used by Gollin (1954, 1958), that he had not distinguished the different modes of organizing activity. They proposed theoretical framework which they prophesied will build up the gap between two theories : developmental and consistency, to nurture yet to born developmental social psychology.

In contrast to other approaches interested in final outcome or impressions, the principal interest of

developmentalist like Werner, Kaplan and other was with the 'ways' in which the perceiver deals with the inconsistency of other person. The (present) experimenter throughout the study was obsessive in the 'ways' of reactions to inconsistency and not in final outcome (impressions). One of the objectives of the study was to see the way the impressions were integrated (a kind of mini replica of Kaplan and Crockett's, 1968 proposal).

Individual Differences

It is a common experience to find that two persons disagree sharply in their opinion of other. The question of individual correlates of person perception is often difficult to answer because of the many elements that enter into the measures of individual differences in how people perceive others. Perhaps the most general discussions of individual differences in person perception have been in terms of cognitive style, since in these treatments the point is usually made that there is consistency in an individual's cognitive processes, independent of the nature of the object involved. Gollin and Rosenberg (1956) showed that persons able to integrate a series of religious, political and economic terms into

broader categories also tended to relate personality traits, even if they were incongruous.

Conceptual Differentiation : One of the best studied aspects of individual differences in person perception was the degree of conceptual differentiation. Conceptually, differentiation refers to the tendency to make fine distinctions among people and thus to perceive them as different from one another. Operationally, it has been defined in several ways, and little is known yet about the interrelationships among these measures. Some of the important measures of differentiation are: cognitive complexity, dogmatism and authoritarianism and conceptual belief system.

Cognitive Complexity : A cognitive system is to be considered relatively complex in structure when (a) it contains a relatively large number of elements and (b) the elements are integrated hierarchically by relatively extensive bonds of relationship. The differences between cognitively high and low complex judges in resolving inconsistent information have usually been studied in relation to sequentially presented information.

Mayo and Crockett (1964) first presented behavior about another that was positive in nature (or negative) and

then presented negative (or positive) information. Judgments about the person were made after each presentation. The results indicated that low complex judges formed more univalent impressions by changing their initial judgments in the direction of the subsequent contradictory information. Such a recency effect was not found for high complex judges, who retained both types of informations in their final judgments, yielding a more ambivalent impression of the others.

Crockett (1965) had also reported two unpublished studies of a similar nature by Rosenkrantz and Supnick. Rosenkrantz obtained effects similar to those of Mayo and Crockett for males but not for females ; while Supnick obtained results which were inconsistent.

Tripodi and Bieri (1964) using more sophisticated methodology and systematic analysis found somewhat similar results. They asked subjects to make judgments of pathology based on information which might contain any of the three behavioral dimensions of aggression, body anxiety and social withdrawal. Judges received information which was either consistently combined or inconsistently combined. In relation to inconsistently combined information, High complex judges discriminated significantly better than did

Low complex judges. They also found that the cognitively complex judges were less confident of their judgments in all stimulus conditions except those involving inconsistent information. For inconsistent information, High complex judges had higher confidence ratings than for any of the other types of stimuli they judged while low complex judges felt more confident of their judgments of consistent information. Similar findings were reported by Tripodi and Bieri (1966), and Leventhal and Singer (1964).

Tripodi and Bieri (1966) analyzed the relation of cognitive complexity to the judgment of the amount of conflict in consistent and inconsistent stimuli and to certainty of those judgments. High complex subjects perceived more conflict in the stimulus individuals than did the low complex subjects.

Irwin, Tripodi and Bieri (1967) reported two studies. In both studies, it was found that using cognitive complexity as a measure of differentiation, persons with whom predominantly negative affect was associated, were differentiated significantly more than were persons with whom predominantly positive affect was associated. Further, women differentiated significantly more than men among persons with negative affective value, while among positive persons, men tended to differentiate more than women. The

work related to complexity and judgment gives evidence that the judge with more structure in his system of perceiving others (High complex) will discriminate better among inconsistent stimuli, will prefer and be more certain of his judgments based upon inconsistent information, and will inject greater conflict into his judgments in comparison to low complex judges.

Authoritarianism and Dogmatism

Steiner (1954) concluded that 'high ethnocentrics' tolerate less disharmony between their value systems and their perceptual assumptions. He presented sets of trait pairs to determine which pairs were likely and unlikely to occur together. Then, high and low scorers on the California Ethnocentrism Scale were presented trait pairs that had been previously rated as likely to occur and unlikely to occur. The subjects task was to cross out those pairs whose occurrence they judged as least likely. High E S's crossed out a significantly greater number of dissimilar trait pairs than did Low E Ss.

Kenny and Ginsberg (1958), found no significant relationship between intolerance for trait inconsistency and authoritarian submission, as measured by a subset of

items from the California F Scale. Steiner and Johnson (1963) pointed out that the observed difference may have arisen from a greater heterogeneity of age, educational background, and occupation among Kenny and Ginsberg's Ss. When such heterogeneity was eliminated, Steiner and Johnson (1963) obtained a significant correlation of .26 between F scores and intolerance of trait inconsistency. In a study dealing with dogmatism and tolerance for trait inconsistency, Foulkes and Foulkes (1965), gave to High and Low scorers on Rokeach's Test, a series of statements supposedly describing each of four girls, and the S's ratings of each girl were obtained. Subjects then received additional information intended to reverse the initial impression. They then rated the girls a second time. Results indicated that High D Ss changed their original ratings considerably or else showed little change. By contrast Low D Ss generally showed moderate shifts of personality impression. High D Ss found it more difficult than Low D Ss to tolerate the inconsistency created by the conflicting information, and to reduce it either changed their impressions drastically or else ignored the contradictory information.

The studies just reviewed indicate that authoritarian and dogmatic persons possess less tolerance for inconsistency.

Belief System (Concrete - Abstract Thinking)

Harvey, Hunt and Schroder (1961) differentiated four different belief systems (different level of abstractness), based on a series of studies at the University of Colarado.

In one study by Harvey (1965) ten representatives of each of the 4 main levels of abstractness argued in opposition to their own beliefs about philosophy as a subject, under the instructions that their arguments would never be heard by anyone other than themselves (private) or that their arguments would be heard by a university curriculum committee (public). Immediately following argumentation, all subjects were readministered the scale on opinions toward philosophy; and they were readministered the same scale a second time one week later. As a main effect, the more concrete subjects changed their opinions more than did the more abstract subjects, and as an interaction, the more concrete subjects changed their opinions more in public while the more abstract subjects changed more in private, this shows that concrete subjects have a greater need or tendency toward cognitive consistency and greater arousal and change from the experience of cognitive inconsistency. Ware and Harvey (1967) studied the influence

of personality on the amount of information sought about another person before forming an impression. Eighteen concrete and 18 abstract subjects participated in the experiment. The subjects were exposed, in three steps, to two, four and six pieces each of positive and negative information about a hypothetical person and tested after each step on their impression of the person and the centrality of their impressions. No significant difference was found by t - tests between the positive generalization produced by positive inputs with the negative generalization produced by the negative inputs, for the total generalization or the generalization at each input frequency. The picture was different, however, when comparisons were made between extent of generalization under the input-output inconsistency conditions. The results indicated a kind of tendency to see good in other person rather than bad. Subjects felt more certain that a person described as having positive characteristics would be less likely to manifest undesirable behavior than a negative depicted person would be to display positive characteristics. When input and output characteristics were hedonically consistent, the concrete 53 generalized more than the abstract individuals, but they generalized less than the abstract subjects when the inputs were hedonically inconsistent.

Whether consistent or inconsistent input-output concrete individuals were more certain of their impressions than were the abstract Ss.

Harvey and Ware (1967) reported the impact of personality differences in dissonance resolution. Seventeen representatives each of system 1 and 4 served as subjects. Subjects were first exposed to a series of descriptive statements about a person's past behavior, then they were presented person's present behavior that ran sharply counter to his past activities (bad person turned good or good person turned bad). A counter balance designed was used in the presentation of material. Following exposures to each behavior pattern, subjects rated, on a 6-inch scale from 'completely consistent' to completely inconsistent. The degree of consistency perceived between ~~that~~ other person's past and present behaviour. They were then required, within an 8 minute time limit, to write at least two paragraphs accounting for either the consistency or inconsistency they perceived. The written explanations were scored by two independent judges for (a) the amount of psychological discomfiture (b) the amount of change attributed to ^{other person} ~~the~~ from the past to the present, (c) number of explanations, (d) integration of reiteration of the conflicting statements (e) use of

stereotypic labels, (f) tentativeness of conclusions about other persons, and (g) the mutual exclusiveness of good and bad attributes in the same person.

Both patterns, Good turned bad, and bad turned good, were combined, as there was no significant difference on any. It was found that the concrete Ss, to a significantly greater extent than the abstract individuals (a) perceived inconsistencies between other person's past and present behavior, (b) were negatively aroused by the inconsistencies, (c) sought to neutralize the inconsistency by attributing it to temporal change in other persons, (d) gave few explanations of the inconsistencies, (e) gave poorly integrated accounts of the inconsistency, expressed in mere reiteration of the conflicting characteristics, and (f) used stereotypic labels such as 'bum', 'fink' and 'solid citizen' in their explanations, (g) were less tentative in their conclusions; (h) viewed desirable and undesirable characteristics as mutually exclusive.

The results of the three studies reported by Harvey and his colleagues may be interpreted as that concreteness of conceptual functioning disposes toward a low tolerance of inconsistency and toward resolving cognitive inconsistency in ways different from the modes of resolution that result from abstract functioning. Similarly, it can be said that Low

Complex, High Dogmatic individuals were less tolerant of inconsistency.

The present study borrows heavily from Harvey and Ware (1967) and Ware and Harvey's (1967) works. The major difference between the present study and the Harvey and Ware's study is that present study heavily emphasizes on cognitive consistency theories, and studies inconsistency tolerance and modes of inconsistency reduction more elaborately.

To summarize the studies reviewed, when Ss were presented with material about some person which contained ^{that} items were opposite in valence, or which lead to contradictory expectations about that person, some were able to reconcile the contradictory items and to include them in their final impressions, others were not. To put in other words, in such situations people differed in their ability to react to inconsistency.

Development and Relevance of the Problem

In the first introductory chapter it was pointed out that an emotional disease has in root the germs of faulty perception. To reduce the emotional problems one should reduce the errors in person perception. Inconsistent behavior of other person (dear ones) eventually may lead to some emotional shock,

if not properly understood by the perceiver (~~usually dear ones~~). It was also made clear (in first chapter) that the present work will restrict itself to study certain reactions to inconsistent behavior of others and will not prepose any remedial measurement to improve person perception.

The first chapter also dealt with informal historical development of concept of consistency and its formal formulation by six theorists. Consistency theories rich with methodological complexities and large number of researches in its credit scarcely had anything to offer for the problem of person perception and more specifically when other person behaves inconsistently how he is looked by others. On the contrary, consistency theorists mainly concentrated on the reactions of inconsistent person 'himself' when he confronts with own inconsistency. The present experimenter failed to collect any work from consistency theories directly attacking on the problem of perception of an inconsistent person.

In the second chapter - related studies, the experimenter reviewed studies dealing with the perception of incompatible person. The major break through came from Aşch's work on impression formation. Plenty of researches came out since

Asch's contribution, stressing different issues of impression formation, (i) the way the impressions are organized and changed (ii) primacy-recency effect, whether first impression is important or later one, (iii) average - additivity, the impressions organizes itself additively or averagely, and (iv) what are important individual and situational determinants of impression. It becomes difficult task to relate studies in person perception. The low level of additivity of the empirical evidences, resulted due to great variation in methods, stimuli, judges, data analyses and scoring procedures.

It was desirable to study person perception (inconsistent person) through consistency viewpoint. Certain terms like inconsistency tolerance, botheration, modes of inconsistency reduction etc. were thought may lead to more depth in the person perception studies. An attempt was made in the present work to study perception of seemingly inconsistent person through consistency viewpoint. Exact formulation of the problem, objectives, hypotheses etc. have been presented in chapter No. III.
