INTERPERSONAL COMFORTABLENESS ORIENTATION

OF COLLEGE STUDENTS

By

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Statement of Problem

Walters and Stinnett (1971) have stated that more research is
needed concerning the ability of family members to tolerate conflict,
to accept hostility of others within the family and to develop and com-
municate a genuine sense of care and respect for each other. Such re-
search knowledge may be greatly facilitated by gaining greater insight
and knowledge concerning how family members can achieve interpersonal
comfortableness.

Greenberg (1971, p. ix) has noted that over a hundred years ago
Thoreau wrote, "The mass of men live lives of quiet desperation." This
is perhaps even more true today in this society of competition and con-
flicting ideas in which lives are further complicated by rapidly chang-
ing technology and the uneasy world situation. It is becoming increas-
ingly apparent that the overcoming of the "quiet desperation" as well
as the fulfillment of basic emotional needs is closely associated with
the ability to establish comfortable relationships with each other.
Comfortableness in interpersonal relationships might best be defined as
a process in which people become aware that in the presence of a par-
ticular person they feel "at home" and secure or feel a sense of under-
standing or emotional atunement (Branden, 1969).

Satir (1964) points out that the small child needs to be physically comfortable; he also needs to feel comfortable in his relationships with people who are important to him. The spouse who is seeking a divorce, the adolescent who is leaving home, the elderly person who is separated from the main stream of life all are searching for comfortable relationships. Yet as common as this need is, very little is known concerning why an individual is comfortable around some persons and uncomfortable around others.

Jourard (1971) suggests that people are expected to be communicative within a family, but that there is evidence of lack of self-disclosure. Children don't know their parents, fathers don't know their children, and husbands and wives are strangers. A basic reason for such lack of disclosure among family members may be due to an absence of comfortableness within the relationship. It is interesting to note that many of the qualities which promote comfortableness within relationships are also qualities which contribute to marriage success. Stein (1972, p. 280) has stated:

> There is evidence that the following qualities contribute to marriage success: (1) being empathic, (2) having inner resources to enjoy oneself, (3) having the capacity to confront and resolve differences or else to allow the other to be different, (4) having the courage to share all of oneself, (5) being appropriately other centered, (6) having the security to tolerate suggestions and at times criticisms, (7) having the inclination to help the other actualize himself, and (8) being able to engage in meaningful nondefensive communication.

Spock (1971) concurs with Stein by suggesting that a loving person makes others feel comfortable by helping them to feel good about themselves, respecting others, being trustworthy and by expressing spontaneous thoughtfulness and helpfulness.

Comfortableness in interpersonal relationships appears to be an extremely important factor involved in mate selection and marriage success. The following expressions are often made by youth concerning the dating partner: "I feel completely at ease with her;" "When I am with him, I feel I can be myself;" "I don't feel a need to put on a front;" "She makes me feel very uncomfortable;" "I feel threatened when I am around her." It is unfortunate that many individuals date and eventually marry persons with whom they do not feel comfortable. As important as this concept of interpersonal comfortableness is, it has been a virtually ignored concept in family life education. There has been little or no research of this concept. To the investigator's knowledge no instrument has been developed in previous research to measure comfortableness orientation. It is to this purpose that the present investigation is addressed.

Interpersonal Comfortableness Orientation

For purposes of this study, interpersonal comfortableness orientation is defined as the degree to which a person is inclined to help another feel secure, unthreatened, and respected. Among the major qualities involved in interpersonal comfortableness orientation are: (a) empathy -- refers to the ability to see things from another's viewpoint; (b) spontaneity -- the natural, open expression of feelings and freedom from extreme guardedness; (c) trust includes such qualities as expressing feelings honestly, absence of "putting on a front," having a helpful attitude toward others, and wanting the best for them; (d) judgemental refers to the tendency to stereotype and judge the behavior of others as good or bad; (e) interest-care refers to a genuine interest

in another and to a communication of feeling that one is committed to the promotion of another person's welfare; (f) respect includes consideration and regard for the uniqueness of another individual; (g) criticalness-hostility refers to the tendency to criticize others and express hostility when another's actions or ideas are different. These qualities, though not exhaustive, were deemed to be among the more important qualities involved in interpersonal comfortableness orientation as reflected through a review of literature.

Purpose of the Study

The general purpose of this study was to investigate interpersonal comfortableness orientation of college students and to relate interpersonal comfortableness orientation to certain background factors:

The specific purposes of this study were to:

1. Develop an instrument, the Interpersonal Comfortableness Orientation Scale, to measure the degree of comfortableness orientation which college students perceive themselves as possessing.

2. Determine if significant differences existed in the Interpersonal Comfortableness Orientation Scale scores according to: (a) sex, (b) religious preference, (c) socioeconomic status, (d) parents' marital status, (e) maternal employment, (f) responsibility of consequences of action, (g) closeness of relationship with father, (h) closeness of relationship with mother.

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Elements of Comfortableness

Empathy

Empathy may be defined as the ability of an individual to enter
another person's inner world of private personal meanings and to see
things from the other person's point of view or frame of reference
(Rogers, 1962; Blood, 1960).

Barrett-Lennard (1962) points out that empathy implies that a per-
son can appreciate how others feel inwardly. In other words, it implies
that a person can "tune-in" to the other person's wave length and re-
ceive his message as he communicates it. Smith (1966) suggests that
empathy with another involves the ability to recognize that another
person's feelings, thoughts and behavior are similar to our own. Smith
(1966, p. 29) states, "It is only by being empathic, by recognizing the
similarities between what we feel and think and what others feel and
think that we can understand each other." Katz (1963) in the book
Empathy, Its Nature and Uses, states that a person who empathizes
abandons himself and relives in himself emotions and responses of
another person. Foote and Cottrell (1955) believe that empathy is
basically taking the role of the other person. Competent interactions
experienced in the family and other groups appear to depend heavily

upon the development of empathy.

There is evidence that communications which convey empathy for the feelings of the listener are supportive and defense reductive. Reassurance results when a message indicates that the speaker identifies himself with his listener's problems and shares his feelings (Gibb, 1965). There is also evidence which suggests that the less dogmatic person is more likely to provide communication of empathy in interpersonal relationships (Stoffer, 1968). In a study of 17 students at the University of Michigan, Newcomb (1956) reported that the greater the attraction a person has for another the greater the empathy. He tends to proceed toward that other person. Truax and Carkhuff (1967) report that a growing body of literature concerning parent-child relationships produces evidence consistent with the thesis of Rogers (1952) that empathy, warmth and genuineness are characteristics of human encounters that change people for the better.

Spontaneity

Berne (1964) states that spontaneity means option, the freedom to choose and express one's feelings from the assortment available. Berne further states that for certain people there is something which transcends the programming of the past and that is spontaneity. Smith (1961) suggests that spontaneous people can openly and naturally show affection or aggression when the situation demands. There is research evidence which indicates that behavior which is spontaneous and free of deception reduces defensiveness. When the defensive rigidity is reduced, the individuals can hear each other and learn from each other. They become more sensitive which implies greater awareness of one's own

feelings and perceptions of others (Gibb, 1965).

Satir (1964) states that when a person tries so hard to please the other person that he finds himself living in a manner that he thinks the other wants him to live, he is no longer a spontaneous human being. Maltz (1964) and Rogers (1970) agree that people need to learn to be more spontaneous and to learn that it is natural to be warm and genuine.

Trust

Erikson (1954) explains that trust implies reasonable truthfulness as far as others are concerned and a sense of trustworthiness as far as oneself is concerned. Baldwin (1955) suggests that trust is an attitude, a contentment and confidence which comes from the assumption that life is pleasant and will not become unmanageable. As Werner (1963) has stated, trust is an essential component of a healthy interpersonal relationship. When trust is missing from a relationship, one or both of the persons involved may tend to feel isolated and anxious in a sense, uncomfortable.

There is much evidence which suggests that a child learns trust largely because his parents care for him (Read, 1966). Trusting in and feeling safe with his parents, the child can proceed to trusting in and feeling safe with other people. Langford (1963) concurs with this by stating that children gain a sense of security and trust by being made comfortable by adults.

Rogers (1952) pointed out that to be perceived by another as being trustworthy does not mean that a person be "rigidly consistent" but they be "dependably real." Schutz (1967) found that trust and directness deepened and enriched interpersonal relationships and opened up

feelings of closeness.

Judgmental

Rogers (1952) points out that one of the major barriers to inter-
personal communication is a natural tendency to judge and evaluate, or
to approve or disapprove the statements of other people. Gibb (1965)
agrees that speech is often judgmental and in his research indicates
that when individuals place blame, see others fitting into categories of
good or bad, making moral judgments or question another's values or
motives, the listener becomes defensive.

Rogers (1961) suggests that a relationship which facilitates growth
frees the other person from the threat of external evaluation. The
more the relationship is kept free of judgment and evaluation the more
it frees the other person to be a self-responsible person. Cottle
(1965) explains that in the evaluation process of an individual's be-
havior, his self-concept and ego ideal eventually lead him to positively
or negatively evaluate his prior behavior. When discrepancies exist be-
tween self-concept, ego ideal and behavior, a particular type of evalu-
ation anxiety ensues.

In a study made by Siegleman (1966), it was indicated that depres-
sion in boys which included being overly moralistic was related to
punishing, demanding and non-loving parents. Goldsborough (1970) points
out that being nonjudgmental is hard work and that possibly we are never
completely free of these feelings. These feelings which stem from our
value systems may come from life experiences with family, friends, com-
munity, religion, class and culture. Goldsborough suggests that the
ability to recognize and acknowledge one's feelings, accept one's own

feelings and look into the origin of these feelings, could help a person become less judgmental.

Interest-Care and Criticalness-Hostility

According to Fromm (1956), one of the major components involved in a loving relationship is genuine care of one person for another. Care at its highest level is unconditional and involves a genuine interest in the welfare of the other; there is a desire to promote the growth and happiness of the other person (Fromm, 1956; Jourard, 1958; and Barrett-Lennard (1962). Evidence exists which indicates that behavior which is perceived as uncaring and disinterested tends to arouse defensiveness and uncomfortableness in others (Gibb, 1965).

Respect

According to Fromm (1956), one of the major components of a loving relationship is respect, the ability to see a person as he is and to be aware of and accept his unique individuality. Fromm further states that respect implies a concern that the other person grow and develop as he is. It is logical that when respect is absent in a relationship, defensiveness and uncomfortableness are aroused. Maslow (1962) suggests that no psychological health is possible unless the "inner nature" of the person is fundamentally accepted and respected by others.

Among the few research studies to examine the role of respect in interpersonal relationships were those conducted by Stinnett (1967, 1968, 1969) in which the Marital Competence Scale and Readiness for Marital Competence Index were developed. A factor analysis revealed that one of the four basic needs represented in the instruments was

respect, the fulfillment of which was operationally defined as treating one's mate or future mate as an individual, avoiding habits which annoy one's mate or future mate, being a good listener and providing encouragement and understanding.

In a study of marital need satisfaction of older husbands and wives, Stinnett, Collins, and Montgomery (1970) found that husbands were less satisfied with fulfillment of their need for respect than any other need in their marriage relationship which was examined.

Another study by Stinnett, Carter and Montgomery (1972) indicated that older husbands and wives felt that respect was the most important characteristic of a successful marriage. Stinnett (1971) also found that a high proportion of college students felt that respect was the most important characteristic of a successful marriage.

CHAPTER III

PROCEDURE

Selection of Subjects

The subjects of this study consisted of 310 male and female stu-
dents enrolled in undergraduate physical education, psychology and so-
ciology classes at Eastern Oklahoma State College. The various depart-
ments within the college were well represented in these courses. All
the students were classified as freshman or sophomores, and the great-
est proportion were in the 19-20 age category. The questionnaires were
administered during the regular class sessions. The data were obtained
during the spring semester, 1971.

Information Sheet

The first portion of the questionnaire consisted of questions de-
signed to obtain background information such as age and religious pref-
erence. The social class criteria was determined by the McGuire-White
Index of Social Status (1955), which uses source of income, occupation
and education as an indicator of social status.

Also included in the general information section of the question-
naire were questions concerning the respondent's perception of influ-
ences that were important in the formation of the kind of person he is
now (Appendix) such as the following:

1. Was your mother employed outside the home for the major part

of your childhood (choice of two responses)?

2. Did your parents encourage you to take responsibility for the consequences of your actions (choice of three responses)?

3. Which of the following describes the degree of closeness of your relationship with your father during childhood (choice of three responses)?

Interpersonal Comfortableness Orientation Scale

The Interpersonal Comfortableness Orientation Scale (hereafter referred to as the ICO Scale) consisted of 42 statements which were developed and utilized to measure the degree of interpersonal comfortableness orientation of college students. The items represented seven different qualities which a review of literature indicated to be important contributions to comfortableness in interpersonal relationships. On the basis of the review of the literature, the investigator developed six items which were considered relevant to each of the seven categories. Items for each of the seven categories comprised the total 42 item scale. The seven qualities represented by the items were: (a) empathy refers to the ability to see things from another's viewpoint; (b) spontaneity -- the natural open expression of feelings and freedom from extreme guardedness; (c) trust includes expressing feelings honestly, absence of "putting on a front," having a helpful attitude toward others, and wanting the best for them; (d) judgmental refers to the tendency to stereotype and judge the behavior of others as good or bad; (e) interest-care refers to a genuine interest in another and communication of the feeling that one is committed to the promotion of the other person's welfare; (f) respect includes consideration and regard for the

uniqueness of another individual; (g) criticalness -- hostility refers to the tendencies to criticize others and to express hostility when another's actions or ideas are different.

Each of the 42 items in the ICO Scale was characterized by five degrees of response: (a) very often, (b) often, (c) undecided, (d) infrequently, and (e) very infrequently. The responses were scored so that a favorable response was given the highest score. The scores were ranked and the upper and lower quartiles obtained. All subjects whose scores fell within the higher quartile were considered as having a high degree of comfortableness orientation in interpersonal relationships. Those subjects whose scores fell within the lower quartile were considered as having a low degree of comfortableness orientation.

Analysis of the Data

A percentage and frequency count was used to analyze the background information. The chi-square test was used in the item analysis of the ICO Scale. The split-half method was used to measure reliability of the items in this scale.

An analysis of variance was used to examine the hypothesis that there is no significant difference in ICO Scale scores according to: (a) sex, (b) religious preference, (c) socioeconomic status, (d) marital status of parents, (e) maternal employment, (f) encouragement to take responsibility for consequences of action, (g) closeness of father during childhood, (h) closeness of mother during childhood.

CHAPTER IV

RESULTS

Description of Subjects

Table I presents a detailed description of 310 students who served as subjects for this study. Fifty-nine percent of the respondents were females and 41% of the sample consisted of males. The respondents ranged in age from 17 to 24 and over, with the greatest proportion falling in the age category 19-21 (50.16%). The smallest proportion was in the age category 21-23 (5.83%). The sample was predominantly Protestant (84.47%). The person who was the main provider of income in the family was the father (69.71%). According to the McGuire-White Index of Social Status (1955), the respondents' families were classified primarily as upper-lower (44.84%) and lower-middle (33.23%). Seventy-nine percent of the respondents' parents were living together. Only 30% of the subjects' mothers were employed outside the home for a major part of the subject's childhood.

The Item Analysis

In order to obtain an index of the validity of the items in the ICO Scale, the chi-square test was utilized to determine if each item significantly differentiated between those subjects scoring in the upper quartile and those subjects scoring in the lower quartile on the basis

TABLE I

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SUBJECTS

Variables	Classification	No.	%
Age	17-18	88	28.48
	19-20	155	50.16
	21-23	18	5.83
	24+	48	15.53
Sex	Male	127	41.00
	Female	183	59.00
Religious Preference	Catholic	20	6.47
	Protestant	251	84.47
	Jewish	3	.97
	Morman	4	1.29
	None	13	4.21
	Other	8	2.59
Socioeconomic Status	Upper-middle	46	14.84
	Lower-middle	103	33.23
	Upper-lower	139	44.84
	Low-lower	22	7.10
Marital Status of Parents	Together	232	79.32
	Divorced or separated	18	5.84
	One parent deceased (with no remarriage)	22	7.14
	Divorced (remarriage)	21	6.82
	One parent deceased (with remarriage)	15	4.87

TABLE I (Continued)

Variables	Classification	No.	%
Mother Employed	Yes	93	30.00
Outside the Home	No	216	70.00

of the total scores. As indicated in Table II, 39 of the items in this scale were found to be significantly discriminating. A split-half reliability coefficient, computed with the Spearman-Brown Correction Formula, of +0.83 was obtained in determining an index of the reliability of the items in the ICO Scale.

Sub-Scores of ICO Scale

The ICO Scale consisted of six statements for each of the seven comfortableness categories. Mean sub-scores were obtained in order to determine those areas in which the respondents possessed the highest degree of comfortableness orientation as well as the lowest degree of comfortableness orientation. Table III lists the total mean sub-scores and the mean sub-scores for males and females. The most favorable sub-score was obtained in the category of trust (23.66%). The least favorable was reflected in the category of judgmental. The later finding appears to be related to the thesis of Rogers (1952, 1961) that the factor which most retards good interpersonal communication is the tendency to judge and evaluate each other. This finding may reflect the fact that individuals are taught and conditioned to evaluate, judge, and stereotype themselves and others in many subtle ways from a very early age both within the home and the school system.

The one-way classification analysis of variance was utilized to determine if there was a significant difference in interpersonal comfortableness orientation sub-scores according to sex. As Table IV indicates, there were significant differences in interpersonal comfortableness orientation sub-scores in all but two categories: "spontaneity" and "judgmental." Females indicated a significantly greater degree of

TABLE II

ITEM ANALYSIS BASED ON COMPARISONS OF THE UPPER AND LOWER
QUARTILES OF TOTAL ICO SCALE SCORES[*]

Item	df	x^2	Level of Sig.
In my relationships with other persons I:			
1. Try to see things from the other person's point of view.	2	27.36	.001
2. Do not try to see things from another person's point of view when his views are opposite to mine.	4	29.91	.001
3. Do not try to see things from another person's point of view when that person is disagreeable and hostile.	4	24.76	.001
4. Try to see things from the other person's point of view when that person is generally agreeable.	3	20.58	.001
5. When another person has a problem, try to imagine how I would feel if I were in his place.	3	34.76	.001
6. Try to understand why a person is behaving in a hostile manner.	3	16.40	.001
7. Am at ease when with another person.	3	35.68	.001
8. Respond to another person in a way that I believe he expects me to respond.	4	15.68	n.s.
9. Express my feelings openly.	3	12.32	.01
10. Do not express strong feelings or emotions.	3	8.17	.05
11. Am guarded in what I say to another person.	4	4.93	n.s.
12. Am "myself" even when I am with people with whom I am not well acquainted.	4	23.80	.001
13. Keep the confidence of another person.	3	51.48	.001
14. Talk about another person's personal problems (which he has revealed to me) to others.	3	45.55	.001

TABLE II (Continued)

Item	df	x^2	Level of Sig.
15. Feel I am putting on a front.	3	36.87	.001
16. Say things I don't really believe to others.	3	38.60	.001
17. Have a helpful attitude toward others.	3	29.44	.001
18. Want the best for others.	3	41.08	.001
19. Judge other person's behavior as good or bad, desirable or undesirable.	4	17.91	.01
20. View others as fitting into certain categories or types of persons.	4	22.88	.001
21. Closely question the motives of others.	4	7.88	n.s.
22. Accept differences in another person without forming unfavorable judgments of that person.	3	36.72	.001
23. Accept the person even though I do not approve of his behavior.	3	10.67	.02
24. Reject a person when his behavior is undesirable.	3	24.76	.001
25. Try to communicate the feelings that I am truly interested in what a person is talking about.	3	36.06	.001
26. Have a bigger problem of my own to tell when someone tells me of his problems.	4	53.22	.001
27. Have my own problems and cares uppermost in my mind when another person is talking to me about his troubles.	3	53.00	.001
28. Try to communicate to the other person the feeling that I really care about his or her welfare.	3	35.89	.001
29. Do not try to communicate the feeling that I am happy for another person when he tells me of his success in something.	3	36.40	.001

TABLE II (Continued)

	Item	df	x^2	Level of Sig.
30.	Try to communicate to the other person the feeling that I am genuinely committed to promoting his welfare.	3	28.88	.001
31.	Try to show that I respect the other person as a person of great worth.	3	35.30	.001
32.	Do not try to treat the other person as a special individual.	3	34.00	.001
33.	Try to respect the differentness of another person.	2	41.30	.001
34.	Do not try to respect another person's ideas when they disagree with mine.	3	42.85	.001
35.	Try to avoid bringing up topics which I know will embarrass the other person.	4	13.98	.01
36.	Try hard to change the other person when his ideas are different from mine.	4	62.08	.001
37.	Tend to see weaknesses or faults in others.	4	28.27	.001
38.	Avoid criticizing others.	4	14.28	.01
39.	Feel hostile toward others when they do not act as I think they should.	3	61.44	.001
40.	Become angry when someone's ideas oppose my own.	3	58.55	.001
41.	Do not "tell others off" even when I might be justified in doing so.	4	19.11	.001
42.	Point out to others in what ways they are wrong about something.	4	11.74	.02

*Empathy items: 1-6; spontaneity items: 7-12; trust items 13-18; judgmental items: 19-24; interest-care items: 25-30; respect items: 31-36; and criticalness-hostility items: 37-42.

TABLE III

ICO SCALE SUB-SCORES FOR TOTAL SAMPLE AND ACCORDING TO SEX[*]

	Mean Sub-Scores		
Category	Total Sample	Male	Female
1. Empathy	22.77	21.92	23.36
2. Spontaneity	18.93	18.92	18.94
3. Trust	23.66	22.33	24.58
4. Judgmental	17.88	17.57	18.10
5. Interest-Care	22.26	20.38	23.57
6. Respect	22.15	20.69	23.17
7. Criticalness-Hostility	19.56	18.72	20.14

[*]Mean Total Score: Total Sample - 147.24

TABLE IV

F SCORES REFLECTING DIFFERENCES IN MEAN ICO SCALE
SUB-SCORES ACCORDING TO SEX

Description	No.	$\overline{X}$	F	Level of Sig.
Empathy				
Male	127	21.92		
Female	183	23.37	15.89	.001
Spontaneity				
Male	127	18.92		
Female	183	18.95	0.004	n.s.
Trust				
Male	127	22.33		
Female	183	24.58	34.37	.001
Judgmental				
Male	127	17.57		
Female	183	18.10	1.61	n.s.
Interest				
Male	127	20.38		
Female	183	23.57	64.53	.001
Respect				
Male	127	20.69		
Female	183	23.17	50.21	.001
Criticalness-Hostility				
Male	127	18.72		
Female	183	20.14	12.30	.001

interpersonal comfortableness orientation in all five categories.

Examination of Hypotheses and Discussion of Results

Hypothesis I(a). Interpersonal comfortableness orientation is independent of sex. The one-way classification analysis of variance was utilized in determining if there was a significant difference in interpersonal comfortableness orientation between male and female. An F score 54.12 was obtained, indicating that the difference was significant at the .001 level. Table V illustrates that females received a significantly higher mean ICO Scale score than males, reflecting a greater degree of comfortableness orientation than males.

TABLE V

F SCORE REFLECTING DIFFERENCES IN MEAN ICO SCALE SCORES
ACCORDING TO SEX

Description	No.	$\bar{X}$	F	Level of Sig.
Male	127	140.69		
			34.13	.001
Female	183	151.79		

This finding may be due to the sex role expectation that women much more than men express tenderness, nurturance, considerateness, and care; while men are expected to be much more aggressive, competitive, and unexpressive (Stein, 1972). The feminine identity is derived to a

large degree by the woman from her personal relationships, while the masculine identity may be determined to a greater degree from occupation and achievement (Stein, 1972). Such differences in sex role expectations may contribute to women having a higher degree of interpersonal comfortableness orientation.

Assuming that disclosure of feelings contributes to interpersonal comfortableness orientation, the present finding might be explained by Jourard's report (1971) that in a series of studies published over a six or seven year period using a Self Disclosure Questionnaire, women disclosed more personal data about themselves than men. According to Jourard, the male role will not allow him to disclose inner experiences resulting in men relating more impersonally to others than do women.

Hypothesis I(b). Interpersonal comfortableness orientation is independent of religious preference. In examining this hypothesis the one-way classification analysis of variance was utilized to determine if there was a significant difference in interpersonal comfortableness orientation scores according to religious preference. As Table VI indicated, the difference was significant at the .05 level. Protestants received a significantly higher mean ICO Scale score, indicating a more favorable degree of interpersonal comfortableness orientation. However, it should be noted that the great majority of subjects (84.2%) were Protestant suggesting that other religions may not have been adequately represented.

Hypothesis I(c). Interpersonal comfortableness orientation is independent of socioeconomic status. The one-way classification analysis of variance was utilized to determine if there was a significant difference in interpersonal comfortableness orientation according to

socioeconomic status of the respondent's family. Table VII shows an F
score of 1.02 was obtained, indicating there was no significant differ-
ence. The results suggest that the socioeconomic status of the family
is not a factor contributing to the respondent's comfortableness orien-
tation.

TABLE VI

F SCORE REFLECTING DIFFERENCES IN MEAN ICO SCALE SCORES
ACCORDING TO RELIGIOUS PREFERENCE

Description	No.	$\overline{X}$	F	Level of Sig.
Catholic	20	140.45		
Protestant	261	148.14		
None	5	147.15	2.91	.05
Other	6	138.87		

TABLE VII

F SCORE REFLECTING DIFFERENCES IN MEAN ICO SCALE SCORES
ACCORDING TO SOCIOECONOMIC STATUS

Description	No.	$\overline{X}$	F	Level of Sig.
Upper-Middle	46	143.95		
Lower-Middle	103	148.21		
			1.02	n.s.
Upper-Lower	139	147.63		
Lower-Lower	22	147.13		

Hypothesis I(d). Interpersonal comfortableness orientation is independent of the marital status of parents. When this hypothesis was subjected to the one-way classification analysis of variance, no significant difference was found in interpersonal comfortableness orientation according to marital status of parents. As Table VIII indicates an overwhelming majority of the respondent's parents were living together.

Hypothesis I(e). Interpersonal comfortableness orientation is independent of maternal employment. Table IX indicates that no significant difference was found when the one-way classification analysis of variance was applied to the examination of this hypothesis. The results suggest that the mother working outside the home during the major part of the respondent's childhood had no significant effect on the interpersonal comfortableness orientation.

TABLE VIII

F SCORE REFLECTING DIFFERENCES IN MEAN ICO SCALE SCORES
AND MARITAL STATUS OF PARENTS

Description	No.	$\bar{X}$	F	Level of Sig.
Living together	232	147.07		
Divorced or separated	18	152.05		
One parent deceased	22	146.40	0.85	n.s.
Divorced (remarriage)	21	143.90		
One parent deceased (remarriage)	15	148.20		

TABLE IX

F SCORE REFLECTING DIFFERENCES IN MEAN ICO SCALE SCORES
ACCORDING TO MATERNAL EMPLOYMENT

Description	No.	$\bar{X}$	F	Level of Sig.
Mother Employed Outside the Home for the Major Part of Respondent's Childhood	93	145.53		
			1.91	n.s.
Mother Not Employed Outside the Home for the Major Part of the Respondent's Childhood	216	147.96		

Hypothesis I(f). Interpersonal comfortableness orientation is independent of parent's encouragement of respondent to take responsibility for the consequences of his action. When this hypothesis was subjected to the one-way classification analysis of variance, a significant difference was found in interpersonal comfortableness orientation according to the parent's encouragement of the respondent to take responsibility for the consequences of his action. As Table X illustrates, an F score of 4.01 was obtained, indicating that the difference is significant at the .05 level. Those respondents who indicated their parents were above average in encouraging them to take responsibility for the consequences of their actions during childhood received the most favorable mean ICO Scale score, while those who indicated their parents as below average in emphasizing this quality received the least favorable mean ICO Scale score.

TABLE X

F SCORE REFLECTING DIFFERENCES IN MEAN ICO SCALE SCORES ACCORDING TO
DEGREE TO WHICH PARENTS ENCOURAGED CHILDREN TO TAKE RESPONSIBILITY
FOR THE CONSEQUENCES OF THEIR OWN ACTIONS

Description	No.	X	F	Level of Sig.
Parents' Encouragement to Take Responsibility for Consequences of Action				
Above average	117	149.71		
Average	185	145.93	4.01	.05
Below average	6	137.66		

This finding coincides with the thesis that learning to take responsibility for the consequences of one's actions is an essential aspect of mature moral behavior and character development, as well as being an essential aspect of mature interpersonal relationships (Hurlock, 1964).

Perhaps the person who has learned to take responsibility for the consequences of his own behavior is more comfortable in relationship and therefore communicates this comfortableness to others due to the fact that they are not as likely to excessively depend on others, be demanding of others, or place responsibility for their behavior on others. This finding might also be due to the possibility that those persons who take responsibility for the consequences of their actions may be less manipulative in relationships. This possibility is suggested by the thesis of Shostrom (1967) that manipulative persons often lack confidence in their own ability to achieve goals and therefore believe that they must rely upon and use others to achieve their goals. Perhaps parents who greatly emphasize the quality of taking responsibility for the consequences of one's actions contribute greatly to the interpersonal comfortableness of their children by in part providing an insulation against the need to manipulate others.

Hypothesis I(g). Interpersonal comfortableness orientation is independent of the degree of closeness of relationships with father during childhood. In order to determine if there was a significant difference in ICO Scale score according to the degree of closeness of the relationship with the father during childhood, a one-way classification analysis of variance was applied. As Table XI indicates, an F score of 4.05 was obtained, indicating that the difference was significant at the

.05 level. Those respondents who indicated the degree of closeness with their father during childhood as <u>above average</u> received the most favorable ICO Scale scores.

TABLE XI

F SCORE REFLECTING DIFFERENCES IN MEAN ICO SCALE SCORES
ACCORDING TO DEGREE OF CLOSENESS OF RELATIONSHIP
WITH FATHER DURING CHILDHOOD

Description	No.	$\overline{X}$	F	Level of Sig.
<u>Degree of Closeness of Relationship With Father During Childhood</u>				
Above average	112	149.66		
Average	125	144.55	4.05	.05
Below average	71	147.92		

This finding supports the contention by Bigner (1970) and Walters and Stinnett (1971) that there is need for further research concerning the impact of the father on the personality development of children. The present finding also coincides with other evidence that in some respects the father may have greater impact upon the development of children than does the mother (Walters and Stinnett, 1971). One example of such evidence is reported in <u>Family Life</u> (1968, p. 6) of adolescents being treated at a Psychiatric Center in Dallas, Texas. Dr. Perry

Tallington, the psychiatrist-in-chief reported:

> . . . 87% of them have stable homes where money is no problem, where friends and neighbors visit freely and where the mother functions well. What these kids have in common is an emotionally immature father.

At St. Justin Hospital in Montreal, in examining the records of adolescent girls who had attempted suicide, it was found that in an overwhelming number of cases, the attempted self-destruction was associated with "parental deprivation and deficiency in father-daughter relationship" (Family Life, 1968, p. 6).

Hypothesis I(h). Interpersonal comfortableness orientation is independent of the degree of closeness of relationship with mother during childhood. In examining this hypothesis, the one-way classification analysis of variance was again used. As the F score indicates in Table XII, there was no significant difference in ICO Scale scores according to the degree of closeness of the relationship with the mother during childhood.

TABLE XII

F SCORE REFLECTING DIFFERENCES IN MEAN ICO SCALE SCORES
ACCORDING TO THE DEGREE OF CLOSENESS OF RELATIONSHIP
WITH MOTHER DURING CHILDHOOD

Description	No.	$\bar{X}$	F	Level of Sig.
Degree of Closeness of Relationship With Mother During Childhood				
Above average	143	147.37		
Average	142	146.30	1.62	n.s.
Below average	25	151.80		

CHAPTER V

SUMMARY

The purpose of this study was to develop an instrument, the Inter-
personal Comfortableness Orientation Scale, to measure the degree of
comfortableness orientation of college students, and to relate ICO Scale
scores to certain background factors.

The sample was composed of 310 college students attending Eastern
Oklahoma State College. The questionnaire was administered during regu-
lar class periods in the month of May, 1971. The subjects were pri-
marily between 17 and 20 years of age. They were predominantly Protes-
tant.

The questionnaire included an information sheet for securing vari-
ous background data and the ICO Scale which was designed to measure the
degree of comfortableness orientation of college students. The scale
consisted of 42 statements pertaining to seven categories considered to
be important to interpersonal comfortableness: empathy, spontaneity,
trust, judgmental, interest-care, respect, and criticalness-hostility.
Total scores and sub-scores were obtained.

The chi-square test was used in an item analysis of the ICO Scale
to determine those items that significantly differentiated between the
subjects scoring in the upper quartile and the lower quartile groups on
the basis of the total scale scores. The one-way classification analy-
sis of variance was used to determine if interpersonal comfortableness

orientation was independent of: (a) sex, (b) religious preference, (c) socioeconomic status, (d) marital status of parents, (e) maternal employment, (f) responsibility for consequence of action, (g) closeness of father in childhood, (h) closeness of mother in childhood.

The results and conclusions of the study were as follows:

1. Thirty-nine of the 42 items of the ICO Scale were significantly discriminating between the upper quartile and lower quartile groups.

2. A split-half reliability coefficient, computed with the Spearman-Brown Correctional Formula, of +0.83 is an indication of the reliability of the items in the ICO Scale.

3. The mean sub-score on the ICO Scale according to sex indicated that the area of greatest orientation for both male and female was "trust," the areas of the lowest orientation for both was in the area of judgmental orientation.

4. There was a significant difference in the ICO Scale sub-scores of empathy, trust, interest-care, respect, and criticalness-hostility with the females expressing a significantly greater degree of interpersonal comfortableness orientation at the .001 level in all five areas.

5. According to the one-way classification analysis of variance, sex was significantly related to the interpersonal comfortableness orientation at the .001 level. The following variables were found to be significantly related to the interpersonal comfortableness orientation at the .05 level: (a) religious preference, (b) responsibility for the consequence of action, and (c) closeness to father during childhood. Factors that

were not significantly related to interpersonal comfortable-
ness orientation were: (a) socioeconomic status, (b) marital
status of parents, (c) closeness of mother in childhood.

The major conclusions which may be drawn from the results of this
study are that sex, religious preference, degree of parental encourage-
ment to take responsibility for the consequences of one's behavior and
degree of closeness of relationship with father are significant influ-
ences in the development of interpersonal comfortableness orientation.
It is suggested that more detailed investigation of the following find-
ings would appear to have potential for gaining more insight into inter-
personal comfortableness orientation: (a) the finding that the females
expressed a much higher degree of interpersonal comfortableness in the
categories of interest-care and respect, (b) the finding that inter-
personal comfortableness orientation is significantly related to the
degree of parental emphasis upon encouraging the child to take responsi-
bility for consequences of his own actions, and (c) the finding that
interpersonal comfortableness orientation is significantly and posi-
tively related to closeness of relationship with the father during
childhood but is not significantly related to the closeness of relation-
ships with the mother.

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APPENDIX

GENERAL INFORMATION

Please check or fill in answers as accurately and honestly as you can to each question. The blanks at the left of each page are for purposes of coding (do not fill in). Begin with item 5. Since your name is not required, please be honest with your answers. Your cooperation in this research project is greatly appreciated.

_____ 1. Age: _____

_____ 2. Sex: _____

_____ 3. Religious preference:
  _____ 1. Catholic
  _____ 2. Protestant
  _____ 3. Jewish
  _____ 4. Mormon
  _____ 5. None
  _____ 6. Other (specify) _____

_____ 4. Who is the main source of income in your family?
  _____ 1. father _____ 2. mother _____ 3. other (specify) _____

_____ 5. What is the primary source of the above income?
  _____ 1. inherited savings and investments
  _____ 2. earned wealth, transferable investments
  _____ 3. profits, royalties, fees
  _____ 4. salary, commissions (regular, monthly or yearly)
  _____ 5. hourly wages, weekly checks
  _____ 6. odd jobs, seasonal work, private charity
  _____ 7. public relief or charity

_____ 6. What is the occupation of the principal earner of the above income? father _____

_____ 7. What is the highest educational attainment of the principal earner of the above income?
  _____ 7. less than grade 8
  _____ 6. completed grade 8, but did not attend beyond 9.
  _____ 5. attended high school, completed grade 9, but did not graduate
  _____ 4. graduate from high school
  _____ 3. attended college or university for two or more years
  _____ 2. graduated from 4-year college
  _____ 1. completed graduate work for profession

_____ 8. What is your parents' marital status?
       _____ 1. living together
       _____ 2. separated or divorced (with no remarriage)
       _____ 3. one of the parents deceased (with no remarriage)
       _____ 4. divorced (with remarriage)
       _____ 5. one of parents deceased (with remarriage)

_____ 9. Was your mother employed outside the home for the major part of your childhood?
       _____ 1. yes   _____ 2. no

_____ 10. Did your parents encourage you to take responsibility for the consequences of your actions?
       _____ 1. above average   _____ 3. below average
       _____ 2. average

_____ 11. Which of the following describes the degree of closeness of your relationship with your father during childhood:
       _____ 1. above average   _____ 3. below average
       _____ 2. average

_____ 12. Which of the following describes the degree of closeness of your relationship with your mother during childhood:
       _____ 1. above average   _____ 3. below average
       _____ 2. average

INTERPERSONAL COMFORTABLENESS ORIENTATION SCALE

Please answer the following questions about your relationship with others as honestly and accurately as you can. This is not a test, so do not be concerned with what you think a person should do, only with what you feel you usually do.

For each item below, circle the appropriate answer which you feel best describes your behavior:

Response Code:

VO	O	U	I	VI
Very Often	Often	Undecided	Infrequently	Very Infrequently

In my relationships with other persons I:

_____ 1. VO O U I VI   Try to see things from the other person's point of view.

_____ 2. VO O U I VI   Do not try to see things from another person's point of view when his views are opposite to mine.

_____ 3. VO O U I VI   Do not try to see things from another person's point of view when that person is disagreeable and hostile.

_____ 4. VO O U I VI   Try to see things from the other person's point of view when that person is generally agreeable.

_____ 5. VO O U I VI   When another person has problems, try to imagine how I would feel if I were in his place.

_____ 6. VO O U I VI   Try to understand why a person is behaving in a hostile manner.

_____ 7. VO O U I VI   Am at ease when with another person.

_____ 8. VO O U I VI   Respond to another person in the way that I believe he expects me to respond.

_____ 9. VO O U I VI   Express my feelings openly.

_____ 10. VO O U I VI   Do not express strong feelings or emotions.

_____ 11. VO O U I VI   Am guarded in what I say to another person.

_____ 12. VO O U I VI   Am "myself" even when I am with people with whom I am not well acquainted.

_____ 13. VO O U I VI   Keep the confidence of another person.

_____ 14. VO O U I VI   Talk about another person's personal problems (which he has revealed to me) to others.

_____ 15. VO O U I VI   Feel I am putting on a "front."

_____ 16. VO O U I VI   Say things I don't really believe to others.

_____ 17. VO O U I VI   Have a helpful attitude toward others.

_____ 18. VO O U I VI   Want the best for others.

_____ 19. VO O U I VI   Judge other person's behavior as good or bad, desirable or undesirable.

_____ 20. VO O U I VI   View others as fitting into certain categories or types of persons.

_____ 21. VO O U I VI   Closely question the motives of others.

_____ 22. VO O U I VI   Accept differences in another person without forming unfavorable judgments of that person.

_____ 23. VO O U I VI   Accept the person even though I do not approve of his behavior.

_____ 24. VO O U I VI   Reject a person when his behavior is undesirable.

_____ 25. VO O U I VI   Try to communicate the feeling that I am truly interested in what a person is talking about.

_____ 26. VO O U I VI   Have a bigger problem of my own to tell when someone tells me of his problems.

_____ 27. VO O U I VI   Have my own problems and aches uppermost in mind when another person is talking to me about his troubles.

_____ 28. VO O U I VI   Try to communicate to the other person the feeling that I really care about his or her welfare.

_____ 29. VO O U I VI   Do not try to communicate the feeling that I am happy for another person when he tells me of his success in something.

_____ 30. VO O U I VI   Try to communicate to the other person the feeling that I am genuinely committed to promoting his welfare.

_____ 31. VO O U I VI   Try to show that I respect the other person as a person of great worth.

_____ 32. VO O U I VI   Do not try to treat the other person as a special individual.

_____ 33. VO O U I VI   Try to respect the differentness of another person.

_____ 34. VO O U I VI   Do not try to respect another person's ideas when they disagree with mine.

_____ 35. VO O U I VI   Try to avoid bringing up topics which I know will embarrass the other person.

_____ 36. VO O U I VI   Try hard to change the other person when his ideas are different from mine.

_____ 37. VO O U I VI   Tend to see weaknesses or faults in others.

_____ 38. VO O U I VI   Avoid criticizing others.

_____ 39. VO O U I VI   Feel hostile toward others when they do not act as I think they should.

_____ 40. VO O U I VI   Become angry when someone's ideas oppose my own.

_____ 41. VO O U I VI   Do not "tell others off" even when I might be justified in doing so.

_____ 42. VO O U I VI   Point out to others in what ways they are wrong about something.

VITA

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