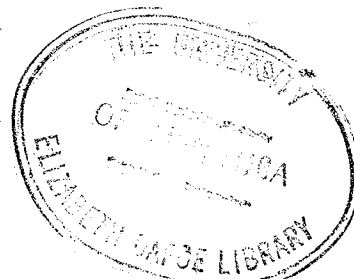


AN EXPERIMENTAL STUDY OF THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN
PARENTAL INTERACTION AND BEHAVIOUR DISTURBANCES
IN CHILDREN

THE REPORT OF A RESEARCH PROJECT
PRESENTED TO
THE FACULTY OF THE SCHOOL OF SOCIAL WORK
THE UNIVERSITY OF MANITOBA

IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT
OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE
MASTER OF SOCIAL WORK

BY
HILDE HOULDING
MAUREEN McDOWELL
BRENDA MUIRHEAD
PENNY OWENS
APRIL 1970



ABSTRACT

THE PURPOSE OF THE RESEARCH PROJECT WAS TO STUDY THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN PARENTAL INTERACTION AND BETWEEN THE DEVELOPMENT OF BEHAVIOUR DISTURBANCES IN CHILDREN. THE SAMPLE POPULATION OF NINETEEN CHILDREN WAS TAKEN FROM THE FILES OF THE SOCIAL WORK DEPARTMENT OF THE CHILD GUIDANCE CLINIC AND INCLUDED THOSE CHILDREN WHOSE BEHAVIOUR PROBLEMS COULD BE CLASSIFIED AS EITHER ADJUSTMENT REACTION OR SPECIAL SYMPTOM REACTION. A QUESTIONNAIRE THEN ADMINISTERED BY THE RESEARCHERS TO EACH PARENT REVEALED THE PARENTS' PATTERN OF INTERACTION AS BEING ESSENTIALLY SYMMETRICAL OR COMPLEMENTARY.

THE RESULTS OF THE STUDY REVEALED THAT A CHILD WITH ONE SPECIFIC TYPE OF BEHAVIOUR DISTURBANCE TENDED TO HAVE PARENTS WITH ONE SPECIFIC PATTERN OF INTERACTION. THAT IS, A CHILD WITH A PROBLEM CLASSIFIED AS AN ADJUSTMENT REACTION TENDED TO HAVE PARENTS WHOSE PATTERN OF INTERACTION WAS SYMMETRICAL AND THAT A CHILD WITH A PROBLEM CLASSIFIED AS A SPECIAL SYMPTOM REACTION TENDED TO HAVE PARENTS WHOSE PATTERN OF INTERACTION WAS COMPLEMENTARY.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

	PAGE
ABSTRACT	II
TABLE OF CONTENTS	III
LIST OF TABLES	IV
CHAPTER	
I INTRODUCTION	1
II A REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE	8
1. IMPLICATIONS OF COMMUNICATION THEORY	8
2. RELATED STUDIES	11
III METHOD	19
IV ANALYSIS	28
V CONCLUSIONS	60
BIBLIOGRAPHY	64
APPENDIX	66

TABLES

- TABLE I CHILD'S DIAGNOSTIC CATEGORIES
- TABLE II AGREEMENT-DISAGREEMENT RESPONSES
- TABLE III DEVIATIONS FROM MEAN AGREEMENT, DISAGREEMENT AND NOT-APPLICABLE OR NO ANSWER RESPONSES
- TABLE IV CHILD'S DIAGNOSIS AND PARENTS' RESPONSES (A)
- RANK ORDER OF COUPLE WITH HIGHEST POSITIVE DEVIATION TO COUPLE WITH HIGHEST NEGATIVE DEVIATION FROM MEAN AGREEMENT.
- TABLE V CHILD'S DIAGNOSIS AND PARENT'S RESPONSES (B)
- DIAGNOSTIC CATEGORIES OF THE CHILD COMPARED TO PARENTS' DEVIATION OF DISAGREEMENT FROM THE MEAN DISAGREEMENT
- TABLE VI
- A. PREDICTION OF PARENTS' INTERACTION ON THE MEASURE OF AGREEMENT-DISAGREEMENT DEVIATION
- B. COMPARISON OF PARENTS' PREDICTED INTERACTION CATEGORY WITH THE CHILD'S DIAGNOSIS
- TABLE VII COMPARISON OF HIGHEST NUMBER OF COMPLEMENTARY OR SYMMETRICAL RESPONSES TO THE CHILD'S DIAGNOSIS
- TABLE VIII SELECTED RESPONSE COMPARISONS
- A. COMPARISON OF COUPLES WHO AGREE WIFE HANDLES MONEY (QUESTION 4A) TO CHILD'S DIAGNOSIS.
- B. COMPARISON OF COUPLES WHO AGREE HUSBAND HANDLES MONEY (QUESTION 4A) TO CHILD'S DIAGNOSIS.
- C. COMPARISON OF COUPLES WHO BOTH DECIDE HOW INCOME IS SPENT TO CHILD'S DIAGNOSIS.
- D. COMPARISON OF COUPLES WHO GAVE DIFFERENT RESPONSES TO WHO DECIDES HOW MONEY WILL BE SPENT TO THE CHILD'S DIAGNOSIS.
- E. COMPARISON OF COUPLES WHO NEVER DISAGREE ABOUT MONEY TO CHILD'S DIAGNOSIS.

- F. COMPARISON OF COUPLES WHO GAVE DIFFERENT RESPONSES AS TO AGREEMENT-DISAGREEMENT ABOUT MONEY TO THE CHILD'S DIAGNOSIS.

TABLE IX SELECTED QUESTION AGREEMENT DISAGREEMENT MEASURE COMPARED TO TOTAL QUESTIONNAIRE AGREEMENT-DISAGREEMENT MEASURE

- A. COUPLES POSITIVE DEVIATION OF AGREEMENT-DISAGREEMENT FROM MEAN AGREEMENT-DISAGREEMENT RESPONSES TO QUESTION 5 (DEALING WITH THE OUTSIDE WORLD) COMPARED TO THE CHILD'S DIAGNOSIS AND INTERACTION PATTERN OF PARENTS' PREDICTED IN TABLE VI (B). THE SAME SIGNIFICANT DEVIATION OF 2.5 WAS USED.
- B. COUPLES WITH THE HIGHEST NUMBER OF COMPLEMENTARY AND HIGHEST NUMBER OF SYMMETRICAL RESPONSES TO QUESTION 5 (DEALING WITH THE OUTSIDE WORLD) COMPARED TO HIGHEST NUMBER OF COMPLEMENTARY-SYMMETRICAL RESPONSES TO THE TOTAL QUESTIONNAIRE AND THE CHILD'S DIAGNOSIS.
- C. COMPARISON OF COUPLES RATED ON CRITERIA OF BIPOLAR RESPONSES TO QUESTION 5 WITH THE HIGHEST NUMBER OF COMPLEMENTARY-SYMMETRICAL RESPONSES TO TOTAL QUESTIONNAIRE AND THE DIAGNOSIS OF THE CHILD.

TABLE X A CONTINUATION OF SELECTED RESPONSE COMPARISONS

- A. COMPARISON OF PARENTS WHO BOTH CLAIM DISAGREEMENT ABOUT RELATIVES TO THE CHILD'S DIAGNOSIS.
- B. COMPARISON OF PARENTS WHO BOTH SAY "NO" DISAGREEMENT ABOUT RELATIVES TO THE CHILD'S DIAGNOSIS.
- C. COMPARISON OF COUPLES WHO AGREE IN THEIR MAJOR VALUES AND BELIEFS TO THE CHILD'S DIAGNOSIS.
- D. COUPLES WHO BOTH ACKNOWLEDGE DISAGREEMENT IN THEIR MAJOR VALUES AND BELIEFS COMPARED TO THE CHILD'S DIAGNOSIS.
- E. COMPARISON OF COUPLES WHO AGREE ABOUT THE DISCIPLINING OF CHILDREN WITH THE CHILD'S DIAGNOSIS.
- F. COMPARISON OF COUPLES WHO DISAGREE ABOUT THE DISCIPLINING OF CHILDREN WITH THE CHILD'S DIAGNOSIS.

TABLE XI VARIANCE IN THE DIAGNOSIS OF THE CHILD AS DETERMINED BY COUPLES RESPONSES TO EIGHT SELECTED ITEMS IN THE QUESTIONNAIRE: PARENTS INTERACTION PREDICTED BY THE HIGHEST NUMBER SSR OR AR DIAGNOSES, WITH AN SSR DIAGNOSIS INTERPRETED AS INDICATING COMPLEMENTARITY AND AN AR DIAGNOSIS INDICATING SYMMETRY.

- A. COUPLES WITH A CHILD DIAGNOSED SSR IN CONTROL CATEGORIES.

B. COUPLES WITH A CHILD DIAGNOSED AR IN CONTROL CATEGORIES.

TABLE XII COMPARISON OF THE THREE MEASURES OF TYPE OF PARENTS' INTERACTION WITH THE DIAGNOSIS OF THE CHILD AND NUMBER OF FITS WITH THE HYPOTHESIS

TABLE XIII A COMPARISON OF THE CHILD'S DIAGNOSIS AND THE DIAGNOSIS PREDICTED BY THE COMPARISON OF EIGHT SELECTED RESPONSES, THE AGREEMENT-DISAGREEMENT MEASURE AND THE COMPLEMENTARITY-SYMMETRY MEASURE.*

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

THE PROJECT WAS AN EXPERIMENTAL STUDY OF THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN PARENTAL INTERACTION AND BEHAVIOUR DISTURBANCES IN CHILDREN.

THE PRESENT STUDY DEVELOPED AS A RESULT OF A PILOT PROJECT CONDUCTED BY PROFESSOR G. ERICKSON AND ASSOCIATES IN MARCH OF 1968. THE LATTER WAS PART OF A DRUG STUDY AND THE PROJECT FOCUSED ON DEPRESSED PATIENTS IN A PSYCHIATRIC UNIT. THE HYPOTHESIS OF THE STUDY WAS THAT THE MARITAL RELATIONSHIP OF THE DEPRESSED PATIENT (OR THE RELATIONSHIP TO THE MOST SIGNIFICANT PERSON IN THE PATIENT'S LIFE) WOULD TEND TO BE VIEWED AS BEING ESSENTIALLY COMPLEMENTARY BY THE PATIENT AND SPOUSE.

THE PILOT PROJECT HAS SIGNIFICANCE FOR THE PRESENT STUDY BECAUSE, FIRST, THE PILOT STUDY EMPLOYED A SERIES OF QUESTIONS AS THE METHOD TO CLASSIFY THE PARTICULAR MARITAL RELATIONSHIP AND SECONDLY, IT EMPLOYED THE CLASSIFICATION OF COMPLEMENTARITY-SYMMETRY TO DESCRIBE THE MARITAL RELATIONSHIP. THE PRESENT STUDY ALSO MADE USE OF A QUESTIONNAIRE IN GATHERING DATA AND ALSO CLASSIFIED PATTERNS OF INTERACTION AS BEING EITHER COMPLEMENTARY OR SYMMETRICAL.

AS TREATMENT OF THE FAMILY UNIT HAS COME TO BE REGARDED AS A NECESSARY ADDITION TO SOCIAL WORK PRACTICE IN THE LAST DECADE, THE KNOWLEDGE BASE OF SOCIAL WORK HAS EXPANDED TO INCLUDE THEORIES ABOUT FAMILY LIFE AND ABOUT COMMUNICATION. THESE THEORIES, HOWEVER, HAVE NOT BEEN EMPIRICALLY VALIDATED TO ANY GREAT EXTENT AND IT WAS THE PURPOSE OF

THIS PROJECT TO VALIDATE THE HYPOTHESIS THAT PARENTAL INTERACTION IS RELATED IN DEFINABLE WAYS TO THEIR CHILDREN'S FUNCTIONING. WHILE THERE IS A SCARCITY OF EMPIRICAL DATA CONCERNING THE RELATIONSHIP THAT IS ASSUMED TO EXIST BETWEEN PARENTAL INTERACTION AND CHILD DEVELOPMENT, THE COMMUNICATION AND FAMILY THEORIES SUGGEST THAT PARENTAL STYLES OF BEHAVIOUR AND COMMUNICATION PLAY A FUNDAMENTAL PART IN DETERMINING PATHOLOGY IN CHILDREN THROUGH DIRECT EXAMPLE AND REACTION THAT SUCH STYLES PRODUCE IN THE CHILDREN.¹

AN ADDITIONAL AIM OF THIS PROJECT WAS TO DISCOVER WHETHER ONE SPECIFIC TYPE OF INTERACTION BETWEEN PARENTS WAS RELATED TO ONE SPECIFIC TYPE OF BEHAVIOUR DISTURBANCE IN THE CHILD. IN ORDER TO ATTEMPT THIS AIM, IT WAS NECESSARY TO EMPLOY DIAGNOSTIC CATEGORIES FOR THE CHILDREN'S BEHAVIOUR DISTURBANCES, TO DEVELOP A CLASSIFICATION SCHEME TO DESCRIBE THE TYPE OF PARENTAL INTERACTION, AND TO DESIGN AN INSTRUMENT THAT WOULD DIFFERENTIATE BETWEEN THE TYPES OF PARENTAL INTERACTION.

THE INVESTIGATORS CHOSE TO STUDY ONLY ONE TYPE OF COMMUNICATION: VERBAL, AND ONLY ONE CLASSIFICATION OF INTERACTION: THE SYMMETRICAL/ COMPLEMENTARY DICHOTOMY. THE ARBITRARY DECISION WAS ALSO MADE TO STUDY ONLY THE PARENTS, THEREBY EXCLUDING OTHER FACTORS WHICH MIGHT HAVE BEEN SIGNIFICANT SUCH AS PARENT-CHILD INTERACTION, SIBLING INTERACTION, PEER RELATIONSHIPS AS WELL AS FACTORS SUCH AS SOCIAL CLASS.

THE TOPIC HAS SIGNIFICANCE FOR THE FIELD OF SOCIAL WORK BECAUSE

¹T. LIDZ AND S. FLECK, "SOME EXPLORED AND PARTIALLY EXPLORED SOURCES OF PSYCHOPATHOLOGY", IN FAMILY THERAPY AND DISTURBED FAMILIES, EDITED BY G. H. ZUK AND I. BOSZORMENYI-NAGY (PALO ALTO: SCIENCE AND BEHAVIOR BOOKS, INC., 1967), PP. 43-5.

IT WAS AN ATTEMPT TO VALIDATE A PART OF COMMUNICATION AND FAMILY THEORY AND THUS ADD TO THE KNOWLEDGE BASE OF SOCIAL WORK. ALSO, SINCE FAMILY THERAPY HAS BECOME A MAJOR TREATMENT METHOD IN SOCIAL WORK PRACTICE, IT HAS BEEN RECOGNIZED THAT THERE IS A LACK OF DESCRIPTIVE CATEGORIES THAT WOULD CLASSIFY THE FAMILY, ITS PATTERNS OF FUNCTIONS, COMMUNICATING, AND SO ON. THIS PROJECT HAS REPRESENTED AN ATTEMPT TO SO CLASSIFY PARENTAL INTERACTION, ILLUSTRATE ITS EFFECT ON THE DEVELOPMENT OF CHILDREN'S BEHAVIOUR PROBLEMS, AND THEREFORE ADD TO THE KNOWLEDGE OF THE FAMILY AND FACILITATE FAMILY TREATMENT.

MUCH OF THE PREVIOUS WORK IN THE AREA OF PARENTAL INTERACTION AND CHILD DEVELOPMENT HAS FOCUSED ON FAMILIES IN WHICH THERE IS A SCHIZOPHRENIC MEMBER. VARIOUS STUDIES HAD FOUND A CORRELATION BETWEEN THE TYPE OF RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN THE PARENTS AND THE DEVELOPMENT OF SCHIZOPHRENIA IN THE CHILD, AND THE PRESENT PROJECT WAS AN ATTEMPT TO DISCOVER A SIMILAR CORRELATION IN THE NON-SCHIZOPHRENIC FAMILY.

THERE WERE THREE MAJOR ASSUMPTIONS UNDERLYING THE HYPOTHESIS. THE FIRST ASSUMPTION WAS THAT PARENTAL INTERACTION IS RELATED TO THE SYMPTOM DEVELOPMENT OF THEIR CHILDREN. THIS ASSUMPTION IS SUPPORTED BY FAMILY THEORIES WHICH SUGGEST THAT PATHOLOGY IN THE CHILD IS DETERMINED TO A GREAT EXTENT BY PARENTAL INTERACTION.²

THE SECOND ASSUMPTION WAS THAT PARENTAL INTERACTION MAY BE CATEGORIZED AS SYMMETRICAL OR COMPLEMENTARY. A DEFINITION OF THE TERM 'INTERACTION' IS IN ORDER.

A SINGLE COMMUNICATIONAL UNIT IS TERMED A 'MESSAGE'. A SERIES

²IBID.

OF MESSAGES EXCHANGED BETWEEN PERSONS IS CALLED INTERACTION AND PATTERNS OF INTERACTION BETWEEN PEOPLE CONSTITUTE A RELATIONSHIP.³ INTERACTION INVOLVES NOT ONLY THE EFFECT OF A PIECE OF COMMUNICATION ON THE RECEIVER, BUT ALSO, AND INSEPARABLY LINKED WITH THIS, THE EFFECT OF THE RECEIVER'S REACTION ON THE SENDER. THUS, THE FOCUS IS ON THE SENDER-RECEIVER RELATIONSHIP, AS MEDIATED BY COMMUNICATION.⁴

THE CLASSIFICATION SCHEME OF INTERACTION, SYMMETRY-COMPLEMENTARITY, INCLUDES "ALL POSSIBLE KINDS OF COMMUNICATIVE BEHAVIOUR WHICH TWO PEOPLE MIGHT INTERCHANGE".⁵ A COMPARISON AND CLARIFICATION OF SYMMETRY/COMPLEMENTARITY FOLLOWS:

SYMMETRY:

-PARTNERS EXCHANGE THE SAME KIND OF BEHAVIOUR. FOR EXAMPLE, EACH ONE INITIATES ACTION, OFFERS ADVICE, CRITICIZES, ETC.

-PARTNERS HAVE MAJOR AREAS OF DISAGREEMENT, CONSISTENT CONFLICTS OVER DECISIONS.

-DEALINGS WITHIN THE FAMILY AND WITH THE OUTSIDE WORLD ARE BIPOLAR (THAT IS, BOTH TAKE PART).

-COMMUNICATION IN THE RELATIONSHIP APPROACHES EQUALITY

COMPLEMENTARITY:

-PARTNERS EXCHANGE DIFFERENT KINDS OF BEHAVIOUR. FOR EXAMPLE, ONE GIVES, THE OTHER RECEIVES; ONE TEACHES, THE OTHER LEARNS; ONE IS 'SUPERIOR', THE OTHER 'SECONDARY'.

-PARTNERS VIEW THEMSELVES AS BEING WITHOUT MAJOR CONFLICTS, AND IN ESSENTIAL AGREEMENT IN MOST AREAS OF DECISION-MAKING.

-DEALINGS WITHIN THE FAMILY AND WITH THE OUTSIDE WORLD ARE POLARIZED WITH ONE PARTNER.

-COMMUNICATION TENDS TO BE POLARIZED WITH ONE SPOUSE.

THE THIRD ASSUMPTION WAS THAT CHILDREN'S BEHAVIOURAL PROBLEMS COULD BE CHARACTERIZED AND DIAGNOSED AS EITHER THE ADJUSTMENT REACTION

³J. RUESCH AND G. BATESON, COMMUNICATION-THE SOCIAL MATRIX OF PSYCHIATRY (NEW YORK: W. W. NORTON AND CO., INC., 1951), P. 5.

⁴P. WATZLAWICK, J. H. BEAVIN AND D. D. JACKSON, PRAGMATICS OF HUMAN COMMUNICATION: A STUDY OF INTERACTIONAL PATTERNS, PATHOLOGIES AND PARADOXES (NEW YORK: W. W. NORTON AND CO., INC., 1967), PP. 28-30.

⁵J. HALEY, STRATEGIES OF PSYCHOTHERAPY (NEW YORK: GRUNE AND STRATTON CO., 1963), P. 11.

OF CHILDHOOD OR THE SPECIAL SYMPTOM REACTION. THE ADJUSTMENT REACTION INCLUDES THE CONDUCT DISTURBANCES AND ACTING-OUT BEHAVIOUR SUCH AS TRUANCY, STEALING, DESTRUCTIVENESS, SEXUAL OFFENCES AND THE USE OF ALCOHOL. A CHILD DIAGNOSED AS HAVING A PROBLEM FALLING INTO THIS CATEGORY COULD BE DESCRIBED BY SOME OF THE FOLLOWING CHARACTERISTICS: RESTLESS, IMPULSIVE, HYPERACTIVE, AGGRESSIVE, PROVOCATIVE, DOMINEERING, VERBOSE, REBELLIOUS, DISOBEDIENT.

THE SPECIAL SYMPTOM REACTION INCLUDES THE NEUROTIC TRAITS AND HABIT DISTURBANCES AND IS CHARACTERIZED BY TICS, SOMNAMBULISM, STAMMERING, PHOBIAS, NAIL-BITING, THUMB-SUCKING, ENURESIS, MASTURBATION, TEMPER-TANTRUMS. A CHILD DIAGNOSED AS HAVING A SPECIAL SYMPTOM REACTION COULD BE DESCRIBED AS: WITHDRAWN, SUBMISSIVE, FEARFUL, UNCOMMUNICATIVE, OVERCOMPLIANT, PASSIVE, INEFFECTUAL.⁶

IT WAS HYPOTHESIZED THAT THERE EXISTS A DIRECT RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN THE TYPE OF PARENTAL INTERACTION (WHETHER COMPLEMENTARY OR SYMMETRICAL) AND THE TYPE OF BEHAVIOURAL PROBLEM OF THE CHILD (WHETHER ADJUSTMENT REACTION OR SPECIAL SYMPTOM REACTION). THAT IS, KNOWING ONE, THE OTHER COULD BE PREDICTED.

THE FIRST HYPOTHESIS WAS THAT THE FORM OF PARENTAL INTERACTION COULD BE PREDICTED FROM THE DIAGNOSIS OF THE CHILD'S PROBLEM. THE SECOND HYPOTHESIS WAS THAT THE DIAGNOSIS OF THE CHILD'S PROBLEM COULD BE PREDICTED FROM THE FORM OF PARENTAL INTERACTION.

⁶H. G. GINOTT, "INNOVATIONS IN GROUP PSYCHOTHERAPY WITH PREADOLESCENTS" IN INNOVATIONS TO GROUP PSYCHOTHERAPY, EDITED BY G. M. GAZDA (SPRINGFIELD: CHARLES C. THOMAS, PUBLISHER, 1968), P. 273.

IN ORDER TO TEST THESE HYPOTHESES, SEVERAL QUESTIONS NEEDED TO BE ANSWERED FROM THE MATERIAL. THE FIRST WAS: WHAT BEHAVIOURS WOULD DETERMINE THE CHILD'S DIAGNOSIS? THESE BEHAVIOURS WERE COLLECTED FROM THE CHILD'S FILE AT THE CHILD GUIDANCE CLINIC. FURTHER, DID THESE BEHAVIOURS CLEARLY FALL INTO ONE OR THE OTHER OF THE DIAGNOSTIC CATEGORIES: ADJUSTMENT REACTION OR SPECIAL SYMPTOM REACTION?

THE SECOND QUESTION WAS: WHAT ASPECTS OF FAMILY LIVING REQUIRED PARENTAL INTERACTION? THE INVESTIGATORS CHOSE VARIOUS SIGNIFICANT AREAS THAT WOULD DESCRIBE PARENTAL INTERACTION AND DEVELOPED THEM INTO THE BODY OF A QUESTIONNAIRE.

NEXT, THE THIRD, WHAT PATTERNS OF INTERACTION INDICATED A COMPLEMENTARY OR A SYMMETRICAL RELATIONSHIP?

THE FOURTH QUESTION TO BE ANSWERED WAS: WAS THERE ONE SPECIFIC BEHAVIOURAL DISTURBANCE IN CHILDREN THAT WAS RELATED TO ONE SPECIFIC TYPE OF PARENTAL INTERACTION? THE RESEARCHERS FELT THAT THE ANSWERS TO THESE FOUR QUESTIONS WOULD ILLUSTRATE THE VALIDITY OF THE HYPOTHESIS.

CHAPTER II WILL ELABORATE ON THE REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE. A REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE ON COMMUNICATION THEORY AND FAMILY THEORY INDICATED THAT INTERACTION BETWEEN PEOPLE COULD BE CLASSIFIED AS EITHER SYMMETRICAL (MEANING THE MINIMIZATION OF DIFFERENCE BETWEEN THE INTERACTING INDIVIDUALS) OR COMPLEMENTARY (MEANING THE MAXIMIZATION OF SUCH DIFFERENCE). THIS TYPE OF INTERACTION EVENTUALLY BECOMES PATTERNED AND CAN THEN BE CONSIDERED AS A RELATIONSHIP (ESSENTIALLY EITHER SYMMETRICAL OR COMPLEMENTARY). MOREOVER, VARIOUS STUDIES HAD FOUND A CORRELATION BETWEEN THE TYPE OF RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN THE SPOUSES AND THE DE-

VELOPMENT OF BEHAVIOUR SYMPTOMS IN THEIR OFFSPRING. WHILE ALMOST ALL OF THESE STUDIES HAD BEEN CONDUCTED WITH FAMILIES CONTAINING A SCHIZOPHRENIC MEMBER, NEVERTHELESS IT SEEMED PROBABLE THAT A SIMILAR CORRELATION COULD BE FOUND IN THE CASE OF NON-SCHIZOPHRENIC FAMILIES. CERTAIN STUDIES HAD ALSO SUGGESTED THAT INTERACTING COUPLES COULD BE TESTED IN ORDER TO DISCOVER WHETHER THEIR PREDOMINANT PATTERN OF INTERACTION WAS SYMMETRICAL OR COMPLEMENTARY, AND THAT SUCH TESTS COULD BE CONDUCTED BY MEANS OF A PAPER AND PENCIL DEVICE SUCH AS A QUESTIONNAIRE.

CHAPTER III WILL DEAL WITH THE METHOD AT LENGTH. THE SOCIAL WORK DEPARTMENT OF THE CHILD GUIDANCE CLINIC WAS THE AGENCY SOURCE OF THE MATERIAL OBTAINED FOR THE SAMPLE. DIAGNOSES OF CHILDREN'S BEHAVIOURS WERE MADE FROM DESCRIPTIONS IN THE FILES, AND A QUESTIONNAIRE WAS ADMINISTERED TO THE PARENTS OF THE CHILDREN, TO DETERMINE THEIR PATTERNS OF INTERACTION. TWO MAJOR LIMITATIONS OF THE METHOD WERE FOUND: ONE IN THE QUESTIONNAIRE AND ANOTHER IN THE SAMPLING PROCEDURE. THESE WILL BE DISCUSSED IN FURTHER DETAIL IN CHAPTER III.

CHAPTER IV WILL PRESENT AN ANALYSIS OF THE MATERIAL AT LENGTH. IN ANALYZING THE DATA, THE FOLLOWING STEPS WERE TAKEN: FIRST, THE INVESTIGATORS MEASURED THE AGREEMENT AND DISAGREEMENT OF THE RESPONSES MADE BY PARENTS IN ANSWER TO THE QUESTIONNAIRE. SECOND, THE RESEARCHERS JUDGED THESE RESPONSES AS TO SYMMETRY OR COMPLEMENTARITY. THIRD, THE INVESTIGATORS COMPARED SELECTIVE SUB-TESTS WITH THE SCORES OBTAINED BY THE FIRST TWO MEASURES AND WITH THE CHILD'S DIAGNOSIS.

IN CHAPTER V, THE RESULTS OF THE RESEARCH STUDY WILL BE EVALUATED IN RELATION TO THE VALIDITY AND RELIABILITY OF THE HYPOTHESIS.

CHAPTER TWO

A REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

THIS CHAPTER WILL BE DEVOTED TO A BRIEF DISCUSSION OF COMMUNICATION THEORY AND ITS RELATION TO FAMILY THEORY. THE FINAL SECTION OF THE CHAPTER IS CONCERNED WITH A REVIEW OF STUDIES WHICH PROVED PERTINENT IN THE FORMULATION OF THE PRESENT INVESTIGATION.

1. IMPLICATIONS OF COMMUNICATION THEORY

UNTIL THE ADVENT OF THE CONCEPT OF COMMUNICATION, OR INFORMATION EXCHANGE, THE INTERDEPENDENCE OF THE INDIVIDUAL AND HIS ENVIRONMENT REMAINED A NEGLECTED FIELD OF PURSUIT IN TRADITIONAL PSYCHOANALYTIC THEORY, WHICH POSTULATED INSTEAD THAT BEHAVIOUR WAS PRIMARILY THE OUTCOME OF AN INTERPLAY OF INTRAPSYCHIC FORCES IN THE INDIVIDUAL.¹ THE DEVELOPMENT OF COMMUNICATION THEORY HAD SERIOUS IMPLICATIONS FOR THE PSYCHOANALYTIC TRADITION, BECAUSE THE ESTABLISHED CONCEPTS OF "SANITY" AND "INSANITY" BECAME MEANINGLESS IF IT IS ACCEPTED, AS COMMUNICATION THEORY POSTULATES, THAT PSYCHIATRIC SYMPTOMS IN AN INDIVIDUAL ARE MERELY BEHAVIOURS APPROPRIATE TO THE INDIVIDUAL'S ONGOING INTERACTION WITH SIGNIFICANT OTHERS.² CONSEQUENTLY, ATTEMPTS (SUCH AS THIS RESEARCH PROJECT) TO DEVELOP AND VERIFY THE POSTULATES OF COMMUNICATION THEORY, HAVE PROFOUND IMPLICATIONS

¹P. WATZLAWICK, J. H. BEAVIN, AND D. D. JACKSON, PRAGMATICS OF HUMAN COMMUNICATION: A STUDY OF INTERACTIONAL PATTERNS, PATHOLOGIES AND PARADOXES (NEW YORK: W. W. NORTON AND CO., INC., 1967), PP. 28-30.

²IBID., PP. 46-47.

TIONS FOR ALL PROFESSIONS TREATING DISTURBED INDIVIDUALS.

COMMUNICATION THEORY HAS CONCERNED ITSELF WITH THE EFFECTS OF ONE PERSON'S BEHAVIOUR UPON OTHERS, THEIR REACTIONS TO IT, AND THE CONTEXT IN WHICH IT ALL TAKES PLACE. THE TERM "COMMUNICATION" REFERS NOT ONLY TO VERBAL, EXPLICIT AND INTENTIONAL TRANSMISSION OF MESSAGES, BUT ALSO INCLUDES ALL THOSE PROCESSES BY WHICH PEOPLE INFLUENCE ONE ANOTHER.³ THIS DEFINITION IS BASED ON THE PREMISE THAT ALL ACTIONS AND EVENTS HAVE COMMUNICATIVE ASPECTS, AS SOON AS THEY ARE PERCEIVED BY A HUMAN BEING, AND THAT SUCH PERCEPTION CHANGES THE INFORMATION WHICH THE INDIVIDUAL POSSESSES, THEREBY INFLUENCING HIM. THERE ARE SEVERAL KINDS OF COMMUNICATION: VERBAL; NONVERBAL - CONSISTING OF VOCAL INFLECTIONS, BODILY GESTURES, AND FACIAL EXPRESSIONS; AND THE COMMUNICATIONAL CUES INHERENT IN THE CONTEXT IN WHICH THE COMMUNICATION OCCURS.

THE TWO PEOPLE INEVITABLY WORK OUT A RELATIONSHIP TOGETHER BY MUTUALLY INDICATING WHAT KIND OF BEHAVIOUR IS TO TAKE PLACE BETWEEN THEM. BY BEHAVING IN A CERTAIN WAY THEY DEFINE THEIR RELATIONSHIP AS ONE IN WHICH THAT TYPE OF BEHAVIOUR IS TO TAKE PLACE. GENERALLY, THIS AGREEMENT IS ACHIEVED "IMPLICITLY" BY WHAT THEY SAY AND HOW THEY SAY IT AS THEY RESPOND TO EACH OTHER, RATHER THAN BY EXPLICIT DISCUSSION.⁴

THE PRECEDING BRIEF SUMMARY OF COMMUNICATION THEORY WAS INTENDED TO PROVIDE BACKGROUND KNOWLEDGE FOR THE FOLLOWING DISCUSSION OF TWO CONCEPTS CENTRAL TO THE CONCERN OF THIS RESEARCH PROJECT - THE CONCEPTS

³J. RUESCH AND G. BATESON, COMMUNICATION: THE SOCIAL MATRIX OF PSYCHIATRY (NEW YORK: W. W. NORTON AND CO., INC., 1951), p. 5.

⁴J. HALEY, STRATEGIES OF PSYCHOTHERAPY (NEW YORK: GRUNE AND STRATTON, 1963), p. 10.

OF SYMMETRY AND COMPLEMENTARITY. IN 1936, BATESON FIRST REPORTED ON THE CONCEPT OF SCHISMOGENESIS, WHICH HE DEFINED AS "A PROCESS IN THE DIFFERENTIATION IN THE NORMS OF INDIVIDUAL BEHAVIOUR RESULTING FROM CUMULATIVE INTERACTION BETWEEN INDIVIDUALS."⁵ HE CONCEPTUALIZED TWO TYPES OF INTERACTION PATTERNS: SYMMETRICAL SCHISMOGENESIS AND COMPLEMENTARY SCHISMOGENESIS. THESE TWO PATTERNS HAVE COME TO BE USED WITHOUT REFERENCE TO THE SCHISMOGENETIC PROCESS, AND ARE NOW REFERRED TO AS SYMMETRICAL AND COMPLEMENTARY INTERACTION. ALL COMMUNICATIONAL INTERACTION CAN BE DIVIDED INTO THESE TWO BASIC CATEGORIES.

IN THE LITERATURE ON COMMUNICATION, A SYMMETRICAL RELATIONSHIP HAS COME TO BE DEFINED AS A RELATIONSHIP IN WHICH TWO PEOPLE EXCHANGE THE SAME TYPES OF BEHAVIOUR. EACH PERSON INITIATES ACTION, OFFERS ADVICE, CRITICIZES THE OTHER, ETC. THIS TYPE OF RELATIONSHIP TENDS TO BE COMPETITIVE, THAT IS, IF ONE PERSON MENTIONS THAT HE HAS SUCCEEDED IN SOME ENDEAVOUR, THE OTHER PERSON POINTS OUT THAT HE HAS SUCCEEDED IN SOME EQUALLY IMPORTANT VENTURE. A COMPLEMENTARY RELATIONSHIP, ON THE OTHER HAND IS ONE IN WHICH TWO PEOPLE EXCHANGE DIFFERENT TYPES OF BEHAVIOURS - ONE IS IN THE "SUPERIOR" POSITION AND THE OTHER IS IN A "SECONDARY" POSITION IN THAT ONE OFFERS CRITICISM AND THE OTHER ACCEPTS IT, ONE OFFERS ADVICE AND THE OTHER FOLLOWS IT, ONE TEACHES AND THE OTHER LEARNS, AND SO ON.⁶

LIKE ANY OTHER PATTERN OF COMMUNICATION, THESE TWO HAVE THEIR POTENTIAL PATHOLOGIES.⁷ IN A SYMMETRICAL RELATIONSHIP, THERE IS AN

⁵G. BATESON, NAVEN (LONDON, CAMBRIDGE UNIVERSITY PRESS, 1936).

⁶HALEY, STRATEGIES OF PSYCHOTHERAPY, OP CIT., P. 11.

⁷WATZLAWICK ET AL., OP CIT., P. 107.

EVER-PRESENT DANGER OF COMPETITION. IN A COMPLEMENTARY RELATIONSHIP, PROBLEMS ARISE WHEN ONE PERSON IS FORCED TO CHANGE HIS OWN DEFINITION OF HIMSELF INTO ONE THAT COMPLEMENTS AND SUPPORTS HIS PARTNER'S SELF-DEFINITION.

THIS SIMPLE DIVISION OF RELATIONSHIPS INTO THE TWO TYPES - COMPLEMENTARY AND SYMMETRICAL - IS USEFUL FOR CLASSIFYING DIFFERENT RELATIONSHIPS OR DIFFERENT SEQUENCES WITHIN A RELATIONSHIP.⁸ NO TWO PEOPLE WILL CONSISTENTLY HAVE ONLY ONE PATTERN OF INTERACTION, HOWEVER. USUALLY, THERE ARE AREAS OF A RELATIONSHIP WORKED OUT AS ONE TYPE OR THE OTHER. IN A HEALTHY RELATIONSHIP, BOTH SYMMETRY AND COMPLEMENTARITY MUST BE PRESENT.

THE PROCESS OF DEFINING A RELATIONSHIP AS ESSENTIALLY SYMMETRICAL OR COMPLEMENTARY IS A PROCESS OF WORKING OUT RULES FOR INTERACTING. THUS, THE PROCESS OF WORKING OUT A SATISFACTORY MARITAL RELATIONSHIP, FOR EXAMPLE, CAN BE SEEN AS A PROCESS OF WORKING OUT SHARED AGREEMENTS ABOUT BEHAVIOUR, LARGELY UNDISCUSSED, BETWEEN TWO PEOPLE.⁹ MOREOVER, THE COUPLE MUST NOT ONLY SET RULES, THEY MUST ALSO REACH AGREEMENT ON WHICH OF THEM IS TO BE THE ONE TO SET THE RULES IN EACH AREA OF THEIR MARRIAGE. NOR IS THIS PROCESS LIMITED ONLY TO COUPLES IN A CERTAIN CULTURE.¹⁰ A COUPLE IN ANY CULTURE MUST DEAL WITH WHAT RULES TO FOLLOW, WHO IS TO SET THEM, AND WHAT RULES TO FOLLOW TO RESOLVE DISAGREEMENTS.

FINALLY, THE CORE OF A COMMUNICATION APPROACH TO THE FAMILY WAS

⁸HALEY, STRATEGIES OF PSYCHOTHERAPY, OP.CIT., P. 11.

⁹IBID., PP. 123-25.

¹⁰IBID., PP. 128-29.

DEVELOPED OUT OF JACKSON'S CONCEPT OF "FAMILY HOMEOSTASIS", WHICH HE INTRODUCED IN 1954.¹¹ THIS CONCEPT SUGGESTS THAT THE FAMILY MAY BE VIEWED AS A SYSTEM, AND THAT THE FAMILY ACTS SO AS TO MAINTAIN A BALANCE IN RELATIONSHIPS.

2. RELATED STUDIES

A REVIEW OF STUDIES CONDUCTED TO DATE IN THE AREA OF PARENTAL INTERACTION AND ITS RELATIONSHIP TO SYMPTOM DEVELOPMENT IN CHILDREN INDICATED TO THE PRESENT INVESTIGATORS THAT VERY LITTLE EXPERIMENTATION HAD BEEN DONE ON THIS PARTICULAR ASPECT OF THE THEORY, AND THAT MOST STUDIES HAD CONCERNED THEMSELVES WITH SCHIZOPHRENIC FAMILIES RATHER THAN FAMILIES WITH OTHER FORMS OF EMOTIONAL DISTURBANCE. NEVERTHELESS, THE INVESTIGATORS FOUND SEVERAL STUDIES WHICH SUGGESTED A METHODOLOGY AND SOME CORROBORATION FOR THE PRESENT PROJECT.

IN 1956, A PAPER BY BATESON, JACKSON, HALEY AND WEAKLAND WAS PUBLISHED AS A PROGRESS REPORT ON A RESEARCH PROJECT DESIGNED TO FORMULATE AND TEST A BROAD, SYSTEMATIC VIEW OF THE NATURE, ETIOLOGY AND TREATMENT OF SCHIZOPHRENIA.¹² THIS PAPER ANNOUNCED THE RESEARCHERS' COMMON AGREEMENT ON THE BROAD OUTLINES OF A COMMUNICATIONAL THEORY ON THE ORIGIN AND NATURE OF SCHIZOPHRENIA. IN PARTICULAR, THE "NECESSARY INGREDIENTS" OF THE DOUBLE BIND - A CHARACTERISTIC INTERACTIONAL SITUATION FOR SCHIZOPHRENICS - WERE DISCUSSED AND THE DOUBLE-BIND INTERACTION

¹¹D. D. JACKSON, "THE QUESTION OF FAMILY HOMEOSTASIS" PSYCHIATRIC QUARTERLY SUPPLEMENT, 1957, v. 31, PART 1, PP. 79-90.

¹²G. BATESON, D. D. JACKSON, J. HALEY AND J. H. WEAKLAND, "TOWARD A THEORY OF SCHIZOPHRENIA" BEHAVIORAL SCIENCE, OCTOBER, 1956, v. 1, NO.4.

BETWEEN PARENT AND CHILD WAS ILLUSTRATED FROM CLINICAL DATA. THIS PAPER WAS ONE OF THE FIRST ATTEMPTS TO CHARACTERIZE AND DESCRIBE SCHIZOPHRENIA AS A DISTURBANCE IN COMMUNICATION AND CONSEQUENTLY LAID THE GROUNDWORK FOR CONSIDERING OTHER FORMS OF PSYCHOPATHOLOGY IN THE LIGHT OF COMMUNICATION THEORY.

A NUMBER OF STUDIES WERE THEN CONDUCTED WHICH PROVIDED STRONG EVIDENCE THAT CONFLICT EXISTED BETWEEN THE PARENTS OF SCHIZOPHRENICS. HOWEVER, THE STUDIES DID NOT CLARIFY WHAT STRIFE BETWEEN THE PARENTS HAD TO DO WITH SCHIZOPHRENIA IN THE CHILD. IN AN ATTEMPT TO RECTIFY THIS, HALEY HYPOTHESIZED THAT SCHIZOPHRENIC BEHAVIOUR SERVES A FUNCTION WITHIN A PARTICULAR KIND OF FAMILY ORGANIZATION, AND THAT THE FAMILY OF THE SCHIZOPHRENIC IS A SPECIAL KIND OF SYSTEM WHICH CAN BE DIFFERENTIATED FROM OTHER FAMILY SYSTEMS.¹³ HALEY THEN ANALYZED A SMALL SAMPLE OF FAMILIES PARTICIPATING IN THERAPEUTIC SESSIONS WHERE PARENTS AND SCHIZOPHRENIC CHILD, AS WELL AS SIBLINGS, WERE SEEN TOGETHER AND RECORDED.

IN HIS PAPER HALEY POINTED OUT THAT WHAT WAS LACKING IN THE STUDY OF INTERPERSONAL RELATIONS WAS A METHOD OF DESCRIBING BY SOME ANALOGY THE PROCESS WHICH TAKES PLACE WHEN TWO OR MORE PEOPLE INTERACT. HIS FINDINGS INDICATED THAT THE MOST APPROPRIATED ANALOGY FOR DESCRIBING FAMILIES WAS THAT OF A SELF-CORRECTIVE SYSTEM GOVERNED BY FAMILY MEMBERS INFLUENCING EACH OTHER'S BEHAVIOUR AND THEREBY ESTABLISHING RULES FOR THE SYSTEM. HIS APPROACH OFFERED A GENERAL THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK WITHIN WHICH THE RULES OF ANY ONE FAMILY COULD BE CLASSIFIED. HE USED

¹³J. HALEY, "THE FAMILY OF THE SCHIZOPHRENIC: A MODEL SYSTEM" JOURNAL OF NERVOUS AND MENTAL DISEASE, 1959, no. 129.