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Degree of insight as a factor influencing judgements of masculinity

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THE DEGREE OF INSIGHT AS A FACTOR INFLUENCING JUDGEMENTS OF MASCULINITY

by

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

In the development of psychoanalysis Freud[1] observed that functional factors operating on various levels of consciousness effected perception and behavior. He described three levels of consciousness as conscious, preconscious and unconscious. Although the concept of functional factors below the level of consciousness effecting perception did not originate with Freud he did more to explain the content and operation of these unconscious factors than any other investigator preceding or following him. Freud's contributions in this area were not founded, however, on experimental evidence and it was left for later investigators to give his theories and observations experimental verification.

During the last two decades experimental evidence has led us to believe that an individual's perception is not only a function of external or internal stimuli acting on various receptor organ systems which then activate responding organ systems but also a function of various past experiences,

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[1] Sigmund Freud, An Outline of Psychoanalysis (New York, 1949).

feelings, attitudes, interests, preconceived notions, ideas, fears, needs, wishes, drives, and other functional factors which may be currently operative at some level of consciousness in the perceiving organism.

Murray[2] was one of the early investigators to demonstrate the effect of functional factors on perception. Murray had a small group of adolescent girls describe some pictures of men under two conditions-- before and after the subjects had played a game of murder. He found that after the game of murder the subjects tended to see more maliciousness in the various pictures than they did at the first presentation.

In an experimental study, Sanford[3] also demonstrated the operation of functional factors in perception. In this study school children were required to complete partially drawn pictures and also take a word association test under two experimental conditions-- when hunger was satiated and when it was unsatiated. He found that many more food-responses were given in the two tasks when the subjects were somewhat hungry than when the subjects' hunger was satiated.

In a more recent, although similar, experiment using

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[2]H. A. Murray, Jr. "The effect of Fear upon Estimates of the Maliciousness of other Personalities," Journal of Social Psychology, 4 (1933), 310-329.

[3]R. N. Sanford, "The Effects of Abstinence from Food upon Imaginal Processes: a Preliminary Experiment," Journal of Psychology, 2 (1936), 129-136.

college students as subjects Levine, Chein, and Murphy[4] found results very similar to those of the Sanford study.

Bruner and Goodman[5] in a recent study, had two groups of children judge the size of various coins. One group of children was selected from a slum area of Boston. A second group of children was selected from a progressive school which catered to the children of prosperous business and professional people. These experimentors found that the group from the slum area overestimated the size of the coins significantly more than the children of the second group. These results led Bruner and Goodman to propose two hypotheses as possible general laws:

1. The greater the social value of an object, the more will it be susceptible to organization by behavioral determinants.

2. The greater the individual need for a socially valued object, the more marked will be the operation of behavioral determinants.

Theoretical discussions of how perception is effected by these various functional factors have been published by

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[4]D. Levine, I. Chein, and G. Murphy, "The Relation of the Intensity of a Need to the Amount of Perceptual Distortion," Journal of Psychology, 13(1942), 283-293.

[5]J. S. Bruner, and Cecile C. Goodman, "Value and Need as Organizing Factors in Perception," Journal of Abnormal and Social Psychology, 42(1947), 33-44.

Wallach[6], Bruner and Postman[7], Klein and Schlesinger[8], Brunswik[9], and many others.

About the time Sanford was conducting his experiment, as mentioned above, a closely related study of importance was conducted by Sears.[10] In view of the fact that projection was widely used as an explanatory principle in both normal and abnormal behavior, Sears felt that the concept warranted critical study. With this in mind he conducted a study to investigate the exact nature of projection and the conditions under which it operated.

Using a graphic rating scale (of seven steps) Sears had 97 S's rate one another and themselves on three obnoxious non-sexual character traits (which had previously been selected from a group of 31 such traits) as he was interested in finding out whether reprehensibleness was requisite to projection. A fourth non-sexual trait, bashfulness, was used as

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[6]H. Wallach, "Some Considerations concerning the Relation between Perception and Cognition," Journal of Personality, 18(1949-1950), 6-13.

[7]J. S. Bruner, and L. Postman, "Perception, Cognition, and Behavior," Journal of Personality, 18(1949-1950), 14-31.

[8]G. S. Klein, and H. Schlesinger, "Where is the Perceiver in Perceptual Theory," Journal of Personality, 18(1949-1950), 32-47.

[9]Egon Brunswik, "Discussion: Remarks on Functionalism in Perception," Journal of Personality, 18(1949-1950) 56-65.

[10]R. R. Sears, "Experimental Studies of Projection: I. Attribution of Traits, "Journal of Social Psychology, 7(1936), 151-163.

a control. From these ratings he obtained two scores--the combined or mean rating each S received and the average rating attributed to others. Using these two scores he also obtained a crude measure of insight. If a S rated himself in the same half of the distribution as others rated him he was thought to have insight and to lack insight if he rated himself on the other half. Two of the important conclusions reached by Sears in this study were:

1. These subjects who lacked insight into the amount of a given trait they themselves possessed tended, on the average, to attribute a greater amount of that to other people than did those subjects who possessed an equal amount of the trait but had insight.

2. Subjects lacking insight into their own possession of a trait assigned more extreme ratings to others on that trait than did subjects possessing insight...

In a recent study Holt[11] reached similar conclusions with regard to various needs.

Inasmuch as the concept of projection has been widely used (particularly in psychoanalytical theories[12,13]) as an

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[11] R. R. Holt, "The Accuracy of Self-Evaluations: Its Measurement and Some of its Personological Correlates," Journal of Consulting Psychology, 15(1951), 95-101.

[12] S. Freud, "Psycho-analytic Notes upon an Autobiographical Account of a Case of Paranoia (Dementia Paranoides)," Collected Papers. London, 1950. III, 387-470.

[13] O. Fenichel, Outline of Clinical Psychoanalysis. New York: Norton, 1934. pp. 492.

explanatory principle in theories of paranoia and since latent homosexuality is also contained in these same theories, an investigation of the possible relationships between self-perception (insight or lack of insight) and judgement, of masculinity might be worthwhile.

THE PROBLEM

This study was concerned with the various relationships between an S's "actual masculinity", and his judgements of "self-masculinity" and judgements of the "masculinity" of others. Perception will be of central importance since a judgement of masculinity must be defined as the overt expression of the perception of masculinity. The study of Bruner and Goodman seems to justify the first hypothesis stated below. The observations of Remmers[14] and others tends to justify the second hypothesis, and the Sears study warrants the third hypothesis.

I. Males will overate themselves on masculinity.

II. Males will overrate their friends, fellow students and associates.

III. The less "insight" an individual possesses with regard to his own "masculinity" the less he will tend to overrate the "masculinity" of others.

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[14]As quoted by Guilford, J. P. Psychometric Methods. New York, 1936. pp. 277.

CHAPTER II

METHODS

Twenty-six white, fraternity brothers served as subjects (hereafter S) for this study. Each S was given the Terman-Miles Attitude-Interest Analysis Test[15] (hereafter referred to as the T. M.). A week later each S rated all of the S's, including himself, as to their relative "masculinity" using a graphic rating scale. When this first rating was completed each S made a second rating of himself and all other S's.

THE RATING SCALE

In the construction and use of the graphic rating scale the suggestions made by Guilford[16] and Thurstone[17] were followed closely. The scale consisted of an unbroken line six inches long and below which three descriptive phrases were placed--at the two extremes and at the center. The two extreme descriptive phrases were not so extreme as to cause S's to avoid using them. The intermediate or average phrase was placed at the center of the

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[15] L. M. Terman, and C. C. Miles, Attitude-Interest Analysis Test. New York, 1938.

[16] J. P. Guilford, Psychometric Methods. New York, 1936. Chap. IX.

[17] L. L. Thurstone, and E. J. Chave, The Measurement of Attitude. Chicago, 1929.

lines in the following manner:

less than average masculinity	average masculinity	more than average masculinity

INSTRUCTIONS TO THE SUBJECTS

Prior to this rating, masculinity was defined for the S's in terms of attitudes and interests, and the following instructions given:

"I am going to read you some definitions. Please listen carefully. After I have read these definitions you will each be given a copy of the definitions along with some other material."

"Persons in our culture, who are high in masculinity are likely to enjoy aggressive, and frequently dangerous adventure; are likely to be relatively undisturbed by various sights, sounds, and odors; are likely to be somewhat insensitive with regard to the feelings of others; are likely to be most tolerant of others who make minor deviations from the accepted moral and social codes; are likely to be chiefly interested in out-of-door sports, mechanics, science, and politics; and are likely to be self-confident and relatively undisturbed by minor frustrations."

'Persons in our culture, who are low in masculinity are likely to be overly humble; are likely to be emotionally responsive to various sights, sounds, and odors usually unnoticed by others; are likely to be overly sensitive, sympa-

thetic, and compassionate with regard to the feelings of others, are likely to be chiefly interested in religion, social life, literature, and the various arts.'

After masculinity was defined for the S's a sample of the rating scale was presented to them on a blackboard along with the following instruction.

"I have here a list of all of the members of your fraternity who are participating in this study. Each of you will be required to rate the masculinity of all the persons whose names appear on this list. You will notice that your own name is on the list. Rate yourself along with all the others. You will make these ratings using rating scales like this one (demonstrating). Using a scale like this one and keeping the definitions of masculinity in mind you will find it fairly easy to make the necessary ratings. You will now be given a list of those to be rated, a copy of the definition of masculinity, and a booklet of rating scales."[18]

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[18]At this point one of the subjects asked the following question, "On that other test (The Terman-Miles) the instructions said that you were collecting results to establish standards for that test on a college population. Now in this test are you trying to find out something else about college students as a group, I mean how they rate each other?" The writer wanting to keep the instructions consistent answered, "Yes, I want you to rate the masculinity of the people on this list as compared to other college students, that is the college male population." This answer involved a rather serious oversight on the part of the writer since it was originally intended for the S's to rate each other S, and himself, as to his degree of masculinity as compared with the distribution of masculinity in the general male population. This change may have been, at least partially, responsible for the negative results obtained respecting Hypothesis II.

After the materials were distributed the instructions continued as follows.

"You will notice, in the booklet of rating scales, that to the extreme left of each scale there is a list of code numbers, and also that to the left of each name on the list of individuals to be rated there is also a code number. Now suppose that to the left of the first scale in your booklet the code number A22 appeared. To find out which individual the code number refers to look at the list of names and you will discover that A22 is, lets say, John Doe. Now you are ready to rate John Doe on the scale to the right of code number A22."

"In order to make your rating you will place a check like this (✓) (demonstrating) any place along the line. The descriptive phrases below the line will be your guide. For example, if John Doe seems to you, when you consider the definitions of masculinity, to be of about average masculinity make a check (✓) here (demonstrating using blackboard sample). If it seems to you that he is of more than average masculinity you may make a check somewhere along here (demonstrating) depending on how much less than average you think him to be. Or you may feel that he is very masculine in which case you may make a check here or here (demonstrating) again depending on the degree. Then again, you may feel that he is not very masculine at all in which case you may rate him here or here (demonstrating) depending on the degree.'

"You will do this with each scale as it appears in the booklet checking the code numbers carefully each time to make certain that you are rating the proper S on it. There will be, of course, only one check mark on each scale. Remember, you may place your checks any place along the line. Do you all understand? Are there any questions?"

Before the S's started their ratings they were reminded to rate themselves along with all the others and assured that all the data would be handled in a most confidential manner.

The order of code numbers in the booklets of rating scales was different for each S inasmuch as the order was randomly selected for each booklet other than self rating which was fourteenth in each case. The order on the list of names was also randomly selected.

After the rating was completed the second booklet of rating scales was passed out and the S's were requested to continue as before.

SCORING THE RATING SCALE

Scoring the rating scale judgements of masculinity was accomplished by the use of a six inch scoring stencil such as the one produced below.

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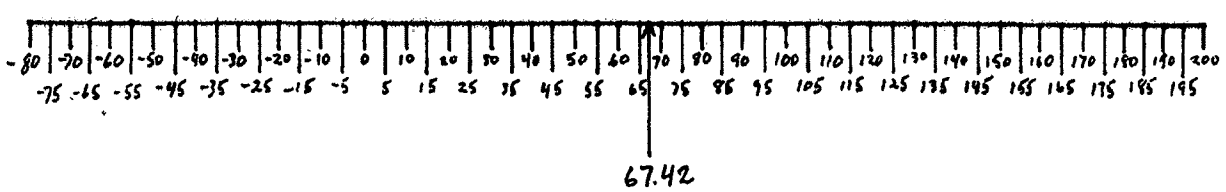

*inbetween values were interpolated.

The range -80 to +200 represents the range of the distribution of T. M. scores for a white, male college population and 67.42 represents the mean of the distribution.[19] To score the S's ratings the point 67.42 was set at the mid-point (designated average masculinity) of the rating scale line. The ratings were then directly comparable to T. M. scores.

DEFINITIONS

The mean of the first and second ratings was used to determine the various scores used in the following definitions.

Actual Masculinity. 1. Each S's T. M. will be considered one of the actual masculinity scores (hereafter T. M. score).

2. The mean rating any given S receives when rated by all the other S's (excluding self-ratings) will be considered a second actual masculinity score (hereafter R. M. score).

Masculinity Ratings. Masculinity rating will refer to the rating scale score of masculinity any given S assigns to any other S. (hereafter M. R. score).

Self-rated Masculinity. Self-rated masculinity will refer to the mean rating scale score of masculinity any given S assigns himself (hereafter S. R. M. score).

Insight Score. Each subject had two (2) Insight Scores. The first represented by the difference between his S. R. M. score and his T. M. score and the second represented by

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[19] Terman, op. cit., p. 8.

the difference between his S. R. M. score and his R. M. score.[20] Expressed mathamatically as follows.

I_1 = S. R. M. - T. M.

I_2 = S. R. M. - R. M.

Where I_1 (first insight score) stands for the difference between S. R. M. and T. M. and I_2 (second insight) for the difference between S. R. M. and R. M. With insight so defined it is obvious that the larger a S's insight score the less insight he possesses.

Mean difference of Judgements or Projection Score. The mean difference of judgements (amount of overrating or underrating) will refer to the mean of the differences between any given S's M. R. of other S's and their actual masculinity (using either T. M. or R. M. as the criterion). There will be two (2) such scores which will be referred to as Overrating scores O_1 and O_2.

REFINED HYPOTHESES

The hypotheses of this study may now be stated with greater specificity:

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[20] It seemed reasonable to assume that any deviation of the S. R. M., positive or negative, from the T. M. or R. M. should be considered lack of insight; consequently, all Insight scores were positive. The writer feels that this definition was one of the weaknesses of this study and suggests that in further studies insight be defined so that positive and negative (i. e. overratings and underratings of self) insight may be considered separately or at least both aspects included in the definition.

Ia. There will be a significant difference between the mean of the distribution of T. M. scores and the mean of the distribution of S. R. M. scores in the direction of the higher S. R. M. scores.

Ib. There will be a significant difference between the mean of the distribution of R. M. scores and the mean of the distribution of S. R. M. scores in the direction of higher S. R. M. scores.

II. There will be a significant difference between the mean of the distribution of T. M. scores and the mean of the distribution of R. M. scores in the direction of higher R. M. scores.

IIIa. There will be a significant negative correlation between the distribution of I_1 scores and the distribution of O_1 scores.

IIIb. There will be a significant negative correlation between the distribution of I_2 scores and the distribution of O_2 scores.

CHAPTER III

RESULTS

1. The reliability of Ratings. The retest reliabilities are given in Table I. for the self-ratings and the ratings of others. The mean S. R. M. was 105.14 and the mean R. M. was 78.02 as calculated from the raw data.

Table I.

THE RELIABILITY OF SELF-RATINGS AND OF RATINGS OF OTHERS

Score	N	First Rating		Second Rating		Correlation[21] Coefficient
		Mean	Standard Dev.	Mean	S.D.	
S.R.M.	26	101.35	32.17	107.42	29.95	.95*
R.M.	593	77.66	45.95	77.5	45.22	.88 *

*Significant at 1% level of confidence.

2. Hypotheses of Ia and Ib. The significance of the differences between the means of the T. M. and the S. R. M. and between the means of the R. M. and the S. R. M. are given in Tables IIa and IIb. The correlation coefficients are also given.

[21] Pearson Product-Moment correlation coefficient method was used to calculated all correlations in this study.

Table IIa

SIGNIFICANCE OF DIFFERENCES BETWEEN MEANS OF T.M. AND S.R.M.

Score	Mean	σ	σ_M	r	$\sigma_{diff.}$	t
T.M.	78.02	46.13	9.23	.18	10.42	2.6*
S.R.M.	105.14	32.49	6.77	t= .86		

*significant at the 5% level confidence.

Table IIb

SIGNIFICANCE OF DIFFERENCES BETWEEN MEANS OF R.M. AND S.R.M.

Score	Mean	σ	σ_M	r	$\sigma_{diff.}$	t
R. M.	78.12	36.99	7.71	.35	8.14	3.32*
S.R.M.	105.14	32.49	6.77	t= 1.74		

*significant at 1% level of confidence.

3. Hypothesis II. The significance of the differences between the means of the T.M. and the R.M. are given in Table III along with the correlation coefficient.

Table III

SIGNIFICANCE OF DIFFERENCES BETWEEN MEANS OF T.M. AND R.M.

Score	Mean	σ	σ_M	r	σ_{diff}	t
T.M.	78.02	46.13	9.23	.49	8.34	.01
R.M.	78.12	36.99	7.71	t = 2.64*		

*significant at 5% level of confidence

4. Hypothesis IIIa and IIIb. The correlation coefficient between the distribution of I_1 and O_1 and between the distribution of I_2 and O_2 are given in Table IV. The significance of the correlation coefficient given was calculated by the formula:

$$t = \frac{r}{\sqrt{1 - r^2}} \times \sqrt{N - 2} \quad (22)$$

TABLE IV

SIGNIFICANCE OF CORRELATIONS BETWEEN I_1 AND O_1 AND BETWEEN I_2 AND O_2

Score	r	t
I_1 and O_1	.13	.61
I_2 and O_2	.30	1.42

[22] Interpreted using Fisher's table and N-2 degrees of Freedom.

CHAPTER IV

DISCUSSION

The retest reliability coefficients of self-ratings and of the ratings of others were found to be quite high--.95 and .88 respectively. However, the very low correlations between the T. M. and the S. R. M. distributions (r=.18,t= .86) and the low correlation between the R. M. and the S. R. M. distribution (r = .35, t = 1.74) tends to indicate that the ratings of masculinity are more reliable than valid when compared to the criteria of masculinity.

There is, however, a significant correlation between the T. M. and the R. M. distributions (r = .49, t = 2.64). This tends to indicate that S's may be using interests and attitudes, in part, as a basis for rating the masculinity.

There seems to be a more significant relationship between the R.M. and the S.R.M. distributions than between the T. M. and the S. R. M. distributions. This seems to suggest that:

1. S's are using some additional criteria for rating self-masculinity and masculinity of others.

2. S's may be using some criteria soldy for rating others and possibly some criteria soley for rating the self and/or some additional factors are involved which cannot be accounted for in this study.

Since hypotheses Ia and Ib are strongly supported by

the data it would seem that masculinity is valued by males; however, the results are not conclusive since some individuals underrate themselves. This perhaps suggests that different individuals value different degrees of masculinity.

Hypothesis II was not supported by the data of this study. The writer feels that this resulted, at least in part, from weaknesses in the experimental design. If the writer had had the S's indicate the five (for example) friendships, within the group, he valued most and then compared the ratings assigned these individuals with their distribution of M. R. this hypothesis may well have been supported at least in part. Or if in addition to knowing each S's five most valued friendships, the five weakest friendships were known a comparison of their two distributions would be of value here. What was found in this study seems to suggest that S's do not overrate all their fellow students, and associates inasmuch as the writer did not know who's friendship was valued by whom. (see also footnote (18)).

Gift

Hypotheses IIIa and IIIb were not supported by the data of this study in fact there was a positive relationship whereas a negative one was predicted. What was found here was that the S's who overrated themselves the most also overrated others the most. The writer feels that this too resulted, at least in part, from a weakness in the definition of lack of insight. In this study it was a surprise to find so many S's underrating themselves (of the 26 S's 10 S's S. R. M. was lower than their T. M. and 7 S's S. R. M. was

lower than their R. M.). This may possibly have been avoided or at least been less surprising, if the writer had made a closer study of Sear's results.

WEAKNESS OF THIS STUDY

1. After the data was collected for this study the writer found out that all the S's did not know all the other S's even by name. Two of the S's were dropped from the study inasmuch as they knew less than half of their fraternity brothers by name. It was impossible to determine the extent of this in the entire group since the S dispersed shortly after the data was collected.

2. Another weakness was that information about the various friendship, mentioned above, was not collected. This obviously was an important consideration in Hypothesis II.

3. The writer feels that insight was inadequately defined. If the ideal degree of masculinity that each subject valued had been known lack of insight might have been defined in terms of the extent to which a S's S.R.M. deviated from his actual masculinity, (T. M. or R. M.) and towards his ideal. The underrating or projection score might then be considered to be the difference between his ideal degree of masculinity and his mean rating of others.

SUGGESTION FOR FUTURE STUDIES

The writer feels that the following suggestions would represent improvements in the experimental design of this study and should be considered in any future study of a similar nature:

1. Each S should be able to identify all other S's

by name.

2. A survey should be made to determine each S's strong and weak friendships.

3. A survey should be taken to determine what criteria S's use to judge masculinity and the finding of this incorporated into the definition of masculinity.

4. S's should be asked separately to indicate the degree of masculinity he feels is ideal.

5. "N" should be sufficiently large so that S's who underrate themselves may be treated separately if necessary.

The writer believes that this was a worthwhile study even in view of the negative results and feels that the problem warrants further study.

CHAPTER V

CONCLUSIONS

The conclusions of this study are at present, only applicable to populations similar to the one from which the subjects of this study were selected, namely a white, male college population. They would be more correctly applicable to white, fraternity college populations.

The age range of subjects used in this study was from 18 to 27 years with a mean age of 20.04 years. The range of years of college attendance was from 1 to 4 with a mean of 2 years of college attendance. The following conclusions were reached and should be applicable to similar populations:

1. Masculinity ratings are perhaps more reliable than valid.

2. Males tend to overrate themselves on masculinity.

In addition to the above conclusions the writer feels that the two general hypotheses-- that males will overrate their friends, fellow students and associates, and that the less insight an individual possesses with regard to his own masculinity, the less he will tend to overrate the masculinity of others-- warrant further investigation.

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