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Ben Jonson's *Epicoene*: Implications of Relationships Between the Sexes

By

Dr. Zahir Jang Khattak
Department of English
Gomal University
D.I.Khan

Ben Jonson's *Epicoene*: Implications of Relationships Between the Sexes

The comic world that Ben Jonson creates in *Epicoene* is sharply divided between two sets of characters: the one like Truewit and his two friends, Dauphine and Clerimont, who know or have the aptitude to know the nature of women; the other like Morose, Capt. Otter and the two "braveries" who do not know the nature of women nor are likely to learn, through experience. F. E. Sheling's categorization of two distinct types of men, the Knaves and the fools in a Jonsonian play, is true of this comedy.¹ Here the skill or the lack of it in managing women separates the knaves from the fools; The success or failure of the characters in *Epicoene* is determined by the extent to which they can exploit the inclinations of women. Most of the characters are engaged in some relationships with women: Morose is planning to marry *Epicoene*; L'Fool and John Daw have surrounded the "collegiates" ladies; and Clerimont is in love with Madame Haughty and so on. The comic situations arise from Truewit's web of conspiracies that he spins in collaboration with his friends for the exposure of those who are busy in wooing women in the wrong way or are planning to marry under false assumptions.

If it seems off that Jonson should put so much stress upon the art of seduction, one may understand it better if one turns to the second Prologue to the play wherein he says that a poet does not write truths, "but things, like truths, well feigned."² He adds that his characters or situations in the play should not be taken for real ones and whoever does so "makes a libel what he made a play." (Prologue II. 14) In other words the truth Jonson is concerned with exists within the play and it need not be related to the real world which lies outside it. Moreover, Jonson perfectly understands the limitations of the sexual relations in real life. In this connection it is important to note that Jonson makes Truewit point out the serious business of life to Clarimont: "What, between his mistress abroad

and his ingle at home...he thinks that hours ha' no wings, or the day no post-horse." (I. 1. 29 - 30) To this Clarimont replies sarcastically: "Foh, thou hast read Plutarch's morals, now, or some such tedious fellow; and it shows so vilely with thee, 'fore God, 'twill spoil thy wit utterly." (I. 1. 66 - 68) Clarimont asks him: "Talk to me of pins, and feathers, and ladies, and rushes, and such things; and leave this stoicity alone till thou makest sermons." (I. 1. 69 - 71) This makes Truewit realise where he stands and he answers: "well, Sir, if it will not take, I have learned to lose as little of my kindness as I can. I'll, do good to no man against his will, certainly." (I. 1. 72 - 74) From then onwards Jonson safely sets all other considerations aside and obtains a license, as it were, for the comic world of the play he creates.

In tremors of this world (the comic of *Epicoene*) what is wrong with the characters of the play is that, with the exception of the few, they do not know how to establish relationships with women. The chief offenders in this regard is Morose around whom the comedy revolves. T.S. Eliot's view that it is not the plot but the idea that radiates through a Jonsonian play is perfectly applicable to *Epicoene*: the play takes its life from the attitude various characters have towards women.³ Our interest in the inheritance issue which, according to Anne Barton is the central plot of the play is subsidiary since the danger of Dauphine's disinheritance is completely gone by Act II, Scene ii.⁴ We are informed by Dauphine:

This woman was lodged here by me o'purpose, and, to be put upon my uncle, hath professed this obstinate silence for my sake being my entire friend, and one that for the requital of such a fortune as to marry him, would have made me very ample condition." (II.ii. 183 - 87)

So when Morose sets about his marriage to this "silent woman" in order to disinherit his nephew we already know that

Dauphine is in control of the situation. Our mirth is aroused by the comic attitude of Morose toward Epicoene and the subsequent diversions at his cost. He is stupid enough to think that he would marry a silent woman through a barber to disinherit his nephew. In fact, what he is interested in is not a wife but a tool to "thrust Dauphine out of my [Morose's] blood like a stranger." (II.iii. 108 - 09) He has no direct contact with the woman he is marrying; he entrusts this job to a barber hoping that no one else knows about it. His mistake is pointed out to him by Truewit. "Why, did you ever hope, sir, committing the secrecy of it to a barber; that less than a whole town should know it?" (III. ii. 81 - 83) Besides, he wants a wife--his main folly--"upon unconscionable terms; her silence. (IV. ii. 110). This is what Edmond B. Partridge terms a deviation from the norm in this comedy: a woman is a personality, though certainly an inferior one in *Epicoene*, and has to be dealt with as a human being.⁵ This is why Epicoene reminds him: "Why do you think you had married a statue, or a motion only? One of the French puppets." (III. ii 37 - 38) The sub-title of the play, that is, *The Silent Woman*, is ironic: it suggests that to expect silence from women is asking for an impossibility.

As a consequence of Morose's ignorance or "negligence", as Jonson puts it, he becomes "the anvil to work on" for Truewit and his colleagues. Truewit brings out this fact in another context, namely, when he is saying to his friends: "A wench to please a man comes not down dropping from the ceiling, as he lies on his back droning a tobacco pipe. He must go where she is." (IV.i.68-71) Morose's presumptuousness in this regard is exposed and he is subjected to all sorts of humiliations.⁶ In the mock-trial scene when L'Fool and John Daw tells the company that they had "carnaliter" with his just married wife Morose instead of raging exclaims: "O let me worship and adore you, gentlemen!" (V.i.570) In fact, he is ready to pocket any insult provided that in return he is offered a riddance from his wife. He even declares himself impotent: "I am no man, ladies." (V.i.490) He comes to terms with his nephew on his

knees. In order to obtain deliverance from Epicoene he promises to Dauphine: "I will subscribe to anything, and seal to what thou [Dauphine] with for my deliverance." (V.i.651-52) It is significant that Morose's public humiliation is arranged by Truewit who is also the master of the art of seduction.

The people who are made to converge upon Morose's house are equally naive and foolish. The ladies have formed a college because they have the Sir Otters for their husbands and the L'Fools and the Daws for their "braveries". Surrounded by such men the ladies have to rely--the comedy suggests--on their collective resources of wisdom, if one might call it so. Truewit, who knows the nature of woman, confides to Dauphine:

Why, all their actions are governed by crude opinion, without reason or cause; they know not why they do anything; but as they are informed, believe, judge, praise, condemn, love, hate, and in emulation of one another, do all these things alike, (IV.ii.687-92)

He adds a telling remark: "Only they have a natural inclination sways 'hem generally to the worst, when they are left to themselves." (IV.ii.692-94) The ostensible purpose of the college these ladies have formed is to pass judgment on social and cultural matters but its actual purpose is to allow free play to the women's vices.⁷ So if something is wrong with the women or society in Epicoene it is because men do not know their proper job, so to speak, and consequently "women have been left to themselves" with their "natural inclination" to folly.

The type of husbands they must have--though all are not shown on the stage--is suggested by the example of Capt. Otter. As his wife is a candidate for the college his relation with her can be considered as representative of the relations of the other husbands of the collegiate ladies--one can safely extend his example to them. If anything, they must be worse as their wives are the confirmed

members of the college whereas Mrs. Otter is only aspiring to become one. Moreover, there are remarks, dropped now and then, from which one can imagine the relations of the collegiate ladies and their husbands. For instance, we hear that the lady centaur "has immortalized herself with taming of her wild male" (IV.I.28-29) which shows that she has gone farther than Mrs. Otter. But Mrs. Otter is no less a spoilt woman. Her husband, Capt. Otter, is a block-head and Truewit characterizes him as "an excellent animal" (III.i.53) and as "his wife's subject." (III.i.55) In terms of Epicoene it must be so, for Capt. Otter has also married Mrs. Otter for the wrong reasons. When Dauphine asks him why did he marry at all if he believes that "wife is a scurvy colgdogdo" as he calls Mrs. Otter, he replies: "A pox! I married with six thousand pound, I. I was in love with that." (iv.i.242-43) It is interesting to note that Capt. Otter has had command both by sea and by land. "(I.I.376) There is no reason one should not believe this. But as he is unsuccessful in the domestic field his wife" commands all at home"; she becomes a princess for him and he her subject. He admits: "I have not kissed my fury these forty weeks." (IV.I. 243-44) So, no wonder if the women have formed a college. The early seventeenth-century England did not have the modern conception about women. The general social position of women had considerably declined after sixteenth century, under the impact of Puritanism and Calvinism, though it reached its lowest level in the eighteenth century.⁸ Therefore in this play women's independence and their "college" is a sort of a comment on the failure of men.

The two knights who are ironically called "braveries" do not know themselves; they are fools, because they cannot manipulate women. L'Fool bases his importance on Mrs. Otter; he is obsequious and is her runner, as it were, for assembling people at her house. John Daw is the other gallant who courts Epicoene in a most ludicrous way: he has lived with her for almost six months; claims to be intimate with her; but does not know that "she" is, in

fact, a boy. His whole approach is wrong. Dauphine brings this out when he tells Clerimont:

Daw does nothing but court her [Epicoene]; and the wrong way. He would lie with her, and praises her modesty; desires that she would talk and be free, and commends her silence in verses... (I.i.308-11)

Obviously enough, such a man is incapable of establishing an exploitative relation with a woman. Dauphine adds his sarcastic remark that in spite of being such a fool "he rails at his fortunes, stamps and mutinies, why he is not made a counselor, and called to affairs of state." (I.i.311-13) In other words, Dauphine is implying as how could a man be fit for the affairs of state if he is not competent in the affairs of winning a woman. Failure with women promises by extension a failure in social and public life as well.

In a play whose "hallmark...which distinguishes it from the great comedies it precedes and follows, is its sexual toughness" the significance of Truewit's character must be the real centre of the play.⁹ Therefore, Truewit masterminds all the plots which leads to the deflation of all the "prodigies" as some of them are aptly called. Sir Clerimont and Dauphine--the two real wits--are also his pupil in the art of seduction. No doubt in certain respects the importance of Dauphine cannot be overlooked in his won right. He has secured his own interests--that is his inheritance--without the help of Truewit. In terms of the plot of the play as summarized by Anne Barton, he must be considered as the major character. But in the art of seduction he is Truewit's pupil.¹⁰ Both Dauphine and Clerimont do not know the best tactics; they learn them from Truewit.

In the beginning Jonson shows us Clerimont complaining to his boy: "No marvel if the door be kept shut against your master, when the entrance is so easy to you." (I.i.21-22) his lady is more open to his boy than him because he [Clerimont] writes a kind of

poetry that is liable to get him "the dangerous name of a poet", (I.i.6) His otherwise beautiful song is not a proper address to a fashionable lady. This often anthologized song is worth quoting:

Still to be neat, still to be dressed,
As you were going to feast;
Still to be powdered, still perfumed:
Lady, is it to be presumed,
Though art's hid causes are not found.
All is not sweet, all is not sound.
Give me a look, give me a face
That makes simplicity a grace... (I.i.97-104)

In this song Clerimont is objecting to the powdering and perfuming and such other trivialities. He wants simplicity. There is nothing wrong about the sentiments of the song, rather they are admirable. Notwithstanding all this, it is misplaced in the context of Epicoene. Truewit points this out to him. He objects to this song and tells Clerimont: "And I am already o'the other side; I love a good dressing before any beauty o'the world." (I.i.109-10) He also advises him that "A lady should, indeed, study her face when we think she sleeps." (I.i.121-22) The whole point of Truewit's discourse, in sum, is that Clerimont is proceeding on the wrong lines. He should, rather, play on the whims of the lady he would win over. Truewit dilates upon the technique by which women should show themselves to advantage- For instance: "If she have good ear show'em; good hair, lay it out; good legs, wear short clothes." (I.i.113)

He makes another such speech in Act.IV, Scene I (37-49). Then again he has a considerably long speech about the technique of seduction. There is no escape from the fact that all this is oriented to a specific purpose; it is the central point of the play. Truewit's knowledge in this field brings Clerimont round to his point of view and he subsequently acknowledges that: "Methinks

the Lady Haughty looks well today, for all my dispraise of her in the morning. I think I shall come about to thee again, Truewit," (IV.i.34-36) Clerimont realizes that make-up is necessary and that he was wrong to ask for simplicity from his would-be mistress. So he comes to agree with Truewit at last.

Dauphine is also certainly impressed by Truewit's discourses and shows his readiness to go to school to him, so to speak. This makes Clerimont make fun of Dauphine but Truewit appreciates his recently aroused interest: "No I, like him well. Men should love wisely, and all women" (IV.i.149-50) and he promises to "make 'hem all in love with thee [Dauphine] afore night" (IV.i.154-55) Subsequently he literally succeeds in winning all the "collegiate" for him. After his success with women his plot of manipulation of his uncle, Morose, through Epicoene also culminates in victory for him. Morose, who cannot stand noise, is so tortured by the garrulity of his supposed wife that he renounces his malicious intention of disinheriting Dauphine. Instead he turns over in his will all his property to Dauphine who promises to manage his divorce from his newly wed wife.

Notes

¹ English Drama, (Delhi: S. Chand & Co, 1993), P. 166.

² Ben Jonson, Epicoene (2nd Prologue) in Drama of the English Renaissance-II: The Stuart Period, ed, Russell A. Fraser and Norman Rabin (New York: Macmillan, 1976), P. 2. All further references to this play appear in the text.

³ Ben Jonson" in Ben Jonson: A collection of Critical Essays (20th Century Views), ed. Jonas A. Barish (New Jersey: Princeton Hall, 1963), PP. 14-15.

⁴ Ben Jonson, Dramatist, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1984, Rpt, 1986), P. 122.

⁵ "The Allusiveness of Epicoene" in Ben Jonson: Modern Critical Views, ed. Harold Bloom (New York: Chelsea House, 1987), P.30.

⁶ Edmund Wilson says that "The dramatist, on a visit to the country, had encountered a local character who gave him an idea for a play". "Ben Jonson's Morose", in Ben Jonson : A collection of critical Essays, p.65

⁷ Alexander Leggat, Ben Jonson: His Vision and his Art (London: Methuen Co.: 1981), P. 104.

⁸ "Women: the Renaissance and the Enlightenment," New Encyclopaedia: Macropaedia, 15th ed., 1979, p. 110.

⁹ Russell A. Fraser, "Introduction," Epicoene by Ben Jonson in Drama of the English Renaissance (New York: Macmillan, 1976), p. 160.

¹⁰ Ben Jonson, P. 121.

THE DEVELOPMENT OF WOMEN'S MOVEMENTS IN THE WEST: A HISTORICAL REVIEW

Dr. Samar Fatima Masaud
Associate Professor
Institute of Islamic Studies
University of the Punjab
Lahore

Background

Before discussing the development of women's Movements in the West, it seems appropriate to define the term "Modernization" which according to many scholars is synonymous with "Westernization".

"Modernization is only a word that is used to describe the dynamics of social change brought about by the transformation of the Western economy over the last two hundred years. It is not used as a philosophical statement of how things should be but as a way of measuring the rate of this change". (1)

In other words, Westernization or Modernization is the process of change towards those types of social, economic and political systems that have developed in European countries and America from eighteenth century onwards. The so-called "Modern World" which emerges out of these radical changes is, in fact, the rejection of monotheism and the breakdown of patriarchal values. (2) The system of the modern world is generally based on the concept of freedom of individuals and equality of sexes with less tendency towards religious doctrine. The modern world clearly recognizes women's rights and also gives respect and importance to the working class and non-whites. Due to the process of modernization various reforms were introduced regarding women's

social, legal and economic position. As a result, at the beginning of the twentieth century Western women found themselves living in a very different situation. Thus the smart "Western Women" of today in neat, lighter and more fashionable dresses shows the signs of her new freedom and status.

In order to get this new modern status, however, women of the West had launched an organized campaign long ago in the form of Women's Movements. The ideas, activities and objectives of Women's Movements were not only the result of a plain desire for gender equality, but, they were a complex mixture of many ideological and political elements. Today although feminist movements exist in every Western European country and they have plenty of work ahead, but it is a fact that true equality is still only a dream. (3) Whether the dream Western women will come true, is not our concern. However, why and how the latest position of Western women was achieved is the main theme of this article.

The Development of Women's Movements

It is a fact that the early Women's Movements fought not just for the vote for females but for their full social, political, and economic equality as well (4). However in nineteenth century, due mainly to the Industrial Revolution, When many conspicuous changes took place, Women's Movements took the view that the democratic goals and values of the American revolution must apply to women as well as to men (5). At present parallel to the Women's Movements another theory called "New Right" is also trying to reassert the power of the family and re-establish the power of the father (6). In fact the battle of the two sexes has a very long history and feminist movements have raised many strange fears in men's minds.

"They fear women's sexuality, which, once released, may prove insatiable. They fear the iron grip of domesticity and

fatherhood as their fate, for which biology baits the trap" (7).

New feminism emerging in 1980s considered motherhood and family life as crucial aspects of women's subordination.

"Socialist feminists theorized that the family was a device for the exploitation of women as unpaid houseworkers and childminders" (8).

Recently in America and other Western countries varied and intricate activities of feminist groups are going on which are based mainly on the demand of equal opportunity, the fight for the ERA, political power, abortion and family policies and sexual politics (9).

In order to trace the history of Women's Movements it is almost impossible to date it precisely. However, one may look back as far as the Renaissance (1300-1400) when the idea of liberal education and learning for both sexes was spread, or one can attribute it to the Reformation, the religious movement of the sixteenth century which had far-reaching effects in the economic, social and political spheres, or one can take into consideration the French Revolution in 1789 which provided a considerable momentum for breaking down the powerful monarchies and ancient hierarchies. In fact, the process of modernization has not been a simple matter. It consisted of a whole complex of interrelated changes involving ideological, technological and institutional innovations. It was not only, as commonly understood, due to the Industrial and technological revolution and the accompanying economic development which determined the way Western societies evolved, but also the philosophy, new liberal ideas and education that gave direction to the discoveries and new techniques. In addition, increasing urbanization tended to reduce the size of the family and broke up the old values which, in turn, provided wider economic and political participation for both sexes.

The first intellectual change started with the Renaissance meaning the rediscovery of Greek classical learning, culture and the art. The approach of the Renaissance was dramatic and there was less emphasis on any spiritual guidance; instead, it emphasized worldly affairs and gave more importance to individuals. Consequently spiritual guidance to the ruler seemed to be disappearing and, in fact, the seed of Nationalism was sown at that time.

The second intellectual change was the beginning of the Reformation movement which challenged the authority of priest and king by asserting the precedence of conscience. The Reformation was a reaction against idolatry and ritual in Christianity. Although Christianity had its roots in Judaism and started from a Judaic base which was monotheist and believed in the word of God rather than in images, when St. Paul's teachings reached other lands and Christianity was spread over the Mediterranean area, it was influenced by the pagan philosophy of the Greeks and Romans, ultimately giving great importance to Mary, pictures, music and rituals. By the time power was given to the Church, Christianity was full of pagan influences and the Church had acquired many pre-Christian traditions and forms. The Reformation tried to purify the Christian church and recover the primitive purity of Christianity. This was the time when Christianity divided into two major sects, the Roman Catholic and the Protestant. The Roman Catholics did not change very much and continued to follow the traditions of a medieval age. However, the Movement had a great effect on the Protestant and their domestic life. The sacredness of marriage was reduced to some extent, which resulted in making divorce a bit easier. The idea of marriage as a companionship gained considerable popularity among the ordinary masses. Although patriarchal authority was clearly asserted by the Puritans, especially in family matters, they introduced a new notion of humanity and human responsibility. Some of them adopted a more humane and

sympathetic attitude to women and criticized old customs and beliefs such as the notion that women were naturally shameful and unclean. Some of the small Puritan sects, for example, the Quakers and Ranters included women in decision-making and women not only prophesied, but they preached as well. Some extremist religious sects even attacked conventional marriage and advocated free love and the complete independence of the female sex (10).

In fact, from the time of the Renaissance till the Reformation, There was a very slow and subtle, but significant process of change which later paved the way for a great and rapid change throughout Europe and America. The conspicuous change, however, started with the French Revolution in 1789, the first great social upheaval in Europe to find an intellectual expression in purely non-religious terms. In fact, the French Revolution supplied an important additional momentum to that of the intellectual development which had started developing since the Renaissance. The nature of the Revolution was political and it was the assertion and liberation of the capitalist class against an outdated feudal system and monarchy. The Revolution advocated the economic, political, legal and social equality of the sexes and held out the promise of emancipation to the oppressed. French women who, for centuries, were treated as an inferior and suppressed class considered the Revolution as an effective relief from their miseries and showed great interest in and appreciation for the Revolution and fought for the realization of its aims. Thus once the Revolution was under way, women organised themselves and founded several political clubs and newspapers through which feminists cited women's political contributions to the struggle for liberty and drew attention to their patriotism. Realizing that they had reasonable grounds for their proposals, they argued that since they were fulfilling the duties of citizens, they could not logically be denied the rights of citizens and, therefore, must be accorded political equality (11). In fact, the idea of the Puritans that people should have a say

in their own governing within church and the State was put forward by the feminists as the demand for the vote.

During the Revolution the most exclusive and independent feminist society was the "Societe des republicaines revolutionnaires" which was intensely conscious of the dignity of womanhood. Although basically it represented the interests of women of the working class, it played a vital and conspicuous role for the cause of women and demanded social, economic and political equality for them. The feminist cause gathered so much strength with each new French upheaval that the Societe along with nearly 48 other women's organizations was banned and women were prohibited from political meetings (12).

The efforts of women did not succeed much except in the matter of divorce, inheritance, legal majority of women at the age of twenty-one and in civil suits when they were granted the right to appear as witnesses. However, it became manifest that women, basically of the middle class, did have the power to organize themselves and fight boldly for their rights. It must be borne in mind that the Napoleonic codes almost swept away every advance the women had made during and after the Revolution.

Until the French Revolution, the question of women's rights had not been raised as such, instead, the preceding movements including the French Revolution were started against religious innovations, monarchies and hierarchies. Nonetheless, these movements did create a collective consciousness among women for their rights and they dared, for the first time in patriarchal history, to analyze their own position. However, despite the survival of some of the ideas of these movements, the economic, social and political helplessness of women continued to increase throughout the nineteenth century and it seemed that, to secure and recover its strength from the great jolt caused by the aforementioned

movements, the patriarchy suppressed the female sex more than ever.

In various ways women in the Western patriarchy have suffered and been regarded as the cause of human suffering and misery. In fact, the Eden legend of the female represented the most crucial argument of the patriarchal tradition; and the connection of women, sex and sin constituted the fundamental pattern of Western patriarchal thought and determined most sexual attitudes (13). In the early nineteenth century, politically, women were not allowed to vote, stand for election, hold public office or, in many parts of central and Eastern Europe, join political organizations or attend political meetings. Similarly, to ensure that they did not become economically independent, women were debarred and prevented from holding and transferring property, engaging in trade, running a business, joining a profession and opening a bank account or obtaining credit in their own name. Regarding civil and criminal law, in most countries, women were not 'legal persons' in the sense that they were not allowed to enter into contracts and were regarded as minor or children in the eyes of the law. Until their marriage, regardless of age, women needed the permission of their fathers to work, marry, change residence and so on, and after marriage the authority passed to the husbands who enjoyed complete freedom to dispose of their wives' income, property and children (14).

In America, until 1840 the law gave the husband the exclusive control and guardianship over the children, the custody of the wife's person, the sole ownership of her personal effects and absolute right to use her real estate and the product of her industry. Under English common law the husband owned both her person and her services and was allowed to sue others for wages due to her and confiscate them for himself. The wife had no legal rights of property ownership, for whatever she owned, earned or inherited, belonged to her husband. The husband could take the property from

his wife by personal violence and was neither punished nor forced to restitute. Her position under common law was worse than that of slaves and she was the actual bond servant of her husband as she vowed a life-long obedience to him. The two i.e. the husband and the wife were called "one person" and that one person was the man in the eyes of the law. She was also not permitted to choose her domicile and, upon marriage, automatically had the same domicile as that of her husband, even if he was living in another country.

According to Western jurisprudence, whether it was in England or France, the husband was something like a legal keeper and a lord to his "slaves" and was regarded as sovereign. By law, the husband had full control of the children and even after his death, the wife was not regarded as the legal guardian of her children unless he accepted this before his death. Thus a widow wishing to remarry had to submit the question of child custody to a family council consisting of her dead husband's relatives. As the children were the father's legal possessions and he was the sole "owner" or them, he could deprive the mother of her offspring. Divorce opportunities for women were virtually nil and in the case of the wife's desertion, the husband, if he wished, could compel his wife to return by law or by physical force. In fact, until 1881 the legal right of a husband to use physical force to stop his wife from leaving home had never been questioned. Similarly until 1884, the wife could be imprisoned for denying her husband his conjugal rights or refusing to return home. In France a woman found guilty of adultery was given two years imprisonment, while a husband was held liable only if he brought a concubine into the home to share with his wife and even in that case, he was only fined (15).

These were the circumstances in the nineteenth century which forced women to protest and start a campaign for particular reforms. However, besides such suppressive socio-economic and political conditions, there were some other factors as well which created a conducive environment for the feminists in the nineteenth

century to organize themselves and they, unlike their predecessors, found an eager and amicable atmosphere for their mission. Some major stimulating factors for a collective consciousness among women for their rights and a radical change in their status were as follows:-

- (1) The nineteenth century was the period when, economically, socially and technically the most decisive and irreversible changes took place due to the Industrial Revolution. The most influential and greatest effect of the Revolution was on the family and on paternal authority. As women did not have any previous experience of work in the factories, the employers found it easier to subdue them. Thus, now, women were under the control of employers rather than of their husbands and fathers. That meant the men's social control in the family was threatened. Secondly, the economic basis of patriarchy was weakened because, whatever the wage earned by women, it did give them a feeling that they were no longer desperately dependent on the male's income.

The pre-industrial family which used to be very large, consisting of husband, wife, children, uncles, aunts, grandparents and cousins etc. and was a productive unit in which all members played an effective role, was reduced to a smaller family unit and ceased to be an economic unit due to a drastic decline in domestic production. Because of the transfer of production from home to factories and the larger scale industries, thousands of men, women and children left their homes to look for the jobs in the factories. At that moment, women observed that there existed a lot of discrimination on the basis of sex and that they were not employed in better jobs, but only in menial jobs. They got jobs mainly in the mines and factories where the conditions were appalling and working hours unlimited. Thus, in order

to gain better employment and admission to the professions, women started agitation and demanded better jobs and facilities and equal pay with men. Since admission to good professions was not possible unless women had a chance for education and had some political power to force the government, for the legislative improvement, they also demanded the right to have access to higher education and the right to vote.

- (2) One of the main characteristics of the nineteenth century was the denial of sexual enjoyment for women, and it was emphasized that women were maternal rather than sexual creatures. Thus throughout the century there existed a great danger of sexual abuse, and to control, especially women's sexuality, many devices were introduced. Besides some physical means, a certain kind of morality and social pressure were created to prevent women, even, from expressing any desire for sex (16). In England, the Victorian period divided women into two classes, first 'good women', mainly from the higher middle class, who represented purity of mind and spirit by their modest behaviour and dress and were passive and symbols of chastity and delicacy. They were not supposed to enjoy sex and if they did so and actually admitted it they were suspected and were not considered as good company for other 'proper women'. Apart from child-bearing and presiding over a big household, they were like an ornament to society and a status symbol for their husbands. On the contrary, 'bad women', mainly from the working and lower middle class, represented sexuality by not considering themselves as a special class, thus behaving and dressing provocatively. These women could not afford to stay at home and lead an "idle" life, and thus went to work in the factories.

Out of such suppressive circumstances, there developed a strong reaction against the traditional outlook about sex and some of the ordinary women started treating sex as an integral part of their life and of self identification. Soon women became aware of their sexuality and power due to curiosity, education and the appearance of books and pamphlets giving advice on how to improve one's sex life. Thus they protested against the almost universal belief that women's basic role was to fulfil man's sexual desire and be pregnant with his children. The process of sexual awareness for women which began to rise in the late nineteenth century as a protest against the denial of sexual enjoyment for women, accelerated in the twentieth century. Within the past few decades, the establishment of sex clinics, the invention of new techniques which can increase both partners' enjoyment, the availability of several effective contraceptive devices and the legalization of abortion clearly indicate that female sexuality and her right to sexual enjoyment is now widely acknowledged and recognized. The introduction of birth control techniques in the nineteenth century, in fact, played a vital role in granting women sexual freedom. Women who, by using contraception could reduce the fear of unwanted pregnancies, started increasing their sexual activity and their enjoyment.

- (3) Until the seventeenth century, each individual was considered as one element in a total picture. In the nineteenth century, due to the spread of liberal ideas, the concept of the individual as a separate personality weakened the traditional religious influence over sexual morality, and the church, which in the past had played a dominant and definite role in determining the human behavior, lost its previous rights and authority over many areas of human life.

- (4) Lastly the changes in the demographic structure due to urbanization brought about changes in class structure which ultimately created the middle classes. The professional and industrial middle classes, especially of woman, in turn, played a vital role in changing the socio-economic and political life. The rise of feminism in the nineteenth century was, in fact, due to the emergence of the middle class.

All the aforementioned factors and changes in values and social structure motivated, rather forced women, especially the middle class, to organize themselves and redefine their role in a male oriented society.

In England, the movement for women's emancipation started in 1792 when Mary Wollstonecraft published her 'shocking' book "Vindication of the Rights of Women" (17). By many of her contemporaries, the book was considered as an attack on the traditional family and marriage and a source of diffusing French Revolutionary ideas. And as a matter of fact it was true because the ideas contained in the book really seemed to be a by-product of French upheaval and it was clear from the book that the author was inspired by the revolutionary thoughts of the Revolution about liberty, equality and fraternity. Her main emphasis was that women are human beings first and females second, therefore, they must enjoy the rights of a human being. She argued that all human beings must have the right to decide their fate and their own interest rather than depending on others. She insisted on giving women rational education, free scope for intellectual development and larger opportunities for economic independence.

After the publication of the book, though on the surface there did not appear to be any great change, women gained a greater awakening of consciousness. However, British

an organized form is believed to have started some time between 1830 and 1850. It commenced with the emergence of the Reform Movement which ultimately opened the way for an expansion of Suffrage Movement in 1866 and paved the way for a series of investigations into the conditions of working women. In the 1860's British feminists derived great help and courage from John Stuart Mill, a great advocate of women's rights and the author of the famous book "The subjection of Women" in 1869. In 1903 Suffrage Societies gave rise to a new and more militant organization (18).

In America, the first female anti-slavery convention in 1837 had profound implications. In fact, the Abolition Movement provided the first occasion on which women were able to organize themselves in a political manner. The official inauguration of the women's movement took place with the Seneca Fall Convention of July 1848, which initiated a long series of women's rights conventions in the United States (19). The first serious attempt to achieve female suffrage started in 1867. In some other countries, for example, France, Germany, Sweden, Norway and Finland etc. organized feminism developed in between the sixties and nineties of the nineteenth century (20).

Conclusion

In societies individuals or groups are presumed to have access to all opportunities available to them. However, human history proves that it is not the case. Regarding women, especially, there has always been a striking departure from this. To eliminate this difference on the basis of the gender women themselves struggled hard through an organised campaign called "Women's Movement. As a result today feminism is a universal movement which touches every aspect of human life and in its broadest sense includes both women and men who advocate women's rights.

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"Ideology Factor" in Media Studies

DR. MUGHEES-UDDIN*

There has been a major shift of interest in communication theory away from the behaviorist emphases of previous research approaches, towards the ideological problem of how messages are structured, how they function in the circulation and securing of dominant social definitions, and how communication can be analyzed as a process through which a particular culture is represented, maintained, or transformed. In American media theory, there has been a resounding absence of the notion of ideology. Specifically, the concept of Cultural studies, of which ideology is a part, has been as Carey (1979, p. 410) says, "generally misunderstood, ignored or misrepresented in the US." The purpose of this essay is to isolate and elucidate, against its historical background, the sense of ideology that predominates in modern Media Studies.

The "ideology" was created during the period of French Revolution by Antoine Destutt De Tracy, who used it to describe a new science, the science of ideas (Larain, 1979, p. 27). It would have as its object the establishment of the origin of ideas. By overcoming religious and metaphysical prejudices, he hoped this would serve as a new basis for public education, ideology, along with grammar and logic, was to be a part of zoology and thus have close relation with the physical sciences (Miller, 1971, p. 28). The work of de Tracy and his followers, who were called "the ideologists," was known in the new American republic, at least by John Adams and Thomas Jefferson (Drucker, 1974, p. 13). The term ideology was first given a negative connotation by Napoleon. Although he found himself on the same side as the "ideologues" during the Revolutionary period, he later became target after he gained a position of absolute authority (Miller, 1971, p. 28). When they could not accept his despotic excesses, Napoleon turned against them, using the description "ideologists" with the

during the Revolutionary period, he later became target after he gained a position of absolute authority (Miller, 1971, p. 28). When they could not accept his despotic excesses, Napoleon turned against them, using the description "ideologists" with the derogatory meaning that they were unrealistic and doctrinaire intellectuals ignorant of the possibilities of politics (Larrain, 1979, p. 28).

In French political philosophy, the birth of this negative connotation is linked to the fortunes of religion in general and to the Catholic church in particular. In eighteenth century's French, criticism of religion preceded criticism of the state (Barth, 1976, p. 10). In the eyes of the ideologues, nothing endangered social beacons the achievements of 1789 more than divisive religious conflict and the siding of the state with the religious authority for the purpose of suppressing tolerance and freedom of conscience. Napoleon intended to found the new political order of France on the traditional European basis of a relation firmly rooted in the social order, which would sanction divinely ordained inequalities within a hierarchical social structure.

Among the pro-Bonapartist Public, then, ideology came to connote something low and despicable, which, in words of Walter Scott, Napoleon's biographer, prevailed "with none save hot-brained boys and crazed enthusiasts" (Scott, 1987, p. 251). To the present time, the concept of ideology has retained the connotation of an invective and accusation. Roucek (1944, p. 16) speaks of a popular connotation of the term as visionary moonshine, and most modern dictionaries include the signification "theorizing of a visionary and impractical nature." Alongside the passive connotation is one of extremism and emotionalism: ideology is seen as "emotionally charged beliefs about the substance of the 'good life'" (Mark, 1973, p. 3); a "force increasingly hostile to the advancement of civilization" (Feur, 1975, Preface); "systems of beliefs that are implicitly totalitarian" (Halle, 1972, p. 6); "The product of a right-or left-wing stance, combined with a certain personality structure which predisposes a person to aggressive

action, to dogmatic assertion and to Machiavellian practices" (Eysenck and Wilson, 1973, p. 30); or characterized by "bias.

Oversimplification, emotive language and adaptation to public prejudice" (Geertz, 1964, p. 47).

Although Napoleon was the first to give the term a derogatory association, Marxian usage incorporated a pejorative content into the concept of ideology itself (Carlsnaes, 1981, p. 28). This represents a return to a conception of ideology that is in line with Plato's notion of *Doxa* or common-sense discourse which, unlike philosophy and science, denotes sets of ideas not primarily conceived for cognitive purposes.

During the nineteenth century there was a growing convergence between the term ideology and its negative content. This was taking place largely through the radical critique of religion by the so-called left-wing Hegelians, although without any formal connection with the term ideology. The transformation of Christianity into a dogmatic system was being described, for the first time, as responsible for alienation in society. Feuerbach went further by attempting to show that the attributes of the divinity, such as providence, goodness, love, and holiness, are really reification of human attributes. Religion was no longer seen either as a totally irrational belief or as an arbitrary invention of wicked priests trying to deceive the people. Feuerbach came close to the Marxian concept of ideology, which surpassed the critique of religion and asserted the negative and critical character of ideology.

When Marx finally arrived at his own general concept of ideology, it subsumed not only religion but all forms of distorted consciousness, and it initiated a tradition of critically examining the negative, historical contradictions in a society in relation to its dominant ideology.

An ideology understands a culture within the framework of assumptions which are characteristics of a specific social group but have probably spread beyond it to other groups. It reflects a systematic orientation of thought and feelings of a particular group. Therefore, it is biased towards that group in a systematic and pervasive way, implicitly suggesting that a society which is not

structured in harmony with its characteristic forms of thought and conditions of existence is not fully rational. As Marx puts it, an ideology "defends," "justifies," "legitimizes," "speaks for," or is an "apologia" for a particular group. It is necessarily led to "conceal," "disguise," mystify," or "misunderstand" its subject-matter (Parekh, 1982, p. 30).

What of the social group to which an ideology is biased? Although Marx concentrated on class-based ideology, the dominant social group might be a nation, a race, a linguistic group, a professional group, or even a subgroup within a class. Thus, a history of Rome or India, which selectively interprets facts so as to show the good leadership of the Parisians or the Brahmans and the chaos of their opponents' leadership, defined either in terms of the objectively shared conditions of existence (class-in-itself) or in terms of the awareness among people of common identity springing from their common experience (class-in-itself) is of major importance to Marx. His theoretical frame reference was bounded by the major three classes of his time—those who owned large amounts of land, those who owned capital, and those owned labor-power. Other classes included the petit bourgeoisie, whose role in the economic structure lay in the realm of circulation of commodities rather than their production; the professionals, who provided the technical expertise for the social structure, trained qualified people, administered government, etc.; and the lumpenproletariat, the poor, the unemployed, the homeless, the criminal etc.

Any approach to Marx's theory must begin with the proposition that a material base in society determines an ideological superstructure. In 1851, Marx wrote:

• Upon the several forms of property, upon the social conditions of existence of existence, a whole superstructure i.e. reared of various and peculiarly shaped feelings, illusions, habits of thought and conceptions of life. The whole class produces and shapes these out of its material foundation and out of the corresponding social conditions. Eight years later he wrote:

The mode of production of material life determines the general character of the social, political and spiritual processes of life. It is not the consciousness of people that determines their being but, on the contrary, their social being that determines their consciousness (Marx, 1964, p. 51)

Ideology is a process accomplished by the so-called thinkers consciously, it is true, but with false consciousness. The real motive forces impelling him remain unknown to him": otherwise it simply would not be an ideological process. Hence, he imagines false or seeming motive forces (Marx and Engels, 1962, p. 451)

An ideology, then, is essentially a body of thought giving a systematically biased and distorted account of its subject matter, but also with enough grains of truth to make it plausible. It has an empirical basis in the experience of a specific social group and it is normative for the rest of the society, turning what is a specific fact for one group into an "ought" or "ideal" for all groups. Insofar as it presents an illusion or appearance of reality, it has obvious similarities with Marx's theory of fetishism¹, just as, at the level of the economic base, the products of work are given a life of their own by being fetishized, so social role are reified in the ideological superstructure (law, politics, education media, etc.). Not until the time of Lenin was the term ideology no longer taken as synonymous with false consciousness but given its own neutral meaning.

If the task of ideology is to bring about the logical transition from what is a fact for one group to what is a norm for others, it might reasonably be asked why ideology is so persistent, why so many individuals do not see through its distortions. Ideological explanations tend to misperceive and distort and mystify because they universalize a particular social point of view. The bourgeoisie, for instance, will argue that people are by nature possessive and that the bourgeois form of society, with its laws and institutions protecting private property, is natural to human kind. Here the limits of this point of view are taken as the limits of the world itself, as what is natural and self-evident. It would also, of course, suit the

practical interests of the bourgeoisie if everyone behaved as bourgeois, thus eliminating any subversive challenge to the social structure. As Marx puts it, one need not take the narrow view that one class explicitly set out to assert its own class interests: "it rather believes that the particular conditions of its liberation are the only general conditions within which modern society can be saved" (Marx and Engels, 1962, Vol. I p. 275).

The concept of ideology carries with it the implication of distortion. Ideology is concerned with the transmission of systems of signification across cross lines. This is conceived not as an abstract process but as being effected, in a concrete way, via the means of mental production, controlled by the economically dominant class. The consciousness of those subjected to this relay of ideologies is thus distorted not abstractly but in a way conducive to the perpetuation of existing relationships of class domination.

Unfortunately, the precise way in which such questions are addressed depends upon the way in which the concept of ideology is interpreted and handled a matter on which Marxists have been by no means united. The importance of such general conceptual considerations for the specific way in which the media are to be interrogative can be illustrated by considering the contrasting approach to the concept of ideology embodied in the works of George Luka'cs and Louis Althusser.

In this sense, ideology legitimizes the class structure and becomes indispensable for its reproduction in a noncorrosive way. The medieval serfs who accepted their inferior status as part of a God-given hierarchical order, or the slaves who believed in their owner's right to do with them as they pleased in Colonial America, or the bourgeoisie who accepted the principle of the Divine Right of Kings in pre-Revolutionary France, were all negative classes who internalized ideological beliefs that originated elsewhere and mystified their exploitation. In each case, the socio-cultural world was perceived as necessity and fate.

The most basic form of reasoning characteristic of ideological thought is the fallacy of reducing history to nature and presenting a prevailing practice or idea as "natural," "normal," "reasonable," or "necessary." This is why Marx was intensely

suspicious of any reference to "nature" in philosophy, seeing this as a cloak for legitimizing a social practice (Parekh, 1982, p. 138). An ideology that has successfully universalized, naturalized, and dehistoricized the world-view of a particular social group then finds it easy to present the critic as naive, irresponsible, Utopian, or even as "an ideologist" (in the Napoleonic sense, of course), because one of the most striking aspects of ideology is that it is "critical towards its adversary but-uncritical towards itself" (Marx and Engels, 1975, Vol. p. 181).

The analysis of ideology is currently one of the fastest growing areas within media studies. To be a critic of ideology, however, presents a major epistemological problem. If ideology is so all-persuasive, how can one be liberated from it? If ideology is a form of thought resulting from the universalization of a partial and narrow social point of view, it would seem that critics can rise above their limiting assumptions if they are acutely aware of and concerned to transcend them. Marx believed, rather optimistically, that one could become a "free agent of thought" and, with enough self-consciousness and self-criticism, look at society from any stand-point (Parekh, 1982, p. 27). The following theses would be important: Critics should investigate, with a rigorous critical attitude, the inner structure of society rather than its phenomenal forms, be ware of how their own position in society mediates their relations with what is being studied, and avoid a historical concepts or methods of investigation or ways of understanding the prevailing social order (Parekh, 1982, p. 143).

Yet a doubt remains as to where critics of ideology can be found: within a negative class (Marx and Engels), or within a vanguard party committed to raising the consciousness of that class (Lenin), or within the ranks of intellectuals who are (supposedly) free of class ties (Mannheim and Marcuse). Yet the characterization of intellectual as somehow above ideology is itself an ideological position, as in the general academic belief that methodologies and agenda for study are uninfluenced as by social bias. The social theorist brings to the study of society a specific social point of view, a body of attitudes, assumptions, and interests which shapes the selection, organization, and interpretation of the subject matter. The ideological view of the academic denies the social mediation of knowledge, thus overlooking a powerful source of bias, and views

universities as transcendental institutions in no way shaped by society. As Althusser (1971, pp. 163-164) contends, what takes place in ideology seems therefore to take place outside it. That is why those who are in ideology believe themselves outside ideology: one of the aspects of ideology is the practical delegation of the ideological character of ideology by ideology: ideology never say "I am ideological." It is necessary to be outside ideology, that is, in scientific knowledge, to be able to say: I am in ideology (a quite exceptional case) or (the general case) I was in ideology.

The precise relationship between "science" and "ideology" is a crucial aspect of the epistemological question which underlies much of recent media study. How do I know that my critique is not itself ideological?

A Marxist theory of ideology, must start from the other direction. It must start not with the abstract, consciousness, but with the concrete, the structure of ideological forms themselves. Ideology must be viewed not as the product of an evanescent consciousness but as an objective component of the material world.

Ideology is not an attribute of consciousness. Rather, both in general and in the particular forms it assumes, consciousness is a product of ideology. From the point of view of language as fully developed system (and language is the home of all ideologies), it is not the consciousness of individuals which determines the forms of language but rather the forms of language which, pre-existing the individuals who comprise the members of any speech community, produce the consciousness of individuals by defining the linguistic terms within which their thought is structured. And it does so not abstractly but concretely as a set of material signs relayed to individuals via the concrete mediations of home, school and the media.

It has been partly as a result of these criticisms that more recent developments in the Marxist theory of ideology have tended to look back beyond Althusser to the work of Antonio Gramsci whose writings on such subjects as culture and ideology, the role of intellectuals, and the crucial concept of hegemony afford a more flexible, less economistic way of conceptualizing the relationship between ideological, social, political and economic processes and relationships. Be this as it may, the crucial role that Althusser has played in facilitating the development of significantly new lines of approach to the study of the media should not be underestimated. The stress that he placed on the active role of ideology, on the part that it played in shaping the consciousness of ideology, on the part that it played in shaping the consciousness of social agents, formed the central conduit through which developments in structuralism and semiology have both entered into and lastingly altered Marxist approaches to the media in placing questions concerning the politics of signification at least on a par with the traditional Marxist concern with the analysis of patterns of media ownership and control.

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Mass communication research and the concepts of reference groups: Musing a relationship.

By

Fazal Rahim Khan, Muhammad Aslam Parvez, Hashmat Ali Zafar, and Farish Ullah
Department of Journalism and Mass Communication Gomal University, D.I.Khan.

Abstract:

The paper traces the evolution of the reference group concept in sociology focusing the way it has been conceptually explicated and operationalized. The extent, usually implicit, to which it has been used in the Mass Communication research is also discussed. Some thinking is also done on how might the reference group theory be more fully integrated into mass communication research, and utilized by the communication researchers to further explain the communication behaviors of the audience members. The paper Includes that significant conceptual and methodological deficiencies still beset the attempted minimal synthesis of the reference group theorization with the uses and gratifications tradition of mass communication research, and, if further pursued, such a synthesis will potentially prove fruitful for the conceptual repertoire of mass communication research.

Introduction:

Communication research is a variable field as compared with the level focus of such fields as sociology, psychology and anthropology. That is, while a sociologist or a psychologist stays within a single level of analysis (eg, a social system level or individual level of analysis), a communication researcher shifts level of analyses by eclectically borrowing concepts from other fields.

This not only involves theoretical reductionism but it also means that unique research methodologies be devised to adapt to the demands of the changing levels of analyses.

Historically this burden has constrained the conceptual growth of the field and hence when compared with the theoretical developments within the level of fields the communication research seems to be suffering from conceptual and theoretical inadequacy. Communication researchers agree that mass communication research suffers from such a theoretical lag (Paisley, 1972). For instance, in exploring media use behaviors, although the mass Communication research has not totally ignored the influence of social component, a systematic theoretical approach to looking at media choices within a social context has been lacking.

This, precisely, is the point of departure for the present paper. Through a detailed review of the sociological research tradition of the reference group phenomenon and the media use tradition of the mass communication research, the present paper essentially suggests a possible theoretical basis for the mostly atheoretical uses and gratifications dimension of the mass communication research. Specifically, the review focuses three questions of potentially useful theoretical and methodological interest to communication research.

1. How has the reference group concept evolved and operationalized over the years in sociology?
2. How, if at all, has it been used in mass Communication research?
3. How might one integrate the reference group theory with some dimensions of mass communication research?

Reference Group: evolution of the concept:

The term "reference group" was used by Hyman (1942) who hypothesized that the way individuals evaluate their social status is contingent on their choice of a social frame-work for comparison. At about the same time, Newcomb (1943), seeking to understand processes of attitude change or lack of change among Bennington college students chose the Bennington community as a reference group. These two studies together comprised the first systematic investigation of reference group processes.

These and other notions about the reference group phenomenon, sometimes explicit at others implicit, were systematized by Merton and Rossi (1950). In their interpretations of the findings of the American Soldier, Merton and Rossi distinguished between the "in-groups" and "out-groups" and stressed one of the most distinctive features of the reference group theory. That is, the reference groups are not necessarily membership groups and that "social" or "personal" frame of references are yielded by nonmembership groups as well. They further conceptualized the reference group theory as aiming "to systematize the determinants and consequences of those processes of evaluation and self-appraisal in which the individual takes the values or standards of other individuals and groups as a comparative frame of reference."

Their discussion of conformity, further, led them to the concept of anticipatory socialization and its interrelationship with social mobility; i.e., the consequences for the individual, his own membership group, and the larger social system if the reference group is a non-membership group. They didn't explicitly define the concept anticipatory socialization but they seem to refer to it as some kind of process or value adaptation through positive orientation to the norms of a non-membership reference group. Further tests of anticipatory socialization are found in Eulau (1962).

It has also been noted that of the multiple reference group employed each may be specialized as a point of comparison for one particular dimension (Turner, 1955); and, that several multiple reference groups may impinge simultaneously on the same sphere of comparison or the same realm of attitudes. In that case they may either reinforce the same outcome or produce conflicting consequences for the individual (Form & Geschwender, 1950; and reinforce the same outcome or produce conflicting consequences for the individual (Form & Geschwender, 1950).

patchen, 1961; Rosen, 1955). Furthermore, as mentioned earlier Merton & Rossi (1955) talk of conflicting consequences for a person with an out-group reference group, but Litwak (1960) has presented an interesting reformulation in his concept of "stepping-stone" reference orientation; i.e., in a situation characterized by ordered change, "where integration in one group is considered to be a prerequisite for the integration into a second group... it is possible for the individual to view both his current membership group as reference groups, without endangering his integration into his current group and without preventing his joining a different future group" (PP. 72 - 73). Thus each group is valued by the individual as a stepping-stone to help him in his advance.

Similarly, one of the other earlier research concerns identified by Merton and Rossi (1950) and explored further by Kaplan (1955) focused on the relative potency of status categories versus primary groups including conformity. Kaplan has attempted to tackle this problem in terms of a substantively confined area of the voting behavior of the Catholics. His over-all conclusion was that without the intimate subgroup as a reference, there was relatively little 'interest group' voting; with it, 'interest group' voting was maximized. That is, to say that even in the realm of reference group category behavior, the small intimate primary group plays a crucial role.

Although basic to all research and theorizing in the reference group area has been the distinction drawn by Kelley (1952) between the comparative and the normative types or functions of reference group (Singer, 1981), the literature offers in one form or another the evidence for the existence of at least three types reference groups (Kemper, 1968). In general, a reference group is a group collectivity, or person which the actor takes into account in some manner to help orient himself in a certain course of action or attitude. This definition of reference group is distinct from the more universalistic usage of the concept by Eisenstadt, (1954) who subsumes the reference groups under the category of norms. The three groups are: the normative groups, the comparison groups and the audience groups.

Kemper (1968) views normative groups as providers of guidance to action by explicitly setting norms and espousing values. The major identifying characteristics of a normative group promulgates and which, in some way, the group brings to his attention. Comparison groups provide the actor with a frame of reference that serves to facilitate judgements about any of several problematic issues. Kemper, (1968) splits this category up into; a) equity groups--- used as a frame of reference for judging whether or not ones situation is fair or equitable, b) legitimator group--- used as a frame of reference for judging the legitimacy of ones behavior or opinions not necessarily normative groups; for example, "everyone cheats on income tax; why shouldn't I?" c) role models--- demonstrate for the individual how something is done in the technical sense and it is usually a person rather than a group; and d) accommodator group--- provides the individual with a cue for a complementary response (in co-operative situations) or a parallel response (in competitive situations).

The audience groups, on the other hand, demand neither normative nor value-validating behavior of the actor for whom they serve as referent. They do not serve as frames of reference in any of the senses in which the comparison groups may be used. The actor attributes certain values to an audience group and attempts to behave in accordance with those values. The audience group may overlap with the comparison and the normative groups. However, the audience groups don't demand conformity to norms and they employ different sanctioning techniques; e.g., they can withhold reward or impetus for achievement but not punish.

Kelley (1952), suggested for the first time normative group as a second type of reference group. Similarly, Shibutani (1955) distinguished three denotations of the term reference group: 1) that group which serves as point of reference in making comparisons or contrasts (the same as comparative reference group), 2) the group in which the actor aspires to gain or maintain acceptance, and 3) the group whose perspective constitutes the frame of reference of the actor. Shibutani proposed limiting the concept to the third

usage, which is akin to Kelley's normative function but carries broader imperative for defining the situation in which the actor finds himself. That means, with Shibutani, the third usage points more to a psychological phenomenon than to an objectively existing group of people. It refers to an organization of the actor's experience and in any collectivity, real or imagined, envied or despised, whose perspective is assumed by the actor. Interpreting further, Shibutani contends that the choice of reference groups--- conforming to the norms of the group whose perspective is assumed--- is a function of one's interpersonal relations. Further, the extent to which culture of a group serves as the matrix for the organization of perceptual experience depends on one's relationship and personal loyalty to others who share the outlook.

Sherif (1953), (1956) has defined groups as those group to which an individual relates himself as a part or to which he aspires to relate himself psychologically. The distinctive problems associated with reference groups theory arise, as Sherif sees it, primarily in societies which are relatively differentiated, relatively unstable--- in short, in modern societies. Modern man, essentially in Western societies, is caught in the throes of mobility, in the dilemmas and contradictions of statuses, and painful predicament of marginality created by the demands and goals originating in diverse groups. In other words, the problems identified by Sherif involve conformity to conflicting demands rather than processes of evaluation and comparison.

On the other hand is Turner (1956) whose various distinctions between reference group type overlap with what has gone above. He applies the term identification group to the same type of group that Shibutani prefers to limit the reference group concept to; strictly normative and in broader terms reference group as perspective. Similarly, Turner deals with the concept of the audience in his evaluation group, which appears to be a cross between a comparison group and an audience group as defined above. Even more explicit is Turner's own 'audience' group? which is virtually a one-to-one match with the group described above. So much for the concept elaboration and refinement.

Moreover, at present there is no such thing like 'a' theory of 'the' reference group phenomenon. This may perhaps be due to the fact, and as Turner (1955) also notes and as recorded earlier on, that persons take different groups as standards in matters of material success, morals, tastes and other areas and that groups can be "segmentally" rather than "totally" relevant (P. 131).

Further, although the sociologists have mainly concerned themselves with the consequences of reference orientations (Singer, 1981), the literature also offers evidence on the determinants of reference group selection (see for instance, Hyman, 1968; Newcomb, 1952; 1961; Merton, 1954; Patchant, 1961; Form and Geschwender, 1962; Stern and Keller, 1953; Runciman, 1966; Strauss, 1968; Rosow, 1967).

In terms of operationalization of the concept, according to pool and Shulman (1959), the reference group studies fall into two groups: a) those who ask direct question about personal influences; e.g. whose opinions do you respect, whom would you consult, etc.; and which attempt to infer the importance of a reference group from the fact that an individual's behavior approximates the model behavior of a group. But these previous approaches do not offer evidence on whom respondents actually thought about as they reached a decision, and how much difference that made.

Person's reference groups have been measured by such simple and yet predictive questions as those on subjective class identification (see, Centers 1949). Now this approach has come under considerable criticism for its use of the researcher-determined class categories, which do not conform neatly with the class configuration in the minds of respondents (Blumberg, 1972). However, when this 'self-location' was combined with a question on class awareness prediction of attitudes was found to have registered improvement, Campbell et al., 1960-- (Univ. of Michigan Survey Research Center).

Moreover, the type of comparative reference groups that individuals normally employ has been studied by direct questions (Patchman, 1961), by the spontaneous group reference that individuals make in the course of survey on personal satisfaction (Stern and Keller, 1953), and by applications of Kuhn's 'who am I?' test, which elicits spontaneous definitions of the self and its incorporation in to various social categories (see Mulford and Salisbury, 1964).

In the realm of normative reference groups Rosen (1955a) has identified a problem and has tried to resolve it. In his study of parental factor of attitude and behavior formation, Rosen has illustrated the danger of looking for a single reference group as the entire explanatory factor. Thus in another study Rosen (1955a) tried to measure conflicting group membership. He concludes that too much reliance on questionnaire with its tendency to depend on the subject's perception of his referents for the location of reference groups can obscure the fact that there may be referents whose importance he does not perceive or cannot verbalize.

But since methodology is intimately related to theory, we will argue that further development of reference group theory particularly in the area of how an individual resolves conflicting expectations of his membership groups would considerably simplify the task of delineating and quantifying referents.

Earlier on centers (1949) measurement of class identification was mentioned. The feeling of identification with other categories which might be reference groups can also be tapped by simple techniques. In the Elmirs voting study, e.g., the respondents were asked to indicate which of a series of groups were the most important to them. Similarly, in the Campbell et al. (1960), the Michigan voting studies, individuals were asked to indicate whether they were 'pretty close' to the group, and how much interest they have in the group. These measures of psychological identifications predicted voting better than the mere measure of objective group membership (Suchman and Menzel, 1955).

Again, with a group there maybe a differentiated structure and a set of norms rather than one norm. This has been examined by a relatively simple instrument, e.g., the Michigan study in 1956 dissected the structure of social categories by asking the respondents how he perceived the aggregate group voting, how he perceived the voting norm of the local members of the group, and how he perceived the leadership voting.

Another aspect, which we believe is relevant length of membership reference group or in group is the length of membership because this too could tell us something about ones sense of identification or about the degree to which one has internalized its norms. The length of membership in a group may well be influenced by social and geographical mobility. However, the experimental techniques to study the influence of reference groups on the behavior of communicator have been developed by Zimmermann and Baur, (1956) and by Poll and Shulman, (1959) and saliency of reference groups has been experimentally manipulated by Charters and Newcomb (1952).

More important of all, the attitudes of the referent-others are often measured by questioning the individual about them, and the lack of independence in the two measures likewise makes causal inference hazardous. Research by O, Gorman (1975 and O, Gorman and Gary, 1976) and Fields and Schuman (1976) has raised serious questions about the usefulness of respondent reports of group norms, and more generally about the relation between perceived norms and the 'objective norms'.]

Reference Group Phenomenon and Mass Communications:

Questions 2 and 3 have been lumped under this sub-head for two reasons: one, the concepts of 'reference groups' have been rarely used very much in the mass communication literature except for the early classical research on media use behaviors (see, Merton 1949) and communicator studies by Baur (1958), and pool and Shulman (1959) and more implicitly by Katz and Lazarsfeld (1955) and McLeod and o' Keefe (1972) in their approach to socialization

perspective and communication behavior; and two, there has been no real attempts to integrate the reference group theory and any dimension of mass communication research.

Still we will try to suggest another framework which can allow us to more fully integrate the two areas.

However, the foremost among the researchers who systematically moved in this direction were Riley and Riley (1959). These scholars suggest a social system perspective on mass communication research from the standpoint of the reference group theory. They suggested that if the individual's values are indeed shaped in part by the primary groups to which he belongs or aspires to belong, then his perception of a message and his response to it may be better understood in terms of his relationship to these groups and to their values.

Similarly, Riley and Riley (1951) in an exploratory study of children's mass media preferences suggest that the individual's integration into a significant group may affect both his choice of materials to read or listen and his interpretations of media contents. In this study, children who were not disposed to talking extensively with friends --- and who felt the strain of exclusion from the peer group--- were found to express relatively high interest in stories which fostered fantasies of aggression or escape. Even when the excluded child and the integrated child were exposed to the same media material the content served a different function for the two.

Another piece of related research develops the hypothesis that media preferences may be associated, not only with the individual's disposition to communicate with the members of the group but also with his agreement with their values. In this vein, it was thus found that the boys' media behaviors tended to conform to the expectations of their middle-class parents even when these significant others were not immediately present.

Moreover, when the boys were subdivided according to the degree to which their own aspirations conformed to the

expectations of parents and peers, it was found that the boy's selection of media materials in line with the parental expectations was related to interacting with his parents as persons (Riley and Riley, 1959).

It must, however, be noted here that unlike Turner (1955, 1956) conceptualization of reference group as generalized other, these mass communication studies looked at reference group in narrower terms of 'primary' significant others. Again, a study by Whithney (1980) of the influence of status inconsistency on attention to public affairs content in news media may be interpreted, at a very crude and broad level, as a study of conflicting reference groups' influence on behavior.

More specifically, such directly relevant questions like--- how is the recipient's reaction to a mass communication related to his membership (or coveted membership) in a single primary group? or, how does this reaction vary, on the one hand, with his positive or negative feelings towards members of this group and, on the other hand, with his agreement or disagreement with their values? or, how does it vary with his status in the group and the particular role he is expected to perform? or, how does his reference group seem to affect his reactions to different types of communication --- those intended to inform, persuade and commit him to action, and those intended merely to entrain and provide him with food for fantasy? or, a far more complicated question of how does he respond when he must react to a message in multiple roles as a member of conflicting reference groups? or, how does his reaction vary with the relative significance of these groups to him, with the relative degree of his positive or negative feelings towards them and so on --- have not been explicitly addressed in the mass communication literature at all. The answer to these questions should go above and beyond simply locating the recipient of mass communication within social structure.

Again, implicitly or indirectly, the information seeking literature may also be said to have employed some of the concepts of reference group theory. As said earlier on in this paper that reference group theory has motivational basis and motivational

basis have also been identified in the media use behavior. For example, a survey of information seeking during an election campaign showed that voters were much more likely to ask for pamphlets describing the views of the candidates if they expected to talk about the election with friends. The social concept of communicatory utility is stressed by Chaffee and McLeod (1967) and Tipton (1970).

Similarly, the research carried out by Wisconsin group ---- McLeod, Chaffee, Wackman ---- on family communication patterns and its influence on media use behaviour uses the concept of reference group if it is interpreted narrowly as primary reference groups as Riley and Riley (1951) do. Of course, the concept reference group per se is not involved.

However, earlier on Baur (1959) was more explicit in his use of the reference group theory. His emphasis was on the effect that an actual or potential reference group has on the communication, whether to mass audience or to small groups of friends. The particular significance of the several related studies he reports lies in their implication for the process by which reference groups come to influence attitudes and beliefs. Briefly, the research that Baur cites supports the following propositions: 1) that the characteristics of the audience to which information is to be communicated influence the way in which the communicator organizes new information and thereby what he himself may remember or believe at a later time, and 2) secondary audiences or reference groups, usually internalized and often imagined, are important targets of communication and may, at times, play a decisive role in flow of communication.

From these two propositions, it follows that real or imagined communication with salient reference groups can significantly influence the individual's cognitive structuring of reality, in accordance with the attitudes to these groups.

Noelle-Neumann (1984, 1990, 1991) work on the spiral of silence theory of public opinion formulation and scores of studies done in her tradition posit fear of isolation from society as a basic assumption in opinion expression. Opinion expression or lack thereof is mainly responsible for public opinion formulation. Unfortunately, scant explicit attention has been given to the concept

of reference group in the theory of spiral of silence. How might various reference groups mediate opinion expression or how might or might not the tenor of the trend-setting mass media influence the societal perceptions of the majority or minority distributions of opinions are the important questions that are awaiting investigations.

Indeed, the basic position of this paper has been that although the reference group theory has not been a part of most of the mass communication literature, it nevertheless is compatible with much of it.

More specifically, the research on media behaviors provides another potential locus of integrating some aspects of mass communication theory with the reference group phenomenon. Of late the uses and gratifications perspective has been revived to shed further light from a different angle on the media use behaviors. It approaches media research by searching for the reasons that motivate people to choose certain media and the gratifications they obtain from the act of media exposure. The functional inventories that pervade the uses and gratifications research tend to include a need for social contact in a form or another; e.g., surveillance of the environment, transmission of culture, correlation of parts of society and even entertainment are all social phenomena. Because of the generally atheoretical nature of these functional inventories (see Elliot, 1974), media behavior is not generally linked to any other social activities or relationships. Nor has the uses and gratifications research satisfactorily dealt with the social structural conditions from which media behaviors remain dominant. Rosengren and Windahl (1974, p. 166) e.g., note that it seems as if any type of content may serve any type of function.

Many studies in the uses and gratifications tradition implicitly utilize the reference group concept. Wieb (1969), for instance believes that maintenance is the main aspect of socialized function of mass media. His idea of maintenance appears consistent with reference group theory. The individual is drawing to mediate material that reinforces his self-concept. The self-concept is largely determined by the group or groups that he refers to and media operate to reinforce the individual's affiliation with the group.

Atkin (1972) attributes media choice to the social utility of information obtained which is used for future interpersonal

interaciton with a specific group of people. His hypothesis was supported and the maintenance and or reinforcement received was based on how well the individual integrated himself in that group. Again consistency with the reference group theory is obvious.

Similarly, Herzog (1944) and Katzman (1972) have indicated that social learning and companionship have been found to be among the reasons women follow soap opera. McQuail et al (1974) suggest that media help an individual discharge a definite social role to meet membership requirements of his peer groups. In individual to define who he is, and reinforcing an image of himself and his value system.

In their Israeli study, Katz et al. (1973) report the integrative needs which involve the individual's link with society that can be fulfilled through media use. Similarly, Johnstone (1974) reports the fulfillment of integrative need as being a major factor in adolescents' mass media behavior. Riesman (1950) sees the adolescents' use of popular music similarly. Once again, the reference group phenomenon is described without it begin cited:

When he listens to music, even no one else is around, he listens in a context of "imaginary" others ----- his listening is indeed often an effort to establish connection with them.

Moreover, reference group theory can also explain Fox and Williams' (1974) discovery of differing uses radio and phonograph records between conservatives and liberal college students.

The above finding can be interpreted in the light of reference group theory because we think potentially the uses and gratification and the reference group theory are mutually synthesizable. Thus while uses and gratifications focuses on motives e.g., reference group phenomenon among others looks to the groups to which a person psychologically aligns himself, tries to adopt their tastes, attitudes, behaviors, behaviors etc. to reinforce his identification with them. A synthesis of two approaches may state that one motivation for media choices is to reinforce reference group affiliation.

Lichtenstein (1978), attempted such a synthesis in the context of exposure to public television and upper and upper

middle class identification and found that exposure to public tv could successfully be predicted by the perception of Public tv as an upper class medium and the respondents' reference group identification with the upper calssses.

The conceptual and empirical problem with Lichtenstein's work is that it focuses only on the normative reference group and ignore considering other reference functions that social class may be serving. Further it does not empirically take into consideration what Rosen (1955a) terms "process of interiorization and legitimation of referents' expectations." Similarly, it concentrates only on the awareness of the norm and ignores the respondent's strength of commitment to that norm. Ignored also is what Hyman (1960) calls length of membership in a group which can be a good indicator of norm adaptation. More importantly, the work looks only at the in-group reference orientation, while the reference group theory is significant for the out group reference orientations too. Specifically, how might gratification seeking and or gratification obtained be influenced by these considerations. Could these serve as more parsimonious and better explanations of media use, media images and media effects? Indeed, a conceptual and a methodological challenge for the researcher active in, what William Paisley term, the "variable field" of mass communication research.

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BEHAVIORAL PROBLEMS OF
MENTALLY RETARDED CHILDREN
AS EXPERIENCED BY THEIR
TEACHER

HUMERA HAFEEZ
AND
DR. YASMIN FAROOQI
Department of Applied Psychology
University of the Punjab

ABSTRACT

The research aimed at (a) comparing different types and intensity of behavioral problems of mentally retarded children in government and private schools, and (b) how their teachers manage to deal with such behavioral problems. A questionnaire was devised and administered to the 19 teachers of Amin Maktab (private school) and 11 teachers of Shadab School (government school). Information provided by the respondents revealed that teachers from Amin Maktab seem to experience fewer problems in their interaction with the mentally retarded children, probably, because Amin Maktab being a private institution, might have been in a better position to manipulate its resources in a more innovative way as compared to the Shadab School.

INTRODUCTION

Mental Retardation (MR) constitutes one of our nation's most insidious health, educational and welfare problems. It is however a very complex, medical, social, educational and economic problem and therefore presents a strong challenge to our civilized society. Studies show that retarded children spend much less time on task than do others, that they are easily distracted (Bloom, 1974).

The specific set of behavior is common to all MR. Children, each child has a different set of physical, intellectual and social characteristics, and each has lived a different environment. Educators of MR children generally agree that the following behavior problems (BP) are generally observed.

- A. Disruptive Behavior
- B. Aggressive Behavior
- C. Self-Injurious Behavior
- D. Psychological Disorders
- E. Sexual Problems.

A view of human development sees behavior as emerging from an interaction between the maturing child and his/her environment. The factors associated with BP's can be grouped into two main categories:

a. Personal Factors:

Where aspects related to the individual affect his/her behavior e.g. temperament, language delay, developmental delay, and overactive,

b. Environmental Factors:

Where family, housing and social situation affect the child. e.g. mental depression, environmental stress, parental management techniques, parental history.

The most tenable view at this is that biological and environmental factors interact with one another to cause BP's.

Effective and humane education of MR children has always depended on the individual actions of competent caring teachers. Child (1997) states that these children could profit more from a program that emphasizes the practical and vocational skills for independent living.

Effective teaching of retarded students with BP requires careful assessment, detailed instructional planning and individualized behavior and learning management. Teachers must be thoroughly familiar with the retarded child's learning characteristics, and match their instructional strategies and materials to each student's need. Learning cannot take place without providing consequences (reinforcement) which signal the students that their responses are correct or incorrect.

Consequences are feedback mechanisms that predominantly serve two functional.

- a. To motivate children (which implies the need to increase same behavior).
- b. To control children who act inappropriately (which implies the need to decrease certain responses).

Farooqi & Akram in 1983 and then in 1992 conducted a research to test the effectiveness of token economy as a method of teaching basic concepts to severely MR children. The result showed a significant difference between pre and post therapeutic sessions.

Amiah, Kumaraiah & Mishra (1991) investigated and found behavior modification procedures to be quite effective in eliminating BP of MR children.

Briefly speaking, it may be argued that there are still many unanswered questions in the education to MR children with BP. While their opportunities for education and training are rapidly expanding internationally, nobody really knows their true learning potentials, or the extent to which they can be successfully integrated into their social environment. What we do know is that

they will go no further than we let them; it is up to us to open doors and raise our sights, instead of creating additional barriers.

METHOD

SUBJECT:

A sample of 30 was taken and distributed between (a) Amin Maktab School for MR children (b) Government Shadab School for MR children.

INSTRUMENTS:

The following techniques were used for the collection of the data.

- i. Questionnaire
- ii. Rating Scale
- iii. Observation

PROCEDURE:

It was an exploratory study to identify (a) different types and intensity of BP of MR children in a government school and a private school and (b) how their teachers manage to deal with such problems.

In order to obtain the required sample the researchers approached the Head of the institutions and the staff of both the schools. A briefing was given to the teachers concerning the purpose and nature of the study and they were requested to fill in the questionnaire and rating scale individually.

For the collection of data, a carefully constructed questionnaire was made and administered at each of the teachers for eliciting the required information from them. A behavioral problem scale was also invented to measure the intensity of BP's of MR children in a government and a private school of MR.

The questionnaire prepared for the teachers consisted of 39 questions. Moreover researchers observed different classes of MR children in both the schools in order to have a general idea of the working conditions of these two schools.

STATISTICS:

Arithmetic mean was calculated of the scores obtained from BP's to assess the average BP's of MR children.

RESULTS

Table 1, 2 and 3 show that MR children of Shadab school manifest more disruptive, aggressive and self-injurious behavior as compared to MR children of Amin Maktab School, respectively.

Table -1. ARITHMETIC MEAN FOR DISRUPTIVE BEHAVIOR

Type of Behavior	X of 'S	X of 'A
Talking Out	5.45	4.10
Out of Seat	4.72	2.84
Making Noise	6.63	4.57
Rocking	3.27	1.84
Non compliant	4.09	3.47

S Shadab School
A Amin Maktab School

Tables 4(A), and 4(C) suggest that the type of intervention procedures being used by the teachers of both the schools are dependent upon the situation/type of MR child.

Table-4A
INTERVENTION FOR REDUCTION IN BEHAVIORAL PROBLEMS OF MENTALLY RETARDED (MR) CHILDREN
FROM TEACHER'S PERSPECTIVE

Type of Intervention	YES		PERCENTAGE	
	S	A	S	A
dance/music as a therapy (Q 30)	11	19	100	100
play therapy (Q 30)	11	19	100	100

Note:-
S Shadab School
A Amin Maktab School
MR Mentally Retarded
Q Questionnaire

Table-2
ARITHMETIC MEAN FOR 'AGGRESSIVE
BEHAVIOR

Type of Behavior	X of S*	X of A*
Striking Others	3.36	2.47
Striking Objects	3.27	1.78
Tripping Others	1.72	1.78
Kicking Others	2.63	1.57
Kicking Objects	1.81	2.31
Pulling Objects Hair	2.45	2.15
Damaging Property	2.45	2.47

Table-3.
ARITHMETIC MEAN FOR SELF-INJURIOUS
BEHAVIOR

Type of Behavior	X of S*	X of A*
Striking Oneself	2.63	2.63
Hitting various Body parts	4.63	4.05
Scratching Body parts	3.0	3.05
Self-Induced vomiting	1.63	1.47
Consuming Non-edible items	5.36	4.63

Graph 1 indicates that generally speaking more psychological disorders were found among the MR children of Shadab School as compared to those of Amin Maktab; whereas, Graph 2 indicates equal frequency of sexual problems in both the schools.

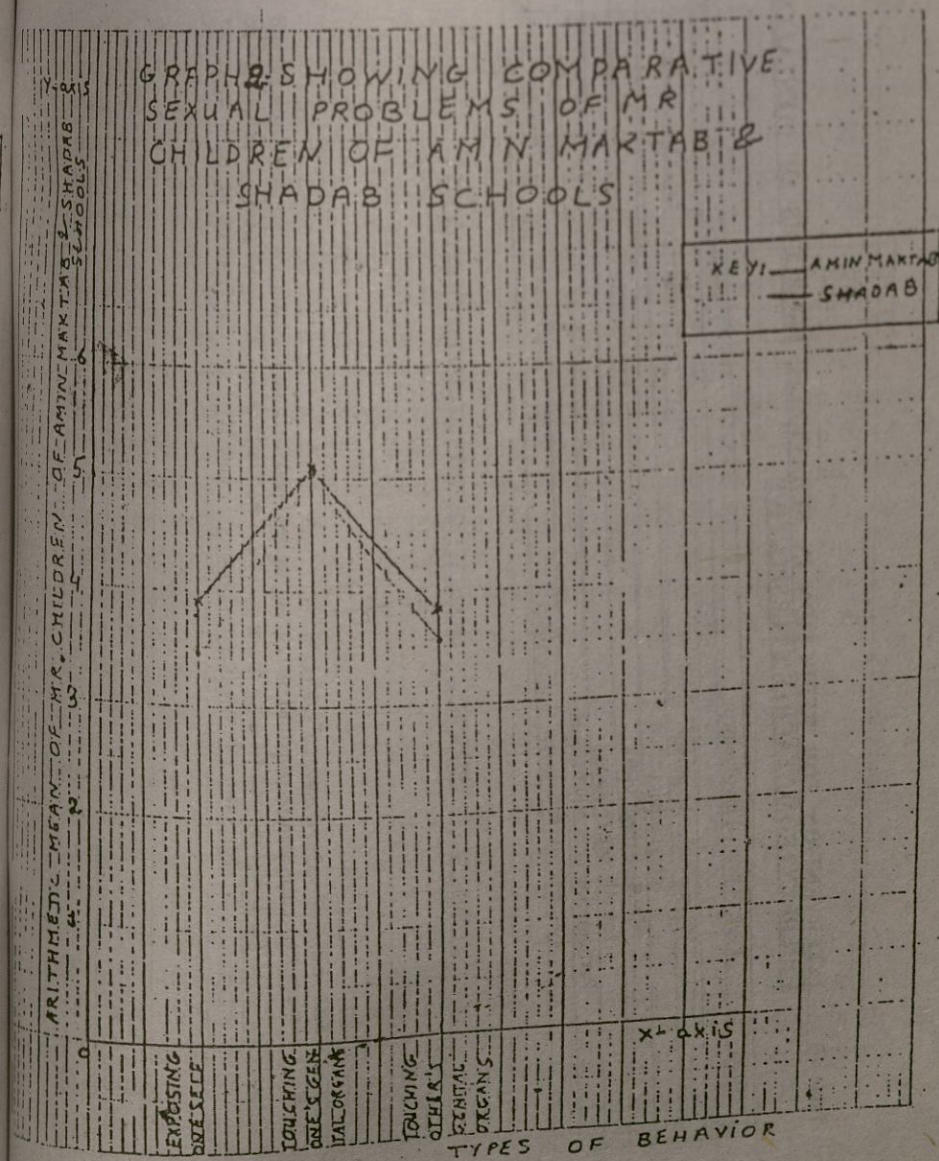
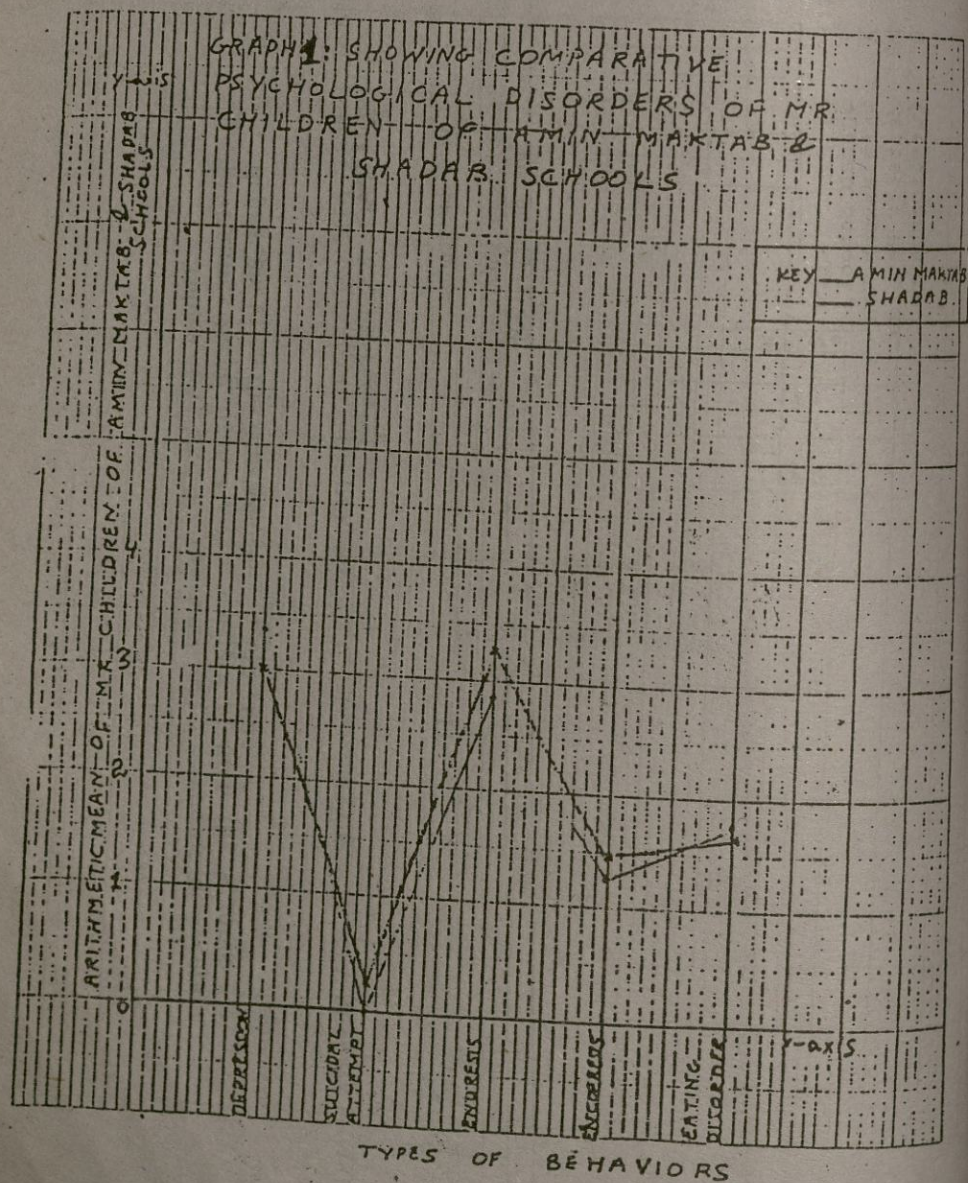


Table-4B.

INTERVENTION FOR REDUCTION IN BEHAVIORAL PROBLEMS OF MENTALLY RETARDED (MR) CHILDREN FROM TEACHER'S PERSPECTIVE

Type of prental involvement	Frequency		PERCENTAGE	
	S	A	S	A
Playing different games	-	-	-	-
Story telling	-	-	-	-
Entertainment visits	-	-	-	-
Introducing to guests	-	-	-	-
Participation in family functions	-	-	-	-
all the above activities	11	19	100	100

S Shadab School
A Amin Maktab School

The results presented in tables 5(A) and 5(B) show that some of the punishment intervention used by both the schools are slapping, scolding, caning/beating, explaining to MR children in isolation or in front of the class, scolding in front of the class, sending the child out of e class or any other.

Table-5A. USE OF PUNISHMENT AS AN INTERVENTION (Q 31)

Type of punishment	Frequency		PERCENTAGE	
	S	A	S	A
slapping on the face	-	-	-	-
scolding	1	1	9.0	5.2
caning or beating	-	-	-	-
explaining to MR children	5	6	45	32
sending the child out of class	1	-	9.0	-
any other	4	12	36	63

Table-5B. USE OF PUNISHMENT AS AN INTERVENTION (Q.32)

Type of punishment	Frequency		PERCENTAGE	
	S	A	S	A
explaining in isolation	6	9	55	47
explaining in front of the class	5	2	45	11
scolding in front of the class	-	1	-	5.2
any other	-	7	-	37

S Shadab School
A Amin Makab School

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All correspondence should be addressed to Dr. Nsim Riaz Butt, Chief Editor, Journal of Research(Humanities), Department of English Language & Literature, University of the Punjab, Lahore (Pakistan).

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