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CHAPTER - I

Research problem

A cross cultural study of rigidity – flexibility and Psychological normality in Iranian and Indian college students.

Emergence of the research problem

In many western culture though it seems clear that stressful conflicts are often a part of adolescence. Some of these conflicts pit the teenager’s movement towards adulthood against the limits imposed by society. The society forces adolescence to go school, and govern them with laws that apply to minors but not to adults. Society controls the age at which adolescence may vote, drink, drive, enlist in the military, and even enter into contracts. These age involves lot of biological and psychological development of adolescence and youths problems of adjustments which different investigator and psychologists have done in different societies. In present study the Researcher, felt the need of cross cultural study between two cultures youth who have entered in second stage of education. The other reason for such a study is because of possibility to access to the population which going to be study (Since scholar belong to Iran) also because of lack of limited cross cultured study on rigidity and normality on large population the researcher intended to do comparative study between Indian and Iran.
A) GENERAL INTRODUCTION:

Social Scientists in our times are usually concerned with the problem of a social change particularly relating to the deleterious effects of customs and traditions, similarly, psychiatrists and clinical psychologists are faced with the problem to produce therapeutics changes in their patients who are often resistance to change. The academic psychologists, on the other hand, largely remain theory-centered, while social psychologists, like clinical psychologists and psychiatrists, remain phenomenon-centered rather than theory-centered the study or personality is common to both types of psychologists, the theory centered psychologists as well as phenomenon centered psychologists. As a result, personality has been studied by different psychologists from the various points of view. In that process they have discovered several traits of personality many of those traits have already been intensively and experimentally studied, while there are still some traits, which also need scientific investigation.

‘Flexibility – Rigidity’ is one such trait, which is quite important for the contemporary psychologists. The concept of flexibility is a phenomenon which was probably studied for the first time by Rapaport, Gill and Schafer(1945). Thereafter, Jones and Jones (1928).

The concept of ‘Rigidity’, on the other hand, was brought, into the realm of personality of Luchins(1942), when studying “set and Einstellung”. This new notion or rigidity drew the attention of so many other psychologists like Goldstein (1948), Rokeach(1948), Warner(1946), Kounin (1941), Wolpert(1955), Wesley (1953) and Rehfisch(1958).
An Einstellung has been defined as "the set which immediately prediscopes an organism to one type of motor or conscious set"—Warner, 1934, P. 37.

Cunningham (1955) studied the Einstellung—rigidity in children. The study identified age sex and I. Q. correlation. A water jar and alphabet maze were administered under standard speed and stress conditions to experimental and control subjects. Results were analysed in terms of "Susceptibility to set" and "ability for overcome set". In general, the findings were in agreement to other studies of rigidity like Luchins (1958) and others. Herrig (1958) conducted a study on a group of catholic rural adults, frequently twilight courses, and control group of catholic city workers and students. The results obtained, suggested that rural adults and city workers were equally rigid and the students group was more flexible. Reduction of rigid tendency was indicated at the end of the twilight courses.

Earner (1958), on the basis of his study on 'difference in some personal characteristics of rigid and flexible individuals, found that the flexible subjects who were highly educated, having higher income and occupation related themselves as happier, more successful and more socially responsibilities than the rigid subjects. The young flexible group changed residence more often than young rigid group, but old flexible group changed residence less than the old rigid group.

Ginasberg (1967) comparing the results obtained from the various test of personality found the usefulness of the tests and clean results of flexibility—rigidity sign.
Langer and Mokain (1964) applied the test of Behavioural rigidity (TBR) and structural objective Rorschach Test (SORT) on college students. They found that rigidity. Flexibility emerged as a bipolar factor.

In a study of Junior school students Kellmer and McKenzie (1960) found that students of more limited intelligence showed a significantly higher degree of rigidity and less able students showed greater flexibility in problem solving than the comparable group in school using traditional teaching method.

In India such type of study has not probably been made so far, except one that of Rabindradass (1967). Of course Ansari F.B is said to be pioneer in the field of personality rigidity in Indian who has introduced rigidity as a factor of personality and conducted so many studies on rigidity on sex difference (1979), rigidity and personality variables like social introversion, dominance, neuroticism and self-sufficiency on cross cultural studies on college going students or indo- Iranian and Mauritius cultures (1989).

The present research is an attempt to study the problem of 'Flexibility-Rigidity and Normality' in the context of Indian social life. This seeks to investigate the impact of flexible-rigid behaviour found in various segments of social organization in Indian and Iran. The researcher has the assumption that people belonging to different religions, sociocultural-milieu, sex and age group and educational background differ in this personality correlate. The present investigator further assumes that such a study will be largely helpful in understanding and analysing the students population on the basis of this trait. Luchins(1958) pointed out that some social problems are often related with rigidity of behaviour. For
instance, the rivalries and Feuds, that continued long after their original course no longer existed, were due to rigid personality trait and habits.

B) DEFINITION OF RIGIDITY AND FLEXIBILITY

Rigidity and flexibility are two traits lying on the extremes of the same bipolar continuum varying only in degree but not in kind.

Rigidity as matter of fact slipped into the discussion of personality by Luchins when studying "set and einstellung" in behaviour. This new notion of rigidity has drawn the attention towards the general feature of personality organization rather than situational organization. The former was considered to be more important than the latter.

Luchins (1958) has studied the effect of the situational structure upon personality of his subjects and the conclusion he obtained suggests that there are at least two forces at work in producing task-behaviour (routine work), the situational factor and the personality factor which can be classified as rigid. Thus, rigidity of behaviour according to Luchins is not the effect of the situational factor only but a specific personality trait exhibited by the whole of the personality. Other psychologists other than Luchins have also given some important definition of rigidity, which show different aspects of the rigid behaviour.

According to Werner (1940) rigidity is defined as lack of variability and adaptability which have been observed as normal trait of less developed organism, less variability exists in an immature rather than in the mature organism.
Kounin (1941) defined "rigidity as a positive monotonous function of chronological age", with the advancement of age (experience) rigidity may be found even persons of dull behaviour.

For Rokeach (1948) "the rigidity inherent in an ethnocentric person's solution of social problem is not an isolated phenomenon within the personality, but is rather an aspect of itself in the solution of any problem, be it social or non-social".

According to Cowin L, Emory (1951) "rigidity was defined as the tendency to adhere to a previously practiced method of problem-solving when that method no longer offers the most direct and efficient means of solving the problem".

According to Wesley (1953) - rigidity is conceived as a tendency to persist in response that may previously have been suitable in some situation or other, but that no longer appear adequate to achieve current goals or to solve current problems.

Robert Meresko, Mandal Robim, Franklin and S. Honnz. Etc. (1954) have defined psychologist rigidity by saying that "rigidity" is a person's "resistance or lack of readiness, to be influenced by motivationally relevant stimulation in such a way as to adjust to his environment as effectively as his behaviour repertory permits". This definition includes both defensive inhibition (resistance) and organic deficit (lack of readiness), both react to external stimulation and reaction to inner process, both rigid cognitive functioning and rigid action (behaviour repertory includes both knowledge and ability).

According to Edward A. Wolpert (1955) rigidity is a personality trait. Person who suffers from this trait would be expected to think concretely, to show little
variability in behaviour; to evidence prejudice against minorities, to have few methods available for solving problem, to conceive to interpersonal relationship in terms of power hierarchies and, in general, to exhibit impoverishment in all areas of functioning. Such individuals impoverish in all areas of functioning, such individuals would appear flexible or varied, still others would fall between the two extremes. The individual rigid in some area and flexible in other area would be the exception of the rule.

All the above definition cited by different psychologists according to their own viewpoint have to say that rigidity is a personality trait and is "An inability to change one's set" when the objective conditions demand it". In other words, when objective conditions demand a change of set, the rigid would not change. Thus, a person having rigidity will have following characteristics:-

1. Lack of variability and adaptability.
2. Lack of resistance or readiness.
3. Feeling of ambiguity to adjust effectively to the environment.
4. Rigidity in thinking and few methods available for solving the problem.
5. Prejudices against minorities.
6. Conservative in his approach, and
7. Preservative tendencies.

Such a behaviour is due to fear of failure, uncertainty to consequences, strong impulsive needs, inflexible goal, repeated failure, frustration, insecurities, low success expectation and other similar reasons.

Eyzenck had defined rigidity from clinical point of view. He defined rigidity as "dysthemic trait and thus can be characterized by low extroversion and high
neuroticism." Rigidity, according to Eysenck, is related to the behaviour of the patients of hysteria which they show up during the treatment. Since rigidity is talked of in the other sense also, the social and educational investigators do not apply Eysenck's clinical findings in their respective areas.

John M. Reofisch (1958) has defined rigidity in terms of following six characteristics:

2. Intolerance of disorder and ambiguity.
3. Conservatism.
4. Obsessinal and preservative tendency.
5. Social introversion, and
6. Anxiety and guilt.

This definition throws some high lights on some characteristics of rigid behaviour which have been studied by different psychologist and researchers.

Anasari (1976) had developed a Rigidity scale (Ri scale) and has defined rigidity on the basis of following Six characteristics which may be considered as a basis for a comprehensive connotative definition of personality rigidity as established empirically:

1. Introversion:
2. Conservation
3. Fusion of fear
4. Automatism
5. Intolerance of ambiguity and
1. Introversion

Such person finds interest and values in one's own thought, feelings, and ideas, dreams for future, socially and emotionally constricted, anxious, unable to speak before audience or in social gathering.

2. Conservatism

This refers to the tendency to have the stabiles ways of behaving, conservative in making decision, conventional in nature, adherence to certain place, people and mode of conduct and ever persistence of purpose.

3. Fusion of fear

This characteristics refers to anxiousness and helplessness. People having this traits become anxious when they can not solve problem relating to life, want someone to help them, feel some times that uncertain and unpredicted things give them torture. They also show aggressive behaviour when they find that a friend or relative is not approving of them, and also show hostile or selfish tendency towards persons whom they love most because they love themselves too much.

4. Automatism

People suffering from this trait become frightened when they have to perform same task time and again, are slow in making of mind, do compulsive acts like changing one type of work to another when put in an ambiguous situation. They often repeat the same error while performing a task, show unfavorable attitudes towards any nation group or class of people.
5. Intolerance of ambiguity

Such an individual depicts discomfort when faced with complex or uncertain situations; they do not easily cope with any difficult situations and thus seek help from outside to resolve or explain the ambiguity or shall simplify the situation. They also avoid difficult problems of their life.

6. Lack of adaptability

Such people have adjustment problems and lack in readiness, prefer the company of others or younger and consider themselves to be very inferiors. That is why they do not adjust themselves in any situation very easily. Novel situation seems to be a Herculean task to them.

These definitions seem to be more adequate because they cover up all the characteristics of rigid behaviour, which have been advanced by different psychologists from the time to time.

The analysis of these six characteristics reveal that persons suffering from rigidity are engrossed in the interest and valued primarily suited to their own thoughts, feelings and ideas. They think about the future and adhere values according to their own standards, plan for future but hesitate to reach a final decision. Their feelings are easily hurt because they lack in self-confidence and readiness. They do not feel comfortable in modern fashion because they are the great supporters of old traditions and customs. But they become very ambiguous and tense when they can not solve problems of their lives, claim that sometimes uncertain and unpredicted things give them torture. Such individuals also become aggressive when they find that a friend or relative is disapproving of them.
They also become frightened when they have to perform some task time and again, are slow in making up their minds and they often do errors while performing a task.

Such peoples become disgusted when they can’t solve problem relating to life, feel discomfort when faced with complex situation show lack of adjustment in novel situation, always consider themselves to be very inferior, seek help from others and prefer the company of others or younger.

The concept of “Flexibility” in behaviour is a phenomenon which means the tendency on the part of a person to shift from one task to another task; from one method to the other method while performing some activities. According to Rapaport, Gill and Schafer (1945) it means "the ambiguity to modify concepts once developed, upon encountering difficult to failure ..... a freedom of shifting from one concept to another". From the above explanation of the concept of flexibility it is clear that shifting (variability) in performance in responses is a pre-requisite condition that favours successful adaptation. Studies are available which indicate the reason of shifting take place in the responses when the person is placed in a specific situation. Solomand Diamond (1957) have mentioned that(1) the shifting may take place because of the change in internal drive state of organism, (ii) the shifting tendency may follow maturation in the organism. For example, mentioned may be made of male dog who urinates in the squatting posture when it is Juvenile but changes to a three legged when it is a adult. Jones and Jones (1928) mentioned that the child who would not have feared of snake when he was three year old, does so the age of five. (iii) In the Plugger's (1957) classical demonstration of the spread of reflection, the decelerate frog, when it is failed to
move the irritant side by the scratching movements of one leg, brought the opposite leg also into play. The child, who is not noticed for being good, attracts attention by being naughty. (iv) Perceptual shift may cause a re-structuring a figure ground relation ship leading to different behaviour. Example of this may be given to Koher's (1925) chimpanzed who learns to use two sticks fastened into one to pick up a banana as against the use of one stick for one purpose. (v) studies regarding the phenomenon of conditioning have also been reported where stimulus substitutions and generalisation have led to shifting responses (Skinner, 198C; Watson and Rayner, 1920). There are various kinds of flexibility which fall into two groups. In one group we find the characteristics of the adaptive organism which result in various responses even to constant stimulus conditions. The second group includes the kind of behaviour changes which, although they are based on an underline capacity for trail and error represent in themselves so many ways of reducing variations in behaviour by substituting that tried and tested, response for the random trail.

In short, flexibility enables an individual for adjust himself effectively to the problem of complex life. Persons who are flexible by nature usually easily find adjustment to new situations and experience without loosing find adjustment to new situations and experience without loosing their emotional estability or identity. They operate from a base of relatively estable conditions which relates them to their environments. As they encounter needs and experiences, they change their condition to some extend to yield a better fit with novel situational demands. However, they do so while maintaining a basic sense of stability and continuity in their functioning.
C) General Introduction on Normality:

To define "Normality" it is not so easy. Everyone defines normality in different way. Usually normality means "physical" "psychological" and "mental" health, which cause an individual establish normal relationship in social context. It is the balance relationship which an individual establish with his environment. Some psychologists defines the term "Normality from the maturity point of view. And others believe to be adjustability of personality. Still some other defines normality as a mental health.

D) Definition of Normality

In the new Webster of American dictionary normality defined as a state of being normal or according to standard or rule, or having average intelligence and physical condition. According to dictionary of psychology (1992) normality is defined as normal personality in broad concept which can be defined statistically most common type in a group and often as an individual free from defects or disorder, specially from psychiatric involvement. Readers digest great encyclopedic dictionary defines normality as a standard or typical of average people having intelligence, mentally and emotionally balanced. According to readers digest, normal implies that a particular reason who does not exceed certain limits or does not deviates far from average or standard established for a group or class or species. Short text book of psychiatry (1999) defines normality, as normal mental health or reality orientation, self- awareness, and self knowledge, self- esteem and
self acceptance, ability to exercise voluntary control over behaviour, ability form affective relationship and pursuance of productive and good directive activities.

Oxford English dictionary (1989) defines normality as a "uniqueness" which is the outstanding characteristics of individual as well as the "regularities" and uniformity which are the outcome of scientific attempts to impose order on nature and in particular on mankind as a whole.

American Encyclopedia defines normality as "mental health which involve the development of a healthy attitude in the individual taught himself and toward the environment in which the curve, so that he will achieve the maximum amount of self fulfillment. International Encyclopedia of psychology, psycho analysis and neurology, has defined normality as a mental health of social rules and norm. medical and psycho physiological observation alone can not give an adequate picture of the individual experience of mental illness, that must be seen in the context of the interpersonal relationships that surround the individual. Psychoanalytically oriented definition of normality is as follows:

1. Non-existent in a complete form, but existing as selective and quantitative approximation.

2. In agreement with statistical averages of specific groups if that is not country to standard of individual health and mentally.

3. Physical normality, absence of physical disease presence of good structure and function and maturity.

4. Intellectual normality.

5. Absences of neurotic and psychotic symptoms.

6. Emotionally maturity( especially in contrast with neurotic character formation.

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a) Ability to be guided by reality rather than by fears.
b) Use of long-term value
c) Crown-up conscience.
d) Independence
e) Capacity to love someone else but with an enlightened self-interest.
f) A reasonable aggressiveness.
g) A reasonable dependent
h) Healthy sexual adjustment with acceptance of opposite gender.
i) Good work adjustment.

Aims and Objective of the Present study

The present study aims to investigate the typical behaviour and attitudes and adjustment of rigid and normal individual and their personality traits. Therefore the study attempts to measure the personality traits objectively with the help of some reliable and valid tools like rigidity scale and normally scale. In order to fulfil the main aims of the study following objectives are spelled out.

Objectives

a) Tracing the level of normality and rigidity in Indian and Iranian students.
b) Verifying the relationship between rigidity and normality.
c) Tracing the general differences in respective rigidity and normality.
d) Considering the interactions amongst all possible groups and sub-groups in respect to normality and rigidity along with sub factors whenever is required.
In present study to keeping the aims and objectives in mind the researcher has formulated following hypothesis to fulfil the aims and objectives of the research.

**Hypothesis**

First ten hypothesis are made on the basis of analysis of variance.

1. There is no significant difference in rigidity score of two cultural groups in relation to two genders.
2. There is no significant difference in rigidity score of two cultural groups.
3. There is no significant difference in rigidity score of two gender groups.
4. There is no significant difference in rigidity score of two cultural groups in terms of two way interaction.
5. There is no significant difference in rigidity score of two cultural groups in terms of between groups.
6. There is no significant difference in normality score of two cultural groups in relation to two genders.
7. There is no significant difference in normality score of two cultural groups.
8. There is no significant difference in normality score of two gender groups.
9. There is no significant difference in normality score of two cultural groups in terms of two way interaction.
10. There is no significant difference in normality score of two cultural groups in terms of between groups.

Following hypothesis are made on the basis of 't' test.

11. There is no significant difference in Rigidity scores of the following groups.
a) There is no significant difference between Iranian and Indian students in rigidity.
b) There is no significant difference between male student and female students in rigidity.
c) There is no significant difference between Iranian male students and Indian male student in rigidity.
d) There is no significant difference between Iranian female and Indian female students in rigidity.
e) There is no significant difference between Indian Male and Indian female in rigidity.
f) There is no significant difference between Iranian Male and Female students in rigidity.

12. There is not significant differences in normality scales of following groups

a) There is no significant difference between Iranian students and Indian student in Normality.
b) There is no significant difference between male student and female students in normality.
c) There is no significant difference between Iranian male student and Indian male students in Normality.
d) There is no significant difference between Iranian female students and Indian female students in Normality.
e) There is no significant difference between Indian male students and Indian female students in Normality.
f) There is no significant difference between Iranian male and Iranian female students in Normality.

13. There is no significant difference between following groups in Introversion.
   a) There is no significant difference between Iranian students and Indian students in introversion.
   b) There is no significant difference between male students and female students in introversion.
   c) There is no significant difference between Iranian male student, and Indian male in introversion.
   d) There is no significant difference between Iranian female and Indian female in introversion.
   e) There is no significant difference between Indian male and Indian female in introversion.
   f) There is no significant difference between Iranian male and Iranian female in introversion.

14. There is no significant difference between following groups conservatism.
   a) There is no significant difference between Iranian students and Indian students in conservatism.
   b) There is no significant difference between male students and Indian male in conservatism.
   c) There is no significant difference between Iranian male students and Indian male students in conservatism.
d) There is no significant difference between Iranian female and Indian female in conservatism.

e) There is no significant difference between Indian male and Indian female in conservatism.

f) There is no significant difference between Iranian male and Iranian female students in conservatism.

15. There is no significant difference between following groups in fusion of fear.

a) There is no significant difference between Iranian students and Indian students in fusion of fear.

b) There is no significant difference between Male students and female students in fusion of fear.

c) There is no significant difference between Iranian male students and Indian male student in fusion of fear.

d) There is significant difference between no Iranian female and Indian female in fusion of fear.

e) There is no significant difference between Indian male and Indian female in fusion of fear.

f) There is no significant difference between Iranian male and Iranian female in fusion of fear.

16. There is no significant difference between following groups in Automatism.

a) There is no significant difference between Iranian students and Indian students in Automatism.
b) There is no significant difference between Male students and female students in Automatism.

c) There is no significant difference between Iranian male students and Indian male student in Automatism.

d) There is no significant difference between Iranian female and Indian female in Automatism.

e) There is no significant difference between Indian male and Indian female in Automatism.

f) There is no significant difference between Iranian male and Iranian female in Automatism.

17. There is no significant difference between following groups in intolerance.

a) There is no significant difference between Iranian students and Indian students in intolerance.

b) There is no significant difference between Male students and female students in intolerance.

c) There is no significant difference between Iranian male students and Indian male student in intolerance

d) There is no significant difference between Iranian female and Indian female in intolerance.

e) There is no significant difference between Indian male and Indian female in tolerance.
f) There is no significant difference between Iranian male and Iranian female in tolerance.

18. There is no significant difference between following groups in Adaptability

a) There is no significant difference between Iranian students and Indian students in Adaptability.

b) There is no significant difference between Male students and female students in Adaptability.

c) There is no significant difference between Iranian male students and Indian male student in Adaptability.

d) There is no significant difference between Iranian female and Indian female in Adaptability.

e) There is no significant difference between Indian male and Indian female in Adaptability.

f) There is no significant difference between Iranian male and Iranian female in adaptability.

Following hypothesis are made on the basis of correlational studies.

19. There is a significant correlation between normality and rigidity scores.

20. There is a significant correlation between normality and rigidity six sub-tests.

a) Normality with Introversion. b) Normality with conservatism.

c) Normality with fusion of fear. d) Normality with Automatism.

e) Normality with Intolerance f) Normality with adaptability.
21. There is a significant correlation between rigidity and rigidity six sub-tests.

a) Rigidity with Introversion.

b) Rigidity with conservatism.

c) Rigidity with fusion of fear.

d) Rigidity with Automatism.

e) Rigidity with Intolerance.

f) Rigidity with adaptability.

22. There is a significant correlation between rigidity six sub-tests.

a) Introversion- Conservatism

b) Introversion – fusion of fear

c) Introversion – Automatism

d) Introversion- Intolerance

e) Introversion – Adaptability

f) Conservatism- fusion of fear

g) Conservatism- Automatism

h) Conservatism- Intolerance

i) Conservatism- Adaptability

j) Fusion of fear- Automatism

k) Fusion of fear- Intolerance

l) Fusion of fear- Adaptability

m) Automatism- Intolerance

n) Automatism – Adaptability

o) Intolerance- Adaptability