CHAPTER - I

The parent-child relationship.

General Background of the problem:

All schools of dynamic psychology place heavy emphasis on the socialization process, the processes by which an individual grows from a dependent infant to an independent adult. Probably the most fundamental agency of socialization is the family, school and motherhood, since the most extensive and intensive social interactions of the child during crucial developmental stages occur within the family. As aptly stated by Murphy, Murphy, and Newcomb.

The child's self is formed while he is in the process of literally flowing into the personalities about him; the ego, or self, is partly made out of these images and attitudes which well within him as he watches and becomes absorbed in the activity about him. He may at a later age reject the opinions of his parents, he may storm against authority and conservatism; but much of the earlier pattern of the ego is formed at a time when self-criticism is out of the question and the personality is utterly important to reconstruct itself by hewing away those aspects which arise from primitive identification.
This study deals with one particular aspect of the psychological dynamics of family relationship, namely, the mother-child relationship in child-rearing situations in an industrial urban community.

The writings of Freud (1918), Adler (1932), Sullivan (1943), Watson (1929), Horney (1937), Mead (1934), and others, although differing as theoretical systems of psychology, nonetheless have in common the stress which they place on the importance of the mother's role in the development of the child's personality.

One approach to the analysis of the mother-child relationship was based on comparison of specific feeding and training practices (e.g., Levy). This approach was not fruitful because by 1928 concentrating entirely on specific details of child rearing, many other aspects of the parent-child relationship were overlooked. Murphy, Murphy, and Newcomb (1937) recognized this when they stated: "It is quite beside the point to stress the value of rewards and punishments; what the parent is speaks far more loudly than the techniques he employs". Urllansky (1949) in a review of literature relevant to the hypothesis that types of infant care determine personality structure, also suggested that emphasis
he placed on the total pattern of experiences of children rather than upon specific infant care practices. More recently, Watson (1959), in his value on child psychology, stated that "research studies suggest very strongly that it is not specific practices but maternal attitudes which most profoundly influence later personality development." The emphasis on parental practices without considering underlying attitudes, on one hand, and the converse stress on attitudes without giving consideration to specific parental behaviours, seem to represent two extreme points of view. In understanding the influence of the mother-child relationship on the social development of the child, it seems necessary to examine more closely the linkage between attitudes and behaviour. A knowledge of how maternal attitudes and manifested in behaviour would shed more light on the primary social experience of the child with its mother. Specific details of child-training practices are likely to be primarily significant as expressions of the attitudes of the socializing agents, rather than through intrinsic effects. It is the desire to investigate the link between attitudes and behaviour which provided the basic impetus to the present research.
Nearly every parent loves his children. But in many cases misunderstanding, hard feelings, and open conflict occur between parent and child. It would seem that love is not sufficient to produce a happy parent-child relationship. What else is needed? Among other things we would say that common sense, knowledge of what can be expected of the child, reasonableness, patience and intelligence are necessary.

Very often good parent-child relationships are maintained by the use of affection as a method of control. When mother or father try to get the child to do something by indicating that they will love him more if he does, then affection becomes a form of barter and is cheapened in the process. To make affection dependent on good behaviour is always a mistake. It may be that the child will be good in order to be loved but his idea of the meaning of love is distorted as a result. It is very important that the child feel secure in the affections of his parents, for any insecurity here may have serious results. Affections, then, should never be used as a lever to move the child, for he needs to feel, that no matter what happens there is a solid emotional anchor, that his mother and father will love him always.
The most important single feature of children is a relationship with their parents. This means that the child needs to feel that there is at least one solid dependable fact in the changing confusion of his social relationships, that the need never doubt his parent's affection for him.

Mutual Confidence:

Being an effective parent means being able to carry through requirements and restrictions without arousing antagonism in the child. It means managing the routine demands on the child without arousing resentment. This can be accomplished only when the routine requirements are made impersonal and are clearly not just the whims of the parent. Thus the child is helped to realize that he goes to bed, or washes his hands, or does any of the other routine daily activities not because the parent wants these things but because these are necessary parts of the business of living.

Another important feature of the parent-child relationship is mutual confidence and trust; that is, the parent trusts the child and the child trusts the parent. Any kind of suspicion of each other and the
parent-child relationship suffers. The parent can earn the child's confidence and trust by being completely reliable. This means that the child is never deliberately deceived.

Lack of Trust:

Carelessly made promises not fulfilled tend to undermine the child's trust in the parent and it is impossible to have a happy and effective parent-child relationship without this trust.

It is equally important that the parent show trust and confidence in the child. This is even more difficult because the child in his immaturity is often unreliable. He may tell lies as most children do, or pilfer or fail to live up to some of his responsibilities, but none of these should cause the parent to lose faith in the child. It is this which helps the child to achieve and gradually greater dependability. Suspicion and lack of trust in the child inevitably spoils the parent-child relationship.

Some times the parents' lack of faith in their children leads them to check up too closely on them and to require them to account for every moment of their time. This usually forces child into deceit in order
to have any feeling of individual freedom. Constant check-up and too rigid supervision leads to resentment and sometimes even rebellion and the parent-child relationship suffers. Children need some privacy and even secrets from their parents. Parents need to respect the possessions and private affairs of their children.

Some children have really find people for parents but they have never found it out because about the only contact they have with them is when they are being disciplined. In order to build up or sustain a happy parent-child relationship there must be frequent occasions when parent and child engage in pleasant, friendly and happy activities together.

When things go wrong between parent and child, as they occasionally do, it is the parents responsibility to try to mend the breach. It is so easy for little misunderstandings and resentments to grow that the sooner such things are cleared up the better. Sometimes the child simplest way to manage this is to have a regular family council when every member of the family, young and old, has an opportunity to get things off his chest. Human relationships are complex and it is so easy for
things to go wrong. Free discussion often helps to clear up misunderstandings. Such free discussion is not easy to manage because of the usual parental tendency to lay down the law and insist that father or mother knows best.

Heart to Heart Talks:

Sometimes parent-child relationships are helped by 'heart-to-heart' talks between one parent and one child. This should not be spoiled by another parental habit of moralizing. In such private conferences parent and child can get closer to each other and often remove barriers of misunderstanding. Sometimes the boy or girl 'opens up' and reveals thoughts, feeling and ambitions or doubts, fears and confusions which the parent would never know of if it were not for this occasion. Such confidential talks are difficult to arrange. It is almost impossible to plan them ahead of time but the alert parent is ready to grasp the occasion when it presents itself.

There are children who feel smothered by parental affection. This is when such affection keeps the child from becoming more and more independent as he grows up.
The child can learn to depend less on the parent for care and direction and at the same time retain and even strengthen his affection for the parent. The parent-child relationship can become even more meaningful as the child grows away from the detailed supervision which was necessary in the early years of his life.

Practical suggestions:

(1) Parents can and should enjoy their children, in fact enjoyment of contacts with children is one of the best tests of effective parenthood.

(2) Affection should never be used as a method of control.

(3) Requirements and restrictions should be impersonal required by the situation and not a parental whim.

(4) Trust and mutual confidence between parent and child can be maintained by complete parental reliability and an abiding trust in the child.

(5) Too constant check-up on the child is undesirable.
(6) Frequent happy times together by parent and child help to maintain healthy parent-child relationship.

(7) Occasions can be found for confidential personal chats between parent and child.

(8) Affection should not hinder the child's progress towards independence.

Thus, we think of child's inadequate behaviour not as bad but as an indication that he needs help in learning how to behave more adequately. The main objective of child training and education is to help a child achieve self-discipline.

There's nothing more important today than the job of parenthood. None of us are satisfied with the world as it is. The only hope seems to be to bring up the next generation in such a way that will be able to live more adequately than the present generation.

It is of some real value to think of our objectives as parents. What are we trying to do with our children? What goals have we in mind? We need a clear picture of our objectives—a kind of blueprint we can go by, what we do depends on the kind of picture we have formed of what kind of person we want to produce.
Most parents tend to think in terms of immediate results. They think they are doing a good job if they are able to have well-behaved, obedient children who do as they are told, at least when there are adults around. But this is not good enough. We need to think in much broader terms, in terms of what kind of person the child is becoming. In this regard, may I suggest a picture of the kind of person we as parents should keep clearly in mind as the goal of our job of child training.

Adult in the Decisions:

We are trying to produce adults. An adult is a person who is capable of managing his life satisfactorily. He is grown-up not only physically but also intellectually, socially and emotionally. He has left behind his childish forms of behaving. He is capable of fitting into social groups. He has learned how to live efficiently and peacefully with other people. He is a good husband or wife, a good parent, a good neighbour and citizen. He has something to contribute to the society in which he lives. He has learned how to accept the consequences of his own behaviour and decisions. He is independent in the sense he can make his own decisions and manage his own affairs. He doesn't need a policeman at his
elbow in order to keep from breaking laws. He is emotionally mature. He has outgrown his childish ways of emotional expression. He no longer has temper tantrums when he can't have his own way. He has overcome his fears and insecurities. He is, in short, the kind of person one likes to have around.

Now, with this kind of objective in mind the question arises how so we produce that kind of person? The first thing to keep in mind is that all of this is learned. The difference between a delinquent and a non-delinquent, for instance, is a difference in terms of what has been learned. The delinquent has managed to learn some of the wrong things and failed to learn some of the right things. The job of the parent is to make sure that the opportunities are arranged for the right kind of learning.

When the child is born he knows nothing. He has everything to learn and he learn something in every situation. It is the serious responsibility of the parent to see that the child has the kinds of experiences which will help him become the kind of adult we have described.
Because the young infant is unable to make any decisions at all, the parent starts out by making all the decisions and controlling the activities of the helpless infant. But as he grows and learns he becomes capable of making some of the decisions for himself and managing some of his daily activities. This is the general principle—gradually handing over to the child the responsibility for the management of his own affairs. This must be a gradual process—each month some little item of the day's routine becomes the child's responsibility and less the responsibility of the adult. In this way he is getting practice in the use of freedom and the fulfilling of responsibility.

Self Discipline:

When parents think in terms of getting the child to do something, the easiest way is to bribe the child. You can get a child to do almost anything if you make the reward big enough. So it isn't surprising that this method is used a great deal. So, whether it is eating up vegetables, being less noisy, or whatever it is, parents often use the bribe method. But this method is inadequate mainly because it doesn't help the child to learn the kinds of things that help him become an adult.
Sometimes also parents make use of affection as a means of getting the child to do thing or keep from doing things. "Mother won't love you if you do that" or "Mother will love you more if you behave in certain ways" or "father don't like children who are noisy or a nuisance". But affection is too important to be used in this way. The child needs to feel that there is a solid foundation of affection, that he is secure in the affection of his parents, and that no matter what he does he can always count on the love of his parents. And also, he is not helped towards our goal of self-discipline by this method.

And the torture method is another favourite method parents use to keep their children obedient and well-behaved fear and pain, spanking and slapping are still common methods. These methods are successful when all we are interested in is to keep the child good for the time being. But in terms of the more important long range objective they are inadequate. They do not help the child to develop self-discipline and self-regulation. In fact, in some cases they actually hinder that kind of development.
It is inevitable in any kind of society that there should be restrictions and compulsions. No one who lives with other people can do that he likes. He must learn to accept the necessary rules of the society in which he lives or he is maladjusted or delinquent.

No child study expert ever recommends complete 'Free expression,' for this is impossible.

Gradual Change:

The method of helping the child to become a well-adjusted, efficient happy adult is one of a gradual change from external control to self control.

A reasonable scheme of discipline is one that has a plan in which the requirements that the child must accept are necessary and just as few as we can get along with. But there are requirements—things that the child must do whether he wants to or not, and other things that he must not do. But these requirements are not just whims of the adult, but clearly situational demands. The child must do this not just because mother wants him to or father will be annoyed if he doesn't but because this is a necessary part of living. To help the child learn this the requirements are carefully and consistently enforced. If he fails to live up to the requirements then he must suffer the consequences of his failure. Both the requirements and the consequences are made as impersonal as possible.
The requirements change with the growth and learning of the child. As he learns to accept more things as his own responsibility the control by adult over that activity gives place to control by the child. Thus he gradually achieves more responsibility and at the same time more freedom. For these freedom and responsibility must go together.

In this scheme the child has plenty of practice in making choices and learning the consequences of his own choices. He is not just learning to obey someone else, but he is learning how to manage his own affairs in a satisfactory manner.

The child is helped in making his progress from external control to self control by an environment which provides him with enough interesting activities, with a good example of how to live and enjoy living, and the right kind of attitudes and moral standards of the individuals with whom he lives. His table manners, his code of honesty, his prejudices and related things are usually a reflection of the group with whom he lives his own family.
Whenever you are trying to decide what is the best thing to do in terms of the management of your children think in terms of the ultimate goal. Ask yourself will this help or hinder the child's development towards as all-round maturity.

A reasonable scheme of discipline avoids the undesirable features of the personal command - obey methods as well as the unrealistic free - expression idea. It does this by considering every experience of a child as a harmful experience.

The Concept of Attitude - Its measurement:

General Statement of the problem:

The purpose of this study reported here is to investigate the relationship between maternal attitudes toward child rearing and family life in an urban industrial community of Ahmedabad City, as measured by questionnaires, and the observed interaction of the mother with her preschool child in a specific play situation. They hypotheses to be listed are based on the concept that an attitude includes as one of its components a tendency to act or react in defined ways in particular stimulus situations. The study uses specific observation techni-
ques which yield quantitative measures of covert behaviour. The basic question to be answered is whether mothers who reflect different attitudes also differ in social interactions with their children. A secondary question to be addressed is whether different attitude instruments differentially predict social behaviour.

In the child study area it may be pointed out a vital need for studying a major link between parental attitudes and the behaviour of children - the relation between parental attitudes and how parents actually behave with their children. It may be described many of the existing studies as having a "reverse leap-frog" design in that inferences from obtained differences in parental attitudes involve a backward extrapolation in time, conceptually 'having over' the actual behaviour of parents with the children. It is hoped that the present study will contribute towards filling the gap in this area of research. Moreover, the present research should be of value in helping to assess the behavioural predictability of different attitude scales for parent-child interactions. Parents of these children were administered questionnaires that assessed child-rearing attitudes and behaviours. Social uncertainty were positively correlated with (a) the magnitude of the absolute difference between
parents in their acknowledged child-rearing attitudes and behaviour and (b) the degree to which the mother exceeded the father in warm personal contact with the child. The whole study gives an atmosphere of child's physical environment with a vital section of the city to realize the nature of its origin, growth and development. This is done in order to evaluate whether a city, which is an abode of millions of human beings, ever takes into consideration to vital needs of children of the human race. The study also gives the effect child rearing attitudes and forms of misdemeanour selected for comparison as viewed by adults.

Every manifestation of conscious life, however, simple or complex, general or particular, can be treated as an attitude, because everyone evolves a tendency to action. According to G.W. Allport an attitude is "a mental and neural state of readiness, organised through experience, exerting a directive or dynamic influence upon the individual's response to all objects and situations with which it is related."¹ Krech and Crutch

Field propose the following definition; perceptual and cognitive processes, with respect to some aspect of the individual's world, an attitude is essentially a form of anticipatory response, a beginning of action, which is not necessarily completed.

Sherif and Cantril describe attitudes as among "those components of the psychological make-up of the individual which determine that he shall react not in a passive or neutral way but in a selective and characteristic way especially in relation to certain specific stimulus situations." Puson states that an attitude is the probability of the occurrence of a defined behaviour (or social action) in a defined situation... Attitudes will be studied for their utility in prediction.

No one has seen an attitude; an attitude, however, real to its possessor, is an abstraction, the existence of which is inferred from nonverbal overt behaviour, or from verbal or symbolic behaviour.

Smith, Bruner, and White define attitude as a “predisposition to experience a class of objects in certain ways, with characteristic affect; to be motivated by this class of objects in characteristic ways; and to act with respect to these objects in a characteristic fashion. In brief, an attitude is a predisposition to experience, to be motivated by, and to act toward, a class of objects in a predictable manner.” Green defines an attitude as a latent variable which describes a “consistency among responses to a specified set of stimuli or social objects.”

---


Rosenberg et al have described attitudes as made up of cognitive, affective, and behavioral components. Their schematic presentation is given below:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Measurable Independent Variables</th>
<th>Measurable Intervening Variables</th>
<th>Measurable Dependent Variables</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Affect</td>
<td>Stimuli (individuals, situations, social issues, social groups, and other attitude objects)</td>
<td>Sympathetic nervous responses</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Verbal statements of affect.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Verbal statements of belief.</td>
<td>Perceptual responses</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Verbal statements concerning beha-</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>viour.</td>
<td>Overt actions</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

They have been particularly concerned with relationships among the three major components of attitudes and through experimental methods have studied attitude change by systematically manipulating one of the components.

Warren and Carmichael hold that since there is complexity in our ideals they are seldom definite, and do not lead to form concrete experiences. But they
continue to develop in the form of deep lying ideal attitudes, which serves motives of action and control the course of our time.\textsuperscript{7}

In Kohler's Gestalt psychology\textsuperscript{8}, the term 'Attitude' is found to express one kind of psychological stress or activity within the organism. He remarks that from the viewpoint of Gestalt psychology a change of attitude involves a definite psychological stress exerted upon a sensory field by processes originating in other parts of the nervous system. To some degree the organisation of the field may yield to it and the most compulsory organization which can occur in experience is a dynamical event of attitude consisting of one member from which it issues and the other one towards which it is directed.

From the above it may be concluded that there is actually no difference among psychologists on the conception of attitude has been studied from different quarters with different points of view.


\textsuperscript{8} Kohler, W.: \textit{Gestalt Psychology.} New York, Liveright.
The present study is concerned with child rearing attitude what Green refers to us 'elicited verbal attitude and 'action attitudes', or, expressed in terms of Rosenberg et al, the relationship between the affective-cognitive components (Verbal statements of affect and belief) and the behavioural components (overt actions).

These early studies in the 1950's are significant in the historical development of systematic efforts to analyse parents behavior and its effects on the growing child. However, they are limited by their sole reliance on case histories, lack of precision the operationally different and measuring variables, and unwarranted assumptions of causal relationships.

One of the most comprehensive studies of parental attitudes and practices and their relationship to child variables was made by Maccoby, Sears and Levin (1957).

---

This study was based on standardized interviews with mothers of preschool children, in which they described their child-rearing practices as well as certain aspects of the child's behaviour. The research studied customary child-rearing practices of lower and middle-class mothers, the effects of certain practices on selected personality characteristics of children, and factors associated with the use of different child-rearing practices. From the transcription of the interview, 188 scales were rated for each mother, with seven main factors:

A - Permissiveness - strictness;
B - Warmth of mother - child relationship;
C - General family adjustment;
D - Responsible child-training orientation;
E - Aggressiveness and puritiveness;
F - Perception of husband;
G - Orientation towards child's physical well being.

Natural personality dimensions were derived from the scale ratings.

Among the findings of this study were the marked differences in the practices and attitudes reported by middle-class and working-class mothers, the working-class
mothers being more puritive and restrictive and less permissive and warm in their relationships with their children. Positive correlations were also found between a mother's self-esteem and esteem for her husband and her activity to feel and express warmth toward the child. No significant relationships were found between infant feeding practices and child behaviour, but there were positive relationship between feeding problems in children and lack of warmth, rejection and a high use of punishment by the mothers. It was also found that dependency behaviour in children was positively related to rejection on the part of the mother.

Since all data were derived from interviews, the ratings for mother and child were not independent. This study, nevertheless, is an outstanding attempt to quantitatively and qualitatively analyse several aspects of child-rearing practices simultaneously and to evaluate their influence on the socialization process.

The studies thus far reviewed have attempted to link family life variables to child behaviour variables by analysis of such factors and parental background, personality characteristics, material adjustment, socioeconomic status, and parental attitudes and practices in
the area of child rearing.

However, they have depended on either analysis of case records or information attained through interviews with parents. Reliance upon reports of behaviour rather than actual observation of behaviour raises the problem of accuracy because of such factors as selective recall, deliberate distortion, or unconscious distortion. The study reported here has utilized direct observation of behaviour with specific measurement techniques as a more objective method than rating scales or interviews.

An individual may manifest uncertainly in a given situation if he feels to predict further events in which he is involved. At least two general classes of such situations are of interest. Social situation, in which an individual is unable to predict the manner in which he will responded to by other persons. A child's expectations about how other persons outside the home will respond to him may derive from his previous experience with his parents. Differences between parents in their responses to their child's past behaviour may prevent the child from developing a generalized expec-
tanch for how other persons react toward him in the future. These differences may therefore create a temporary cautiousness on the part of the child in responding to new interpersonal situations. Such cautiousness, by relatively long response latencies, should be manifested until sufficient experience has been gained to develop specific expectancies for others' behaviour has become fairly predictable, uncertainty should decrease.

Personally the earliest studies of an objective type, growing out of psychoanalytic theories of family relationships of Flugel\textsuperscript{10} Symonds\textsuperscript{11} reported the results of two investigations. The first study compared 31 pairs of accepted and rejected children, drawn from case reports and matched for sex, age, grade social background, and level of intelligence.

\begin{enumerate}
\end{enumerate}
The measuring instruments were check lists of items of the child's behaviour, parental harmony, and factors in the parents' childhood. The accepted children showed more socially acceptable behaviour, were more confident of the future less confused and discouraged, and had fewer feelings of insecurity than the rejected children. Symonds' second investigation, also based on case reports, compared children of dominoitory parents as described as polite, sensitive, self-conscious, shy, and more conforming, while children of submissive parents were described as disobedient, irresponsible, independent, stubborn, and unmanageable.