PART I

* Introduction.
* The problem.
* Early attempts to measure Social Intelligence.
CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

The fact that people differ has long been of interest to educationists and psychologists. They have considered the enquiry into how and why individuals differ as one of the most important areas of studies. One of the first steps in studying these differences was the measurement of intelligence because mental abilities play an important part in everyone's life. Psychological test construction received a great impetus more than half a century ago when Binet constructed his scale of intelligence in 1905. Since then, there have been many intelligence tests in the field. The measurement of intelligence soon became important to educational institutions and business and industrial concerns as well. The educationist soon realised that a pupil's mental ability is a determining factor in his success at studies. The businessman and the industrialist realised that success of their employees on their jobs depends much on their mental abilities and how they are used.
The psychology of individual differences became a fertile field of investigation for research workers. The application of psychological tests as an aid to guidance in educational institutions and to selection techniques in industry revealed that mere knowledge of intelligence was not adequate. Effective guidance and selection require the knowledge of interest, aptitude and personality of pupils. In industry, it is found that jobs differ as individuals differ. Each job requires a definite pattern of abilities for success. There are jobs which demand one pattern of aptitude and abilities, whereas there are others which require an altogether different pattern of aptitude and personality traits. It is found that highly intelligent people fail in the world of work in spite of their intelligence, whereas others succeed even with moderate intelligence. Occupational adjustment requires that proper persons should be placed on proper jobs. Better techniques for offering guidance and refined methods of selection demand further exploration in new areas of psychological testing. There is a need to devise psychological tools for new areas which will be useful to guidance bureaux on one hand and the personnel departments of industry, on the other. The job of guidance worker boils down to discovering the potentialities of an individual by measuring the different
psychological factors and helping him to recognise his assets and limitations. This is a very difficult job, especially when the available psychological tests are inadequate and far from being perfect.

In India, work on constructing psychological tests is still in infancy. We have a few intelligence tests, quite a number of achievement tests, some aptitude and personality tests. But we have yet to cover the field and construct all the tools that are required for effective guidance. Much remains to be done. In the field of aptitude testing, we have not got tests that can measure the professional aptitudes of individuals. It is a known fact that different kinds of occupations require different types of ability for success. The ability to deal with people, frequently termed as "social intelligence", "social ability" or "social aptitude", is required in varying degrees in different occupations like those of insurance agents, salesmen, supervisors, managerial positions etc. The life insurance salesman, selling an expensive service with no benefits to the insured, except a feeling that his family will be taken care of when he dies in the presumably remote future is a good example of a worker whose success depends upon an unusually high level of this kind of
social ability. This ability is also an important factor in the general occupational adjustment of an individual. People sometimes fail on jobs not because they are incompetent to hold them, but because they fail to adjust to their fellow workers. Even in social life, success depends on the social ability to adjust to one's kiths and kins. Research in social psychology has revealed that one of the greatest aid to success in marriage is the ability to understand, to evaluate and to compromise.

Thus social intelligence is an ability of paramount importance in the life of an individual; it is not limited in its usefulness to a specific area of education or occupation, it actively contributes to success in every walk of life.

Nature of Social Intelligence:

When a guidance worker wants to assess an ability, he should have a valid and reliable test to measure it. In India there is no test to measure social intelligence at present. It is because this field has not attracted attention of the majority of workers who are content to work in more common and familiar areas of measuring general intelligence and scholastic achievement. Another reason for this paucity of work is the lack of a clear
understanding about the nature of adequate experimental data. All that we know about social intelligence is summarised below:

1. Social intelligence is not a unitary trait, although it may be a generalised trait.

2. Social intelligence appears to be more loaded with environmental factors and learning than with heredity.

Gorden Allport considered the concept in some detail in his book, 'Personality: A Psychological Interpretation'. He states:

"But it is obvious that social intelligence cannot be an inherited capacity to the extent that abstract and mechanical intelligence may be. It is rather a trait developed through opportunity and through interest, upon the basis of a native general intelligence".

It is agreed that social intelligence is mostly acquired during an individual's socialization process. Social scientists also call this a process of personal social conditioning and social-cultural conditioning. An individual acquires the most appropriate and acceptable modes of behaviour related to the circumstances according to the prevalent social and cultural norms. It is a learning process and as in all other learning, here also general intelligence might be playing its role to some

extent. Comparing it with educational achievement, we may call it social achievement. But the part which general intelligence plays is more predominant in the former than in the latter. One reason for this is the factor of motivation. Educational achievement is a motive to a more or less extent among all pupils. This is not so with social intelligence. Because there is no compulsion for learning these patterns of behaviour, only those whose primary interests are social in nature exercise their general ability in this area. But it is not only the general ability or the social interests that shape this ability in question. There are multitude of social-psychological factors exercising an important influence on the acquisition of this ability and there is no reason to believe that we shall be able to explain it away in terms of a few traditional factors such as considered above. And the fact that very few persons possess it in spite of a high general ability present in many more people, supports this contention.

The present work relates to constructing and standardising a test to measure this ability with the hope that it will provide the necessary tool to procure relevant data for further understanding the complex nature of this trait.