CHAPTER - I

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Man lives in the society. He has strong needs to relate himself significantly and meaningfully to other members of the society. He makes efforts to gain acceptance and approval of others and to maintain a position in the group. More specifically, the sociometric relationship of an individual is a very important phenomenon in the social reality.

Liking for others and their reciprocal feelings towards us are among the most important aspects of social life. Being liked by others can have significant effects upon a person's well-being. Having friends is important to anyone. Feelings of liking lead to increased association and they shape the behaviour of individual in interaction. Groups are formed on the basis of attraction between persons (Secord and Backman, 1964; p.238). Interpersonal attraction is the basis of all human social behaviour. Living in human social context and acceptance of the individual by his group members is a boon and also a sign of normality. Rejection by the group members may be sufficient to induce clinical symptoms in the sufferer, or disruptions of normal acquaintance processes may sometimes lead to unpleasant consequences. Isolation or rejection is both unpleasant and aversive, and much clinical depression is the result of the rejection by other persons.

The presence of a friend more effectively reduces stress than does the presence of a stranger. Positive interpersonal
attraction should lead to a greater ease in managing a conflict, but negative interpersonal attraction should lead to a greater difficulty in managing a conflict. Socially isolated pre-school and elementary school children are at developmental risk in terms of language, moral values, and affecting-responding; without treatment, social isolation may continue as a stable pattern of behaviour. In a series of studies by Roff (1956, 1957, 1960, 1961, 1963), childhood peer status emerged as a significant predictor of young adult adjustment level.

Feelings of isolation are a common source of self devaluation and discouragement. Probably, the struggle for recognition and status is a life long one. Every favourable token of social recognition gives the ego a boost, bolsters one in self-confidence, and gives one a great sense of belongingness. No human-being ever reaches the point, where it is not a thrill to receive social approval, or where he does not shrink and recoil from social disapproval. It is also beyond doubt that, at any age, an acceptable social status is an important requisite for satisfactory personal and social adjustment. Lack of such status frequently makes way for misery and unhappiness; whereas, the attainment of such status once lacking may produce marked changes in an individual's personality and feelings of well-being.

Stating in the same vein, Jennings (1950, pp. 3-4) emphasized: "Integrated patterns of human relations contribute to educational ends in many ways. They help personal development and increase motivation to learn. The kind of
group life in which an individual participates, contributes to his personal development. Individuals fully develop only in interaction with their fellows. Happiness and growth of each individual student depends, in a large measure, on his personal security with his classmates. Popularity plays a central role in one's self-concept, and the unpopular often suffer not only the pangs of rejection by others, but also the pangs of their own self-condemnation.

Relations with others can be the source of the deepest satisfaction and of the blackest misery. Many people are lonely and unhappy, some are mentally ill, because they are unable to sustain social relationships with others. Many everyday encounters are unpleasant, embarrassing or fruitless, because of inept social behaviour. Many of these difficulties and frustrations could be eliminated by a wider understanding and better training in skills of social interaction (Argyle, 1969). Evidence has suggested that there are negative consequences associated with having few friends or low level of acceptance by peers; thus sociometric measures may be good predictors of psychological risk (Asher, Oden, and Gottman, 1977). Children whose sociometric status is low are more likely than their peers to be identified as deviant (e.g., school dropout, mental health problems) during adolescence and adulthood (Kohn and Claussen, 1955; Roff, Sells, and Golden, 1972; and Cowen, Pederson, Babigian, Izzo, and Trost, 1973). Low status children are often characterized as socially incompetent and at risk for adjustment problems (Asher and Hymel, 1981; Asher, Renshaw, and Geraci, 1980; Asher, Markell, and Hymel, 1981). Impaired peer relationships
are what brings most patients to psychotherapy (Grunebaum and Solomon, 1982).

The area has been approached from clinical angle by Sullivan (1947), who developed the theory of personality given by Freud, by explaining mental health and illness as the expression of sound and unsound "interpersonal relations", and emphasized that the paratactic processes are due to social rejection of the self, leading to a disturbed perception of 'self' to 'society'. Sullivan (1953) further emphasized that isolation or rejection is both unpleasant and aversive, and much clinical depression is the result of the rejection by other persons. In addition, Horney (1957), while developing her 'characterological approach' to personality, also stressed that the neuroses are generated due to disturbances in human relationships. Fromm (1957), too, emphasized that human relations determine the course of personality development. In a general sense, the inability to establish constructive and satisfying interpersonal patterns underlie all neurotic patterns.

As a result of the importance of peer relations, over the past two decades, the topic of young children's peer group status and peer relations have received research attention from diverse psychological perspectives. There has been a resurgence of interest in children's social adjustment, particularly as this adjustment is defined by the child's peer group. The recent revival of interest in sociometric data has been triggered by a more general interest in children's social cognition and by a growing body of evidence
that peers are an important source of data for predicting a child's future adjustment. Peer influence is a strong and consistent determinant of a wide range of educational outcomes for elementary and high school students. Importance of early peer relations have also been advocated by Ullman (1957), Asher (1978), Hartup (1978, 1980), Youniss (1980), and Lewis and Schaeffer (1981).

Developmental psychologists (e.g., Hartup, 1976; Oden and Asher, 1977; Furman, Rahe, and Hartup, 1979; Gottman and Parkhurst, 1980; and Ascher and Hymel, 1981) have studied peer acceptance as an index of the adequacy of children's peer-relations. Children whose relationships with peers are inadequate either because interactions occur at low frequencies or because the quality of such interactions is inappropriate, are considered 'at risk' for later problems with adjustment (Jones, 1957; Kagan and Moss, 1962; Suomi and Harlow, 1975; Furman, Rahe, and Hartup, 1979; and Hartup, 1979). Problems in social skills in childhood have been associated with a variety of adjustment problems later in life (Green and Forehand, 1980; and Vosk, Forehand, Parker, and Rickard, 1982).

Because of the growing awareness of the importance of early peer relations (Asher, 1978; Hartup, 1978, 1980; Youniss, 1980; and Lewis and Schaeffer, 1981), investigators have become interested in developing methods of identifying children who are 'at risk' and in developing intervention strategies for aiding children who have peer-relationship
problems (O'Conner, 1969; Oden and Asher, 1977; Furman, Rahe, and Hartup, 1979; and Walker et al., 1979). Clearly, much potential lies in peer relations for furthering the development of social and personal competence. Approval by peers in the form of group acceptance and popularity serves as a powerful reinforcer for school-age-children.

Keeping in view what has been stated in the preceding paragraphs, it can be concluded that the effect of peer group influences on children and adolescents has interested educators, sociologists, social and developmental psychologists for many years. The topics of young children's peer group status and peer relations have received research attention from diverse psychological perspectives.

Being accepted by, being peripheral to, or being rejected by agemates has an impact on children and adolescents. Since a high level of social acceptability permits the child greater social mobility and more opportunities to satisfy his social needs, it is generally recognised as a desirable goal in child guidance endeavours. The crucial problem is not simply whether children are influenced by their peers; of greater significance is the discovery of those factors that determine sociometric status. Hence, psychologists have attempted to identify physical and personality factors related to social acceptability or popularity.
in the belief that knowledge of these factors would provide points of departure for helping the isolated or rejected child to improve his social-acceptance status.

In the historical perspective, it can be noted that Terman (1904) conducted research on leadership and suggestibility in elementary school children. In 1909, Cooley (1955) identified 'fellowships' that boys form around 12 years of age. Puffer (1912) collected case histories of what he termed gangs and concluded that the "character of these gangs determines, in no small degree, what sort of men these boys will become" (p. 8). In the 1920's, interest in the peer group continued to grow. Hurlock (1927) showed the importance of group rivalry as an incentive to win. Furfey (1927) studied friendship choices of boys, and Thrasher (1927) recognised high levels of 'group cohesiveness' and the existence of 'common codes' among peers. During the 1930's significant contributions to the methodology of peer research were made by Dorothy Thomas and J.L. Moreno. Thomas (Thomas, Loomis, and Arrington, 1933) perfected observation techniques, and Moreno (1934) devised sociometric procedures to measure peer group membership.

Since Moreno (1934) devised sociometric procedures to measure peer group membership, hundreds of investigations have examined correlates of peer popularity and unpopularity. The 1940's and 1950's were periods of extensive study.
of children's peer relationships. The sociometric technique provides most of the data for these studies, and in the period between Moreno's (1943) original work and Gronlund's (1959) summary of sociometric research, many of the major questions of children's social choices were explored. These major questions refer to the measures including behavioural observations in natural settings and analogue situations, teacher reports, self-reports, knowledge of social skills, responses to hypothetical situations, and academic achievement. Numerous studies have compared popular and unpopular children on a range of measures. Large quantities of data concerning the correlates of sociometric status are available in the literature of child psychology.

A large body of evidence suggests that bright children are more popular than less bright children. This conclusion is based on two types of studies:

(1) investigations in which I.Q. data have been correlated with sociometric data in school children, and

(2) research focussing on the social relations of gifted children, on the one hand, and retarded children on the other.

An early study combining intelligence and sociometric status is that of Almack (1922). He reported positive correlations between the I.Q. of .......... children and the I.Q. of the children they chose (as their friends).
Another study comparing I.Q. and choice status directly for a grade school sample is that of Hardy (1937). Choices of desired associates were obtained during an interview. Intelligence was appraised by the Stanford-Binet Scale. A correlation of .37 was reported between the number of choices received and the I.Q.. Later studies, essentially similar to this one, commonly obtained correlational values of this general magnitude (Warner, 1923; Williams, 1923; Wellman, 1926; Furfey, 1927; Jenkins, 1931; Partridge, 1933; Burks, 1937; Dimock, 1937; Pintner, Forlano, and Freedman, 1937; Mc Gahan, 1940; Bonney, 1942, 1943, 1944, 1946; Wechsler, 1944; Mayman, 1946; Reilly and Robinson, 1947; French and Mensch, 1948; Grossman and Wrighter, 1948; Johnson, 1950; Cronbach, 1950; Taylor, 1952; Badami and Tripathi, 1953; Bass, Wurster, Doll, and Clair, 1953; Bonney, Hoblit, and Dreyer, 1953; Borgatta, 1953; Davis, 1953, 1957; Harvey, 1953; Mill, 1953; Riggs, 1953; Shapiro, 1953; Barbe, 1954; Brown, 1954; Slater, 1955a; Gallagher and Crowder, 1956; Fiedler, Doyle, Jones, and Hutchins, 1957; Kelly, 1957; Gallagher, 1958; Gronlund, 1959; Thakar, 1961; Sharma, 1965; Tiwari and Gautam, 1966; Yamamoto, Lambright, Merlene, and Corrigan, 1966; Glick, 1969; Kakkar, 1970; Gautam, 1971; Kalanidhi, 1971; Malhotra, 1971; Vasudeva and Verma, 1974; Sharma, 1975; Baron, 1978; Chen, 1980; and Kundu and Maiti, 1985).

The maximum correlation obtained in these studies is .37, and the median correlation is no higher than .10.
On the other hand, Jennings (1943), in a study of adolescent girls in a training school, found a correlation of .04 between I.Q. and choices received. This result is not typical of those obtained with unselected public school samples.

A few other studies (Grossman and Wrighter, 1948; Heber, 1956; Porterfield and Schlichting, 1961) attempted to study the relationship between intelligence and sociometric status. These studies have gone beyond the gross correlational approach. These investigators concluded that intelligence did make a difference to a certain point i.e., normal intelligence, but beyond that it did not materially affect the selection-rejection score. The studies revealed that the relationship between intelligence and sociometric status is likely to be exponential rather than rectilinear. Some investigators argued that the correlation between intelligence and popularity could be due to an independent relation between social class and peer acceptance. Roff and Sells' (1965) study has supplied evidence which clarifies this issue. A large population of Minnesota school children was divided into four socio-economic groups. This was accomplished on the basis of census records. Then intelligence of popular and non-popular children were compared at each social class level. The results showed clearly that the popular children were brighter than the non-popular children, when social class was held constant. The mean differences,
in intelligence between popular and non-popular children varied from twelve to twenty points. In contrast, Jennings (1943), Sharma (1965), and Glick (1969) reported insignificant correlations between sociometric status and intelligence. The large bulk of evidence suggests that the relation between intelligence and popularity is positive. The maximum correlation obtained in these studies is .37 and the median correlation is no higher than .10.

There have been several studies, since 1937, dealing with the connection of sociometric status with (i) adjustment (Cattell, 1934; Hardy, 1937; Burks, 1938; Bonney, 1942, 1947; Jennings, 1943; Northway, 1944; Young and Cooper, 1944; Kuhlen and Bretsch, 1947; Northway and Wigdor, 1947; French and Mensh, 1948; Grossman and Wrighter, 1948; Cronbach, 1950; Greenblatt, 1950; Baron, 1951; Martin, Gross, and Darley, 1952; Mill, 1952, 1953; Tagiuri, 1952; Bass, Wurster, Doll, and Clair, 1953; Bonney, Hoblit, and Dreyer, 1953; Borgatta, 1953; Gronlund and Anderson, 1953; Shapiro, 1953; Cohen, 1954; Slater, 1955a; Guthrie, 1956; Fiedler, Doyle, Jones, and Hutchins, 1957; Kelly, 1957; Chazan, 1963; Anierio, 1964; Sharma, 1965; Pathak, 1972; and Sharma, 1975); (ii) anxiety (Vreeland and Corey, 1935-36; Kuhlen and Lee, 1943; Young and Cooper, 1944; Hallworth, 1952; Thorpe, 1955; McCandless and Castaneda, 1956;

The studies dealing with the relationship between sociometric status and adjustment have provided at least some support for the hypothesis of a moderate positive relationship between adjustment and sociometric status (better adjusted children are more popular), although Northway and Wigdor (1947) and Sandhu (1982) found some evidence of a curvilinear relationship. Likewise, anxiety has also been found to be related to popularity. Most investigators who have employed paper-and-pencil tests of anxiety, such as the Children's Manifest Anxiety Scale, report low negative correlations...
between anxiety and popularity among children in the intermediate grades of elementary school. Furthermore, those studies which attempted to investigate the relationship between extraversion and sociometric status found that the highly chosen popular individual emerges as a sociable, surgent, and emotionally labile person. Moreover, it can also be noted that none of the attempts to relate masculinity to popularity have yielded significant results, and the trends, though positive, is weak (Bass and Wurster, 1953a; Mill, 1953; Shapiro, 1953; and Slater, 1955a).

From these studies, the characteristics of unpopular children seem to fall into two groups, which have been variously named recessive and aggressive (Shaw, 1954), externalizing and internalizing (Rolf, 1976; cf. McMichael, 1980), and apathetic withdrawn and angry defiant (Kohn and Parnes, 1974). Social acceptance has been considered important for positive adjustment.

Keeping in view what has been stated in the preceding paragraphs, the following points can be safely drawn:

(1) The literature concerning peer relations that has accumulated during the past fifty years contains much information which is of both theoretical and practical significance. There
is adequate information already in existence upon which future studies can be built;

(2) In the several decades since Moreno (1934) developed a sociometric measure, numerous investigations have examined the importance of peer relations. However, popularity and specific friendship selection should be carefully distinguished. 'Popularity' refers to the general degree of liking by the peer group, whereas, friendship selection refers to liking by a specific peer. Thus, it is possible to have a low popularity score but still be selected a specific friend by another peer (or by a small number of peers);

(3) One problem in this literature has been the inconsistency with which 'popularity' or 'acceptance' among peers is operationally defined. Sometimes it is defined simply by social acceptance (the number of peer nominations to the question, "Whom do you like most"?) and sometimes the acceptance score is combined with a measure of social rejection (defined by many nominations to the question, "Whom do you like least"?). Since these two dimensions - acceptance and rejection - are only slightly negatively correlated, the kinds of social status distinctions that can be drawn from the sociometric data vary greatly depending on
whether acceptance and rejection scores are used together to define types of status or whether acceptance alone is used as the index of status. For example, when negative status is defined solely in terms of the small number of liking nominations received from peers, the result is a confounding of two types of negative status that can be seen when the combined use of acceptance and rejection scores is undertaken (Northway, 1944; Gronlund and Anderson, 1957; and Asher and Hymel, 1981). Under this latter condition a distinction must be made at the negative status end of the acceptance dimension between children who are also actively disliked by their peers and children who are simply not nominated by their peers as liked or disliked. The latter children are sometimes referred to as 'isolates' and sometimes as 'neglected children'. Recently, Gottman (1977) and Hymel and Asher (1977) have demonstrated that both positive and negative nominations must be used to avoid confounding rejected and neglected status groups. Peery (1979) recently demonstrated the importance of using both positive and negative dimensions in predicting pre-schoolers' social comprehension skills;

(4) There is little research that involves study of the same problem with groups that vary widely in age. Age trends are fairly well documented in the area of peer conformity, but the factors that influence sociometric status have not been studied intensively in groups of children other than pre-adolescents. More specifically, the major problem with the literature on sociometric
choices has been the lack of studies of developmental changes in the basis for sociometric choices. Are the reasons for choosing a peer as liked or disliked the same among pre-adolescents and adolescents?

(5) For assessing sociometric status, a vast majority of investigators have made use of pooled information on different sociometric criteria. It is just possible that a person who is a desirable companion in one social interactional situation may not be desirable in the other. By pooling information of different social-interactional situations (sociometric criteria), differentiation of social status is lost (Moreno, 1960);

(6) The phenomenon of peer relations is a complex process. It must take into account the child's previous socialisation history, aspects of his ability and personality, the characteristics of the children with whom he is interacting, and the social-interactional situation in which peer interaction takes place. In this context, it is important to emphasise that both research and application in this area must be multivariate, rather than univariate, in character. The investigator knows of no systematic researches that have been conducted in this specific area of research which is multivariate in nature;

(7) No systematic research has been made to study sociometric status in relation to motives; and

(8) Sex differences have been revealed in the correlates of sociometric status.
These eight aspects provided the guidelines for the formulation of the objectives of the present investigation.

**Phase - I**

**OBJECTIVES**

The main objectives of Phase-I of this study are as follows:

1. it intends to study the relationship between sociometric status scores derived from three sociometric criteria;
2. it proposes to study surface and structural relationship between measures of sociometric status, intelligence, personality, and motives;
3. it intends to compare the structure of sociometric status at pre-adolescent age with the adolescent stage of development;
4. it intends to study whether the correlates of sociometric status remain the same or not at pre-adolescent and adolescent age levels;
5. it intends to study whether the correlates of sociometric status remain the same or not for different sociometric criteria; and
6. to compare 'populars' and 'rejectees' on different measures of intelligence, personality, and motives.

**Phase - II**

The main objective of Phase-II of the study was to assess whether sociometric status can be predicted from intelligence, personality, and motives.