THE PROBLEMS OF QUANTIFICATION AND OBJECTIFICATION
IN PERSONALITY MEASUREMENT: A SYMPOSIUM

1. INTRODUCTION

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I. INTRODUCTION

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One of the areas that has been stimulated considerably by the tremendous growth and interest in clinical psychology is that of personality measurement. Many of the findings, hunches, and working hypotheses of the clinician have importance for the measuring of personality; and the development of projective techniques and expressive movement techniques and similar devices in the field of clinical psychology has had repercussions in the field of personality measurement. The problem facing the measurers of personality today is this: Can the scientific approach utilize the hard-won intuitions of the clinician and provide psychology with objective measures and evaluations of the tools that are now being used widely but not wholly objectively? The purpose of this symposium is to examine some of the recent trends in the field of personality measurement with special reference to the gains made in the clinical field. The following trends seem to be apparent:

First, objectifying of present-day clinical tools. In this category come all the attempts to provide more objective evaluations of such scoring as now taken place in the Rorschach, TAT, incomplete-sentence technique, mosaic test, etc. There is need for provision of suitable scales for evaluating these techniques and also of summarizing the achievements obtained with these techniques thus far. Dr. Garrison's paper attempts to provide some of the basic correlations between performance on the Rorschach test and performance on some 30 other tests which were given to a group of patients. The basic relationships between the determinants of the Rorschach and the psychological functions involved in the other tests are outlined,

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and the nature of the Rorschach variables becomes somewhat clearer as a result.

Because of lack of time it was not possible to deal with the problem of quantifying the oldest clinical tool, namely, the clinical interview. It was suggested, however, that the method of eliciting interview information in a more objective fashion, in the way, for example, that Kinsey works, is a most desirable procedure for examining other clinical variables such as anxiety, guilt feelings, etc. Not only may the interview itself be objectified in this manner, but the giving of such tests as the Rorschach and TAT may become more objective if coded check sheets of the type utilized by Kinsey and his coworkers are provided for recording and scoring responses.

The second area is that of providing new techniques and tools. In this category are found such tests as the Levy Movement Blot which attempt to isolate a single Rorschach variable and utilize it in an objective fashion for the measurement of personality. Similar techniques have been developed for measuring the other determinants on the Rorschach such as color and chiaroscuro. Dr. Rus reports on the more recent applications of the Levy Movement Blot to various types of deviant personalities and emerges with the finding that the test itself serves to differentiate the groups significantly. The field of the Thematic Apperception Test is also undergoing a similar resolution into its components. Some of the outstanding contributions in this area are those made by Rosenzweig's picture-frustration test, the Tompkins-Horn picture-arrangement test, and the Shneidman making-a-picture test. In the expressive movement field there is the new device of Wechsler known as the kataptograph which tends to measure objectively certain aspects of handwriting movements.

The third area in which progress is being made is that of investigation of the relationship between perception and personality. The dictum that our needs and desires influence our perceptual processes as much as the stimulus itself has now been accepted by most workers. The classic work in this field by Bartlett has been followed by Bruner and Postman and others. Dr. Bruner's paper presents some of the more recent findings in the area of perception in relation to Rorschach factors and other projective techniques.
The next area is that of the provision of new statistical tools and experimental designs for the treatment of personality data. The symposium did not have a paper devoted to this area, but it is important to note that considerable progress has been made in this field, especially in the provision of measures of intraindividual variability, new scaling devices à la Guttman, and new adaptations of the inverted factor-analysis technique.

Lastly, the area of theoretical developments, though not represented officially by any contributor, has recently made some progress. It is important to note that several new variables seem to be emerging in the form of generalized concepts and may prove to be useful in the field of personality measurement. Perhaps the most important one is that of ego-involvement, which seems to be an essential element in nearly all tests and tasks. If we could provide a measure of the degree of ego involvement that occurs in a given subject, we might perhaps be able to explain more readily deviation in his performance from time to time. Another transcending variable which is beginning to receive more attention is that of intraindividual variability or its opposite, consistency. The third is the concept of conformity, which seems to underlie performance in many tests and which seems to offer a basis for differentiating those who adjust from those who fail to adjust to society. A new variable which seems to be emerging is that of "emotional charge," which attaches itself to memories, activities, and behavior in general. This concept arises from the recent work in the somatic therapies, especially electric shock, lobotomy, and topectomy. It is found that the memories of patients, although not obliterated by electroshock therapy, nevertheless lose some of their familiarity so that the patient sometimes does not recognize memories as belonging to him or as having been previously recalled. The chronically ill gradually lose the urgency of their hallucinatory phenomena and finally permit them to fade out after brain operation. Similar effects are noted in compulsions and obsessions which after brain operation also tend to lose their emotional charge and fade out gradually. What the nature of this fading-out effect is and how it is conducted physiologically and what other psychological variables are connected with it are still matters for investigation.
The underlying purpose of measurement and the degree to which it can help in evaluation of projective techniques and other personality measures is discussed by Wyatt. He points out that at the present time it is foolhardy to accept the dictum that measurement will finally triumph over intuitive evaluation. However, he does indicate that as soon as measurement enters a given area, it tends to clarify and objectify the variables and their interpretation to a considerable degree.

A neglected area in personality is the interpretation of test results. Hamlin and Kogan take as their thesis the need for a compendium of Rorschach protocols together with accepted interpretations for each. Whether or not it will ever be possible to codify a complete series of different types of Rorschachs in the way that codification has already been made of the different types of brain waves is still an open question, but their suggestion in that direction seems to be a very valuable one.

Another neglected area in the field of Rorschach investigation is that of the importance of the color determinant. In his paper Dr. Lazarus points out the fact that present-day theoretical formulation regarding the importance of the color determinant are far from proved. He also points out that the concept of color shock is quite inadequate as it is used today and in general calls for revision of the role of color in the interpretation of the Rorschach test.

Finally, as Dr. Garrison points out, it is important to add to our procedures for analyzing data the functional relationship approach, whereby clinically observable changes in the patient are correlated with changes in the corresponding test score. For example, if a given factor, say responsiveness to the chiaroscuro determinant on the Rorschach, is related to anxiety or depressive moods, then it should follow that patients who lose in anxiety after operation should also tend to show changes in the chiaroscuro factor. This Dr. Garrison failed to find such relationships in relation to anxiety on the Rorschach indicates that it is necessary to revise or at least investigate more thoroughly some of the alleged relationships between Rorschach factors and personality.

Summary: The purpose of this symposium was to try to lay bare the objective foundation of personality measurement with special reference to the new tools and techniques that emerged fro
clinical practice. The following five areas in which recent progress has been rather rapid are described: first, the provision of methods for objectifying present-day tools; second, the provision of new tools and techniques; third, the development of the relationship between perception and personality; fourth, the development of statistical techniques for dealing with the individual case; and fifth, the development of concepts and transcending variables which will serve as constructs for the erection of new personality hypotheses and theories. Only a beginning has been made in each of these areas, but the trend seems to be in the direction of bringing closer relationships between experimental psychology, clinical psychology, and personality measurement.