CHAPTER - I

PHENOMENOLOGICAL PSYCHOLOGY: AN INTRODUCTION

Introduction

Phenomenological psychology is the study of psychological phenomena in their subjective aspect, regardless of their indebtedness in the objective context of a psychophysical organism.\(^1\) Phenomenological psychology has emerged as a discipline with the writings of Edmund Husserl in first quarter of twentieth century and consequently established with the writings of Jean-Paul Sartre and Maurice Merleau-Ponty. Phenomenological psychology is destined to supply the essential insight needed to give meaning and direction to the research presented under the title of ‘empirical psychology’ as well as plays an important role in philosophy.\(^2\) In the field of psychology, it was a reaction against the scientific methods of empirical psychology. Empirical psychology concerns itself with concrete real beings and in this connection it points towards the physical. Husserl contended that empirical psychology moved away from the essential features of psychological phenomena. He further considers that psychology should free itself from the theoretical prejudices. He rejected empirical psychology on the account of its naturalism by pointing out orthodox behaviorism.\(^3\) Phenomenological psychology has made a critical intervention in both philosophy and psychology. Phenomenological psychology came into force by filling the gap between philosophy and empirical psychology of early twentieth century.\(^4\)

Phenomenology is the study of structures of consciousness as experienced by a person. For Husserl as like Kant and Descartes, knowledge is based on intuition and essence precedes empirical knowledge. The essence of phenomenology is to understand consciousness and the objects towards which it is directed. In other words, the essence of


phenomenology is to understand anything that is experienced and try to come up with clarified understanding of anything which is capable of being experienced. According to Husserl, phenomenological philosophy is the better solution to have a unified psychology. Experience is always open to something that is not the experience itself. In psychology, it would mean that we turn to behaviour and the behaviour is also directed towards something that is itself not behaviour, intentionality combines them with something else so as to move towards unification phenomenology with psychological themes.\(^5\)

The method of phenomenological psychology is primarily derived from phenomenology. It is a dialogue with the human being to get human being to disclose oneself to someone in all its manifestation and complexity.\(^6\) The starting point of phenomenological philosophers is that human experiences manifest a meaningful structure. Thus the aim of phenomenologists is to uncover these structures and rescue them from being buried in the multitude of human experiences. Phenomenologists describe these structures with the help of analytic explication method which is essentially distinguished from the methods of the sciences. In this dialectical method, phenomenologists demonstrate universality and necessity of their description of essences. These basic structures of human being become the foundation of empirical research.\(^7\)

Husserl uses reduction and descriptive approaches to find the essentials. This approach is considered as scientific as it is systematic, methodological and critical. The reduction is to make knowledge as certain as possible. Husserl makes a distinction between naturalistic attitude and phenomenological attitude. According to him, the naturalistic attitude can be erroneous whereas phenomenological attitude is the better and it even helps to understand the naturalistic attitude. In naturalistic attitude, we are aware of the objects but in phenomenological attitude, we are aware of the way in which objects are presented to us. That is to say, the reduction is a kind of attitude where we see the object only in light of this mode of presentation. Thus phenomenological psychology deals with

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what is presented to consciousness but not with their existence because existence limits
the content of consciousness. Phenomenological psychology aims to study consciousness
in its meaningful structure and function. It is to provide a justification and basis for
empirical psychology, as well as a methodology for exploration of consciousness.\(^8\)

The existential phenomenologists reject the transcendental or eidetic reduction.
They are mainly interested in the existential orientation of human being toward world.
Sartre introduced existential psychoanalysis as his method of understanding human
motivation behind the acts. He also uses interpretative and dialectic approach to study
existential orientation of human being towards world.\(^9\) For Merleau-Ponty, the basic
method of phenomenological psychology is the method of description. In addition to this,
he recommends that other methods and techniques appropriate for the study of man’s
experience and relation to himself, to others and to the world could be continually sought
and developed. According to him, the phenomenological psychology is oriented towards
understanding man in all his aspects. Its primary interest lies in human experience and its
qualitative exploration. It also studies human behaviour but it is opposed to the exclusive
restriction of the subject matter of psychology to behaviour and its control. It rejects any
philosophical assumptions concerning the nature of consciousness, except its
intentionality. It particularly opposes the empiricists’ \textit{tabula rasa} concept of
consciousness, the associationistic view, and all reductionist tendencies. It favours and
emphasizes the holistic approach to the study of psychological problems. Merleau-Ponty
wants to bridge the gap between mind and body dichotomy.\(^10\) In broad,
phenomenological psychology is that any psychology which considers personal
experience in its subject matter and which accepts and uses phenomenological
description explicitly or implicitly can be called phenomenological psychology. It is
contrasted with psychology which admits only objective observation of behaviour and
excludes phenomenological description in its methodology.\(^11\)

\(^8\) Ibid., p.21-24.
\(^9\) Ibid., p.332.
\(^10\) Henryk Misiak, Virginia Staudt Sexton, \textit{Phenomenological, Existential, and Humanistic Psychologies: A
\(^11\) Ibid., p.35.
Phenomenological psychology is not only plays a role of mediation between philosophy and psychology in a significant way but it have also introduced a new approach in understanding human personality in the field of psychology. Phenomenological psychology has got its own importance in the backdrop of major debates in the field of psychology. Phenomenological psychology has enriched the discipline of psychology by pointing out the limitations of Wundt’s experimental psychology, Watson’s behaviouristic psychology and Gestalt psychology. Phenomenological psychology put forward the necessity of meaningful interaction between philosophy and psychology in understanding human being holistically.\footnote{Edmund Husserl, \textit{The Crisis of European Sciences and Transcendental Phenomenology}, David Carr, (trans.), Evanston: Northwestern University Press, 1970, pp.187-193.}

Wilhelm Wundt’s experimental psychology made an attempt to free psychology from philosophy. He ridiculed the philosophical analysis of mental processes being speculative in character. He also rejected the emphasis of the anatomical analysis to study the psychological phenomena by physiologists.\footnote{Arun Kumar Singh, \textit{The Comprehensive History of Psychology}, Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass Publishers Pvt. Ltd, 1991, p.96.} John Watson the founder of behaviourism viewed psychology as an objective science of behaviour therefore its method must be empirical ones. He replaced the method of introspection with the scientific method of observation and verification through laboratory experimentation instead philosophers’ methods of observation and logic. Behaviourists adopted scientific methodologies to study and draw conclusions about human thought and behaviour.\footnote{Ibid., pp. 215-226.} In this way, psychology had moved away from its previous association with philosophy and proceeded to ever closer ties with the methodology of physics. The affinity with the natural sciences became so close at times, it was impossible to see where psychology ends and physiology starts.\footnote{Op. cit., \textit{Edmund Husserl’s Phenomenological Psychology: A Historico-Critical Study}, p.6.} But at particular point of time, Gestalt psychologists realized that this physiological scientific method has its limitation in application to psychical phenomenon. Physical sciences consider man as a creature produced by and wholly accounted for in terms of surrounding nature.\footnote{Stephan Strasser, \textit{Phenomenology and the Human Sciences}, Pittsburgh: Duquesne University Press, 1963, p.6.} In this connection, man is seen as
a link in the chain of cosmic evolution, as an organism dependent upon and determined by a biological substratum, whereas in the empirical sciences of man, man is viewed under the aspect of the originator and elaborator of a world in which he lives, works and dwells.\(^\text{17}\) It is evident from the discussion that rather borrowing the method of physics, psychology should design its own methods suited to the problems relevant to it. Husserl, the phenomenologist also arrived at this conclusion through his own philosophy. So he envisaged his new psychology called phenomenological psychology.\(^\text{18}\) Husserl critically viewed German and Austrian psychology for their uses of the empirical or scientific methods. According to him, the scientific psychology uncovered a great number of facts about human and animal behaviour. However, these facts were understood only within the narrow perspective arising from naive naturalistic point of view. Since psychology is concerned with the understanding of individual and the world of individual, psychology can neither be purely descriptive and nor purely experimental. But both methods must be complementary to each other. Husserl’s intention was to bridge empirical psychology with phenomenology by developing a new and special psychological discipline called phenomenological psychology.\(^\text{19}\) Sartre and Merleau-Ponty carried further the task of Husserl in their existential phenomenology.

The school of behaviourism is being one of the dominant schools of psychology was using the scientific approach as the most appropriate method in psychology. Though there was dissatisfaction in the camp of psychology about the use of scientific methods nothing much could have been done because the behaviouristic and psychoanalytic schools dominated the entire discipline of empirical psychology. Sartre and Merleau-Ponty have tried to show the blunder of psychoanalytic and behaviouristic schools in understanding human being through their analysis of unconscious urges and mere behaviour respectively.\(^\text{20}\)

Sartre is critical of pretention of psychology to be positive science in its approach to experience. According to Sartre, psychology tries to draw upon the resources of


\(^{19}\) Ibid., pp.122-137.

experience alone. In so far as psychology claims to be a science which could furnish nothing more than a sum of heteroclite facts and the majority of which have no links between them. But for Sartre, phenomenology is the study of phenomena, not of facts. A phenomenon is that which announces itself to us; its reality is precisely its spontaneous appearance itself must be questioned and described as it appears. It does not further stand for anything else. It does not hide or represent any deeper reality. The whole of man can be found in any particular human attitude.\textsuperscript{21} Therefore we see emotion as the example of human reality. It gathers itself and directs itself emotionally to the world. A phenomenologist, therefore, can question man about his emotions and also can question the emotions concerning man’s essence. For man to \textit{ek-sist} means to take one’s being upon oneself in some existential mode, in some or other orientation toward the world. But, the empirical psychology of those days following the footsteps of physicist considered a particular psychical situation in such a way as to denude it of all meaning. According to them, a fact is nothing, it is devoid of meaning. They never want to attach any meaning to it. For phenomenologists, on the other hand, each and every human act is essentially meaningful. They study the meaning of the different forms of man’s existential orientation towards the world. Emotion has no meaning for traditional psychologists as a fact which is cut off from the meaning giving matrix. But Sartre says that emotion is not a mere accident nor it is an effect of human reality but it is this reality has its own structure, law, meaning and sense. Therefore emotion is an organized form of human existence.\textsuperscript{22}

According to Sartre, psychology should define experience with much greater accuracy than physical sciences. He uses intentionality as the backbone for his psychology and his psychology is the key to his ontology. In fact, the concept of imaging consciousness as the locus of possibility, negativity and lack emerges as the model for consciousness in general (being-for-itself) in \textit{Being and Nothingness}. In this, he describes

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the specific function of consciousness to create a world of unrealities, or ‘imagination’ and its noetic correlative, the imaginary.\textsuperscript{23}

Merleau-Ponty, another prominent existential phenomenologist has concern for psychology from the perspective of phenomenological psychology. He is critical of scientific analysis in the field of psychology. For Merleau-Ponty, all scientific observations and theories are ultimately based on the direct, immediate, spontaneous experience of everyday life, which phenomenology uncovers. This assumption is vital to phenomenological psychology. Merleau-Ponty views science as:

> the whole universe of science is built upon the world as directly experienced, and if we want to subject science itself to rigorous scrutiny and arrives at a precise assessment of its meaning and scope, we must begin by reawakening the basic experience of the world of which science is the second-order expression.\textsuperscript{24}

For phenomenologists, experience is an ‘in-relation-to’ phenomenon, and it is defined by qualities of directedness, embodiment, and worldliness, which are evoked by the term ‘being-in-the-world’. According to Merleau-Ponty, it is necessary to understand the ‘being-in-the-world’ of people to have a meaningful understanding of them. For him, this means viewing people as being-in-the-world as a reciprocal relationship with their world and others. He also accepts that people are influenced by their society which provides a common language as well as many behavioural expectations. However, people develop a sense of agency that becomes their centre for choice and responsibility. Moreover, their active choices also influence culture and lead to other alternative courses of action.\textsuperscript{25} The behaviour is a structure therefore it is necessary to have an understanding of the structural pattern of behaviour for understanding human beings. It is possible with the phenomenological approach which starts its analysis with immediately given

\textsuperscript{23} Ibid., pp.46-53.
\textsuperscript{25} Ibid., p.173.
experiences and its descriptive nature of analysis. In other words, in Merleau-Ponty’s scheme of psychology locate the body subject as crucial means to access the world of perception.26

Merleau-Ponty holds that in understanding people, a therapist or theorist needs to overcome at least two dualisms. First is Cartesian split of body and mind that has been particularly emphasized by academic psychology in their attempts to find the causes of behaviour. The second dualism is the split between the individual and the society, which is more a product of the latter half of the twentieth century as theorist moved from personality toward social constructionism. For Merleau-Ponty, these dualisms attempt to determine that people are simply a product of their culture. Whereas, Merleau-Ponty adopts an approach that appreciates the person’s account of his or her reasons for and how the world appears to him or her as well as it leads to appreciate the social context in which he or she is embedded.27

Phenomenological psychology understands personal experiences as phenomena. It argues against the trends of psychology that focus only on objective observation of behaviour by excluding one’s personal experiences. The experiencing subject can be considered to be the person or self. The motto of phenomenological psychology is ‘going to things themselves’.28 In other words, phenomenological psychology allows the phenomenon to show itself in consciousness. Phenomenological psychology is in tune with phenomenology. Phenomenologists view consciousness as immediately given and its validity is based on the notion of intentionality. It explores human experience in all its facet without any philosophical preconceptions.29

Phenomenological psychology may be considered as a new approach or orientation in psychological exploration rather a school or theoretical systems of psychology such as associationalism, functionalism, psychoanalysis or behaviourism. There is no much difference between phenomenological psychology and empirical

psychology in the object which they study rather the difference is in their manner of approach to the subject matter. In spite of these differences, Husserl views that phenomenological psychology should remain in contact with empirical psychology as a natural empirical science and should be tied to philosophy as an *eidetic, aprioric* science.\(^{30}\)

The study focuses on two contemporary French existential philosophers, Jean-Paul Sartre and Maurice Merleau-Ponty who have critically intervened into the debates of psychology in general and have enriched the phenomenological psychology in particular. They both view an individual as unique with consciousness and do each and every behavioural activity intentionally. Though Sartre and Merleau-Ponty being existential phenomenologists have the commonality on many accounts but approach the psychological issues differently.

The works of phenomenologists have influenced psychoanalysis, behaviourism, Gestalt psychology, cognitive behaviourism and therapists of different schools. The dialogue between phenomenology and psychology has been taking place but it is still not clear how the two disciplines relate to each other. The part of the problem is that both disciplines have developed complexly with competing perspectives and hence could not be integrated easily. The present study is an attempt to show how these two fields are connected from the contributions of Sartre and Merleau-Ponty by enriching both philosophy and psychology.

**Review of Literature**

The phenomenology of Edmund Husserl has sowed the seed for phenomenological psychology. Sartre and Merleau-Ponty have carried out their phenomenological psychological endeavours in their own unique pattern.

Husserl had formulated phenomenological psychology (rational or eidetic psychology) in his Ideas-I. His Phenomenology and the Foundations of the Sciences the third book of Ideas has separate chapter dealing on the relations between psychology and phenomenology. His last work Krisis holds that every possible science even psychology must start from the level of the life-world and his idea of life world adds new dimension to his phenomenological psychology. He also introduced phenomenological-psychological reduction in phenomenological psychology.

Joseph Kocklemans’ Husserl’s phenomenological Psychology: A Historico-Critical Study is a comprehensive text on phenomenological psychology of Husserl. It deals with development of phenomenological psychology in the writings of Husserl. It also tries to show how phenomenological psychology is related to empirical psychology and transcendental philosophy. This work locates Husserl’s position in phenomenological psychology. This work further discusses the existential phenomenology of Sartre and Merleau-Ponty and its relationship to phenomenological psychology of Husserl. Kocklemans’ edited book Phenomenology: The Philosophy of Edmund Husserl and Its Interpretation, provides the basic views of Husserl, Sartre and Merleau-Ponty on phenomenology psychology. This book explains the interconnection between psychology and phenomenology through these readings. Aron Gurwitsch summarizes Husserl’s views on phenomenological psychology in his article “Edmund Husserl's Conception of Phenomenological Psychology”. Jacob Golomb goes back to trace even the influences of Brentano to show how the phenomenological psychology has emerged in Husserl’s phenomenology. Dan Zahavi’s Husserl’s Phenomenology provides the Husserlean frame work of phenomenological psychology and its importance in the field of

psychology. This explains the how the concept of experience in phenomenology is much broader than in empiricism, the relationship between phenomenology and metaphysics. Further he elaborates the meaning of the *epoché* and the reduction, and the different perspectives on the *noema*.\(^{38}\)

There are some studies to introduce nature and scope of phenomenological psychology in general. Amedeo Giorgi’s *Psychology as a Human Science* offered a re-evaluation of psychology from the phenomenological point of view. He turned from his experimental psychological issues to theoretical issues from the value use of phenomenology to scientific psychology.\(^{39}\) Sheree Dukes’s article “Phenomenological Methodology in the Human Sciences” suggests that phenomenological methodology differs from traditional methodologies both in purpose and procedure. The task of a phenomenological researcher is to ‘see’ the logic, or meaning of an experience, for any subject, rather than to discover causal connections or patterns of correlation. The author reviews verification procedures relevant to phenomenological studies and discusses the limitations inherent in phenomenological research.\(^{40}\) V. J. McGill in his article “The Bearing of Phenomenology on Psychology” tries to show that psychology presupposes phenomenology because phenomenological principles have wider scope than psychological principles. But phenomenology is a presuppositionless science.\(^{41}\) In “Phenomenological Trends in European Psychology”, Stephan Strasser discusses the place and importance of phenomenology in the evolution of European psychology, a survey of important thinkers and the influence of their views upon psychology.\(^{42}\)

Ernesto Spinelli’s *The Interpreted World: An Introduction to Phenomenological Psychology* explains phenomenological theory and its method. This work studies perception of self, objects and others from phenomenological perspective. It also provides the influences of phenomenology in major schools of psychology. It tries to

remove the misunderstanding of phenomenological psychology as humanistic psychology by differentiating from the former with the latter. Dreyer Kruger’s *An Introduction to Phenomenological Psychology* tries to provide the image of man and the challenges faced by modern psychology. This work deals with the phenomenological approach to the issues such as perception, memory and unconsciousness. It also provides a detailed study of phenomenology in psychopathology and psychotherapy.

Amedeo Giorgi’s “Phenomenology and Experimental Psychology” explains the significance of phenomenological psychology against experimental psychology. He argues that phenomenology is a way of knowing the subject in all respects where the experimental approach necessarily is limited. The reason is that experimentation within the human sciences under the phenomenological approach aims at the qualitative aspect of experience. It looks for the meaning for the participant of the experimental situation and at the aspects that are manipulated. It should focus on explicitation of the phenomenal experience instead of its analysis.

Herbert Spiegelberg’s *Phenomenology in Psychology and Psychiatry: A historical Introduction* is the first comprehensive work which provides complete historical details of phenomenological views found in the schools of psychology. He further elaborates his work pointing to the psychological issues found in phenomenology. Henryk Misiak and Virginia Staudt Sexton have also attempted to show the influence of phenomenology in the schools of psychology. *Phenomenological, Existential and Humanistic Psychologies: A Historical Survey* is a detailed work which provides complete understanding of phenomenological psychology, existential psychology and humanistic psychology. They

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further make the distinction between these schools of psychology which have their philosophical basis in phenomenology.\textsuperscript{48}

J. H. Van Den Berg’s \textit{The Phenomenological Approach to Psychiatry: An Introduction to Recent Phenomenological Psychopathology} is edited by Marvin Farber. Van den Berg develops the main phenomenological or rather existentialistic categories from the point of view of the interest which they offer to the psychiatrist. He brings out the influence of the phenomenological existentialist orientation upon the thinking of prominent contemporary psychologists and psychopathologists like Binswanger, Straus, Minkowski, Buynendijk, and others. His presentation is dominated by the insistence upon the realities of human existence, as we live with those realities, as they appear to us in immediate experience, ‘pre-reflectively’, in contradistinction to what is discovered ‘on closer inspection’, by ‘objective’ methods of observation which, however fruitful for the physical sciences, have impeded the development of psychology. Throughout Van den Berg's discussion of time and temporality, inspirations due to Heidegger and Sartre are visible and are fully acknowledged.\textsuperscript{49}

Aron Gurwitsch’s article “The Phenomenological and the Psychological Approach to Consciousness” (1955) tries to show that both phenomenology and psychology are concerned with consciousness in general as well as with specific acts of consciousness like perception, memory, comprehension of meaning, reasoning, etc. It explains the significance of phenomenological approach to consciousness against psychological approach. From the psychological perspective, the act of consciousness appears as mundane events where psychology tries to trace the causal reason beyond this event. But Phenomenology concerns itself with the foundational problems of knowledge and experience. Psychology has developed into a positive science, in a sense, psychology is in logical continuity with, and relies partly upon, the physical and biological sciences. Positive sciences take for granted the objects with which they deal and concern themselves with their exploration and theoretical explanation. But phenomenology poses

the question of the existence of objects and of the meaning of their existence. Therefore phenomenology aims at ultimate clarification and justification of all knowledge.\textsuperscript{50}

Jean-Paul Sartre and Maurice Merleau-Ponty, the existential philosophers contributed to phenomenological psychology through their original writings. Though both of them are inspired by Husserl but explained their positions uniquely.

Sartre has written three books exclusively related to psychological issues, \textit{Imagination: A Psychological Critique} (1936), \textit{The Psychology of Imagination} (1940) and \textit{Sketch for a Theory of Emotions} (1939). Besides these works, Sartre main philosophical work \textit{Being and Nothingness: An Essay on Phenomenological Ontology} (1943) plays a major role in bringing about his novel view on psychology. He tries to show the inadequacies of a mere empirical psychology in accounting for human existence. \textit{Imagination: A Psychological Critique} (1936) is the first philosophical work of Sartre deals about phenomenology. In this work, he is critical about the psychologists and philosophers on the issue of imagination. He argues imagination does not involve the perception of ‘mental images’ in any literal sense yet it reveals some of the fundamental capacities of consciousness. Sartre further argues that the ‘classical conception’ is fundamentally flawed because it begins by conceiving imagination as being like perception and then seeks, in vain, to re-establish the difference between the two. In this he appreciates Husserl’s theory of the imagination, signals a new phenomenological way forward in understanding the imagination, despite his view sharing the flaws of earlier approaches.\textsuperscript{51}

Sartre’s work \textit{The Psychology of Imagination} is a systematic analysis of imagination deals about the concept of nothingness and freedom. Sartre argues that imagination is nothing like perception. Perception is our study over time of a particular object with our senses. It is necessarily incomplete. Thus perception involves observation. He maintains that imagination is total or whole. Ultimately he wants to show

that because we can imagine, we are ontologically free. In this he mentions that Husserl remains captive to the idealist principle of immanence i.e. the object of consciousness lies within consciousness.\textsuperscript{52} The World of Imagination: Sum and Substance by Eva T.H. Brann has a detailed study of imagination. In this he explains Mikel Dufrenne, Paul Taylor and Edward Casey’s criticism against Sartre with reference to imagination. Dufrenne asserts that the imagination is much more than a mere denial of world or negative power. For him, imagination is our power for reforming the real world and bearing its vision within us. Taylor also argues against Sartre that imagination is in fact a source of fresh knowledge and judgment. Imagination provides us with affective knowledge experience of our own emotional states and those of others. Casey criticized Sartre for not elaborating the nature of imaginative act more fully.\textsuperscript{53}

Sartre’s Sketch for a Theory of Emotions (1939) deals with positive meaning of emotion. He viewed that emotion is not an accidental display of human beings rather it is intentional act. In this he explains the relation between psychology, phenomenology and phenomenological psychology. He tries to show the inadequacies of a mere empirical psychology in accounting for human existence. He holds that the phenomenology of Husserl and Heidegger as basis of phenomenological psychology of capable of assigning meaning to the facts in the context of human existence. \textsuperscript{54} Sartre’s Being and Nothingness: An Essay on Phenomenological Ontology is a continuation of his previous works on the issues of human existence and freedom. This work essentially studies the nature of being as phenomena that presents in consciousness. He sketches his own theory of consciousness, being, phenomenon through the criticism of earlier phenomenologists such as Husserl and Heidegger as well as idealists, rationalist and empiricists. For Sartre, Being is objective, it is what is. Being is in-itself. Existence, on the other hand, has a subjective quality in relation to human reality. Existence refers to the fact that some individual or thing is present in the world. Sartre distinguishes between two types of Being: ‘Being-in-itself’ (être-en-soi) and ‘Being-for-itself’ (être-pour-soi). Being-in-itself is non-conscious Being, the Being of existing things or objects of consciousness.

Being-for-itself is conscious Being, which is conscious of what it is not. Being-for-itself is conscious of itself. Indeed, consciousness can exist only as engaged in a being conscious of itself. Being-for-itself is consciousness of objects, and can be the object of its own consciousness; i.e. it is conscious that it is conscious of objects. Sartre distinguishes between two types of consciousness: unreflective consciousness, and reflective consciousness. Unreflective consciousness is seen in the pre-reflective cogito of Descartes. Unreflective consciousness is conscious of its consciousness, but it does not attempt to become its own object. Reflective consciousness, on the other hand, is conscious of its lack in relation to being other than itself. Reflective consciousness can also be called moral consciousness, because it reveals values. Values can be determined by the Being-for-itself, in that the Being-for-itself sees what is lacking in relation to itself. Because consciousness can conceive of a lack of Being, Being-for-itself is also the nihilation of Being-in-itself. Being-for-itself brings Nothingness into the world, because Being-for-itself judges other beings by seeing what it is not. Being-for-itself nihilates itself, and becomes its own Nothingness. Nothingness is a state of non-being. Nothingness does not itself have Being, but is sustained by Being. Nothingness is logically subsequent to being. For Sartre, anguish is the discovery that the Self faces Nothingness in the past and the future, that the Self may nihilate itself, because nothing relieves the Self of the responsibility for making choices, and nothing guarantees the validity of the values that are chosen by the Self. Flight from anguish toward reassuring myths is an attitude that Sartre calls ‘bad faith’. Through bad faith, we may seek to deny the responsible freedom of Being-for-itself. Bad faith consists in hiding the truth from ourselves. Authenticity is the antithesis of bad faith. Ultimately he argues for authentic being.\footnote{Op. cit., Being and Nothingness: An Essay on Phenomenological Ontology, 1956.}

Apart from these philosophical works, his literary works too inform his philosophical views by locating it in human life situations. The novel *Nausea* is a story of a troubled life of a young writer in modern times. His novel depicts one’s struggle with the realization that he is an entirely free agent in a world devoid of meaning; a world in which he must find his own purpose and then take total responsibility for his choices.
This work gives the insight of Sartre’s philosophy of existentialism. Another novel *The Roads to Freedom* seeks to illustrate the existentialist notion of ultimate freedom through presenting a detailed account of the characters’ psychologies as they are forced to make significant decisions in their lives. This novel is a fictional representation of his main philosophical work, *Being and Nothingness*, where one attains ultimate freedom through *nothing*, or more precisely, by being nothing. This novel portrays the Sartre’s conception of freedom as the ultimate aim of human existence.

The play *The Flies* is an adaptation of the Electra myth. Sartre incorporates an existential theme into the play. This play suggests Freedom is not the ability to physically do whatever one wants. It is the ability to mentally interpret one's own life for oneself—to define oneself and create one's own values. Even the slave can interpret his or her life in different ways, and in this sense the slave is free. Sartre's idea of freedom specifically requires that the being-for-itself be neither a being-for-others nor a being-in-itself. A being-for-others occurs when human beings accept morals thrust onto them by others. A being-in-itself occurs when human beings do not separate themselves from objects of nature.

Maurice Merleau-Ponty has reinterpreted perception or sensation in new way that has brought to be a well known in psychology than any other phenomenologists. His contribution was the phenomenological recovery of the concept of behaviour from its impoverishment at the hands of narrow behaviourism. For him, behaviour has emerged as a Gestalt or form which embraces both the external and the internal phenomena, consciousness and movement, in inextricable interfusion. Both were aspects of same phenomenon. His two important works are *The Structure of Behavior* (1942) and *Phenomenology of Perception* (1945) which were written in his life time. They deal with psychological issues of perception, body and behaviour. His other posthumous work *The Visible and the Invisible* (1964) mainly deals with his novel interpretation of body. *Primacy of Perception* is another work of Merleau-Ponty which is a collection of his

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essays. In these two works, he emphasizes the necessity of psychology to understand human being in addition to philosophy. Merleau-Ponty’s *The Structure of Behaviour* projects his views on phenomenological psychology by pointing out the inadequacies of scientific theories such as behaviourism and Gestalt psychology. He aims at showing the essential features of the phenomenon by demonstrating the shortcomings of physically reductive and mentalist views. According to him, behaviour is not a thing but neither it is an idea. In this work he establishes behaviour as structure and that needs to be understood properly in order to understand human beings.59

Maurice Merleau-Ponty’s *Phenomenology of Perception* is an important work that deals about the ‘primacy of perception’. In this work, he deviates from phenomenological conceptions of Husserl and Heidegger. He holds a position that we first perceive the world, and then we do philosophy. This entails a critique of the Cartesian cogito, resulting in a largely different concept of consciousness. The Cartesian dualism of mind and body is criticized by Merleau-Ponty. He has also questioned Cartesian understanding of our primary way of existing in the world and he has ultimately rejected it in favour of an intersubjective conception or dialectical concept of consciousness. For Merleau-Ponty, perception and body are central to his philosophy. He argues that we perceive the world through our bodies and we are embodied subjects existent in the world. His conception of body undermines the long standing conceptions of consciousness. His stand point with regards to dualism rejects Sartre’s position. Sartre makes a distinction between the being-for-itself (subject) and being-in-itself (object). Merleau-Ponty’s understanding of body stands between this fundamental distinction between subject and object. He upholds the ambiguous existing of body as both.60

*The Visible and the Invisible* is an unfinished manuscript and working notes of Merleau-Ponty in his last days. This work highlights his own conception mind and body, subject and object, self and other against traditional dualism by critically examining the Kantian, Husserlian, Bergsonian and Sartrean views in this regard. The traditional

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dualism is that mind and body, subject and object, self and other are discrete and separate entities. Merleau-Ponty does not dispute that there is a divergence in our embodied situation that is evident in the difference that exists between touching and being touched, between looking and being looked at, or between the sentient and the sensible. These divergences are considered to be a necessary and constitutive factor in allowing subjectivity to be possible at all. According to Merleau-Ponty, there is an important sense in which such pairs are also associated.61

There are considerable secondary works reflecting on the writings of Sartre and Merleau-Ponty in general and their phenomenological psychology in particular. Keith Hoeller’s edited work Sartre and Psychology: A Special Issue from the Review of existential Psychology and Psychiatry is a collection of articles by different authors which brings forth Sartre’s influence on phenomenological and existential psychology. In this, Max Charlesworth gives a fine outline of existential psychiatry and discusses the method of Sartre with reference to Freud. Hazel Barnes illustrates different notions of self in Sartre. Sander Lee’s “Sartre’s Theory of the Emotions” examines an apparent split in Sartre between the emotion and rationality.62 Keith Hoeller’s another edited work Merleau-Ponty and Psychology: Studies in existential Psychology and Psychiatry is a collection of articles by different authors which brings forth Merleau-Ponty’s influence on phenomenological and existential psychology. The work deals with a special focus on Merleau-Ponty’s understanding on issues such as experience, intersubjectivity, psychoanalysis and phenomenological psychology.63 Jon Stewart’s The Debate between Sartre and Merleau-Ponty (1998) deals about the similarities and differences between Sartre and Merleau-Ponty. He has observed that Merleau-Ponty's writings account for a passive openness to reality and Sartre’s account of individual experience as self-shaped and non-passive. He relates to Merleau-Ponty’s concern with the body and Sartre’s with


As any other schools of psychology, phenomenological psychology is also undergone criticism. There are views for and against the field of phenomenological psychology both from philosophy and psychology. The main criticism is that it has brought psychology back to philosophical speculations and theological conjectures. It lacks objective methods and principles. In the absence of such objectivity, it is difficult to accept the basic tenets of the existential science.

Brody and Oppenheim compared phenomenology and methodological behaviorism as bases for psychology and critical about the phenomenological method. It is viewed that the subject matter of pure phenomenological psychology is all of experience. It is the intent of pure phenomenological psychology to study that which is immediately given in experience. The pure phenomenological psychology studies the data of experience by a method which invokes the suspension of implicit and explicit assumptions. They conclude that pure phenomenological psychology cannot be used as a basis for the construction of theories, nor, as we see now, for the purpose of testing any scientific statement and pure phenomenological psychology cannot even be used as a means of describing experience. It is argued that pure phenomenological psychology is not relevant per se for scientific psychology. Amedeo Giorgi criticizes the approach of Brody and Oppenheim and defended the phenomenological method. He argues that Brody and Oppenheim have not made a comparative study of phenomenological psychology and behaviourism with neutral stand point. They have rather implicitly accepted the criteria the methodology of behaviorism in comparing both behaviorism and phenomenological psychology.

65 Ibid., 1998.
Forest Hansen in his article, “Critique of the Epistemological Skepticism of Campbell's Phenomenological Behaviourist Psychology”, has analysed Donald Campbell’s epistemological issues, he asserts that firm foundations or anchors for knowledge are unavailable and that all knowledge claims go beyond their evidence, are highly presumptive and corrigible. He supports such assertions in two ways: by philosophical arguments and by a causal theory of perception. Both are used in an attempt to persuade us that, no matter how dependable they may be in our experience, conceptual and perceptual judgments cannot be justified as more than highly probable; certain knowledge of the world and of ourselves necessarily and forever remains elusive.\(^68\) Robert Romanyshyn’s work *The Wounded Researcher: Research with Soul in Mind* is integration of phenomenology, hermeneutics and depth psychology which is primarily grounded in a neo-Jungian perspective. While Romanyshyn identifies primarily with neo-Jungian and phenomenological orientations to research, he is not wedded to any particular methodology. In fact, he is critical of Amedeo Giorgi and other phenomenological psychologists who over-identify phenomenology or depth psychology with a particular, circumscribed methodology. Romanyshyn has made a bold and convincing critique of Dilthey’s distinction between the natural and human sciences. According to Romanyshyn, the distinction between explanation and understanding relies upon and perpetuates a subject-object dualism which needs to be surpassed in science.\(^69\)

Sartre and Merleau-Ponty contributed to psychology through their approach of existential phenomenological psychology. They have achieved a tremendous amount of development in the field of psychology where it studies the perception, emotion, imagination, memory, forgetting, etc. In psychotherapy, it deals with making as person aware of one’s authentic state. Their phenomenological methods are even applied in the field of psychiatry which is supposed to deal with abnormal individual. It is evident that there have been many psychologists who are either influenced or have used some of the phenomenological methods in their psychology.

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Bruce Wilshire in *William James and Phenomenology* discusses the significance of phenomenology to psychology. He appreciates phenomenology for its chief value that it raises a challenge to dominant modes of psychology and supplies an alternative mode of thought that keeps open vast reaches of western civilization which are in danger of being sealed off by contemporary science. Donald Snygg in his article, “The need for a Phenomenological System of Psychology”, emphasizes the significance of phenomenology in psychology. *Individual Behaviour: A new frame of reference for psychology* is a joint venture of Snygg and Arthur Combs. It portrays a fully developed new phenomenological approach as ‘personal approach’. Snygg expressed that behaviour is completely determined by and pertinent to the phenomenological field of the behaving organism. Therefore, phenomenology should consists primarily in the exploration of the phenomenal field of the individual, including his or her phenomenal self. Joseph Lyons’ *Psychology and the Measure of Man: A Phenomenological Approach* attempts to explains the approach of phenomenological psychology in dealing clinical problems. It is viewed that with phenomenological psychology, consciousness became as a legitimate subject of psychology. The reappearance of the issue of consciousness in current psychology may be interpreted either as a sign of wider acceptance of phenomenology or as a phenomenon of more complex origin, which has naturally helped the acceptance of phenomenology considerably. David Seamon’s article “The Phenomenological Contribution to Environmental Psychology” considers the value of phenomenology for environmental psychology. It examines the difference between conventional scientific approach and phenomenological approach. The conventional approach sometimes, uncritically accepts theories and concepts which are out of touch with the fabric of environmental behaviour and experience. A phenomenological perspective looks at person environmental relation a fresh and thus helps to revitalize the ontological epistemological and methodological foundations of environmental psychology. It discusses the three substantive themes, such as phenomenology of human experience,

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phenomenology of physical environment and phenomenology of person and world relationship. August Messer has credited Husserl in his experimental investigation of thinking in *Sensation and Thinking* (1908). Messer was speaking of intention, intentional act and intentionality but he was sceptical about essential intuition. He was not interested in Husserl’s transcendental phenomenology. In his essay “Husserl’s phenomenology in its relation to psychology” which was a response to Husserl’s “Philosophy as a rigorous science”, has recommended that Wurzburg school needs phenomenological method. According to him, phenomenology of *Logical Investigation* provided liberation from narrow perspective of sensationalism. It was also an instrumental cause for him to describe the higher functions of thinking in psychology. He acknowledges that phenomenology has played an active role in his interpretation of his own findings.

Phenomenological psychology has influenced Gestalt psychology in due course of time. Both Gestalt psychology and phenomenology have attempted to free modern man to fresh reality. Both the disciplines were developing simultaneously. Though Max Wertheimer, Kurt Koffka and Wolfgang Kohler were never interested in philosophy as such but when they were to face the challenges of behaviourism, they sought the help of philosophy, especially phenomenological method. Kurt Koffka has identified the methods of Gestalt with that of phenomenology in his book *The Principles of Gestalt Psychology*. He called phenomenology as naïve and full of description of direct experience as possible. His battle against behaviourism and introspectionism needed phenomenological method. Karl Duncker’s studies of induced movement, productive thinking, and motivation can be evidence for his knowledge in phenomenology. He even went beyond Husserl in many respects. His treatment of phenomenological pleasure and phenomenology of the object of consciousness was a highlight. Fritz Heider’s work *Psychology of Interpersonal Relation* is influenced by the works of Sheler, Sartre, and

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76 Ibid., p.62.
77 Ibid., p.65.
Merleau-Ponty. He has faithfully described phenomena and he has allowed them to guide the choice of problems and procedures.\textsuperscript{78}

In German phase of phenomenology, there was no much relation with Psychoanalysis rather there was contrast between them. But in French phase of phenomenology, both seemed to have more close contact to merge. James R. Barclay finds eight points of agreements between Freud and Brentano but whatever the cases may be the concept of intentionality in Freudian study must have something to do with that of Brentano.\textsuperscript{79} Carl Gustav Jung had no much interest in phenomenology. But at a time he has criticised Freud being at mid air with no phenomenological foundations. For him, psychological phenomenology was to study the unconscious complexes inferred from the manifested symptoms which is not a possible. He used phenomenology for being popular otherwise there is no concrete connection between his psychology and phenomenology to be found. In the last phase of his time he distinguished phenomenology from natural science which was also close to phenomenological attitude.\textsuperscript{80} Paul Federn defined ego psychology in terms of descriptive, phenomenological and metapsychological. He understood phenomenological to be subjectively descriptive in terms of feeling, knowing and apprehending. His phenomenological definition of ego is “felt and known by the individual as a lasting or recurring continuity of the body and mental life in respect of time, space, and causality and is felt and apprehended by him as a unity”.\textsuperscript{81}

The first phenomenologist took interest in psychoanalysis is Max Scheler, in his book \textit{The Nature of Sympathy} accepted the facts of early childhood sexuality of Freud. Psychoanalysis has been possible major topic for French phenomenologist with exception to Gabriel Marcel\textsuperscript{82}. Angelo Louis Hesnard’s attempt in his book \textit{Psychoanalysis of the Human Bond}, is an effort to fill the gabs in psychoanalysis through phenomenology, especially its failure to do justice to the interpersonal relations. Though Freud’s theory of identification plays an important role in these relations but it does not account for what

\textsuperscript{80} Ibid., p.78.
\textsuperscript{81} Ibid., p.87.
Hesnard considers the foundation for social acts, the “anonymous intersubjectivity” which he finds in Merleau-Ponty’s phenomenology of social behaviour. He was a chief advocate of Merleau-Ponty’s phenomenology and its application to psychoanalysis. He was interested in Merleau-Ponty’s emphasis on the close bonds of consciousness with the body and the world. He was trying to present a phenomenological psychoanalysis. He felt that phenomenology can offer an enlarged consciousness to psychoanalysis which can do justice to even unconscious.\textsuperscript{83} Daniel Lagache’s psychoanalytic theory is a study of structure of the ego, its different types, and their relations among each other, lend themselves to phenomenological interpretation in sense of Husserl’s developed ‘egology’. While Daniel has not stressed this connection, he is aware of phenomenology as a potential aid to his development of Freudian scheme. Thus he appeals to phenomenology as best guardrail.\textsuperscript{84} Antoine Vergote argues that Freud had discovered that the psychic is defined by meaning, and that this meaning is dynamic and historic. Before even knowing it by name, he had thus put the phenomenological method—which consists in letting the phenomena speak as they are in themselves-into action. Antoine particularly applies this method to Freud’s interpretation of dreams, as an attempt to understand the meaning of the manifestation of the unconscious, which is essentially “effective and dynamic intentionality of forces.” This kind of phenomenology goes beyond mere descriptive version of phenomenology. It is more toward Heidegger’s hermeneutic phenomenology than Husserlian descriptive phenomenology. Antoine himself did not identify Freudian approach to that of Husserl.\textsuperscript{85}

Carl Rogers’ major book \textit{Client-Centered Therapy} (1951) argues for phenomenology as a main ingredient for the ‘third force’ in psychology. In this work, he was looking for new methods to cope up with the concrete situation of the individual. The reason is that the essential point about the therapeutic process is that the way the client perceives the objects in his phenomenal field, his experiences, his feelings, his self, other

\textsuperscript{84} Ibid., p.93.
\textsuperscript{85} Ibid., p.96.
persons and his environment which undergoes change in the direction of increased differentiation.\textsuperscript{86}

**Methodology and Chapter Summary**

The present work is classified into six chapters. The present work studies the contributions of two prominent French Existentialist Phenomenologists to phenomenological psychology. As far as the method is concerned, the historical, critical, analytical, comparative and evaluative approaches are followed to study the present problem.

The first chapter is entitled as *Phenomenological Psychology: An Introduction*. It introduces the problem to be studied. It provides a brief account of the significance of the topic and the methodology adopted to study the problem. The review of literature is added to contextualize the problem of study and it would facilitate the present study to be a complete work.

The second chapter is entitled as *Philosophical Basis for Phenomenological Psychology*. This chapter deals about the historical background for the emergence of phenomenological psychology as a discipline. This chapter also portraits a brief account of dominant schools of psychology. This chapter analyses the philosophical systems which shaped phenomenological psychology.

The third chapter is entitled as *Sartre’s Contribution to Phenomenological Psychology*. This chapter explains Sartre’s views on human being. According to Sartre, first of all, psychology must understand human nature from psychological perspectives rather than accepting the views of scientific or narrow philosophical perspectives. Through understanding of human nature, one can have a better understanding of human behaviour. In this connection, his account freedom, bad faith, authenticity, emotion and imagination are critically analyzed. Finally, this chapter discusses Sartre’s new methodology of existential psychoanalysis. For Sartre, existential psychoanalysis enables an individual to trace for meaning for one’s action in one’s fundamental project.

concludes that every act of human behaviour is a conscious act. It is a voluntary action of an individual and it reflects of the individual’s own decisions and choices. Therefore the stimulus response pattern of understanding human behaviour as done in many of the modern psychology is not appropriate.

The fourth chapter is entitled as *Merleau-Ponty’s Contribution to Phenomenological Psychology*. This chapter explains how Merleau-Ponty brings back the perception as basis for all knowledge. He makes body-subject as central to perception. He has done away with objective thought which estrange human being from the world. Merleau-Ponty strongly opposes the dichotomies to show there nothing like inner self which directs one’s behaviour. Instead one’s behaviour is based on the contextual basis and his perception of the being-in-the-world. He maintains that behaviour is always structured but the methods used in psychology are inadequate to study behaviour as it is. Thus he envisaged a systematic phenomenology of perception as an appropriate method of study. For him, perception is man’s primordial contact with the world: ‘it opens a window onto things,’ and as such it should be a starting point for the study of man and the world. He wants to explore man’s phenomenal field. This exploration is focused on the body or bodily being and the world as perceived by man.

The fifth chapter is entitled as *Critique of Phenomenological Psychology*. This chapter critically evaluates the approaches of Sartre and Merleau-Ponty with regards to the study of phenomenological psychology and further briefs their influences on psychologists. This chapter also analyses the interventions of the phenomenological approach to other approaches in psychology. This chapter also analyses the criticisms leveled against phenomenological psychology. Finally, this chapter shows that phenomenological psychology can be a unifying force in psychology.

The sixth chapter is entitled as *Conclusion*. This chapter briefly the positions of Sartre and Merleau-Ponty with regards to phenomenological psychology as a discipline and a method in psychology. Finally, this chapter ends by showing the relevance of phenomenological psychology of Sartre and Merleau-Ponty in the present day psychology.