

CHAPTER I

CERTAIN BASIC COMPONENT-IDEAS IN THE MATRIX

(Developing The Need Of The Present Investigation)

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Social Processing and Attitude:

Wants and goals of an individual are found reflected in his thought and action. Under the impact of social processing both of these develop and change continuously. In course of such development and change the purposive nature of the individual takes a shape, gets organised. Behind its dynamics the roles of momentary physiological state, situation, and cognitions of the individual concerned have been admitted by the psychologists.

Every time an individual reacts to his social ambience and he acquires certain behaviour-changes contributive to form his interpersonal response traits—relatively consistent and stable dispositions to respond in distinctive ways to other persons—which, according to Horney, has been classified as (i) moving towards people, (ii) moving against people, and (iii) moving away from people (Krech et al, 1962). According to Sullivan (1953), the individual's self-concept develops in the course of interaction with significant others—the persons who most intimately provide the rewards and punishments in his life.

The actions of an individual in his social life, narrower or wider, is determined by his attitudes with respect

to social objects. Attitudes develop and become enduring systems, as a composite of conation-cognition-emotion, with 'pro' and 'anti' characters which are measurable by a scientifically constructed device for prediction and control of relevant behaviour.

Attitude can be Measured:

Attitudes can be measured only on the basis of the inferences drawn from the responses of the individual towards the social object. An attitude scale consists of a set of statements or items to which the person responds and its sole objective is to assign an individual a numerical position which indicates the nature of the individual's action tendency, positivity or negativity, towards a particular social object. Thurstone and his associates first introduced a method of attitude scale construction known as "the method of equal-appearing intervals" for measuring religious attitudes (Thurstone, 1929), pending no objective basis for choosing the most discriminating items. Likert's method of "summated ratings" was applied in measuring attitudes towards imperialism, internationalism, colour prejudice, etc. (Likert, 1932), pending absolute meaning of an individual's score — that indicates a position relative to the distribution of scores of other people. In comparing attitudes of different people towards the same nationality or one's attitude towards different nationality, Bogardus social-distance scale gained high recognition since it was made publicly known (Bogardus, 1925), excepting a very critical comment on this scale made by Crespi (1945), denying

it as an adequate attitudinal measure. In latter date Guttman's "cumulative scaling method" claimed to identify the comparative position of a person on a particular attitude (Guttman, 1950) along a unidimensional scale for a single attitude, pending difficulties in selecting ample statements to initiate exploring one's mind. By synthesising the methods of Thurstone, Likert, and Guttman, the method of "the scale-discrimination technique" was developed by Edwards and Kilpatrick (1948) and which has not yet been seriously criticised in regard to its workability, provided its validity is measured by its predictive accuracy when used for specific purpose. Current trends in the attitude scale construction have laid emphasis on multidimensional scaling methods for predicting action towards social objects (Torgerson, 1958).

Attitude changes:

The attitudes of an individual are shaped to a great extent by the information-exposure that are made available to him. Sources for the said information-exposure need to be adequate and correct for developing a desirable attitude or right attitude constellation of an individual. Experimental results on the governing factors of one's attitudes revealed the undeniable influence of the centrality of group values (Smith, 1947) group norms like family norms, and norms of school life, peer group, neighbourhood community-life — the group with which the individual is affiliated. Of course the individual usually rejects those attitudes which are quite incompatible to his personal needs and demands, as may be evident in the dynamics of deviant-group formation. Common acceptance of an attitude produces uniformity of attitudes among the members of various social groups. What one may accept or reject

depends on his personality limits and that is why one's personality has been found to be reflected largely on his attitudes. Or, in other words, the major determinants of attitude modifiability are the characteristics of personality of the individual and his group relations but not upon the weakness or strength of attitude to be modified only. Because the said weakness or strength of the attitudes concerned had dependency on the said two major determinants also. Watson clearly illustrated that as a result of effectiveness of new group affiliation the new entrants for his social recognition adopts the attitudes prescribed by the values and norms of the group (Watson, 1950). A generalised evidence of Watson's conclusion may be observed in the changing attitude of adolescent students during their school life. Attitude change and its presistence is the product of complex interactions — interactions between the personal dispositions and a frame of reference on the one hand and affective forces of external spheres of life on the other—centering around purpose or goal-achievement of an individual. To quote Festinger, "an individual experiences discomfort when he holds logically inconsistent cognitions about an object or event, and that he is motivated to reduce the dissonance through cognitive and attitudinal changes" (Festinger, 1957), by increasing or reducing the proportions of either 'pro' or 'anti' character of the attitude concerned.

Individual in Group life:

Man has to live a social life, under a constant all-pervasive social influence, within an organised group of interacting people with a set of common impersonal goals and with spirit of

sharing the various common modes of codes, conducts, rules, beliefs, and actions of the group, community or society. According to Murdock (1949), the community is the primary seat of social control and the most typical social group to support a total culture. Culture includes all the institutionalised ways and forces which underlie and govern the conduct of individual member and outline the characteristic signs of standard interpersonal behaviour events - the system of reciprocal role behaviours in a given standard situation of interacting individuals meant for typical roles to play.

Group life is vitally significant to an individual's welfare. From the very beginning of his socialisation and acculturation he comes in contact with psychological groups and learns skills of interdependency and sharing ideologies. Besides, the more he grows the more he has to interact with various social organisations - an integrated system of inter-related psychological groups formed to accomplish a stated objective. Through various group memberships the individual satisfies many of his wants and while interacting with them he achieves many of the social goals essential to the survival of the society. Groups provide the individual with new experiences, causing a change in the wants of the individual. Common action patterns come to be played by the members of a group as group goals and ideology emerge in the course of member interaction.

Conformity behaviour plays a very important role on the social life of an individual. Conformity is also a function of interacting individual and a situation-complex. According to Tuddenham, conformity behaviour depends more on the individual

susceptibility in favour of acceptance of others judgements (Tuddenham & Macbride, 1959; Tuddenham, 1961). Tuddenham may be accepted within a specified range of situations to which the individual is susceptible also.

The School as teen-agers' society:

The School is the "teen-agers' community or society" that provides them numerous social experiences, often impersonal and competitive. Many of their most seriously felt responsibilities and serious problems are concerned solely with school-work and living. It is the function of the high schools to meet those needs which are not expressedly or incidentally being met elsewhere in sufficient. It provides the pupils to get involved in new psychological group situation and, as well ^{as} social organisation. Here the students are expected to be processed for developing security feeling, sense of worth, charms of companionship, ideas regarding varieties of life, and skills for maintenance of health. During daily programme participation in school life the younger generation is supposed to be enriched with desirable adjustment-modes in the spheres of physical and psychological purposes of life, autonomy, wider interpersonal relations. Being equipped thus, on the verge of school-leaving, they may be assumed to have inculcated certain common values like skills for living in democracy, decision-making and direction-giving capabilities suitable to life-age concerned, ability to work and making a vocational choice, a perception of essential requirements of marital life, and genuine necessities of happy adulthood. In brief, as thought by Mahatma Gandhi in formulating his basic

education scheme, "such student generation will help to bring about a new social order rid of competition and strife and imbued with the spirit of co-operative fellow-feeling."

(Menon, 1961).

The School life inculcates disciplined behaviour:

The above qualities presuppose a disciplined behaviour of each student through participation in secondary school programme and expect a disciplined student generation with high social morale. If majority of the students are self-disciplined then the group, community or society they form will show signs of disciplined movements - by organising itself, taking right decision in right time, working out plans for the doing, and carrying out that effectively, with full cooperation of its members and without direction or coercion from the outside. While self-discipline may be described as one's quality to choose through own effort, the essentials for good living, the group-discipline may be described as the quality of the group members for choosing through group effort the essentials for effective functioning of the group or graceful community living. In both cases the question of habituation is a must. Here for the true welfare of the group or community, and definitely not for pleasing the demands of somebody foreign to the group or community. Being constituted with multitudes of self-disciplined students if the student generation is formed in all actions of social or national life they will be characterised as with high morale.

A student generation with high social morale must have faith in, and zest for, their country's cause. They must be

ready to sacrifice and cooperate with others in the attainment of the country's or national goal, and must have thorough identification with the cause of country or nation. The success of building up such a student generation depends on how they are conditioned with the prevalency to inculcate these values in them in home and school mainly in terms of their need-satisfactions and modes of adjustments to changes and to various forces, irrespective of their personal limitations. After Allport and Murray, it may be assumed that the following assets of personality make for high morale in democracy (Allport & Murray, 1942): (i) Sound physical health, (ii) sound mental health, (iii) economic security — a job and income sufficient to maintain a standard living, (iv) sound religious and family values, (v) sociability, (vi) confidence and faith in social system under democracy, (vii) power of constructive criticism and confidence in the leaders, (viii) a sense of solidarity, including tolerance of, and cooperation with, all classes of minority groups, and (ix) faith and confidence in bright future or optimistic outlook.

Signs of high social morale:

Society or community expects effective functioning of the student group for its cause through united action on a visible level. Such functioning of student community greatly depends on the teachers who get themselves involved in school programme with statutory aim and objectives tuned to national ideologies. Criteria of high morale in a group include among others (i) a capacity of necessary inner readjustments of an interpersonal nature, (ii) communality of the goals of the individual members,

(iii) positive attitude by group concerning the objectives of the group and the group leadership and (iv) desire of the group members to retain the group and a regard for it as a positive value. When such signs will remain present in a student group they by no means will involve themselves in unrestful movements causing a chaos in social life. (Krech & Crutchfield, 1948).

Students' indiscipline indicates low social morale:

During the last few years India is facing a challenging problem centering around students unrest that has affected country's law and order, peace and progress. From the remarks of the Vice-Chancellors of different Universities the grave situation can easily be appraised.¹ Analysing the situations expressing

1. Views of the Vice-Chancellors of different Indian Universities published in the Bulletin of the West Bengal Headmasters' Association, Vol. XVI, No. 3, March 1967, Calcutta.

- (i) "Students' unrest has become a national evil" -
M.S. Kamath, Vice-Chancellor, Indore University.
- (ii) "Students' indiscipline has increased hundred percent during past few years" -
Dr. B.B. Saxena, Vice-Chancellor, Rabi Sankar University.
- (iii) "Student-unrest has laid to all the activities...which are not only a threat to the future of the nation but also to the interests of the students as a whole" -
B.K. Nehru, Vice-Chancellor, Allahabad University.
- (iv) "Student trouble is not a unimal occurence for India alone-- it is a world problem-- as witnessed in recent years in America, Indonesia or Japan" -
Dr. S.S.Ayyanger, Vice-Chancellor, Andhra University.
- (v) ".....at present the Universities sometime felt powerless to deal with them" -
S. Bhan, Vice-Chancellor, Punjab University.
- (vi) "It has assumed the proposition of Law and Order problem" -
Dr. C.D.Desmukh, Ex.Vice-Chancellor, Delhi University;
Dr. V.K.R.V. Rao, Ex.Vice-Chancellor, Delhi University.
- (vii) "Comments on its etiology stressed upon 'blaming parents and teachers'....." -
Dr. T.Sen, Ex.Vice-Chancellor, Banaras Hindu University.
- (viii) "It also depends on the context of the economic and social conditions" -
Dr. V.C.V. Rao, Vice-Chancellor, Venketeswar University,
Madras.

students indiscipline they may be safely described as a state of low morale (Krech and Crutchfield, 1948) of the student community. Student community under such situations has been found breaking up into antagonistic subgroups, full of interpersonal frictions with feeling of distrust and destructive criticism, failing to be self-governing of its internal tensions, with appreciable amount of unfriendliness and rejection. Moreover, some of the subgroups have been found with extreme negative views and attitudes towards the objectives of student life and its leadership formulated by the authorities and with little feeling of identification and involvement with the psychological groups and social organisations with which they are concerned.

All these basic component-ideas, described in the foregoing paragraphs, have formed the matrix in visualising the need for studying the students social morale in the light of the goals of secondary education so far prescribed by different Education Commission of India, since the day the country has achieved its political freedom, described under Chapter II.