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A BIBLIOTHERAPEUTIC INVESTIGATION
AMONG STANDARD 4 PUPILS WITH SPECIAL
REFERENCE TO THE CRITERION OF
SELF-ESTEEM

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Dedicated to
my
Parents, Brothers and Sisters

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1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

As the child grows up his general range of familiarity with himself and his environment (e.g. his parents and teachers) broadens. Circumstances and forces of influence and stimulation change and vary as the child grows older. Meaningfulness and interest in life at large and in himself in particular, increasingly manifest themselves in varying degrees of intensity and relevance.

General lack of variation and wholesome stimulation in the child's environment in most cases develop into a lack of intrinsic interest in himself and, as a natural consequence, in his sense of accomplishment, since a sound conception of his self-worth and a commensurate self-confidence will normally ensure the measure of motivation he will require to succeed. It is important not to lose sight of the spontaneous urge in every normal, average child to succeed in life. Bessell (1970 : 55) sheds more light on this urge for success and its consequences for the child in either negative or positive circumstances:

'He will feel like a failure unless he perceives success, unless he really feels power and responsibility for what happens to him, and around him. If he feels strong, he can achieve far more in school and in life itself'.

It generally appears that behavioural manifestations relating to shyness, introversion, self-doubt and the fear of rejection often result in the fact that the child refrains from articulating his opinions and attitudes. The child, especially in the later childhood period (i.e. 6 to 12 years of age), may often have a more adequate verbal repertoire than he will actually tend to express in a spontaneous account of some event. In this regard Bijou (1970 : 149 - 55) considers that in many instances the child may be hampered in the process of building a healthy self-concept. The following restricting environmental factors, amongst others, seem relevant to our field of investigation:

- (a) an environment which is sparsely populated with stimulating people and intriguing activities;

(b) an environment which lacks the necessary physical and cultural components,

which, jointly, seem to retard the child's verbal and imaginative activities, hence culminating in a relatively low self-profile.

Contrary to a realistic self-concept, manifestations of a poor self-concept often result in a lack of self-motivation which inevitably affects the child's span of attention, adjustment in classroom and his general level of scholastic performance (Candless, 1967 : 272). Reviewing the available research conducted among the achievement level and self-concept of pupils, Purkey (1970 : 22) concludes that

'... it seems reasonable to assume that unsuccessful students, whether underachievers, non-achievers, or poor readers, are likely to hold attitudes about themselves and their abilities which are pervasively negative. They tend to see themselves as less able, less adequate, and less self-reliant than their more successful peers.'

Since the self-concept appears to be largely an acquired psychological construct, it is generally hypothesised that the concept in all its ramifications is amenable to change, if manipulated meaningfully by virtue of some beneficial programme of activity, viz:

'Change in self-concept is, of course, required by the process of maturing and is central to such activities as counselling, psychotherapy, and remedial teaching' (Candless, 1967 : 284).

1.2 HYPOTHESES

1.2.1 Bibliotherapy affords a means for the use of literature (i.e. the reading and discussion of literary texts) to facilitate a rehabilitative effect which will contribute towards the correction of undesirable or abnormal personality traits in the individual. Readers who are afflicted or disturbed (whether it be psychological or physical), may benefit in a meaningful way from an exposure to judiciously selected literature.

1.2.2 Bibliotherapy, as an inter- and intrapersonal communicative activity, endeavours to equip the reader of imaginative literature with skills to resolve aspects relating to problem-solving and preparedness for action by virtue of literature-reading and discussion, which will enable him to overcome most personal or social upheavals he may encounter in any future event.

1.2.3 Bibliotherapy is an effective activity which relies to a large extent on the aid extended by the parent, teacher or librarian (which is essentially developmental) and will motivate the pre-high school pupil towards self-understanding and responsible decision-making. The implicit motivational force inherent in bibliotherapy will hopefully foster an enhanced self-concept in the pupil.

1.3 PROPOSED METHOD OF RESEARCH

1.3.1 LITERATURE SURVEY

In order to deal with the topic of investigation effectively the researcher needs to base his research on an analysis of the available subject-matter relating to self-esteem (cf. chapter 2), bibliotherapy (cf. chapter 3) and the reading act (cf. chapter 4).

This survey reflects a representative (rather than an exhaustive) review of relevant information in English- and some Germanic-language sources, as a means of exploring the validity of the three main hypotheses and of ensuring a sound foundation for the experimental investigation. In the search for conceptual and terminological clarity the researcher needs to examine a wide range of secondary literary sources systematically, some of which are philosophical and speculative in kind, while others are essentially empirical work based on research. The sources of literature are selected in terms of their direct relevance as supportive material in anticipation of the experimental investigation:

1.3.2 EXPERIMENTAL INVESTIGATION

This study will further be sustained by an experimental investigation (cf. chapter 7 and Annexures A and B) which needs to be designed in the light of the conceptual framework emerging from the preceding literature

survey. Owing to the fact that literature pertaining to the topic of investigation (in particular bibliotherapy and the reading act) is relatively sparse, an experimental investigation therefore seems imperative in order to lend greater validity to research work. Berry (1978 : 129) expresses his concern in this regard:

'As we became familiar with some of the literature on poetry therapy and bibliotherapy, we were impressed by the dearth of empirical evidence supporting the efficacy of either technique'.

Cattell (1946 : 4) justifies the application of the empirical method as a means of complementing the evidence sustained by theoretical conjecture:

'Measurement of course, is only a final specialization of description. It can come into its own only when qualitative description has truly ripened'.

An empirical foundation for the bibliotherapeutic method is provided to facilitate hypothesis-testing. As a point of departure, it seems appropriate to test the hypotheses by means of questionnaires that would yield relevant information on the subjects' personal lives, and on their general level of self-esteem before and after their exposure to bibliotherapeutic treatment.

- 1.3.3 The structure envisaged for the thesis is (a) a literature survey; (b) the experimental investigation, and (c) conclusions, relating to the three hypotheses (1.2.1, 1.2.2, and 1.2.3), derived from the examination of (a) and (b).

2 THE CONCEPT OF SELF-ESTEEM

2.1 INTRODUCTION

On the whole, children are not passive recipients of what people do to or for them, but tend to take an active part in their own development, establishing adult-child relationships and shaping their own life-worlds. The developing individual is the product of the continuous interaction of his hereditary endowment and stimuli of his environmental milieu (Babladelis & Adams, 1967, cf especially chapter 1). This implies that the individual is conditioned, insofar as environmental factors augment his inherently endowed qualities. In turn, the individual exercises an influence on his environment, while his actions are partially determined by his perception of the kind of person he is or wants to be.

'The individual is not', to use G.H. Mead's phrase, 'an intradermal self, nor a self-sufficient atom' (cited in Pfuetze, 1954:300). The child learns to adopt the roles and aspirations of his cultural group. Every cultural grouping (whether this be based on national, religious, linguistic, geographical, class, caste or other criteria) has certain norms to which most members of that culture subscribe (Babladelis & Adams, 1967 : 261). Disregarding of differences in personal experiences, they generally share common values and beliefs of the same culture.

Man's whole life is a striving, a conatus, as Spinoza calls it. We attain selfhood when we know ourselves to be known and when we are evaluated by others. Such consciousness of self is affected in turn by the social environment (Webster & Sobieszek, 1974 : 3). Le Fevre (1969 : 14) poses the questions:

'How do you perceive yourself? Do you think of yourself as strong or weak, as effective or ineffective, as liked by others or disliked? Would you characterize yourself as well-to-do or poor, in harmony with yourself or in inner conflict, anxious and hostile, or kind and loving?'

As children increasingly become aware of their failures they tend to develop an oversensitive attitude to criticism and experience their shortcomings intensely under the eyes of peers and adults (Van Niekerk, 1976 : 44). Escapism is most often the reaction to which they resort, as a means of avoiding unpleasant or threatening situations. It is evident, moreover, that a child with a negative self-concept has difficulty in realising his full potential (Vrey, 1975 : 14).

The focal point of our discussion is therefore the self, which in turn warrants further elucidation.

2.2 THE SELF: THE CRUX OF PERSONALITY-STRUCTURE

Since psychology entails the scientific study of man in terms of his innate make-up, it implies that it is ultimately the study of the person, called personality. Theorists have proposed a variety of definitions of personality, without a clear consensus emerging. They conceptualise personality somewhat divergently because it is an elusive entity (Jourard, 1963 : 3). Mischel (1971 : 2) cautions:

'To study the "total personality" or the "whole person" may be a worthy goal, but it is a practical impossibility.'

There may be as many different meanings of the term 'personality' as there are theorists who have tried to define it. In support of his contention that, such reservation notwithstanding, personality study is crucial to psychological research, Cattell (1950 : 2) claims that

'Personality is that which permits a prediction of what a person will do in a given situation.'

2.2.1 THE DYNAMICS OF PERSONALITY

Allport (1961 : 28) suggests that

'Personality is the dynamic organization within the individual of those psychophysical systems that determine his characteristic behaviour and thought.'

He views man as an organic system, embracing such sub-systems as emotions, memories and motives. These sub-systems, he insists, should not be studied in isolation, but rather in a context of interaction. The self, which forms the core of the personality-structure, should always be viewed in relation to the total experiences of man.

For the purpose of this study it will, however, be necessary, first, to attempt isolating the self-concept and its ramifications as a primary step towards gaining clearer insight into its essential nature.

2.3 THE SELF-CONCEPT

In the light of various views and definitions of self-concept, Van Zyl and Van der Walt (1978 : 3) have identified some of the difficulties obscuring clear understanding. Among others, the following questions need to be countered with a measure of certainty.

- (a) Is there any justification or a fundamental need for a self-concept hypothesis per se?
- (b) Assuming this to be the case:
 - (i) Is the self-concept an object or a process?
 - (ii) Is the self-concept not perhaps only a mental functional construct (i.e. a mere artifice) used by scientists to elucidate certain problems that do not lend themselves to more direct approaches in psychological research?
 - (iii) Is it not eminently desirable that the self-concept should be explained in terms of the dynamic interaction between innate and external forces in social circumstances, rather than in isolation?
 - (iv) Is the self-concept a phenomenological feature of a specific individual?

It seems, however, that much uncertainty surrounds the true essence and consequent accuracy in the description of the self-concept. This fact is evidenced by the wide spectrum of contradictory theories postulated insofar they impinge on the crucial issues raised above.

2.3.1 METHODOLOGICAL APPROACHES TO A STUDY OF THE SELF

Crowne (1979 : 10) argues that the study of personality and all its ramifications should stress potential rather than manifest behaviour. Since our judgment of personality is at present customarily formed à propos the discernable manifestations or behaviour, scientific precepts prescribe that any area of psychological inquiry should be based predominantly on empirical rather than theoretical foundations. In terms of functionalist approach to psychology mental phenomena are considered as activities. This is at variance with the structuralist approach in terms of which these phenomena are viewed instead as states or structures. (Introspective psychology, again, probes man's states and qualities of private experiences and feelings by means of self-report techniques, such as verbal descriptions.)

Behaviourism as a school of psychology claims to be the most viable way of establishing such complex notions inherent in psychological inquiry. Such inquiry is concerned with

'... unambiguously observable, and preferably measurable, behaviour.' (The Fontana dictionary of modern thought, 1977 : 57)

2.3.2 THE SELF-CONCEPT AS AN ATTITUDE OF SELF

Gibson (1978 : 352) defines the self-concept as the attitude one adopts towards oneself as a person. He is of the opinion that the self-concept is often expressed in terms of acquired roles or prescribed patterns of behaviour. Felker (1974 : 2) lends support to the same idea, viz.:

'Self-concept is a unique set of perceptions, ideas and attitudes which an individual has about himself.'

In psychological debate the term 'self' has been used in a diversity of connotations. Two chief meanings, however, have emerged:

- (a) the self as subject or agent, and
- (b) the self as the individual who is known to himself.

The term 'self-concept' refers to the second meaning (Wylie, 1961 : 1).

Hamachek (1978 : 6) draws the same distinction regarding the self-concept, viz.:

- (a) self-as-object - i.e. one's attitudes and feelings towards, and perceptions and evaluations of, oneself, and
- (b) self-as-process - i.e. perceiving oneself as the doer, (thereby likewise endorsing the view that the self-concept refers to the former).

2.3.3 VARIABILITY OF THE SELF-CONCEPT

One may hold divergent views of oneself at different times. In certain situations one might feel happy, comfortable and secure, while in other situations one may feel unhappy, uncomfortable and insecure. One may also hold differentiated views of oneself: e.g. by feeling inferior towards one person, but superior towards another. We may confidently infer that the self-concept is a cumulative perspective of one's personality in a social context, resulting from a range of experiences. Thus, it is clear that the self-concept manifests itself in varying conditions.

2.3.4 THE RANGE OF QUALITIES INHERENT IN THE SELF AND SELF-CONCEPT

Purkey (1970 : 7-10), like Allport (cf. par. 2.2.1), views the 'self' as being fundamentally organised and dynamic. Van Zyl and Van der Walt (1978 : 8-10) suggest an elaboration of Purkey and Allport's model of the range of the attributes of the self, viz. that:

- (a) the self is organised: i.e. things which enjoy priority in one's life lie nearer to the core of the self than less important things;
- (b) the self is consistent, although it changes as it develops;
- (c) one's self-image is unique;
- (d) one's self-concept is dynamic insofar as one's experiences are determined by the motivation which emanates from the self (self-image);
- (e) the self serves as a reference point for the individual, i.e. reality reveals itself to the individual in terms of his idiosyncratic perception of it;

- (f) the emergence of the 'self' assumes the form of a process: i.e. the self-concept is shaped gradually through learning experiences;
- (g) the self is characterised by consciousness;
- (h) the self concept is multidimensional, since it deals with a divergent range of attributes and experiences, e.g. self-esteem, self-image and self-consciousness;
- (i) the self-concept is neither visible nor tangible. It is only evident from one's behavioural manifestations.

2.3.5 THE SELF-CONCEPT AS A HYPOTHETICAL CONSTRUCT

What emerges from this cursory examination of the literature is that there is no single generally accepted definition of the self. Instead, one encounters a collection of ideas and attitudes which man holds of himself at any given moment in time. The self-concept at best seems to be a hypothetical construct or a theoretical 'as if'. Needless to say, the concept of self is inevitably a complex one.

'.....the individual's self-concepts are not a simple mirror-like reflection of some absolute reality. Rather, self-concepts, like impression of other aspects of the world, involve a synthesis and organization of a tremendous amount of information' (Mischel, 1971 : 411).

2.3.6 THE MULTIDIMENSIONALITY OF THE SELF-CONCEPT

One of the most significant characteristics of the self-concept is its multidimensionality (cf. Van Zyl and Van der Walt's elaboration in par. 2.3.6 (h)).

Calhoun and Acocella (1978 : 58) conceive of the self-concept as comprising three dimensions, viz:

(a) Knowledge of oneself:

One attains knowledge of oneself by comparing oneself with others, by categorising oneself and, concomitantly, by labelling oneself in terms of given qualities. Normally such knowledge has a subjective bias and tends to fluctuate.

(b) Expectations for oneself:

One's expectations for oneself are normally based on one's notions of the ideal self, as distinct from the perception of the self in terms of the self-concept.

The perception of the ideal self, moreover, is unique to each individual.

(c) Evaluation of oneself:

In evaluating oneself in terms of one's expectations, such evaluation, according to Calhoun and Acocella (1978 : 60), is a measure of one's self-esteem, i.e. the level of one's appreciation of oneself, or, the extent to which one likes oneself.

This implies that the greater the conformity to one's expectations, the higher one's general level of self-esteem is seen to be.

Conversely, the greater the degree of the frustration of expectations, the lower one's general level of self-esteem.

The dimension which this study attempts to investigate is the one of 'self-esteem'. Mischel (1971 : 412) agrees with Calhoun and Acocella in rating 'self-esteem' as a principal aspect of the self-concept.

2.4 SELF-ESTEEM

Hamachek (1978 : 3) suggests that the terms 'self', 'self-concept', and 'self-esteem' overlap, although each of these terms represents a distinct aspect of man's total personality. Whereas, on the one hand, the self-concept governs the cognitive aspects of one's personal life, self-esteem, on the other, is associated with the affective side of one's personality. This implies that, apart from having ideas about oneself, one also has certain sentiments regarding oneself. Hamachek elucidates the triadic complexity of man's images of self in a concise exposition:

' the self is what we know about ourselves, self-concept is what we think about ourselves, and self-esteem is how we feel about ourselves' (1978 : 6).

Some psychologists insist that self-esteem should be dissected and studied in its constituent parts. Brehm and Cohen (1962 : 259) assert that:

' the personality predisposition of self-esteem is a complex and many-sided variable, containing components of social withdrawal, feelings of inferiority and inadequacy...'

Hamachek (1978, cf. especially chapter one) lends greater specificity to the notion of self-assessment by taking the concept 'self-esteem' to imply one's personal judgement of one's feelings of worthiness or unworthiness, approval or disapproval as expressed by oneself.

2.4.1 THE IDIOSYNCRATIC NATURE OF SELF-ESTEEM

Since each individual's life experiences are unique in synthesis, this uniqueness will manifest itself in the nature of his desires, needs and fears. Such experiences will tend to condition the attitude, whether favourable or unfavourable, we hold of ourselves. In terms of such evaluative norms regarding oneself, one maintains a certain level of self-esteem. It is generally assumed that physical appearance, success, popularity, trustworthiness, praise, wealth and social class are among the major factors which determine one's level of self-esteem.

2.4.2 SELF-ESTEEM AS A PRODUCT

Self-esteem may be regarded mainly as a process, since the developing child gradually incorporates other persons and things into his world. However, it may also be viewed from another angle, viz: as a product. Felker (1974 : 24) elaborates on this:

'As a product, esteem means high regard or a favourable opinion. As a process, it means to regard with respect or affection, to set a value on, and to rate highly.'

It is clear that self-esteem is not the result of a single, unitary experience, but that it experiences moment-to-moment changes under various conditions. In order to attain self-ideal the individual strives to build a positive self-image which is congruent with his ideals.

2.4.3 APPROXIMATING THE SELF-IDEAL

To the extent that the individual approximates his self-ideal, he is seen to be a healthy personality. Hamachek (1978 : 268 - 69) maintains that one of the indications of a healthy person is that he feels equal to others as a person, rather than either superior or inferior to them. Besides enjoying himself in activities involving self-expression and companionship he considers himself generally as liked, wanted, acceptable, able and worthy. In so far as an individual approximates these qualities, to that extent it is contended that he experiences joy and fulfilment, which, in turn, will enhance his self-esteem.

2.4.4 THE MULTI-FACETED NATURE OF SELF-ESTEEM

Besides knowing that 'self-esteem' expresses the evaluative or

normative disposition of the individual's innate and social experiences, the concept on the whole remains a relatively abstruse one.

This statement, however, needs further qualification. It is possible to shed more light on the notion of self-esteem, especially when one considers that psychologists on the whole seem to hold conflicting views as to whether self-esteem should be called a need, an attitude or a sentiment. We will briefly look into each of these approaches, inasmuch they relate to the concept of self-esteem.

2.4.4.1 SELF-ESTEEM AS A NEED

2.4.4.1.1 MASLOW'S HIERARCHY OF NEEDS

Maslow (1970) assumes that the individual has five basic needs, structured hierarchically. These needs, starting with the lowest on the scale, are characterised as:

- (a) physiological;
- (b) safety;
- (c) love and belonging affiliation;
- (d) esteem; and
- (e) self-actualisation (Maslow, 1970 : 45).

When the need which is relatively low in the hierarchy (e.g. physiological or safety needs), has been gratified, then the next highest need emerges, demanding gratification.

In regard to the relatively advanced need of self-esteem, Maslow draws a clear distinction between:

- (a) the need for esteem by others; and
- (b) real self-esteem (Maslow, 1970 : 45).

In the first instance the individual demands the applause and adoration of others as constant confirmation of his worth, and in regard to the second, viz. real self-esteem, one deals with fundamental self-confidence within the individual, a disposition, which derives from the person's innate capabilities.

Maslow is, of course, primarily concerned with the process of self-actualisation in emotionally healthy persons, i.e. the individual's realisation of his highest potential. In his hierarchy of needs (Maslow, 1970 : 98 - 100), higher needs, to which esteem needs belong, display the following features:

- (a) they require more stringent preconditions for their fulfilment;
- (b) they are less imperative for sheer survival;
- (c) their realisation can be postponed indefinitely;
- (d) they are almost limitless in terms of aspirations;
- (e) they are more susceptible to therapy.

Maslow cautions that this representation of needs may give rise to the false impression that it is essential for a need to be fully gratified before the next need emerges. In actual fact most people are partially gratified in some of their needs and partially ungratified in others at the same time (Maslow, 1954 : 98)

He suggests that a more realistic presentation of the hierarchy would be required to view progression in terms of decreasing percentages of satisfaction as we move up along the hierarchy of prepotency. In this way, for example, the average person might be satisfied by, say 85% in regard to his physiological needs, 70% to his safety needs, 50% to his love needs, 40% to his self-esteem needs and 10% to his self-actualisation needs.

The hierarchical model, if oversimplified, is subject to scientific rejection on the grounds of implying a simplistically fixed order. It should therefore be readily assumed that such a fixed order is not compatible with the realities of human variability.

2.4.4.1.2 NEEDS AS DRIVES AND NEED DISPOSITIONS

Schneiders (1951 : 105 - 6) qualifies the notion of 'need' further by dividing it into (a) drives and (b) need dispositions. He argues that drives are fundamental, physiological, instinctive needs, based on a-rational judgements. Conversely, need dispositions are psychological and social in kind, such as security, social recognition and self-esteem. Such need dispositions are more clearly associated with man's rational awareness of self.

The study of drives is, of course, beyond our scope of investigations. Need dispositions, on the other hand, are highly relevant to our purpose owing to their interrelatedness to self-esteem, since the satisfaction of these needs presents a difficult goal for any individual to attain, and the happiness we experience in life is so largely dependent on our ability to make continual adjustments.

2.4.4.1.3 HEREDITY vs. ENVIRONMENT

The influence of inherent and environmental factors, on the needs of the individual as primary elements in the human personality should not be underrated. Innate factors embrace such variables as age, sex, intelligence and other genetic features. Environmental factors relate to the socio-economic milieu of the individual, to his reference group which has the potential of exercising a powerful influence on his development (e.g. the family school, professional or organisational environment), to education and to other formative agencies in society. The norms and values maintained by the reference group, in particular, tend to condition the conduct and decision-making of the individual. Certain forms of behaviour, which are favoured by reference groups, and esteemed as such, are likely to serve as models worthy of his emulation (Schneiders, 1951 : 107 - 8).

In summary, it can be readily assumed that hereditary and environmental factors will jointly condition the individual's needs to a significant extent. The relative potency of these two determinants is observable in private and social behavioural manifestations, depending on the type of need the individual experiences. For example, a comfortable home environment is likely to contribute substantially to the individual's sense of security and, ultimately, to a healthy measure of self-esteem.

2.4.4.1.4 SELF-ESTEEM AND A SENSE OF INFERIORITY

It is, however, not always possible for the individual to conform to the pattern of behaviour required in a specific situation, since he is not always able to control his reactions. A thwarting of self-esteem needs, for example, may produce feelings of inferiority and helplessness (Maslow, 1970 : 45).

Adler (1938 : 102) considers that:

'The feeling of inferiority rules the mental life and can be clearly recognized in the sense of incompleteness and unfulfilment?'

The individual may hold inferior opinions of his rank, social position, importance and other qualities, and may try to win recognition for himself by boastful and aggressive behaviour.

2.4.4.1.5 INCONSISTENCY AND INCONGRUENCE

Overcompensatory reactions tend to result in behavioural inconsistencies. Leon Festinger (1957 :3) has demonstrated, on the basis of empirical investigation, that if inconsistency is present in the individual, he will tend to explain or rationalise inconsistencies. If the inconsistency (which Festinger calls 'dissonance') remains, it may give rise to psychological discomfort. In this regard Byrne (1966 : 275) claims that:

' Whenever an incongruity exists between self and experience, psychological maladjustment occurs, and there is vulnerability to anxiety, threat and disorganization.'

In one's endeavour to actualise self-esteem needs one tries to reduce or avoid incongruent factors, including such elements as information and situations which are likely to increase dissonance.

2.4.4.1.6 CONCLUSION

On the basis of these conclusions by psychologists we may hypothesise that a child who comes from a disadvantaged socio-economic milieu and, as a consequence, suffers material want, and low social standing, tends to lack the sound foundation which will enable him to build a healthy self-image in terms of self-acceptance. Although the environment of the child is an extremely potent determinant of self-esteem needs, it may be assumed that hereditary factors also play a (albeit a less determinate) role in the formative development of the child's self-esteem. (cf. par. 2.4.5.2).

In acknowledging the private and social significance of self-esteem needs, on the one hand, we face the fact on the other that little is known about conditions or experiences enhancing or lessening it.

2.4.4.2 SELF-ESTEEM AS AN ATTITUDE

2.4.4.2.1 PROBLEMS OF DEFINITION

The concept 'attitude' has been used by theorists to denote a diversity of things, resulting in the attribution of more than one meaning to it, thereby calling the very status of the concept into question.

Allport (1967 : 3) shows that the term 'attitude' has been derived etymologically from the Latin aptus signifying 'fitness' or 'adaptedness'. On closer examination, Allport concludes that we need to distinguish between mental and motor attitudes, the former of which enjoys the greater recognition in modern psychology. Since the labelling of an attitude as being either 'mental' or 'motor' is a debatable issue (which has given rise, interalia, to the classical body-mind dualism) it would appear that the formulation of an acceptable definition is still a complex matter. After much consideration Allport (1967 : 8) concludes that:

'An attitude is a mental or neural state of readiness, organized through experience upon the individual's response to all objects and situations with which it is related' ;

in a definition which has attained tacit recognition as a statement of consensus.

2.4.4.2.2 ATTITUDE AS A LOGICO-HYPOTHETICAL CONSTRUCT

Considering the fact that people generally develop attitudes towards whatever they experience in their relationship with the world external to themselves, as well as within themselves, Doob (1967 : 43) attempts to relate the concept of attitude to behavioural patterns. He is of the opinion that an attitude is:

'...an implicit, drive-producing response considered socially significant in the individual's society.'

It is self-evident that attitudes are determined by both private and social factors. Since this is the case, it would appear that not all attitudes can be studied directly as unitary manifestations and that we may derive inferences regarding certain attitudes on the grounds of observed regularities in the behaviour of the individuals in private and collective situations. Accordingly, the notion of attitude may be regarded as a mere logico-hypothetical construct (New encyclopaedia Britannica, 1974, 2 : 360)

2.4.4.2.3 SELF-ESTEEM AS AN EVALUATIVE ATTITUDE

Coopersmith (1967 : 4) is one of several theorists who considers self-esteem to be an evaluative attitude.

Although it is generally conceded that most attitudes may be considered unequivocally as either positive or negative, there are other attitudes which cannot be readily classified (e.g. an attitude of neutrality, a judicial attitude, an attitude of amusement, open-mindedness, tolerance, etc.)

Coopersmith has defined self-esteem in terms of evaluative attitudes towards the self. This enabled him to measure both behavioural (overt) and subjective (covert) expressions of self-esteem against variables to which self-esteem pertains. Through verbal reports and other openly expressed modes of behaviour, the individual conveys subjective experiences. Self-esteem, by implication, can therefore be viewed in a context of both personal and interpersonal behaviour.

2.4.4.2.4 SELF-ESTEEM AND EGOCENTRICITY

H.A. Murray identifies a range of attitudes in man. One of these attitudes, viz. that relating to ambitions, is divided into two needs which Murray calls 'the need for achievement' and that for 'recognition'. Man's desire for recognition is equated to a 'self-forwarding attitude' by Murray (cited in Mc Clelland, 1955 : 63).

In the same vein, Allport (1938 : 169) asserts that all the philosophies of egoism stress the demand for self-magnification in human nature. Egoism is normally contrasted to altruism. Altruism is the general disposition which tends to regard the interests of others. Extreme egocentricity essentially manifests itself as the furthering of selfish attitudes. The egocentric individual is consequently inclined towards promoting his self-esteem through the instrumentality of self-interested conduct (Williams, 1973 : 250 - 51), which becomes a form of self-aggrandisement or power-seeking.

Allport (1938 : 167) remarks on the desire for power:

'Every man is inescapably a Machtmensch; his most coveted experience is the enhancement of his self-esteem and his most ineradicable trait is vanity' ,

this suggesting, rather forcefully, an inextricable link between self-esteem and a measure of egocentricity.

2.4.4.2.5 CONCLUSION

It is evident from the literature on the topic that the concept of

self-esteem embraces innumerable distinct characteristics which cannot be wholly described by any single numerical index. Felker (1974 : 31) summarises this consensus in an apt conclusion:

'There seem to be too many variables involved, such as feelings, attitudes, desires, etc. which are internal and cannot be controlled in a manner acceptable to an experimental psychologist.'

On the basis of these conclusions it would appear that the attitude of self-esteem is complex, and that attitudes play a major role in human experiences of self-esteem.

2.4.4.3 SELF-ESTEEM AS A SENTIMENT

Allport (1938 : 171) contends that

'One cannot treat self-esteem or self-regard as an entity; for basically co-extensive with life itself, it enters into all sentiments and traits, which are after all merely channels of primordial (non-psychological) life-principle.'

2.4.4.3.1 SENTIMENT vs. EMOTION

As a result of conceptual differentiation, 'emotions' and 'sentiments' cannot be equated semantically as synonyms or interchangeable terms. The emotional content of a sentiment amount to much more than an interest. 'Emotions' are described as 'the moving of feelings' (Chambers' twentieth century dictionary 1968 : 346). 'Sentiments', on the other hand, are defined as 'thought, or a body of thought, tinged with emotion' (Chambers' twentieth century dictionary, 1968 : 1008). In this definition it is implied that the subject's feelings are bound up with an object.

Vernon (1971 : 112-3) asserts that a sentiment is formed when emotions group themselves around particular objects, persons or ideas. From this we may deduce that sentiments have greater strength than emotions, and that their effect on behaviour is likely to be more intense. As in the case of attitudes, sentiments also widen in scope as the individual grows older, cumulatively embracing a great diversity of personality facets in his life. One or more distinct elements in

the individual's corpus of sentiments are normally dominant. Love, hate and respect are generally recognised as the more common manifestations of sentiment in man (Vernon, 1971 : 113).

Sentiments are therefore not pure emotions, since they cannot exist in isolation from relationships to persons or objects. Shaffer (1936 : 109) rightly claims, moreover, that different people and objects elicit different emotions and behavioural patterns at different times.

2.4.4.3.2 THE SELF-REGARDING SENTIMENT

An important characteristic of sentiments is their orderliness. As we relate to the world of objects and people we organise our lives and reactions. Not all sentiments are equally significant. The strongest sentiment is that which is centred around the individual himself. In his Social psychology (1949 : 109) Mc Dougall calls it the 'self-regarding sentiment' or 'the self-sentiment'. In the definition of his concept Mc Dougall stresses the fact that sentiments are organised in accordance with the individual's emotional tendency to an object or person.

Mc Dougall (1943 : 150) considers that the growth of self-consciousness has a bearing on the self-regarding sentiment. He goes on to maintain that 'self-regard' appears to be the best generic term for all sentiments, such as self-respect, self-esteem, self-love, pride, and ambition, each of which is a distinctive type of self-regard (Mc Dougall, 1943 : 150). The shorter Oxford English dictionary, 1936 : 1690) defines the word 'regard' as 'to take notice of; bestow attention upon; to take or show an interest in; to give heed to; to regard something or someone is to treat it as being of special value, excellence and merit.'

The concepts 'selfishness', 'egoism', 'egotism', 'vanity', 'conceit', 'megalomania', 'swell-headedness', 'bumptiousness', 'pushfulness', 'masterfulness', and 'aggressiveness' which Mc Dougall includes under the collective term 'self-regard' are all manifestations of the self-image, varying in intensity (Mc Dougall, 1935 : 233).

The self and the self-regarding sentiment are so inextricably inter-related that they cannot be studied in isolation. This results from the complex interaction between individuals in society. Mead (1934 : 48) concludes that

'The self arises in conduct, when the individual becomes a social object in experience to himself'

2.4.4.4.3.3 THE INTERACTIONARY NATURE OF SELF-REGARD

The self-regarding sentiment is further elucidated by Allport as the interacting pattern of all the basic motives of the individual. Shaffer (1936 : 110) considers the self-regarding sentiment as the interaction of conditioned emotional motives. Cattell, again, asserts that all sentiments are related to one another through a master sentiment, called the self-sentiment. He further believes that one always tries to integrate these attitudes in legitimate and socially acceptable expressions (Cattell, 1965 : 168 - 9). He stresses that

'... the term sentiment is applied to any habitual modification, due to learning, whether it be of a single drive or an aggregate of drives, having confluent satisfaction in the behaviour concerned' (Cattell, 1950 : 243)

Wylie also uses the generic concept 'self-regard' as a collective one embracing the subsidiary concepts 'self-satisfaction', 'self-acceptance', 'self-esteem', 'self-favourability', and 'congruence between the self and the ideal self' (Wylie, 1974 : 128). Mc Dougall, who implicitly endorses Wylie's view of the hierarchical status of self-regard, considers the self-regarding sentiment as the main source of our most intense emotional experiences : it consequently sustains all our endeavours (Mc Dougall, 1935 : 233).

2.4.4.4.3.4 CONCLUSION

It therefore seems axiomatic that the self-regarding sentiment potentially has a dominant influence on man's behavioural manifestations. Moreover, self-esteem cannot in any way be regarded as being co-existent with tangible objects, owing to its private and abstract nature.

It is rather a concept which is impregnated in the individual's private and social sphere of life.

2.4.5

PREREQUISITES FOR A HEALTHY SELF-ESTEEM

The development of a degree of self-esteem presupposes the precedence of certain conditions which are required to enable the individual to evaluate himself.

It is generally agreed that parental warmth, a sense of belonging (affiliation) and competence and worth on the part of the individual are among the major factors which lead to increased self-esteem (Felker, 1974 : 43 - 57). Even before these factors have a marked influence on the individual, he should have experienced certain conditions. Generally, the prerequisites discussed in 2.4.5.1 - 2.4.5.4 precede self-evaluation. One esteems or views oneself as being worthwhile if these conditions prevail.

2.4.5.1

SELF-CONSCIOUSNESS

Consciousness and self-consciousness cannot be equated conceptually. Not all experience involve ego-reference. Certain experiences occur in the life of the individual without having an effect on his personal life (Allport, 1938 : 159). As children grow older, their motivation becomes increasingly modified through diversification of interests and subsequent behaviour. The child gradually associates the self with certain types of motivation (extrinsic or intrinsic). He associates himself with types of behaviour in order to protect the self against threat and humiliation (Vernon, 1971 : 34).

The infant, from birth to approximately 5 years of age, appears to be unaware of himself as an independent self. He is vague and often simple with regard to affairs pertaining to his self. His idea of himself as an entity is sketchy, but he gradually builds up an ego-ideal which is conditioned, initially by his parents' wishes, and later by what is approved and idealised by the peer-group.

On the whole psychologists agree that children are already aware of their independent selfhood at the age of three. This is often called the 'stubbornness phase', which is characterised by child-expressions such as 'my doll', 'it is mine', etc. The enhancement of a conscious self takes place in a very definite manner (Vernon 1971 : 34 - 5). Allport concludes that increase of self-esteem in the child is due to the fact that he has developed adequacy of memory and speech and that his capacity to abstract is increasing. (Allport, 1938 : 160). The line between what is 'I' and 'not I' is now marked. In this regard cf. Piaget's view in par. 5.7.2.

2.4.5.2 LEARNING

All children have a capacity for learning. Even the most severely handicapped can learn, for example, to respond to the rattle of the food trolley (Yardley, 1972 : 25).

Studies conducted by Eysenck and Jensen suggest that heredity accounts for 20% of the child's behaviour and environment (cf. par. 2.4.4.1.6) for the remaining 80% (Tobias, 1974, 2 : 7). It is significant that the greater part of the child's behavioural expressions are acquired through learning (cf. par. 2.1). Learning has been defined as

'... the relatively permanent change in a behavioural tendency which is brought about as a result of re-inforced practice.' (Wickelgren, 1977 : 17)

Age is an inseparable factor of learning. Physical development and maturation, in the psychical sense, do not proceed at the same tempo, but there is normally a correlation between the developmental states of a child's intellect and body.

Children are emergent: as they grow older their attitudes change and new ones are formed (cf. par. 3.9.3.11). Gergen considers the implications of individual development in this context:

'... self-evaluation may develop and shift over time as the individual encounters varying learning experiences.' (Gergen, 1971 : 35).

Behaviour can only be acquired when individual beings can perceive change and assimilate new ways and ideas. By acquiring information about the probable consequences of certain behavioural forms, the child experiences the outcome of acquired behaviour. These possible behaviour-forms and their consequences influence the individual's preferences and choices. The individual's self-evaluation, self-appraisal and subsequent self-esteem are shaped in accordance with his preferences.

The child also learns to internalise the expectations of others with whom he has significant relationships, such as parents, teachers and peers (Shaw and Dutton, 1945 : 493 - 500). In this regard cf. par. 3.11.2.

2.4.5.3

MATURATION

'Maturity' is derived from the Latin word maturatio, which implies development to one's full potential. The maturing individual expresses

'... mental and emotional qualities which are considered normal for a socially-adjusted person'
(Webster's third new international dictionary, 1961 : 1394).

Maturation processes predominate in embryological development as well as in the structural features of human growth, but the development of personality characteristics seems influenced primarily by learning. Personality development (e.g. formation of the self-image) is in fact also dependent upon maturation. Language acquisition is an example of the close interaction of maturation and learning (Mischel, 1971 : 244).

Maturation effects are evident in the individual's mental life and physical constitution. It is generally assumed that a parallel rate of maturation between body and mind leads to a healthy adjustment of the individual.

Jourard observes, furthermore, that a person who regards himself in a positive light is socially and personally well-adjusted (Jourard, 1971 : 25 - 30). A well-adjusted person normally sees his self-concept as being congruent with his experiences (Byrne, 1966 : 305). Such a person holds himself in high esteem. Incongruence between one's aspirations (i.e. 'ideal self') and one's actual experience may result in relatively low self-esteem. (cf. par. 2.4.4.1.5)

Jourard warns that the strength of the status-drive in man should not be underrated. He argues that the fanatical quest for status is in reality a means of compensating for the lack of fulfilment of personal needs (Jourard, 1963 : 35) (cf also the conclusion of par. 2.4.4.2.4). Vance Packard contends that, among other factors, status-striving comes with maturity:

'Many people are distressed and scared by anxieties generated by the unending process of rating and status-striving
(Packard, 1959 :7).

Like learning, a certain degree of maturity needs to have been accomplished before adequate self-esteem may be attained.

2.4.5.4 SUGGESTION

The word 'suggestion' is derived from the Latin suggerere, meaning 'to put any idea, proposition or impulse into the mind; to influence the mind of someone' (Webster's third new international dictionary, 1961 : 167).

Allport postulates that

'... suggestion is the acceptance of a proposition for belief or action in the absence of complete self-determination' (Allport, 1938 : 167).

Suggestion which plays an important part in the formation and development of the child's self-esteem is often characterized by the emphatic tone of the commanding words 'must' or 'shall' : e.g. 'you shall do that', 'you must attend Sunday school' (Allport, 1938 : 166).

Suggestion is normally conveyed through a process of verbalisation. Parents and other adults in authority (e.g. the teacher) talk to the child and consciously or unconsciously suggest norms, patterns of behaviour, attitudes and beliefs to the child. The child's desired participation in cultural or national activities are considered as forms of suggestion. Valentine believes that the influence of suggestion on conduct is significantly reflected in the case of children :

'... the greater the child's affection or admiration for the suggester, the more likely is the suggestion to work' (Valentine, 1963 : 165).

Valentine further contends that suggestion is usually dominated by two sources: (a) the child's personal desires, needs and impulses, and (b) the influence of the suggester, through manifestations of prestige or affection (1963 : 165). Valentine immediately cautions us that innate individual differences in children should not be lost sight of.

It is difficult to determine at what age suggestion generally starts to play an important role in the child's development of self-esteem. Valentine sheds more light on this aspect of suggestion:

'As the child grows older the dominant leaders among his companions begin to acquire a prestige which, while very different from that of the parent, may begin to rival it in influence within a limited circle of action' (1963 : 166).

Before adolescence the peer group or gang may be significant in its influence. Although Lecky reports that the self resists change and strives for consistency (cited in Purkey, 1970 : 11); we must also bear in mind that the young child is vulnerable, impressionable and servile (i.e. prone to acceptance without further thinking). However, the self will change if conditions are favourable, which will lead to the growth in self-esteem.

2.4.6 DETERMINANTS OF SELF-ESTEEM

2.4.6.1 PIGMENTATION AND RACIAL GROUP IDENTITY

In a thesis, Black child, white child (1971), Judith Porter deals with group identity, which refers to the individual's feelings about himself as a member of a racial group, including his acceptance or rejection of racial affiliation.

Personal identity (i.e. as opposed to group identity) is directly associated with one's esteem for oneself, i.e. how one feels about oneself on a deeply personal level and one's basic sense of personal worth and adequacy (Porter, 1971 : 141) (cf. par. 2.4.1.).

In a survey conducted among Negro and White children Porter ascertained that, in regard to group identity, self-concept among Black Americans was lower than among White Americans. Many Black children rejected themselves on a racial basis and disliked or were ambivalent towards the fact that they were Black (Porter, 1971 : 160).

Normally, our expectations for ourselves begin to take shape during childhood. These expectations are often based on the image we have of adults we admire. It follows naturally that those by whom the child is surrounded daily serve as models against whom he measures himself. At birth one has no self-concept, yet one may encounter social prejudice that may adversely affect one's self-concept when one has grown up (Calhoun and Acocella, 1978 : 68).

It is commonly found that contemporary society attaches value to factors such as pigmentation and racial group identity. Within the South African context, Momberg and Page conducted a study to trace the correlation between the self-esteem of Coloured and White scholars and students. Subjects were tested on the Coopersmith self-esteem inventory in six groups, viz. English-speaking Whites, Afrikaans-speaking Whites and Coloureds, each contributing a school level (Std. 4) and a university attendance sample.

In the case of the student sample, it was evident that level self-esteem were comparable among Coloureds and Whites. However, among the school children, being Afrikaans or being Coloured did seem to affect self-esteem. Although the English did not display much difference from the other two groups, they seem to have been less defensive in their response to certain items in the scale. The researchers, moreover, concluded that the fact that the self-esteem index among groups of students was relatively similar, was attributable to the fact that they were an élite selection of the population in general (Momberg & Page, 1977 : 181).

Although one cannot deny the power of suggestion, pertaining to racial influence, the degree to which individual attitudes are representative of the society as a whole is unknown. Regardless of race, variables such as the emotional climate in the home, wealth, the status of parents in society and the child's academic performance, contribute to the development of the self-concept. Klein, Levine and Charry (1979 : 288) conclude from their research of the effects of skin colour of children that

'.... features other than skin colour may compete for the child's attention and are important in shaping children's racial preferences and self-esteem.'

2.4.6.2 FAMILY, NEIGHBOURHOOD AND SOCIAL GROUP

Stone and Church (1965 : 147) claim that whatever the child does, he is obliged to do it with reference to the particular social climate in which development takes place. As he grows older, he

learns many things on his own, on the basis of his encounters with people, objects and situations. In this regard Spitzer (1977 : 78) asserts that

'The child who explores well in his exploration of the environment will achieve this esteem [i.e. self-esteem] and be reinforced in his future explorations.'

The various situations in which a child finds himself include domains such as the home and that outside the home, e.g. the family environment and the larger society. Invariably the child will also be exposed to various people, in particular his parents in the initial stage, and later to other people, ranging from members of the family to mere strangers in society. It would appear to be fallacious to separate the child's family and his social group into which he was born, when one takes the development of his self-concept into consideration. In this regard Calhoun and Acocella (1978 : 71) asserts that

'... one of the most crucial steps in the development of the self-concept is the infant's learning to value his parents as very special features of his environment.'

Hetherington and Parke (1977 : 277) posit the notion that the family has traditionally been viewed as the primary source of socialisation of children:

'... early contacts with parents are likely to be critical in shaping children's self-concepts, their expectations in interpersonal relations, and their competence in social situations.'

Initially the parents and later the whole family will serve as models for the child's development. Their actions, attitudes and values, as communicated to the child, will serve as a framework around which the child will organise his or her perceptions of himself and subsequent, appropriate social conduct.

The attitudes, social standards and values of the family are implicitly derived from the influence which emanates from their

neighbourhood and more specifically from their social group. In fact, every cultural grouping (cf. par. 2.1) has certain norms to which most adult members subscribe. T.S. Eliot provides a concise and uncontroversial definition of culture, viz.:

'By "culture", then, I mean first of all what anthropologists mean: the way of life of a particular people living together in one place' (Eliot, 1948 : 120).

On this matter of 'culture', Pratt (1978 : 36) comments:

'The handing on of behaviour patterns - ways of doing things, or "customs" as we sometimes say - from one generation to the next is, one may say, the core of what is referred to by the term "tradition" or "culture".'

In the same vein Vernon (1975 : 35) also maintains that social group relationships which are conditioned by 'tradition' or 'culture' affect self-evaluation on the part of the individual. In many cases, for example, a culture will stress achievement and associate certain material symbols with levels of achievement (Babladelis, 1967 : 261). Vernon considers that people esteem themselves highly by virtue of their socially desirable characteristics (Vernon, 1971 : 104). Vernon's claim is supported by Packard's observation that the Americans' behaviour, social status and resultant self-esteem are reflected in the nuances of their speech, demeanour, taste, drinking and dining patterns, and their favourite pastimes. People are esteemed accordingly by others but at the same time enhance their own self-esteem (Packard, 1959 : 139).

In summary, it may be contended that children who grow up in family situations which lack support for emotional development and who find themselves in a culturally-deprived social environment, may in its extreme form contribute towards the development a negative self-concept and consequently a low level of self-esteem (cf. also par. 2.4.6.4).

2.4.6.3 ACHIEVEMENT AND COMPETITION

There are considerable differences in the manner in which individuals

set their levels of aspiration. Much depends on one's interest, intelligence and how much it matters whether one succeeds or fails. Hamachek (1978 : 189) points out that there is substantial evidence in the literature of a correlation between the individual's self-concept and his achievement.

The concept 'achievement' refers to 'a result brought about by resolve, persistence or endeavour' (Webster's new collegiate dictionary, 1977 : 10). The verb 'compete' refers 'to strive consciously or unconsciously for an objective; to be in a state of rivalry' (Webster's new collegiate dictionary, 1977 : 230).

McClelland and others (1953) report the results of a study of a single motive, viz. the need for achievement as being central to any individual. The principle is endorsed by society and inculcated into its children (cf. par. 2.4.6.3). The need for achievement is deemed important to actual accomplish in various achievement and competitive situations (Birney, et al, 1969 : 1). Although achievement motivation is associated with a diversity of goals, it is on the whole directed towards the attainment of some degree of excellence (Vernon, 1971 : 121).

Most psychologists are in agreement regarding the importance of the need for achievement. Whether achievement motives of this nature are innate, acquired, or both, there is general consensus that such motives dominate the greater part of the individual's behaviour. Since one's self-concept is a product of learning (cf. par. 2.3.4f), and the self-concept emerges from the fact that one constantly compares oneself with other people (2.3.6a) it can safely be contended that achievement is an acquired phenomenon.

Murray, further, elaborates on the social aspect of the achievement motive. The individual is inclined to attempt organising and manipulating his environment. He, moreover, attempts to excel in whatever is undertaken and, in this way, to enhance his self-esteem (Murray, 1965 : 97).

2.4.6.3.1 FAILURE IN ACHIEVEMENT

It is normal to feel distressed when one encounters academic and behavioural failure. These situations may have a deleterious effect on one's self-evaluation and resultant behavioural expressions (Felker, 1974 : 93 - 95). Since the individual fears failure, he will normally set his aspirations carefully in life. In this way he assumes a protective position which is designed to ensure the attainment of his aspirations. Whenever the individual claims to have no fear of failure it may be assumed that such a person, on the whole, is either deluding himself or feigning indifference to protect his sense of dignity among others (Birney, et al, 1969 : 29).

2.4.6.3.2 THE IMPORTANCE OF SUCCESS

It is generally agreed that poor performance tends to lower one's self-esteem, while successful achievement is likely to raise it.

Gibson (1978 : 365) argues that the child's self-concept is closely tied up with his concept of ability, i.e. his attitudes to scholastic and social skills. Therefore, success or failure, and rewards or punishments, as encountered by children seem to be of immense importance for the development of the child's concept of his own ability and resultant self-esteem. However, it is not always likely that children will experience the degree of success of which they believe they are capable. Such a situation in which success is not accomplished may subsequently constitute threat and unpleasantness for the individual. Escapism (cf. par. 2.1, last paragraph) is often a means adopted to avoid such situations (Van Niekerk, 1976 : 44). In this regard Cohen maintains that people with high self-esteem show a preference for avoidance of defences if their self-esteem is jeopardised (Cohen; 1959 : 102).

2.4.6.3.3 ACCOMPLISHMENT OF SUCCESS

It appears that the close relationship between self-esteem and achievement tends to have an acute influence on individual behaviour. Numerous educational programmes have been designed to ensure greater achievement of success. Gibson (1978 : 365) believes that behaviour-

management programmes benefit the child to the extent that it strengthens the child's positive responses to certain situations or people. A large number of other educational research programmes have also been conducted in this field. Moore, for example, conducted a study of reading, in which culturally-disadvantaged children were selected to dramatise stories. Significant changes were detected in their self-concept after the experiment had been conducted (Moore, 1925 : 125 -130). Dramatising the various stories presupposes that the children have read the stories under the guidance of a teacher. After a brief discussion of the content of the story, impromptu role-playing of various characters or situations takes place. In this manner children have to identify with the character or situation and consciously or unconsciously reinforce desirable values, or become aware of undesirable values, if any. They will develop self-esteem accordingly.

In conclusion, it would appear that, as a rule, although achievement, culminating in success, is believed to heighten self-regard, a great deal of evidence is needed before it can be assumed beyond question that self-esteem determines personal performance or that achievement shapes self-esteem.

2.4.6.4 WARMTH AND SELF-ESTEEM

Rogers theorises that human qualities, such as warmth, genuineness and empathy, contribute to positive self-regard among recipients of these gifts (Rogers, 1975 : 63).

2.4.6.4.1 PARENTAL INFLUENCE AND WARMTH

Parents play a dominant role in the life of the child who is exposed to the process of maturation. Parents often train their children and therefore expect them to behave in ways these parents find acceptable (cf. 2.4.6.2). In many instances the child's self-regard is dependent on the parents' attitude and regard for him. It has been claimed that children are happier and higher in self-esteem when their parents treat them with warmth (Calhoun and Acocella, 1978 : 65). Characteristics, such as acceptance,

affection, approval and understanding, are normally assumed to be encompassed under the term 'warmth' (Mussen, Conger & Kagan, 1969 : 484 - 485).

Studies indicate that the care, protectiveness and affection from parents are not limited to a particular level of social standing (Waters & Crandall, 1964, 35 : 1021). Such human qualities are not dependent on material conditions such as wealth, for example (cf. Packard's argument in par. 2.4.6.2).

Moreover, it appears that the exercise of power and the amount of tenderness and affection given to children, vary from father to mother. It has been alleged that the mother's expression of warmth varies according to the mother's needs. Aggressive mothers, on the whole, tend to have a less close relationship with their children and do not express much affection (Crandell & Preston, 1961, 32 : 261). Furthermore, mothers who have learnt to come to terms with themselves are in a better position to display warmth and protection, and in this way, to enhance the child's self-esteem (Medinnus & Curtis, 1963, 27 : 542).

2.4.6.4.1.1 ABSENCE OF ONE PARENT

The presence of a father-figure and the warmth he displays is of great importance for the child's self-concept. It is likely that in the event of the father's absence from the family (e.g. owing to death or working conditions), the child may display emotional disorders affecting his self-concept. Emotional disorders may range from the effects of having to explain to others where his father is to developing weak abilities pertaining to a father-figure through lack of identification. Mussen, Conger and Kagan conclude on the basis of their research that the same-sex parent serves as an identification-model and that the absence of him or her may have significant effects. This fact was not only evidenced in the event of the illegitimacy of children, but in numerous other contexts. For example, during World War 11, the protracted separation of American fathers from their families, resulted in their sons reflecting low self-esteem (Mussen, Conger

& Kagan, 1969 : 429 - 95).

One experiences a trend towards greater permissiveness in family patterns. Pistorius alleges that such conditions are directly attributable to the influence of the mass media and a more liberal approach to social affairs, accompanied by a detrimental degree of secularisation in general, on the institution of 'family' (1971 : 164). Numerous families are headed by only one parent, owing to divorce, desertion, separation, death or other causes, such as illegitimacy. Research indicates that divorce as such does not necessarily have a marked effect on the emotional development of the children concerned. In fact, they are not more disturbed, emotionally, than other children (Gibson, 1978 : 268).

It appears that the child's age at the time of the divorce is a more critical factor in the determination of his emotional adjustment. Likewise, illegitimacy of children is a phenomenon which is becoming increasingly accepted in society, which in turn offers fewer problems for the child's adjustment and formation of self-concept (Gibson, 1978 : 269). Pistorius argues that one should not overlook the exceptions to this rule. Children of widowed or divorced parents, as well as children fostered by others, tend to feel they lack the necessary attention, contact with others and subsequent acceptance which they would have experienced in a normal family situation. These conditions are likely to cause problems for the child who is in the vulnerable position of forming his self-concept (Pistorius, 1971 : 164).

2.4.6.4.1.2 CONCLUSION

In summary, we may infer that lack of parental guidance and relatively harsh and disrespectful treatment of children are characteristic of parents of children of low self-esteem. This might produce some tendency to maladjustment in the child as he grows older. The notion of maladjustment appears to be the consequence, primarily of problems in relationships between people (e.g. members of the family). This has been accepted by most

It should be borne in mind that the child's self-esteem will have become relatively well-established during the middle-childhood period (i.e. in the age group ranging from 6 to 10 years), but that self-esteem is an emotional component resulting in the fact that it is 'neither global nor fixed' (Gergen, 1971 : 37). Other factors, such as age, sex, social class and intelligence play an important role. Clearly, people differ from each other to the extent that they possess independent personalities. One cannot generalise or merely claim that the expression and manifestation of a certain form of behaviour (e.g. leadership) is necessarily indicative of the individual's realistic self-esteem. One should, however, take into account that the average person has

'... an insatiable need for the maintenance and enhancement of the self; not the physical self - but the phenomenal self, of which the individual is aware, his self-concept' (Combs, 1965 : 8).

2.4.8 THE MEASUREMENT OF SELF-ESTEEM

The measurement of self-esteem needs to be accounted for. The question arises as to how one can gain a positive and realistic image of an individual's worth. Although self-esteem is generally assumed to be a major factor in measuring personal behaviour, relatively little research has thus far been directed towards clarifying its importance and dynamics (Coopersmith, 1959 : 87 - 93). Coopersmith's claim still holds for the present.

Crowne and Stephens claim to have identified the more important problems of self-esteem measurement. The first problem is that researchers tend to work with a rather narrow operational definition of self-esteem. Other problems include the various measurement devices which have been developed to measure self-esteem (e.g. questionnaires, check-lists and rating scales). They also argue that in many instances the test has effectively become the construct (i.e. self-esteem) itself. Deficiencies which are inherent in these variables (i.e. the measurement devices, check lists, etc.) tend to distort the research procedure and results (Crowne & Stephens, 1961 : 104 - 121). It appears as though these problems are still being encountered today.

schools of psychology. Since the interaction among family members has been disturbed in such cases, family therapy and, to some extent, group therapy, seems to offer the best solution (Calhoun & Acocella, 1978 : 199).

2.4.6.4.2 THE TEACHER'S INFLUENCE AND WARMTH

Affection, praise and warmth from parents and such displays of goodwill on the part of teachers are considered to be of equal importance. Moustakas believes that by holding the child in esteem and expressing sincere interest in him, the teacher actually facilitates a climate of healthy growth and development (Moustakas, 1966 : 13). Since the self-concept is a social creation (cf. par. 2.3.4f), i.e. the result of one's interpersonal relationships, it implies that the school, and especially the teacher, with whom the school-going child spends the greater part of his wakeful day, inevitably exert a significant influence on him.

In order for the child to be able to experience a healthy emotional life, he is compelled to build a positive system of self-evaluation. To attain this goal he relies on a number of people important in his sphere of interest among whom the teacher features prominently (Felker, 1974 : 40).

Normally the child's first teacher is a woman. She often acts as a substitute mother. Women, by common consensus, are generally considered more nurturant than men, although it should be borne in mind that the claim is still largely unsubstantiated. The motivation and inspiration deriving from the teacher, as a matter of course, determine the social climate in the classroom. This, in turn, will facilitate the child's social adaptation and the growth of his self-concept.

Cogan claims, for example, that when teachers display consideration and warmth, more original poetry and art are produced by high-school pupils (Cogan, 1958 : 89 - 124). Christensen, in studies analogous to those of Cogan, finds that the warmth of teachers is significantly related to their pupils' vocabulary and achievement in arithmetic (Christensen, 1960 : 169 - 74).

2.4.6.4.3 CONCLUSION

There is enough support for the assumption that achievement, in whatever domain, tends to heighten one's self-regard. We may, therefore, conclude that the warmth of parents (which leads to a positive self-image) and the warmth of teachers towards pupils (which enhances their achievement), as a matter of course, tend to raise the child's general level of self-esteem. Thus, warmth serves as a 'hidden' or unquantifiable stimulus which has proved indispensable for the healthy cultivation of the self-concept.

2.4.7 MANIFESTATIONS OF SELF-ESTEEM

Buss proposes a number of qualities ranked by forty-two psychologists as indices of self-esteem, including such manifestations as self-exaltation, pomposity, conceit, boastfulness, vanity, cockiness, confidence, modesty, humility, self-doubt, self-effacement, self-deprecation and self-abasement. These manifestations rank from too much to too little esteem (Buss, 1973 : 495).

Lowe considers that certain parts of the self-concept are peripheral to the core of the self, and are therefore unstable, while other parts, which are central to the self are, as a result, highly resistant to change (Lowe, 1961 : 325 - 36). While the core of one's self-esteem is more or less permanent and dependent on innate factors, parental love and other social factors, the peripheral aspects of self-esteem involve daily or weekly events. A history of past successes usually leads to high aspirations and expectations of further achievement (Buss, 1973 : 496).

2.4.7.1 TYPES OF BEHAVIOURAL MANIFESTATIONS

Resulting from the distinction alluded to above (i.e. between the core and periphery of the self-concept) we may distinguish two types of self-judgements and subsequently two types of behavioural manifestations. On the one hand one expresses temporary, specific behavioural patterns which are transient in nature and limited by time and place, while on the other hand one also expresses enduring, general behavioural patterns which are indicative of one's basic life experiences (Buss, 1973 : 495).

2.4.7.2 IDIOSYNCRATIC NATURE OF MANIFESTATIONS

Bearing in mind that certain things are more important to the individual than others, one should also be mindful of the fact that idiosyncratic differences manifest themselves (Verville, 1967 : 14-5). The need for affection and for achievement are normal and adaptive processes, but not when carried to extreme. Without a sufficient core of self-esteem the individual needs continual reassurance of his own worth (Verville, 1967 : 84-5). Expressions of self-esteem at the two opposite extremes will, of course, reflect either too little or too much of this quality in an individual. The average, fairly well-adjusted individual, therefore, displays confident, but appropriately moderate, behaviour (Murray, 1964 : 94-5).

2.4.7.3 BEHAVIOURAL MANIFESTATIONS WHICH ARE REPRESENTATIVE OF SELF-ESTEEM

Although there is an increasing interest in the individual's perception of himself and of his situation as major influences on his behaviour, it remains obscure which behavioural manifestations are representative of the individual's level of self-esteem. Coopersmith suggests that expressions of the self-concept and of self-esteem in particular can be ascertained by looking upon the subjective concomitants and social consequences of self-esteem, such as independence, leadership and popularity (Coopersmith, 1967 : 28).

It appears that the attainment of leadership which embraces influence and control over the behaviour of others, involves the general tendency to dominate others. One should, however, draw a distinction between dominance and leadership, since there are people who desire to dominate without wishing to exercise leadership. Maslow has related the desire for dominance to feelings of self-confidence and self-esteem (Maslow, 1937 : 404). His argument is that those who are less self-confident, who need admiration and who constantly seek to reassure themselves by attempts to dominate others, normally have a low level of self-esteem. Those who are secure in their self-esteem tend to co-operate rather than compete. Thus, in relations in which one believes himself to be of superior status, one may assume a position of leadership.

2.4.8.1 CONSISTENCY OF SELF-EVALUATION RESEARCH

Many studies in this area have been devoted to demonstrating the different reactions to various situations of persons deemed to be either high or low in self-esteem. The validity and importance of the concept 'self-esteem' depend largely on the consistency of perceivable behavioural expressions (Babladelis & Adams, 1967 : 329). Wylie, in a review of the literature relating to self-esteem constructs, suggests that one of the important deficiencies of research in this area is the apparent absence of concern which researchers have displayed towards the appropriateness of the commonly applied measuring devices for the adequate evaluation of self-concepts (Wylie, 1961 : 152 : 170).

Webster and Sobieszek (1974 : 15 - 16) are critical of self-evaluation research:

'An evaluation may be high or low, good or bad, but these categories are inadequate for describing non-evaluative types of self-referent ideas.'

Their argument is that many empirical studies focus on conceptions of abilities rather than on attitudes. It is alleged that, with regard to self-esteem, one's abilities lend themselves much more readily to being assessed than one's attitudes. However, in many instances, one's abilities do enhance one's attitudes regarding oneself. In measuring self-esteem one is generally measuring the degree of responsiveness to stimuli which evaluate the self. It appears that subjective evaluation of self-esteem is in most instances in agreement with its behavioural expression (Vernon, 1971 : 104).

2.4.8.2 OBJECTIVITY OF HUMAN BEHAVIOUR

Insofar as the proper concern of Menschenkunde (i.e. knowledge of human nature) can be considered an objective study of human behaviour, its mechanisms and its underlying psychological foundations, the question arises as to how human behaviour can be objectified (Hays, 1967 : 4). The attainment of objectivity is, of course, a fundamental goal in general, and therefore of social-scientific interest.

It is often claimed that psychological problems are not amenable to laboratory study, owing to their complexity and temporal duration (Katz, 1967 : 175). White, however, poses the counter-complaint that many social scientists blame 'complexity' for their problems, but are reluctant to explain its nature and seldom attempt to prove that the 'complexity' of phenomena derives essentially from a dearth of scientific rigour (White, 1949 : 22).

Guilford comments on this point:

'If psychology cannot achieve operations of measurements that fit the pattern set by the physical sciences, it should and does proceed to develop its own measurement techniques peculiarly adapted to solving its own problems' (Guilford, 1954 : 2).

Cattell clarifies the position in the qualifying statement:

'Measurement of aspects of human personality, of course, is only a final specialization of description. It can come into its own only when qualitative description has truly ripened' (Cattell, 1946 : 4).

The degree of objectivity in experimental methodology will further depend on the entire measuring procedure, the relationship between respondent and examiner, the instructions, test items, available responses, scoring and interpretation procedures (Mischel, 1971 : 120).

2.4.8.3 LACK OF METHODOLOGY

The fact that no adequate methodology for determining self-esteem has yet been developed, may perhaps be attributed principally to the lack of clear definition. Coopersmith is of the opinion that there is no single theoretical context in which self-esteem can be considered without accepting a number of vague and often unrelated assumptions (Coopersmith, 1959 : 28).

Gergen, in turn, complains that researchers tend to think that the concept 'self-esteem' is too all-embracing and fixed for the purposes of measurement (Gergen, 1971 : 37). It would appear, by

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consensus, as though the concept is too wide to lend itself to 'a final specialization of description' (Cattell, 1946 : 4).

2.4.8.4 QUALITATIVE DISTINCTIONS IN SELF-ESTEEM

Although self-esteem is defined in terms of evaluative attitudes toward the self and measured as behavioural and subjective expressions, it is difficult to distinguish between spontaneous and defensive self-esteem. The qualitative distinctions in self-esteem reflect uncertainties as to how we express our self-esteem and whether it is genuine in its expression. Horney (1949, cf. especially chapter 6) warns against self-appraisal, which is not based on true competence and achievement, but rather on one's idealised pseudo-self.

2.4.8.5 SOURCES OF INFORMATION ON WHICH THE EVALUATION OF ESTEEM IS BASED

A person's measure of esteem can be obtained (a) by self-rating, (b) by others judging his behaviour, or (c) by observing his performance directly (Mischel, 1971 : 118). Rogers (1976 : 414 - 18) takes the position that self-reports (cf. (a) above) are valuable sources of information. In this regard Allport (1938, cf. chapter 11) also maintains that the individual has the right to be believed when he reports his feelings about himself. Both authorities contend that if we want to know more about a person, we should ask him directly. Strong and Feder's general view is:

'Every evaluative statement that a person makes concerning himself can be considered a sample of his self-concept, from which inferences may then be made about the various properties of that self-concept.' (Strong & Feder, 1961 : 170).

However, much criticism regarding self-reports has emerged. The discrepancy between self-concept and self-report is dealt with by Combs, amongst others. He argues that the self-concept constitutes what an individual believes he is and the self-report contains data about what the individual is able and willing to impart about himself. (Combs, 1962 b : 53 : 4). Therefore what the individual believes and what he does are evidently two different things.

2.4.8.6 LIMITATIONS OF SELF-REPORTS

It is difficult to assess the nature and strength of self-esteem, since verbal reports, although used extensively, do not necessarily reveal esteem accurately. Cattell (1950 : 75) comments on the limitations of self-rating methods on the grounds of inadequate scientific foundations:

'....results are easy to get, but except in special conditions, they are not scientifically acceptable as behavioural measures of personality'

Turkat maintains that there is no guarantee that the individual's claim to a particular level of self-esteem necessarily corresponds with his actual feelings of worth (Turkat, 1978 : 130). The evolution of the self, which can only be a rough approximation, depends largely on the co-operation of the subject, his command of adequate symbols of expression, social expectancy and the extent of his immunity of any threat (Purkey, 1970 : 60).

Despite the limitations and weaknesses of self-reports, they do, however, provide insight into the individual's world of self-perceptions, since every spontaneous evaluative statement is considered a sample of his self-concept.

2.4.8.7 TYPES OF SELF-ESTEEM INVENTORIES

A variety of self-report inventories have been compiled by authorities in the field, including the following:

- a) The self-esteem inventory (Coopersmith, 1967).
- b) Q-sort (Stephenson, 1953).
- c) The how-I-see-myself-scale (Gordon, 1966).
- d) Semantic differential (SD) (Osgood, Suci & Tannenbaum, 1957).
- e) Adjective check list (ACL) (Gough & Heilbrun, 1965).
- f) Bledsoe self-concept scale (BSCS) (Bledsoe, 1967).
- g) Rosenberg's self-esteem scale (RSE) (Rosenberg, 1965).
- h) Social self-esteem scale (SSE) (Long, Henderson & Ziller, 1970).
- i) Piers-Harris children's self-concept scale. (PH) (Piers & Harris, 1964).
- j) Sears' test of children's self-esteem. (Larsen & Schwendiman, 1969).

Many empirical self-concept measures have so far appeared in the literature, most of them involving scores purporting to index global self-regard. Wylie (1961) has evaluated most self-evaluation instruments which have attracted the interests of both theoreticians and researchers.

2.4.8.8 PRECAUTIONS IN THE USE OF SELF-REPORT INVENTORIES

These inventories, one needs to caution, should be used judiciously. A host of variables, such as the identity of the subject, his age, sex, level of education, environment and the purpose of the test, have a bearing on the suitability and validity of an inventory selected for a specific purpose.

Ideally, when one attempts to assess self-esteem, one needs training and supervised experience in measurement, personality theory and clinical psychology. However, without such formalised training and knowledge, it is possible within reason for the uninitiated to grasp the concept of self-esteem and to master the means of measuring it.

Whatever the type of inventory used, precautions are necessary to ensure conditions of neutrality while tests are being conducted. In questionnaire situations, for example, it is important that only ideas that subjects commonly hold about themselves should be expressed. Such reports, furthermore, should ideally be subject to strict confidentiality and - preferably - also anonymity.

Since self-reports are viewed with a great deal of scepticism, they can be used in conjunction with significant supportive sources of evidence, such as personal questionnaires. This operational procedure appears to be a valuable element in the effort to eliminate methodological deficiencies within self-esteem research.

2.4.9 CONCLUSION

One's self-concept implies one's mental perception of oneself. It would appear that one's self-concept is a hypothetical idea, referring to a complex set of external and internal variables characteristic of oneself.

The negative extreme of the self-concept is generally based on an unrealistic evaluation and expectations, resulting in low self-esteem. Conversely, a positive self-concept is generally based on realistic evaluation and expectations and a consequential high self-esteem (Calhoun & Acoceila, 1978 : 60).

Although the process of measuring the self-concept, and self-esteem in particular, is clearly a matter of some delicacy, it can be accomplished successfully if the researcher proceeds methodically and adheres closely to external situations pertaining to behavioural manifestations.

Gibson's cautiously phrased conviction in this regard may serve as an apt conclusion to a discussion of the merits of the issue:

'One's concept of ability and self-esteem, once learned, are difficult to change. Once children develop strong beliefs about what their abilities are, they tend to reject all new information inconsistent with these beliefs. Still, many educational programs [e.g. bibliotherapy] designed to change self-concepts and increase self-esteem, are being tried, some of them successfully' (Gibson, 1978 : 365).

3 BIBLIOTHERAPY

3.1 INTRODUCTION

Counsellor librarianship is encompassed in the activities of the profession. It constitutes a method for facilitating human communication between the library user and the librarian.

Maxfield (1954) identifies five levels of counselling which are used for vocational, educational and library purposes:

- (a) Assistance in reference retrieval work: Reference work is a process involving independent fact-finding and problem-solving with the aid of resources the library offers (i.e. reference tools and professional assistance). The librarian, among others, at an advanced level, aids the library user informally in interpreting information for study and research, i.e. performing his hermeneutic function.
- (b) Assistance in subject reference: The subject reference librarian who has special qualifications in a particular subject field, is especially trained to assist the user who is in need of subject-specialised information.
- (c) Motivational counselling: This type of counselling is often referred to as true counselling, since the individual is motivated by the librarian or teacher to raise his level of competence and confidence by means of increasing self-participation in his information-seeking activities.
- (d) Clinical counselling: Assistance in this area involves medical advice and treatment. Librarians who are trained in clinical psychology normally aid the counsellee in matters pertaining to his personality and his view of life. A technique such as bibliotherapy may be used as a means of aiding the counsellee in coming to terms with himself, i.e. ridding himself of problems that may preoccupy him in a detrimental manner.

(e) Psychiatric consultation: Assistance is rendered to individuals in the treatment of mental and emotional disturbances. Very often the librarian who acts as bibliotherapist has to rely on the aid of the psychiatrist when conducting bibliotherapeutic sessions.

3.1.1 BIBLIOTHERAPY AND COUNSELLING

Bibliotherapy, as a specialised and newly evolved aspect of librarianship, is associated with the counselling activities identified in (c), (d) and (e). In general terms, counselling seeks to provide a one-to-one relationship between a patron who seeks better understanding of self or his world and a counsellor (Lejeune, 1978 : 201).

Counselling has a threefold function:

- (a) the interchange of opinions, consultation and deliberation;
- (b) advice and direction as a result of deliberation;
- (c) resolution (Shorter Oxford English dictionary, 1959 : 404).

Teachers, social workers, and librarians are among the array of professionals who are actively involved in counselling relationships. However, Fine warns that

'The functions of 'counselling', that is, helping another to explore and resolve a problem, is not the sole prerogative of the professional counsellor.'
(Fine, 1978 : 30)

The individual who is being counselled is generally referred to as the 'client', 'patron' or 'patient'. 'Client' or 'patron' is used in the case where the individual is not hospitalised. In the context of librarianship, the term 'user' has gained wider acceptance in recent years.

3.1.2 DEVELOPMENTAL COUNSELLING

The concepts 'counselling' and 'guidance' have not always been clearly distinguished. The act of guidance has the general connotation of being confined to directing, leading or giving advice to an individual

(New Encyclopedia Britannica, 1974 : 784), as distinct from counselling, which attempts to remotivate the individual and eliminate perceptions or attitudes which block the individual's development (Penland & Mathai, 1974 : 5). It is essentially a distinction between relatively passive (i.e. marginally involved) and relatively active (i.e. more fully involved) modes of engagement between service-dispenser and client respectively. It would appear that the psychological purpose of counselling is to facilitate client-development - hence the concept 'developmental counselling'. Blocher (1966 : 5-6) views developmental counselling as having a dual purpose, viz. that of facilitating both increased human freedom and greater human effectiveness. These aims are ultimately realised by the individual himself, being assisted by the counsellor whose essential task is to help the former to think clearly.

3.1.3 BIBLIOTHERAPY AND OTHER RELATED CONCEPTS

Other concepts closely related to bibliotherapy are bibliocounselling, biblioprophyllaxis, bibliopsychology and reading-guidance. Rubin, however, argues that they all '... serve informational, instructional and/or guidance needs' (Rubin, 1979 : 241).

(a) Bibliocounselling

Lejeune defines the guidance technique, viz. bibliocounselling, 'as the clinical use of books in guidance and counselling situations that involve personal-social needs and/or problems of individuals or groups for that matter' (cited in Brown, 1975 : 210).

From these two approaches, it would appear that 'bibliocounselling' and 'bibliotherapy' (i.e. the treatment of emotional problems with the aid of books and related material) are virtually interchangeable terms.

Bibliocounselling is used in guidance and counselling situations that relate to personal and social needs. In the counselling situation books are used which carry messages of an appealing nature.

Lejeune (1978 : 205), however, considers bibliotherapy essentially as the vehicle or means by which bibliocounselling is effected, thereby

implying a distinction in terminology. Notwithstanding the apparent distinction between bibliocounselling and bibliotherapy, it would appear that both has qualities which are interrelated, thereby establishing a measure of dependence in their application.

(b) Biblioprohylaxis

The term 'prophylaxis' refers to protective or preventive treatment (Oxford advanced learner's dictionary of current English, 1975 : 682). Biblioprohylaxis, like bibliotherapy, implies a process of therapeutic reading, but as a concept stresses the preventive aspect of bibliotherapy, rather than its remedial or rehabilitating role. The individual is being prepared with the aid of reading material to deal with certain problems which he may encounter in the future.

(c) Bibliopsychology

Bibliopsychology refers to the science of reading that studies the book (as object of reading) in relation to the reader (as subject of the reading act): i.e. it is concerned with what transpires from the reading act. This, in turn, warrants elucidation regarding reading dynamics. Bibliopsychology seeks to understand the mental and other psychological conditions of the reader, in contrast to physiological dynamics, such as eye-movements.

(d) Reader guidance

Reader guidance (cf. also par. 3.1a and b) involves those library activities whose goals are to make available to library users recorded information and to assist users in their needs with regard to reading material. This goal is effected in an objective manner, i.e. without involving the subjective and personal experiences relating to the reader's life.

3.1.4 CONCLUSION

Despite their diversity, the differences and distinctions implied by the above-mentioned concepts, it would appear that three aspects are predominant in each concept, viz. the user or reader, the recorded

information and the librarian - hence the confusion regarding their full and proper concern. To a certain degree some elements implicit in these concepts as a matter of course contribute to the process of bibliotherapy.

The implied terminological issue of this study will further be resolved by gaining greater insight into the nature, coherence and subsequent significance of the term 'bibliotherapy'.

3.2 TOWARDS A DEFINITION

A wide range of terms in the literature of library science and related fields of theory and application in the social sciences are employed in relation to bibliotherapy, such as guidance services, remotivation therapy, discussion or group therapy, resocialisation and rehabilitative reading sessions. The key concepts underlying bibliotherapy, however, are clearly those of reading and of personal maturation or improvement.

Brammer and Shostrom (1977 : 310) point out that many of the principles at issue in the use of bibliotherapeutic material apply to reading material of a general informational nature. The implication of this is evident: where does one draw the distinction between general and therapeutic reading in order to acquaint oneself more fully with the sound nature of bibliotherapy?

3.2.1 MISCONCEPTIONS REGARDING BIBLIOTHERAPY

Misconceptions regarding bibliotherapeutic activity can be prevented by looking objectively at the activities involved in bibliotherapy and the goals to which these activities are directed. Griffin (1978 : 114), for example, cautions that the mere exposure of a person to books or other forms of literature does not necessarily constitute a therapeutic process. This fact will become evident during the course of the ensuing discussion.

In the first instance, bibliotherapy is not wholly as intensive and comprehensive a therapeutic activity if compared to a therapeutic speciality in medicine, such as, for example, occupational therapy.

Moreover, bibliotherapy is not intended to cure illness in itself, nor does it provide a remedy for all emotional maladies; it is not a preaching or teaching activity; it is not directed at remedial reading in the sense of improving one's reading ability or speed, as would commonly apply to the aims of teaching a person to read with adequate skill; it manifests itself neither in the guise of intellectual group discussion nor of the critical evaluation of literature per se.

3.2.2 THE ESSENCE OF BIBLIOTHERAPY

In 1939 bibliotherapy received official recognition in librarianship when the American Library Association's Hospital Division proposed the adoption of the principle of applying therapeutic skills through book-reading. The term 'bibliotherapy' which is derived etymologically from the Greek 'biblion' (book) and 'therapeia' (healing) appeared in Dorland's illustrated medical dictionary (1941), being defined as

'the employment of books and reading of them in the treatment of nervous diseases.'

Griffin, who claims to have learnt much from experience in the field of bibliotherapy defines the concept in a somewhat wider sense as

'...the scientific application of literature toward a therapeutic goal'. (Griffin, 1978 : 114)

It appears, therefore, that a bibliotherapeutic experience involves much more than the mere act of reading a text. Rubin also prefers to define bibliotherapy in a wide sense as

'a program of activity based on the interactive processes of media and the people who experience it. Print or non-print, either imaginative or informational, is experienced and discussed with the aid of a facilitator' (Rubin, 1979 : 242).

In the same vein Shrodes characterises bibliotherapy as

'a process of dynamic interaction between the personality of the reader and literature as a psychological field which may be utilized for personality assessment, adjustment and growth.' (cited in Monroe & Rubin, 1975 : 159).

As Darling (1957 : 293) points out, the first half of this definition relates to the act of reading in any situation, while the second half implies personality adjustment and development.

Tews (1962 : 98) provides a flexible exposition of bibliotherapy, with special reference to its application:

'... bibliotherapy is a program of selected activity involving reading materials, planned, conducted and controlled as treatment under the guidance of the physician for emotional and other problems.'

This definition lifts bibliotherapy beyond a confinement to the 'mentally ill', which suggests that it may be used legitimately by librarians, parents, teachers, social workers and other non-psychiatric specialist groups.

Leedy's semantic contribution lays emphasis on the wide range of reading content implicated in the bibliotherapeutic process:

'Today bibliotherapy (which has been defined as the process of assimilating the psychological, sociological and aesthetic values from books into human character, personality and behaviour) holds a firmly established position with such other modes of healing as occupational therapy, art therapy, music therapy and dance therapy' (cited in Hynes, 1975 : 145).

3.2.3 THE INTERDISCIPLINARY RELATEDNESS OF BIBLIOTHERAPY

Although bibliotherapy seems to involve an array of activities which are directed at promoting self-growth, based on the shared experience of participants and the discussion of literature, the problem surrounding a clear definition of the concept is attributable mainly to its interdisciplinary relatedness.

In Bibliotherapy sourcebook (1978 : 3), a collection of addresses, essays and lectures on bibliotherapy, Rubin claims that 63% of all

articles published on bibliotherapy at the time of writing originated from fields outside librarianship. In the 1920s, all recorded bibliotherapeutic sessions were conducted among hospitalised individuals and groups. Bibliotherapy, in fact, was initially confined to institutionalised persons. Contemporary bibliotherapy has extended beyond the limits of an institution. However, since bibliotherapy is now being applied in cases involving

'mental physical or emotional problems for immature, poorly-adjusted people or those who have character weaknesses' (Brown, 1975 : 181)

it seems clear that contemporary bibliotherapy has been extended to encompass a wider spectrum of relevant areas of applicability. These include such 'normal' environments as schools and libraries.

Rubin (1979 : 241) argues that:

'Bibliotherapy is seen as a library approach because of its basis in the concepts of library service as well as in the principles of psychology and adult education.'

In regard to the 'library approach', as such, Rubin draws attention to its interdependence:

'Bibliotherapy is truly an interdisciplinary field in which librarianship has an active part' (1978 : 255)

3.2.4 INADEQUATE METHODOLOGY

Rubin (1978 : 245) regrets the lack of a sound methodology in bibliotherapy, a state of affairs which results in a great diversity in the technique of application. Griffin (1978 : 115), in turn, views bibliotherapy as a complex process, as it is not yet clearly understood or scientifically validated. During the 1930's and 1950's criteria for book selection in bibliotherapy were based on diagnostic facts of the patient. However, even today workable selection criteria have yet to be postulated.

3.2.5 OBJECTIVES OF BIBLIOTHERAPY

The term 'objective', also called an end, aim or motive, is used to refer to 'something toward which effort is directed: an aim or end of action' (Webster's third new international dictionary, 1961 : 1556). An individual would normally assume a course in life that would enable him to enjoy it to the extent that his capabilities and personality permit it (cf. the concept of self-actualisation, par. 2.4.4.1.1). However, not all individuals are capable of actualising their full potential (cf. 2.1) and therefore have to be aided in a constructive manner. Rongione (1978 : 268) enumerates the following objectives of bibliotherapy as a means of aiding the reader:

- (a) to think positively and constructively;
- (b) to converse freely and easily about problems;
- (c) to analyse his attitudes and behaviour;
- (d) to identify alternative forms of behaviour;
- (e) to increase his self-esteem;
- (f) to appreciate his personal worth;
- (g) to adjust more readily in differing situations;
- (h) to compare his situation and the problems involved to that of other people;
- (i) to stimulate his imagination;
- (j) to provide guidelines for new forms of conduct.

This exposition of objectives by Rongione includes a wide range of contributory factors in the self-actualising process of the individual. Two objectives of importance, viz. (e) and (f), are assumed to be effected more readily by bibliotherapy. Literature stressing qualities pertaining to personal worth is assumed to raise the reader's level of self-esteem.

3.2.6 CONCLUSION

The underlying basic principles of bibliotherapy in any situation, therefore, involve carefully selected reading material possessing therapeutic value in addressing physical, psychological, emotional and moral problems. Twyeffort consequently considers bibliotherapy as

'... an aid to treatment which aims at the acquisition, through reading, of a fuller and better knowledge of oneself and one's reactions, resulting in a better adjustment to life. It also connotes the relief of suffering by the psychological processes induced by reading'. (cited in Rubin, 1978 : 4-5)

3.3 BIBLIOTHERAPY AS AN ART AND SCIENCE

Mental illness is a disturbance in the individual's adaptation to the environment, resulting in what Franks (1971 : 7) calls 'subjective distress and objective disability'. The same event may bring disaster to one person and relief to another. According to Franks (1971) no sharp lines can be drawn between physical, emotional and psychiatric illnesses, since body and mind are inseparable. The two extremes of the continuum represent biological and psychological disturbances. These disturbances manifest themselves in thinking, feeling and communicative behaviour. There are numerous ways of providing a solution to these disturbances.

One of them, viz. bibliotherapy, facilitates the means of relief. Gorelick reasons that fiction as a genre in literature has unique advantages which clinical experiences do not offer:

'As one reads and re-reads with varying perceptions, associations and moods, meaning alters. Here is an excellent paradigm to reinforce the idea that meaning depends much on the receiver's subjectivity.' (Gorelick, 1975 : 138).

Arising from the interaction between the variables of type of reader (his mental state), the bibliotherapeutic facilitator (e.g. the teacher, librarian, doctor or psychiatrist) and the nature of the situation, we need to distinguish between the art and the science of bibliotherapy.

Having examined a wide range of definitions of bibliotherapy, Brown (1975) concludes that two aspects of bibliotherapy predominate, viz. the medical and the non-medical. The term 'medical' refers to treatment or healing with medicine: '... concerned with physicians or 'with the practice of medicine often as distinguished from surgery' (Webster's third new international dictionary, 1961 : 1402).

As a result of the distinction between medical and extra-medical aspects pertaining to bibliotherapy, Brown considers bibliotherapy as a science on the one hand and an art on the other. The medical and extra-medical aspects are consequently referred to as the science and the art of bibliotherapy respectively.

'Science' is defined as 'knowledge by observation and experiment, critically tested, systematised and brought under principles' (Chamber's twentieth century dictionary, 1968). 'Art' is defined as 'practical skill, or its application guided by human skills' (Chambers' twentieth century dictionary, 1968). It is clear that science involved a corpus of theoretical knowledge, which is the focus in question, while art concentrates on human craftsmanship. The distinction between the art and science of bibliotherapy appears to be a matter that may be based on the nature, intensity and degree of the subject's complaint. The art (i.e. the 'extra-medical' aspect) refers to

'an attempt to remedy personality defects or help an individual solve personal problems through the proper reading suggestions given by a librarian, teacher guidance counsellor, or other individual outside the medical field ...' (Brown, 1975 : 4).

The science (i.e. the 'medical' aspect) of bibliotherapy is based upon a clinical diagnosis of the individual's emotional problems, but it requires the joint efforts of the medical and extra-medical professions. Once the problem has been diagnosed by the physician, the librarian may use the patient's medical record to enable him to prescribe literature for a therapeutic session. The physician and librarian should, as a matter of desirability, meet regularly to discuss the progress of the patient.

The art of bibliotherapy (in the context of librarianship) leans heavily upon the bibliotherapeutic facilitator's knowledge of books and his understanding people and their needs.

Having considered the essence of the art and the science of bibliotherapy it would appear that the librarian performs a vital function in both practices. The librarian, who is equipped with a knowledge of bibliographic skills on the one hand, and the content of literature on the other, acts in a certain sense, as mediator between the physician and the patient.

However, the librarian may be quite competent to conduct bibliotherapeutic sessions with 'normal' patrons or users, without the aid of another facilitator. Therefore, in any bibliotherapeutic activity the participation of the librarian seems indispensable.

Brown (1975 : 18) contents that bibliotherapy as a science has gained wide recognition, while such a state of progress cannot as yet be accorded to bibliotherapy as an art. The techniques i.e. pertaining to art, method of performance, manipulation' (Chambers' twentieth century dictionary, 1968) inherent in the art of bibliotherapy, are counselling and guidance (cf. par. 3.1.1). Although the latter activities are important in bibliotherapy, they are not independent techniques, but are based, rather, on the principles underlying the prescription and discussion of literature. It would, however, appear as though the art of bibliotherapy is experiencing an increasing rate of applicability, especially in schools, libraries and other institutions whose primary concern is education.

3.4 THE NATURE OF THERAPY

The adage, 'treat the patient, not the disease' is a familiar one. This aphorism can be appreciated fully only when one studies an individual who is afflicted (Menninger, 1961 : 316), implying that illness of some kind is a prerequisite to therapeutic treatment.

However, there is a tacit acknowledgement in the literature that a subject can be considered for therapy regardless of the fact that he has any afflictions at all, in which case we generally refer to him as a 'normal' patron. Nevertheless, such distinctions between the 'afflicted' and the 'normal' cannot be drawn with confidence in most situations.

Lingren (1953 : 112 - 3) distinguishes five broad classes of people who are in need of some form of therapy, including bibliotherapy:

- (a) persons whose mental health is so impaired that they are normally hospitalised;
- (b) persons whose emotional disturbances interfere with their health, but not to such an extent that they have lost contact with reality;
- (c) persons who have deviated in some drastic manner from accepted social norms of conduct, resulting in their excessive recourse to drugs, alcohol or to some forms of illegal or antisocial behaviour;

- (d) persons who can generally cope with the demands of their daily chores, but are nevertheless searching for greater personal happiness and better understanding;
- (e) persons who cope reasonably well and are naturally self-contained, but have been subjected to psychological stress through some catastrophe.

It seems safe to suggest that Lingren's categories (c), (d) and (e) denote people who are potentially amenable to bibliotherapy.

At this stage it is necessary to differentiate between psychotherapy and bibliotherapy. The former is defined by Edelson as:

'... a method of treatment, the focus of whose operations is the internal states or the personality system of an individual' (Edelson, 1970 : 3).

Michael Shiryon views psychotherapy as:

'... a process of self-re-education based on understanding and choice' (cited in Lerner, 1978 : xi).

The personalistic approach implied in these definitions pertains to the acknowledgement of the uniqueness of the individual, which demands that the therapist should tailor his therapy accordingly.

Bibliotherapy, on the one hand, is considered as an adjuvant (adjuvantem: aid by prescription - Shorter Oxford English dictionary, 1959 : 24) in psychotherapy by Gottschalk (1978 : 48).

In common usage 'therapy' refers to the operation of altering a condition of some kind which already exists. In behavioural usage, however, therapy is defined more precisely as

'... the alteration of an environment to shape or condition a performance which will be maintained when the therapeutic element is removed' (Glossary of behavioural terminology, 1971).

Branch's definition elaborates this statement more fully:

'Therapy is any procedure which is designed to allow the natural healing tendencies of the organism to restore effective functioning. It is, therefore, not healing in itself, but only, a facilitating process toward healing' (cited in Lerner, 1978 : xi).

It is often impossible to determine whether a change in behaviour has been of a therapeutic or prosthetic (i.e. 'the process of instituting something where it did not previously exist' - Glossary of behavioural terminology, 1971) nature, until such time as the problem has been removed or reversed, and behavioural results have been observed.

3.5 THE DISTINCTION BETWEEN THE CLASSICAL AND MODERN THERAPIES

With the advent of specialisation in the behavioural sciences the expansion of the adjuvant therapies is encountered. Adjuvant, or aiding, therapies are generally referred to as 'brief' therapies, since, as a rule, their application does not extend over long periods.

3.5.1 THE EVOLUTION OF BIBLIOTHERAPY

Modern bibliotherapy has emerged from its initial rigid application in hospitals. Its practice has greatly evolved, and it is currently being applied effectively over a wide spectrum within the psycho-sociological spheres of community life. Its application is therefore no longer confined to hospitals and other remedial institutions, such as prisons, as it tended to be when it was in its infancy.

Nevertheless, it should be acknowledged that bibliotherapy seems to hold exceptional promise in assisting the correctional objectives of modern practice in prisons. Rubin (1973 : 13 - 5) believes that the basis of service to prisoners should be changed from one of legal necessity to that of rehabilitation. According to her, current religious, punitive, humanitarian, educational and legal theories do not yet reflect an adequate appreciation of the power of literature as a means of furthering their ends. As far as the rehabilitation of prisoners through books is concerned, however, Barone (1977 : 295) complains that research (whether theoretical or empirical) has been too sparse to meet the requirements of our adequate understanding of the problem-solving potential of bibliotherapy in this context. Barone's

view, as a matter of course, holds for bibliotherapy in other spheres (e.g. schools and hospitals) as well. It would appear that bibliotherapy being an adjuvant therapy, has as a direct consequence inadequately developed methodology, failed to meet the rigorous requirements of independent application.

3.5.2 ADJUVANT THERAPIES

Leedy (1969 : cf. chapter 5) considers bibliotherapy as an adjuvant therapy analogous to poetry, art, music or dance therapy. After psychodrama had been introduced in 1925, dance therapy followed comparatively soon in 1942, but it was only in the 1950's that other adjuvant therapies, such as art and music therapy, were developed (Rubin, 1979 : 242).

Therapeutically speaking, there is much overlap in the practice of poetry therapy and bibliotherapy. Poetry therapy has been defined as

'... a method of treating emotional disturbances in which beautiful writing is being listened to and/or created'
(Lauer, 1978 : 72).

Lauer, warns, however, that if poetry is used for purposes other than treating emotional disturbances (as in recreation, teaching or religious worship), the term 'poetry therapy' would not apply.

3.5.3 CHARACTERISTICS OF ADJUVANT THERAPIES AS DISTINCT FROM CLASSICAL THERAPIES

(a) Adjuvant therapies are characterised as brief therapies owing to the shorter duration of their application, as compared to the classical extended therapies (e.g. psycho-analysis). It is for this reason that adjuvant therapies are gaining greater recognition and extensive applicability.

(b) Adjuvant therapies are considered as collective therapies, in contrast to classical therapies which are predominantly individualised. The collective nature of adjuvant therapies applies to families and other groups (e.g. schools) as distinct from individuals (cf. par. 3.13.4). Since adjuvant therapies have gained greater collective applicability, paraprofessionals (e.g. parents, teachers, social workers and librarians) as opposed to

feelings and imagination (Gorelich, 1975 : 139). Griffin (1978 : 117) condones the application of bibliotherapy as an independent brief therapy provided certain practical considerations are observed. However, he cautions bibliotherapy facilitators of the potential harm of such therapy, e.g. the indiscriminate use of reading matter, discussion sessions and its duration (Griffin, 1978 : 117).

3.6 BIBLIOTHERAPY AND EDUCATION

Education cannot be fully divorced from therapy. Bibliotherapy is dependent on a wide range of auxiliary disciplines, such as psychology, psychiatry and sociology, for accomplishing its goals. Education, if not fully synonymous with therapy, facilitates the scope and dynamics of bibliotherapy. Bibliotherapy, which is firmly based on educational principles (Rubin, 1979 : 241), may be considered to be an assimilating process (Leedy, cited in Hynes, 1975 : 145) directed towards adjustment and growth. In fact, Shiryon claims that bibliotherapy is a self-re-educational process aiming at aiding the individual to a better understanding of himself (cited in Lerner, 1978 : xi). In its broadest sense education is seen by Gunter as

'... the total formative influence for the better that the total environment of persons and objects, nature and culture exercises on the child on his way to becoming an adult until he has reached the stage of adulthood (i.e. self-reliance)' (Gunter, 1974 : 14).

The primary objective of educational action is therefore to assist the individual in his self-development so that he will be able to bear full responsibility for what he allows or causes to happen in his life in matters that are legitimately within his normal control.

At this point it seems helpful to differentiate between education and learning. Logan views learning as

'... a relatively permanent process, resulting from practice and reflected in a change of performance' (Logan, 1976 : 2).

while learning implies the assimilation of content (i.e. the acquisition of knowledge) on the basis of experience, education goes much further.

5-10

Education involves the totality of one's being. Whereas the learning process involves one's cognitive dimension (i.e. reasoning powers), education involves in addition to intellectual growth, also an extension of one's religious, moral, social and affective dimensions, constituting a 'totality of being'. The process of maturation should be considered as a relative idea, since it would be fallacious to assume that broad stages of development precisely correspond to clear-cut chronological ages (Piaget, cited in Cambers, 1973 : 27). Developmental stages are not water-tight compartments, but tend to overlap (cf. par. 5.7.3). It would, therefore, seem essential that one should tailor one's therapeutic activity according to the individual needs of the patron.

Benne (1956 : 7) elaborates on the interdependence between therapy and education. He argues that at one end education appears to be akin to therapy and at the other end it seems to include much more. Many factors contributing to the individual's alienation from the self (cf. par. 2.2) and others are not rooted in the disorganisation of the community in which one lives. These causes are often to be sought in the individual's make-up. Bibliotherapy holds the potential of bringing about a change in the individual. This implies that in a bibliotherapeutic session the individual is free to make choices which will affect him in a beneficial way (cf. par. 2.2.3).

Man is a rational being who is at liberty to choose certain behavioural patterns that will lead him to self-actualisation (cf. par. 2.4.4.1.1).

Brown (1975 : 181) argues that three commonly accepted major goals of education, viz. (a) education for psychological maturity, (b) education for life adjustment, and (c) education for character development, suggest the applicability of bibliotherapy to the attainment of those goals. Bibliotherapy, which stresses psychological growth, is therefore educational in essence.

The claim by Moses and Zaccaria (1978 : 231) that

'Reading materials have traditionally played an important role in both the instructional and guidance aspects of the educative process.'

reinforces the notion that bibliotherapy is inextricably linked to education. Nonetheless, it should be acknowledged that bibliotherapy, like learning, is only one aspect of the comprehensive process of education.

Bibliotherapy, which focusses on self-education acquired through insight, is exercised by means of the acts of reading and discussing literature. The bibliotherapist will assist the individual towards conceptualising his felt needs, but it is only through intrapersonal communication (within the individual self) that the patron arrives at understanding and decision-making.

3.7 TYPES OF BIBLIOTHERAPY

Certain goals of bibliotherapy are explicit, while others have yet to be clearly conceived. Alston (1978 : 145) holds that in any therapeutic programme one's goals will depend on the patient's psychopathology, psychological soundness, motivation, age, intelligence and other behavioural expressions. The goal will determine the form of treatment to be applied.

The basic assumption underlying bibliotherapy is that reading can and does influence behaviour. The question arises as to whether the individual is really aided or improved as a result of bibliotherapy. There seems to be a general consensus regarding the beneficial effects of bibliotherapy.

Rongione (1978 : 271 - 72) has postulated some of the objectives of bibliotherapy (cf. par. 3.2.5) which are applicable to various problems. The following problems are identified in this context:

- (a) physical deficiencies (e.g. blindness);
- (b) chronic illness (e.g. invalidism);
- (c) mental and emotional aberrations (e.g. mental retardation);
- (d) weak personality and character traits (e.g. conceit);
- (e) socio-economic friction (e.g. family relationships).

In accordance with the nature of the problem or problems the individual

experiences, appropriate types of bibliotherapy are recommended. The application of any one type of bibliotherapy depends on the nature of each individual case and the factors which influence it.

Rubin (1979 : 243) distinguishes three main types of bibliotherapy, viz. institutional, clinical and developmental. These are elaborated as follows:

(a) Institutional bibliotherapy refers to the reading of literature (usually of a didactic nature) by institutionalised patients who discuss it with the therapeutic facilitator. Their books are usually prescribed in accordance with their illness. This approach, however, is not very popular in the contemporary usage of bibliotherapy.

(b) Clinical bibliotherapy refers to the use of imaginative literature with groups placed in a given setting who experience more or less similar emotional or behavioural problems. The setting can be either an institution or the community, with a doctor or a librarian conducting the bibliotherapeutic sessions.

(c) Developmental bibliotherapy relates to the use of both imaginative and didactic reading material with groups of so-called 'normal' people. The purpose of developmental bibliotherapy is to maintain the individual's sound mental health by fostering development in the direction of self-actualisation, i.e. the attainment of his full potential. The setting can be a school, a library or other appropriate educational institution. Bibliotherapeutic sessions are usually conducted by a librarian, teacher, psychologist or social worker, working as a team, or operating independently of each other.

Reviewing the position ten years earlier than Rubin, Opier (1969 : 57) identified four main types of bibliotherapy being practised at the time, viz. (a) those of a diagnostic-clinical nature, (b) those designed to modify attitudes, (c) those designed to facilitate personality growth (known as developmental bibliotherapy), and (d) protective bibliotherapy.

Protective bibliotherapy emphasises the intellectual elements in bibliotherapy. This form of bibliotherapy, also known in the literature as preventive bibliotherapy (cited in Darling, 1957 : 294) operates on the

assumption that each person is likely to face certain major problems in the future. By developing a sane set of attitudes through literature therapeutic sessions dealing with problem-solving of various kinds, the individual is assumed to be adequately equipped to make satisfactory adjustments when similar problems arise in his own life.

Berry (1978 : 185) distinguishes two broad classes of bibliotherapy, viz. clinical bibliotherapy and educational, or humanistic bibliotherapy. In terms of his classification clinical bibliotherapy forms part of psychotherapy, practised, for example, by psychiatrists and psychologists, while educational bibliotherapy is practised especially by counsellors and others working in educational settings. Berry concludes that

'... the same literary form can be used in either version of bibliotherapy and that the literature which is shared does not differentiate bibliotherapy - as - psychotherapy (clinical bibliotherapy) from bibliotherapy - as - education/growth (educational/humanistic bibliotherapy)' (Berry, 1978 : 186).

These classification schemes of types of bibliotherapy will undoubtedly contribute greatly to the systematisation of the structure of bibliotherapeutic approaches, and significantly influence the manner in which the literature will be applied and experienced.

3.8 BIBLIOTHERAPY AS A MODE OF COMMUNICATION

The term 'communication', in the context of bibliotherapy, does not connote verbal or linguistic modes of expression and social intercourse only, but also relates to semiotics (i.e. signs, gestures, symbols etc.). In counselling, carefully planned linguistic communication is imperative. In particular, empathetic communication between patron and counsellor is of the utmost importance (Lingren, 1953 : 227).

Bibliotherapy as a process of communication involves a patron as recipient on the one hand and reading material on the other. In every act of human communication, the recipient's attitudes, knowledge, status, values and needs condition his modes of receptivity and reaction (Immelman, 1951 : 6). Literature imparts a message to the reader who grasps and accepts its content, thereby establishing an act of communi-

cation. In all communicative situations effective transmission of ideas normally culminates in effective results. Likewise, effective communication between reader, book and therapist is essential in bibliotherapy.

Beier (1966 : 10) distinguishes two types of messages, viz. persuasive and evocative. He asserts that the evoking message does not simultaneously convey an awareness of a wish to persuade. Persuasive messages are indeed more subtle than evocative ones. For Moody (1969 : 114) the raison d'etre of bibliotherapy resides in the fact that it presents the thoughts and experiences of others in a mode of reading to the receptive mind who, in turn, seeks comfort and stimulation in such reading.

To understand why some people experience change during the course of therapy while others remain relatively unaffected, we should consider not only the mere communication flow between book and reader, but, perhaps more significantly, also the communicative role of the therapist towards the patron (Hammond, 1977 : chapter 3). Kell and Mueller (1966 : 5) are of the opinion that

' the relationship phenomena in counselling are complex and subtle but tractable. In interpersonal interaction we discover a number of identifiable recurrent themes.'

In their research Kell and Mueller (1966) observed that the therapeutic communication act takes on a number of meanings and varies according to the patron's specific and unique problems, his past experiences and the nature of the present relationship.

It is normal that the therapist and the patron will affect each other during the therapy meeting. Although it may seem axiomatic for the therapist to guard against a tendency to be swayed by the patron's emotional appeal on the one hand, and to impose his ideas on the patron, on the other. Burket's contention (1951 : 437 - 9) that empathetic behaviour on the part of the patron is dependent on the therapist's adequate responses and moral support as a means of enabling the patron to experience his full potential, deserves careful consideration.

Hynes (1975 : 145) has suggested a need for introducing a 'biblio-therapeutic scale'. Numerous modes of conducting sessions result in a continuum of activities along this scale. This implies that bibliotherapy varies in practice according to the perception of the bibliotherapist on the one hand and the specific nature of the individual or group on the other.

It would therefore appear that spontaneous communication during a bibliotherapeutic session is effected mutually by the sincerity, respect and empathy of the therapist, and the urgency of the problems and needs of the participating individual or group.

3.9 THERAPEUTIC CHANGE AND ITS DYNAMICS

It is customary to associate therapeutic treatment pictorially with the image of a patron lying on a couch and revealing his memories, feelings, thoughts, dreams and fantasies, while the therapist is trying to understand and interpret the motivations underlying the patron's behavioural manifestations. As in other popular misconceptions, this association is, of course, simplistic and largely erroneous.

3.9.1 COMPENSATION

Binder (1976 : 17), for example, identifies two modes of approach to therapeutic treatment, viz. talking and medical techniques. The classical therapies on the whole stress the cognitive and affective processes which rely mainly on talking cure (cf. psychoanalysis). Contemporary approaches to therapy also place emphasis on cognitive and affective processes, but therapy is generally directed at compensation rather than cure. Compensation is inherent in the art of bibliotherapy and aims to provide a means for the patron to come to grips with the realities of life. Compensation literally means 'to counter-balance, make up for, make amends for' (Shorter Oxford English dictionary, 1959 : 354). During the reading act, and to a large extent during discussion, compensation takes place through intrapersonal communication.

Yalom (1970 : 3) takes pains to outline the complexity of the process of change, which occurs through an intricate interplay of various guided experiences, called 'curative factors'.

3.9.2 THERAPEUTIC CONFRONTATION

Before any meaningful change can take place in the patron, he should be engaged in confrontation, i.e. acquaintance by meeting the therapist whose first task is to gain the patron's confidence. Confrontation is considered to be an integral part of any therapeutic activity, which implies that the therapist and the patron should meet each other face-to-face during the therapeutic session. Mann (1973 : 41) maintains that confrontation, like all psychological processes, is multi-faceted, i.e. it takes on many forms or approaches, depending on the various needs of the patron. Mann, moreover, sees confrontation predominantly as a device for teaching, which means that before anything constructive can be accomplished or new information be assimilated, the patron needs to experience sharing thoughts and views with the therapist. The therapist accordingly acts as a 'teacher', not in the sense of someone who imparts knowledge, but rather as one who assists the patron in the process of self-clarification and one who establishes guidelines for future conduct. Whether the therapist confronts an individual patron or a group in a bibliotherapeutic session, such confrontation aims at fostering a therapeutic alliance. Swart and Wiehahn (1979 : 58) state somewhat emphatically that

'... confrontation requires an active, persistent, insistent and forceful role on the part of the therapist.'

3.9.3 METHODOLOGY FOR CHANGE

Once bibliotherapeutic confrontation has been established, the following activities are usually applied: an oral group reading session in which a number of participants will read aloud in unison, or a session in which individual participants of the group will read either aloud or silently. All reading sessions must be followed by discussion, which is an important element in the process of effecting any change (Hynes, 1975 : 20). Alston (1962 : 159 : 76) insists that bibliotherapy must be applied in conjunction with discussion in order to prevent the patron from drawing erroneous conclusions from the reading matter.

3.9.4 RESISTANCE TO CHANGE

It has been established that resistance to change is not a mere reflection of the patron's unwillingness or inability to change or progress. Rather, there seems ways in which the therapist may resist the patron's willingness to change. This may be due to the therapist's own needs or inner conflicts, which as a matter of course will tend to block the communication flow between him and the patron, hampering change as a result (Keil & Mueller, 1966 : 12).

Hamachek (1978 : 260) distinguishes between direct action which leads to overreaction on the one hand, when one deliberately tries to conceal one's inferiority (or any other imagined or real deficiency), and an inability to transform one's inadequate image or form of behaviour to a more socially acceptable mode of conduct on the other. It therefore follows that compensation (cf. par. 3.9.1) generally involves the concealment or rejection of undesirable characteristics or behavioural manifestations and their replacement by more acceptable ones.

In conclusion, the bibliotherapist needs to bear in mind that the reading material used in bibliotherapy is to serve as a powerful stimulus to bring about a change in the emotional life of the patron. A reader may read spontaneously (i.e. without clear directives on the part of the bibliotherapist), but this would not necessarily constitute therapy, since reading without prescription is almost always bound to be misdirected. A brief examination of the concept 'prescription' and its application to reading matter in the bibliotherapeutic process seems appropriate at this junctive.

3.10 PRESCRIPTION

Apart from literature which aims at diversion and entertainment, literature may also be recommended with a view to increasing the individual's fund of information, to developing interests outside himself and to helping him to understand his problems. Generally speaking, it is very unlikely that a book selected at random by a library user will help him grow emotionally in terms of his prevailing needs or to solve his specific problems of the moment. The librarian who has adequate

knowledge of the content of books of relevance to a specific user's needs is in a position - with or without the aid of the psychologist, psychiatrist, teacher or counsellor. - to select an appropriate book and prescribe (i.e. 'to advise or order the use of' Oxford advanced learner's dictionary of current English, 1974 : 669) it for such a library user.

Wallace and Walker (1968 : 9 - 10) view 'prescriptivity' as a form of action-guiding. The act of evaluation is dominant in prescriptivity, because one's evaluation will determine what one will prescribe. Since prescriptivity involves action-guiding, it means that the act can be regulated and controlled. This therefore implies that the librarian will attempt to withhold certain reading matter from a patron which, in the opinion of the librarian, will not benefit him in any particular way, and present literature which is assumed to be beneficial to him.

The librarian faces the continuous problem of selecting judiciously for an individual or a group. Menninger (1978 : 15) insists that the prescription of reading takes three factors into account, viz.

(a) the present therapeutic needs of the individual or group (e.g. whether the apparent intent of the literature is to educate or help the individual to gain insight into his situation); (b) the background of the individual (e.g. intelligence, educational level, interests, sex and age); and (c) the symptomatic state of the individual (e.g. his emotional state and his capacity to read). According to Menninger (1978 : 16) the act of prescription starts with the selection, acquisition and maintenance of literature and ends with the production of a report of the patron's comments and reactions to his reading.

If bibliotherapy is taken to imply the aid to treatment which aims at the acquisition, through reading, of a fuller and better self-knowledge on the part of a patron, such knowledge resulting in a more adequate adjustment to life, it means that the librarian should familiarise himself thoroughly with literature that is likely to benefit all patrons in need of bibliotherapeutic treatment (e.g. in a hospital situation) or when sessions are conducted in an educational setting.

The librarian ought to be objective in the choice of reading matter to ensure that the selection will not reflect his own biases and predilections. It goes without saying that the needs of the patron are of paramount importance.

Dunton and Licht (1950 : 191) make the cogent point that the prescriptivity of reading material facilitates the continuation of treatment during the patron's absence from therapeutic sessions.

3.11 THE INTERNAL STATES OF THE READER: THE FOCUS OF THERAPEUTIC CHANGE

Once the needs and problems of an individual have been ascertained and the appropriate reading material has been prescribed for him, the foundation for true therapeutic activity has been laid.

The behaviourist approach in therapy aims at augmenting the behavioural patterns of individuals as a means of attaining maximum adjustment. The humanist approach in therapy on the other hand is claimed by some authors to focus its attention on the internal states of the individual (Barclay, 1968 : 19). However, this is essentially a phenomenological approach, in which the critical variable is the individual and his active, unique and selective nature (Kinget, 1977 : 155). Gunter sheds light on the phenomenological approach:

'Phenomenology thus seeks to comprehend a phenomenon from within itself as it essentially is' (Gunter, 1974 : 6).

Phenomenology is an intuitive activity, i.e. we immediately grasp or understand the phenomenon that presents itself to us. Gunter describes this intuitive activity as a process

'... of entering into an inner intellectual or rational viewing of a matter, in order to gain insight or understanding ...' (Gunter, 1974 : 4).

It is generally agreed that man interprets his world in terms of his experiences, needs, wishes and fears (Barclay, 1968 : 30-3). By using the phenomenologico-humanist approach, man is the only agent who can, by virtue of aid from others (the therapist or group members) come to grips with his problems and gain enhanced insight into reality. During the reading act man often transcends his temporal and spatial world which transports him into another sphere. Since transcendence

literally means 'over-climbing', or reading above or beyond one's level of being, we may view advanced educational and spiritual states as transcendental conditions.

During various reading acts a number of processes occur, each of varying intensity. Bibliotherapy aims at the promotion of healthy attitudes and world-views and the suppression of negative attitudes and malfunctions of the individual as a social being. It will be worthwhile to look briefly into the states of universalisation, identification, projection, introjection, catharsis and insight as they manifest themselves at various stages in the reading act.

3.11.1 UNIVERSALISATION

It is a common fallacy to imagine that one is unique in one's conditions of suffering and depression, and also in terms of their intensity. Man's innate sense of uniqueness is often increased by social isolation, which, in turn, may be attributed to interpersonal difficulties. Yalom (1970 : 8) claims that there is no human deed or thought which is fully beyond the experience of others. In a certain sense this is true, because we all suffer humiliation and sorrow, or experience joy and elation, but in the final analysis we are unique individuals with unique life histories, needs and aspirations.

Despite the uniqueness and complexity of human problems certain common denominators are clearly evident. Slavson (1950 : 96-7) is of the opinion that feelings of inadequacy, guilt and shame are lessened and sometimes even obliterated through the process of universalisation.

The underlying principle of universalisation is likeness or similarity. By way of identification (cf. par. 3.11.2) the reader, engaged in a bibliotherapeutic situation, universalises his situation by realising that someone else is confronted with an essentially analogous predicament than himself. As that other person has managed to accept or to surmount his problem, the patron is given incentive to gain confidence in his ability to solve his problems in a like manner.

3.11.2 IDENTIFICATION

Identification is a complex concept in psycho-analytic psychology. It

has a range of meanings, none of which seems to correspond with what men of letters mean by the term. Men of letters employ the term 'identification' with reference to an individual or an audience associating itself with a *dramatis persona* on the basis either of sympathy for his predicament or on a superficial acceptance of correspondences between the character and themselves.

Freud (cited in Hall & Lindzey, 1967 : 46) introduced the concept 'identification' in a precise epistemic sense, and preferred it to the concept 'imitation' since he felt that the latter denotes a transient copying form of behaviour. Freud, moreover, asserted that identification simply does not take place on the basis of surface similarities between two people. In fact, it is a process that goes beyond mere imitation (Freud, cited in Hall & Lindzey, 1967 : 46).

Holland (1975 : 205) qualifies his understanding of the concept thus:

'Identification as such, however, takes place not because of external likenesses, but because of an internal matching of adaptation and defense within a total dynamic response.'

It is clear that, whereas the conventional literary approach stresses superficial and short-lived imitation on the basis of mere likeness, the Freudian approach aims at a complete and permanent solution to facilitate the assimilation of new ideas leading to new experiences.

Identification is a key concept in psychological adaptation and herein lies the key to the reader's problem. By virtue of this adaptive mechanism the reader unconsciously increases his esteem by identifying with other persons. Kisker (1964 : 148) points out that men and women generally tend to enhance themselves by adopting the characteristics of others who have some degree of eminence. It is clear that identification also lies at the root of group-forming. The process of identification is also attitude-forming, as in the case of hero-worship. Shrodes (1978 : 88) considers this kind of identification as an integrating activity:

'... literature invokes a state of heightened emotion, it may also give the reader something to organize, interpret, or analyze.'

It is commonly held that a child initially identifies himself with adults who display specific forms of behaviour. This process is called imitation. As the child grows up he 'identifies' more and more with the norms themselves, i.e. divorcing himself from those displaying the norms.

In his utter subjectivity there is no distinction between the reader's internal and external worlds. This is why he cannot reconcile the two by means of a commonly accepted process of identification. The reader often seeks an objective solution for his subjective problem. It is in the nature of his psychological complexities to be transposed. The objective and subjective aspects of man merge in such a way that the internal becomes the external and the external the internal.

Freudian theory (as elaborated by Maddi, 1972 : 609) postulates two modes of thinking, called the primary and secondary processes. According to this theory, moral predispositions (i.e. primary) of extreme kinds often exhibit the opposite mode of moral behaviour (i.e. secondary).

The core tendency of personality is the individual's pursuit of maximising instinctual gratification (pleasure) and minimising punishment and guilt. The reader often comes to the bibliotherapeutic session conscious or unconscious of his needs. If his needs or problems are clearly defined, he will seek to minimise them in order to pursue an adequate personal and social life. With reference to the two Freudian theories, the primary process is the more primitive mode of thinking, characteristic of the unconscious and manifesting itself in dreams (Blum, 1960 : 2). Thinking at this level obeys the pleasure principle, in which imagined objects give hallucinatory (and therefore only partial) satisfaction of tension reduction (Maddi, 1972 : 609).

It is clear that this process - commonly known as wish-fulfilment - is autistic, and as such cannot contribute to a significant solution of the problem or the full gratification of the need of the reader. Consequently a new or secondary process develops. During the secondary process the reader's thinking tends to become rational, coherent and organised. Previously, when the process of hallucinatory wish-

fulfilment was dominant, there was no control. Secondary thinking operates on the reality principle which means that one's thinking, and as a natural consequence, one's actions are regulated by real-life situations that have functional values and, if used judiciously, will contribute to one's well-being.

The reader with his own life history and specific receptivity can only satisfy his needs if he matches his cognitive content (mind) with the world of the author as represented in the book. Hall and Lindzey (1967 : 41) accordingly view identification as the matching of cognitive content matter with the experience of the author, as brought about through reality, or the secondary principle.

In order to satisfy his needs, the reader must learn to match his mind with the external world. A cathexis, i.e. 'a charge of mental energy, attached to any particular idea of object' (Chambers' twentieth century dictionary, 1968 : 167) may be formed for a realistic perception, where the existing attitudes are reinforced.

It is through literature that the reader gains, what Griffin (1978 : 116) calls 'consensual validation', i.e. when the individual comes to realise that his emotions and reactions are similar to those displayed by characters in a story. In this way the individual may lose his sense of isolation and realise that nobody is really without problems. Griffin (1978 : 116) contends that

'Literature, then, can be a reality-correcting experience in which the disturbed person can see how other people see themselves, their situations and their world.'

It will be useful to look briefly into the potentially negative influence which identification may exercise on the reader. The reader may lose his individuality when he becomes the identification object. Examples of such instances are seen in the novels of Boyle and Hauptmann.

In Kay Boyle's short novel, The crazy hunter, a lonely young girl identifies herself in her isolation and unhappiness with a blind horse. In this case it is not only a matter of imitation or superficial

identification. The girl becomes intensely involved in the horse's situation, which leads to her unhappiness. In this instance identification produces a negative result.

In Hauptmann's Der Narr in Christo, Emmanuel Quint also identifies himself so thoroughly with Christ that it finally induces a complete split in his personality. Emmanuel's identification leads to self-destruction of both his soul and body. For obvious reasons, it would seem unwise to give such a book to someone who finds himself in a state of depression.

In the film, Helter Skelter, the chief character's identification with Christ also leads to his spiritual destruction. Being a strong leader of his group, Charles Mason easily indoctrinates them. The young people in turn begin to identify themselves with Mason. They follow him to the very end. In this instance we also encounter tendencies towards negative identification which can be harmful.

The favourable element of identification in leisure reading is its fantastic and autistic character, i.e. the aspect of self-centredness which is involved when the reader feels himself to be transcended into the world as presented by the literary material. Identification as used in this positive manner may serve as an effective tool in bibliotherapy to resist frustration in a heroic manner.

3.11.3 PROJECTION

Projection in its simplest form is the interpretation of someone else's behaviour in terms of one's intention, and attributing one's own impulses to others. Lingren (1953 : 107) is of the opinion that projection in its broader sense is a mechanism by which one 'projects' one's personality on one's physical and social environment. More formally, projection has been defined as

'... the attribution of traits or motives by partners in a situation involving interaction' (Dictionary of social sciences, 1965 : 545).

Hamachek (1978 : 27) characterises the process of projection as having a dual purpose, viz. (a) to regulate one's own shortcomings and faults, and (b) to attribute these inadequacies which are unacceptable to us, to others.

Thus, in essence, projection is

'... a cognitive distortion of attributes that would normally have been perceived as attached to or arising out of the self, but are now displaced away from the self towards other objects' (Krech & Crutchfield, 1961 : 647)

Frohman (1948 : 54) considers, along similar lines, that displacement, in its ordinary usage, is the shifting of partially conscious or unconscious emotions or attitudes from one situation, person or object to another.

Blum (1966 : 39) endorses this idea in metaphorical terms:

'Just as swallowing the original model for introjection, spitting out unpleasant things underlies projection.'

Like identification and introjection, projection is an indispensable process in learning to cope with life. We are all acquainted with the phrase, 'looking at the world through rose-coloured glasses'. To a person who is in a pleasant mood, the world seems pleasant.

Kant (cited in Heyns, 1967 : 95 - 7), maintains that man as a phenomenal being perceives the world in terms of what he experiences both psychologically and physically.

Projection is not only affected by moods; it also reflects the characteristic personality patterns of the individual. Projection is part of a general anticipatory response, guiding one's actions. When one reads a text one normally projects oneself into another's point of view.

Murray (cited in Hall & Lindzey, 1967 : 196) distinguishes between complementary and supplementary projection:

'Complementary projects refers to the tendency on the part of the subject to perceive or understand his environment in such a manner as to make it congruent with or justify his needs, affects and impulses.'

Supplementary projection, on the other hand

'... takes place when the subject endows objects or persons in the environment with attributes which he himself possesses and which in the usual case are acceptable to him' (Hall & Lindzey, 1967 : 196).

It seems self-evident that in the reading act, complementary projection reinforces the needs of the reader, while supplementary projection consists of displacement processes, i.e. when the reader wants to rid himself of certain feelings. The reader can project because he can take leave of his world, a process called autism.

Rubakin (cited in Simsova, 1969) has suggested that in terms of the bibliopsychological Law of Humbolt Potebnia, the contact between reader and author is not simply a transfer of content, but rather a complex system of projections. Coetzee refers to this type of reading (i.e. one in which the reader projects himself into the reading material his wishes and desires) as Das evasorische Lesen (Coetzee, 1975 : 31).

The reader objectifies his needs and wishes by ascribing them to the content of the book, and this fact implies that what the reader reads is in fact his own projection of ideas and not those which the author meant to convey.

If the same book is read after a period of time, the reader will tend not to have precisely the same projection, since his needs may have changed both in their nature and intensity. The reader's values regarding himself, others and objects, views of life, etc. are dynamic, i.e. they never remain the same.

Projection is diametrically opposed to introjection (Dictionary of Behavioural science, 1973 : 291). In contrast to introjection, projection is a valuable act which enables one to maintain one's sense of adequacy and self-esteem in situations in which there are signs of failure (Hamachek, 1978 : 27).

3.11.4 INTROJECTION

Introjection, or internalisation, generally assumes a negative form. Hamachek (1978 : 26) believes that an individual who internalises given behavioural patterns does it by incorporating into his personality certain qualities of another individual who poses a threat to him. By becoming like that person, he succeeds in regulating his own behaviour in terms of the newly acquired internalised values.

The neurotic personality normally incorporates a large part of the external world into the ego, making it the focus of his unconscious fantasies. This process is termed 'introjection' (Dictionary of social sciences, 1965 : 352). What actually happens is that one symbolically makes the external object part of oneself:

'When certain adults are unable to develop more mature object relationships, their weak egos regress to the oral defense mechanism of introjection. Neurotic identification with the love object becomes the only possible object relationship' (Dictionary of behavioural science, 1975 : 202).

Eysenck and others argue that introjection is in accordance with epistemological theory, i.e. the unconscious mind apprehends the external world by virtue of the images the mind forms (Encyclopedia of psychology, vol. 2, 1972 : 156).

Introjection may be fantasised through the eyes, skin and respiratory system. Frohman (1948 : 54) suggests that introjection is the act of crediting to oneself superior qualities, virtues and talents perceived among others. Extreme introjection, of course, may even border on delusions.

Kisker (1964 : 149) considers introjection to be a specialised form of identification. Sanford points out that the difference between introjection and identification is distinct. He points out that in the case of introjection the object disappears inside as it were (i.e. swallowed) and in the case of identification a continuing relationship with the external object is held (cited in Dictionary of social sciences, 1965 : 352). Blum (1966 : 39) elaborates on the interdependence between the concepts:

'Identification, a mental state, can therefore be described as the outcome of introjection.'

Introjection is therefore a neurotic form of identification, i.e. introjection may be looked upon as a form of absolute servility (acceptance without further ado) (Bleuler, cited in Coetzee, 1975 : xi).

McClellan (1977 : 43) contends that at one level the reader approaches his reading consciously and deliberately and that he is aware of a predominant motive. It might be the case that he is seeking information about a certain subject. On another level the reader may be unconscious of the needs he has to augment by way of reading. In this manner he experiences an unconscious need.

A reader engaged in bibliotherapy, in quest of meaning in life, may find it in his reading and introject the content. Introjection, however, will only benefit such a reader if the content which is introjected is positive and constructive.

3.11.5 CATHARSIS

Catharsis has always assumed an important role in the therapeutic process, though the reason for its use has varied considerably. For centuries patients have been purged to cleanse themselves of such despicable things as bile and evil spirits. After Breuerian and Freudian era, therapists have attempted to help such patients to rid themselves of suppressed and choked emotions arising from supposed physical and psychic evils of this kind by facilitating a cathartic experience.

Shrodes interprets catharsis as being synonymous with abreaction. (to release an emotion) to denote the

'uncensored and spontaneous release of emotion'
(cited by Jackson, 1962 : 119).

In psycho-analysis catharsis is taken to mean

'The expression and discharge of repressed emotions or ideas' (Dictionary of behavioural science, 1975 : 54).

Moses and Zaccaria (1978 : 230) and Russell and Shrodes (1978 : 212) view bibliotherapeutic catharsis as being a result of the identification process, i.e. the reader identifies himself with a character in the book and consequentially releases unpleasant emotions or psychological tension:

'Reading may therefore provide a release of tension through symbolic gratification of socially unacceptable urges or substitute gratification of socially approved motives' (Russell & Shrodes, 1978 : 212).

It seems obvious that catharsis is intricately interwoven with other curative factors. Catharsis enables one to express one's feelings of dislike or displeasure. One may even look upon catharsis as an interpersonal process. H.S. Sullivan (1953) lays considerable emphasis on the role of interpersonal relations. His theory in this regard seems promising when we consider the role of reading. Man, according to Sullivan, becomes what he is through interaction. The book occupies a significant role in Sullivan's perception of such interaction. In general, any frame of reference, whether constituted by real people (e.g. the reader himself) or by imaginary beings, can make up an interpersonal situation. A book which arouses emotions will bring about a physical change, since body and mind form are ultimately integrated (cf. par. 3.11.4). Thus, it is clear that physical changes have manifest psychological symptoms, and vice versa. To gain a cathartic effect from reading the patron equates the character in the book with his own personality, thereby releasing his emotional tension.

3.11.6 INSIGHT

Insight constitutes an important psychological mechanism in bibliotherapeutic reading.

A hypothetical case history may serve as an adequate illustration of this point: for example, the death of a husband may affect a woman to such an extent that she will become hospitalised in a mental institution after a complete nervous breakdown. As soon as she is able to read again, she is given a book about someone involved in a comparable situation. She learns that her experience is not unique, but indeed shared by others (universalisation). She realises that she needs to,

and is indeed able to, and has to adapt herself through identification. She shares in the frustrations and sorrow of the particular character in the book (catharsis) and gains insight into the deeper levels of personal reality by accepting and adapting herself to her position. This culminates in a changed view of life. Insight in such a case is therefore achieved purely by means of the integration of views through catharsis (Erasmus, 1975 : 40).

Imaginative literature affords rich opportunities for identification which, in turn, leads to insight. Shrodes (1978 : 110), who views insight as a re-education of one's emotions, expresses his opinion in cogent terms:

'The insight which literature fosters extends beyond mere re-living of traumatic experience and contributes to the development of the individual's ego integrative powers and to the achievement of direction and a sense of values.'

3.12 BIBLIOTHERAPEUTIC EFFECTS ON THE SELF-CONCEPT

Tews (cited in Voight, 1977 : 171) remarks that in line with the development of the behavioural sciences, bibliotherapy as an adjuvant therapy has evolved into a valuable technique of mental health and a process of self-renewal.

The self-concept is normally tantamount to one's attitude towards one's self-image, i.e. how one personally perceives and knows oneself directly (cf. par. 2.3). Perhaps the single most important assumption of modern theories about the self is the maintenance and enhancement of the perceived self. This means that the healthy person is constantly striving to maintain and protect the self of which he is aware.

In the bibliotherapeutic situation interaction among participants takes place. Interaction heightens perceptions and insight of the self and, hopefully, leads to enrichment and self-knowledge. The term 'hopefully' is used deliberately, since change does not occur in all cases. There may, as we shall see later, be barriers (such as those emanating from the therapist or the technique itself) which retard progress in the individual.

A question often asked is whether the bibliotherapist should aim at restoring the patron to normal (i.e. to help him to return to the state in which he had found himself before he began to suffer) or, merely strive to assist the patron in attaining a condition closer to 'optimum personality' (Jourard, 1963 : 437).

The problem of 'change' implicit in the aims of bibliotherapy becomes acute when the child, the pre-adolescent or the adolescent is the patron. Owing to feelings of insecurity, inferiority and fear of situations, characteristic of the pre-adult, he often experiences unhappiness, which, if unrelieved, can develop into chronic and undesirable personality traits in later life. In some instances it may even lead to mental and emotional illness.

Hutcherson (1963 : 2083) suggests that one of the primary goals of education is the moulding of a wholesome, self-confident, self-respecting, happy and effective personality. In the same vein Rongione (1978 : 269) views as a predominant objective of bibliotherapy the attempt

'To increase a person's self-esteem in the realization of his intrinsic worth as a child of God and as a member of the various social institutions, such as the family, the community, the church, the country, etc.'

It goes without saying that the individual's sense of self-worth has far-reaching effects. Therapeutically planned experiences are designed to enable the patron to raise his level of self-esteem, to an extent in which it will indirectly effect changes regarding matters of great importance to the patron.

Altmann and Nielsen (1974 : 285) reported a project designed to establish the effects of bibliotherapy on the self-esteem of children. It was ascertained that the group who received bibliotherapy changed in a positive manner. The children adopted a new and enhanced level of self-esteem after empathy, respect and genuineness were rated core conditions in the bibliotherapeutic techniques employed. They were now equipped to deal effectively with their environment. Since self-esteem is a core concept in any approach to personality change, it is indissolubly

linked to man's social relationships. While bibliotherapy tries to enhance self-esteem in the individual participating in group therapy, his public-esteem automatically increases. Research in sociometrics, for example, has shown that the individual's self-esteem increases as his public-esteem increases, i.e. social approval reinforces his own worth (Calhoun & Acocella, 1978 : 68).

Therefore, the emphasis in bibliotherapy is directly upon the individual's learning and specifically about himself through books. In this manner he may be assumed to have constructed a realistic self-image.

3.13 GROUP THERAPY

3.13.1 THE GROUP CONCEPT

Group therapy has its counterpart in individual therapy. Very often group therapy serves as a forerunner of individual therapy. A group has been described as

'... a number of individual things related in some definite way differentiating them from others: a clique, school, section of a party: a combination of figures forming a harmonious whole' (Chambers' twentieth century dictionary, 1968 : 467).

For our purposes this distinction will apply to a group selected in terms of appropriate criteria, to participate in a bibliotherapeutic experiment to be outlined in a later section of this thesis.

3.13.2 THE RATIONALE OF GROUP-FORMATION

An outline of the rationale of group formation emerges from McGee's somewhat simplistic definition, emphasising the social nature of human groups:

'A group can be defined as three or more people interacting together over a time in an orderly way on the basis of similar expectations for each other's behaviour'(1972 : 67).

A difficulty in applying the underlying precepts of this statement in

practice arises from the truism that the small group cannot be assumed to be a microcosm of society at large. This affects our ability to generalise with confidence, on the basis of findings in an empirical survey involving a limited sample of human beings, to demonstrate the degree of universality of the conclusions reached.

Mindful of the problems which cloud the 'group' concept, it nevertheless constitutes an adequate means of facilitating and in turn, enhancing manifestations of human behaviour.

Often a collection of people are intrapersonal strangers. By virtue of a given common characteristic or aim they have been constituted as a group. Children, who, for example, fall in a certain age group or who are in the same standard of formal schooling may constitute a group for remedial or preventive therapy (cf. par. 3.7). The main aim of the therapeutic sessions is, to attempt ensuring that those involved in the group will derive the highest degree of benefit. This is possible if they are able to learn from one another's actions and expressed views and yet refrain from prying into each other's private lives.

Bertcher and Maple (1977 : 15) elucidate the position by suggesting the following reasons for group-formation:

- (a) the need for joining in unison participants who are able to serve as models for each other;
- (b) bringing together participants with a view of reinforcing each other;
- (c) the need for an exchange of a diversity of ideas, problem-solving, heightened awareness, learning, decision-making etc., and
- (d) the desire to ensure the development of an ongoing support system for members sharing common interests.

3.13.3 THERAPY AS A MOTIVE IN GROUP-FORMATION

In order to consider the activities involved in any particular group situation one has to consider first of all the express purpose for which

the group has been assembled.

Bibliotherapy is only one of the many wide-ranging motives for concerning oneself with the issues of group-formation. The selection of group members is usually based on voluntary participation. One normally experiences voluntary participation in group bibliotherapy when preventive bibliotherapy is conducted among so-called 'normal' individuals. Depending on the degree of physical and mental health of the institutionalised patient, bibliotherapy may be conducted in an individualised manner. However, not all institutionalised patients receive individualised bibliotherapy. Bibliotherapy may form part of their treatment or daily routine in the institution which is normally conducted in a group and participation is to a large extent compulsory. The activities which constitute such a bibliotherapeutic session, are commonly referred to as 'group therapy'.

3.13.3.1 SELECTION OF GROUP PARTICIPANTS

In selecting the participants of the group there is likely to be an attempt to avoid great discrepancies in terms of such fundamental characteristics as age, intelligence, educational level and previous experience of group therapy (Ohlsen, 1977 : 24 - 31). Furthermore, therapists may generally be inclined to select a one-sex group or a group consisting of an equal number of both sexes, which may perhaps not be very desirable if such a group is to attain maximum benefit from therapy (Thompson & Kahn, 1970 : 60 - 1).

There are numerous compositional factors that may hamper effective group-formation, some of which are identified by Bertcher and Maple (1977 : 26) as:

- (a) too much compatibility, e.g. a group of eleven year olds or a group of boys;
- (b) too much or too little stress; e.g. when the therapist or group members are too lenient or too dominant in their actions and attitudes towards the group;
- (c) insufficient role models of described behaviour - this resulting either in slow progress (growth) or no progress in the individual partaking in group therapy;

- (d) the inclusion of sub-groups who exert a negative influence on the group as a whole, (e.g. dominating the discussion or deliberately attempting to break down communication between participants and therapist).

3.13.4 GROUP BIBLIOTHERAPY: A CUSTOMARY MODE OF APPLICATION

Within each group structure there are several individuals, each of whom has idiosyncratic problems and needs. Contemporary applications of bibliotherapy are customarily based on group approaches. In fact, personal or individual interviews are replaced to a large extent by group sessions (cf. par. 3.5.3(b)) at which the constituent members assemble under the direction of a group leader (referred to as the bibliotherapist) for discussion. In this regard Ottoway (1968 : 1 - 2) considers groups ideal for rehabilitation and therapeutic activity. He views the understanding and the development of human behaviour as the key objectives of therapeutic groups.

3.13.5 SIZE OF THE GROUP

In most situations of group therapy 'large' groups are preferred to 'small' ones. The larger the group, it is alleged, the smaller the emphasis on the individual member, the less the likelihood of damage to group morale in the event of the absence or withdrawal of some members, the more complex programme-planning can become and the greater the dependence of members on the attention of the group leader (Bertcher & Maple, 1977 : 71).

3.13.6 GROUP COHESIVENESS

A group assembled for the purposes of bibliotherapeutic activity should, as a first rule, be unified by given interests, i.e. the participants aspire to gain greater insight into an understanding of themselves or attempt to equip themselves with sound moral values so as to immunise themselves in the event of some probable catastrophes or problems each member might encounter in the future (cf. par. 3.1.3(b)). In fact, the interests of those involved in group activity are not necessarily identical, but these interests are none the less served by virtue of the very existence of the group (Cartwright, 1953 : 21).

3.13.7 GROUP-THERAPY TECHNIQUE

The 'group' structure facilitates the means for the participating member to express himself. Participation in group therapy relies on verbal communication, the means by which members are enabled to gain insight into the problems of others and of themselves (also cf. par. 3.11.6).

Since group therapy is inevitably a social event of some kind, group members will not be expected to expose their total personalities or any area of specific personal difficulty in the group. The therapist guides the discussion of matters (cf. par. 3.14) on a broad and general level, i.e. without prying into the private lives of group members. The operation characteristic of the therapeutic exercise is the group as therapeutic agent.

Therefore, if any member should appear to need assistance on a personal level, it is incumbent on the therapist not to attempt addressing such a need by using the group as therapeutic agent, but to suggest that the matter be attended to in an individual interview.

3.13.8 GROUP EFFECTS ON THE SELF-CONCEPT

Community workers, such as psychologists and teachers, are generally aware of the therapeutic potential of group approaches as such. Group discussions, group counselling and group therapy have precise and directed aims (cf. par. 3.1.1 - 3.1.3). Group therapy concerns itself with the alleviation of particular socio-psychological problems and the modification of specific situations through group participation.

Group therapy attempts to effect changes in regard to attitudes and relationships. Nevertheless, as a general rule, fundamental changes in the structure of the individual personality are not consciously sought. Group effects on individuals, furthermore, are not claimed to be instantaneous. It is, indeed, accepted that such effects may never manifest themselves at all. Rogers elucidates:

'Some persons go through an encounter group untouched, experiencing no significant change then or later. Some persons seemingly uninvolved in such a group show change later in most behavioural ways' (1975 : 63).

3.13.8.1 DEVELOPMENT OF SELF-CONCEPT IN THE GROUP

In the process of interpersonal interaction with the aid of language symbols, it is claimed, we develop our personality (McGee, 1972 : 50).

The group structure facilitates the means through which participants may be able to verbalise and, accordingly, to develop their personality structures through an interchange of views and attitudes with others. In this regard some early psychologists have argued convincingly that a person's personality, and in particular his self-concept, develops by virtue of relations he has with others (Schmuck & Schmuck, 1971 : 14). The 'others' referred to are the group members and the group leader, who serve as models for behaviour modification.

3.13.8.2 GROUP INVOLVEMENT IMPLIES INTERPERSONAL COMMUNICATION

Group involvement stresses personal growth and the improvement of interpersonal communication and relationships through an experimental process (Rogers, 1975 : 12). In this regard H.S. Sullivan (cited in Heider, 1967 : 3) formulated an interpersonal personality theory, stressing the need for personal security and the satisfaction needs as a prerequisite to successful social adjustment. Sullivan emphasises, in particular, the development of self-confidence in the child and the young adult. Such development occurs in interpersonal relations.

In his discussion of the fully-functioning person, Rogers (1962) adopts the phenomenological approach to explain the individual's reaction to his world. This implies that each individual perceives the world in terms of his personal needs, knowledge and aspirations. In this context Schmitt lends support to Rogers' approach by claiming:

'... phenomenological statements are not reached by abstraction. They are ... derived from a scrutiny of particular cases by seeing, intuition, or intuition of essences (Wesensschau)' (The encyclopaedia of philosophy, 1967, vol. 6 : 140).

Thus, it is assumed, the identification of phenomena as essences, i.e. as factors contributing towards the solution of problems, will assist the group members in clarifying their goal. The individual reacts to his world in terms of organised wholes, i.e. his perception is not fragmentary in the sense that his grasping of reality becomes unintelligible and incomprehensible. This implies that he views the world in such a manner that he will understand it. During the process of organising his perceptions of the world into a coherent whole, the individual enhances his self-esteem.

In a manner akin to Rogers' phenomenological view, K. Horney (cited in Blocher, 1966 : 35) developed the so-called 'social' approach to behaviour, in terms of which he ought to understand such behaviour within the construct of socially induced anxiety. It is presumed to be by virtue of the social nature of group therapy that the individual is enabled to ameliorate his state of anxiety and the attendant problems it may pose for him. Likewise Maslow's conception of the 'self-actualising' person (1954) and Shoben's view of the 'normal' personality (1957) represent attempts at acknowledging the pre-eminence of striving, improvement and enhancement of self-esteem in the individual.

3.13.8.3 GROUP INVOLVEMENT IMPLIES PERSONALITY REINFORCEMENT

The group serves as an introspective mirror in which each participant in a group-therapy situation unconsciously mirrors himself. According to Franks (1977 : 172) each member reinforces his intentions in such a situation by seeking to help other members, thereby also enhancing his own self-esteem.

A child, for example, who holds negative feelings about himself tends to hold negative feelings towards others. He therefore needs to develop the ability to love another person whose welfare is acknowledged by him as being as significant as his own. It is through the presentation of positive and exemplary models of behaviour (manifesting themselves in the process of discussion) that the child's self-image may be reinforced. He will, as a natural consequence,

tend to regard others as having self-respect and worth, thereby inducing feelings of a similar nature towards himself.

One of the major techniques which therapists may employ for personality reinforcement, is role-playing. Role-playing in a group context can facilitate both personal and group catharsis (cf. par. 3.11.5)(Levy: 1962 : 131).

3.13.9 CRITICISMS OF GROUP BIBLIOTHERAPY

The chief criticism levelled against group bibliotherapy is based on the argument that reading is an individual and private activity which does not promote interpersonal relations other than with the book, thereby precluding interpersonal interaction.

However, such criticism can be refuted by pointing out that bibliotherapy does not constitute the mere reading of a printed text: it is imperative to note that such reading primarily serves as a preamble to the vital activity of discussion, without which bibliotherapy would be grossly incomplete and ineffective.

Discussion depends for its success or effectiveness on an optimal empathic relationship between the bibliotherapist and each member of the group. Such an empathic relationship requires in the first instance a bibliotherapist who is relaxed, spontaneous, sincere and deeply committed. The bibliotherapist assumes his role in discussion only in an interpretive capacity.

The strength of bibliotherapy therefore derives from the elements of discussion; which enables each individual to gain insight into his personal make-up and behaviour, rather than a mere exposure to the reading of a printed text chosen for the purpose. Bibliotherapy attempts to foster attitudinal rather than behavioural change. This implies that each group-therapy participant is likely to benefit from the views expressed during sessions of discussion. Behavioural implementation of the healing powers emanating from such discussions depends entirely on the participant's willingness and readiness to apply in life what he has learned in an experimental situation.

3.13.10 GROUP BIBLIOTHERAPY: IMPLEMENTATION

Bibliotherapy is amenable to group therapy, since such therapy is not confined to book-reading and subsequent discussion, but can be extended by becoming coordinated with other therapeutic activities such as role-playing and music therapy. Reading, discussions and role-playing may be aided by psychological devices, such as identification (cf. par. 3.11.2), insight (cf. par. 3.11.6) and cathexis. Cathexis refers to 'the investment of an object or idea with psychic energy' (Glossary of behavioural terminology, 1971 : 54).

Role-playing, like bibliotherapy, concerns itself with attitude change (Guerney, 1977 : 93-4). During role-playing sessions the individual is given an opportunity to behave in a model fashion. As a result, Guerney argues that the contrast between his present and potentially new attitudes will serve as motivation for attitudinal change (1977 : 93).

In bibliotherapy the group members may read aloud, either individually or in unison. They may listen to a storyteller, a reader or a recording. Whatever approaches are adopted, such activity must always be followed up by discussion in order to be effective. If the discussion of the literature selected for bibliotherapy has been omitted, group members may quite conceivably arrive at either erroneous conclusions regarding the content of the literature, or they may not have derived any understanding from the bibliotherapeutic session that would facilitate personal growth. In the event of the omission of discussion, moreover, the opinions of other group members will not have been voiced, with the result that the reader of a text must have to rely on his own, often one-sided, views.

Bibliotherapy can, of course, never be divorced from the printed text. The printed text (e.g. a story, passage or poem) constitutes communication between the author and the reader, and consequently provides stimuli for further discussion. In this way each participant in such group therapy sessions gains clarity on problems or difficulties pertaining to himself, either directly or indirectly.

3.13.11 CONCLUSION

It is Rubin's contention that true communication is always therapeutic (cited in Moody, 1968 : 14). This implies that reading should be meaningful in terms of the goals set for the therapeutic session and should not only be an end in itself.

Regardless of the diversity of variables on which a bibliotherapeutic group depends (such as sex, age, homogeneity, background and diagnostic category) Lombard affirms that in group bibliotherapy

'We do not lose sight of the individual - his needs, his growth - but we believe that a person can only become autonomous after he has first been a full-functioning member of a group' (1976 : 150).

3.14 THE ROLE OF THE BIBLIOTHERAPIST

Effective bibliotherapy is based on sound teamwork. Success in the application of bibliotherapy depends on the physician's, psychiatrist's, social worker's, librarian's or other facilitator's skill and sensitivity in gauging the reader's need at various stages of treatment.

In a hospitalised patient's case, bibliotherapy depends greatly on teamwork. We tend to think that diagnosis and therapy are two separate processes, but they are in fact indivisible. Diagnosis, besides being the identification of any handicaps or disorders as observed a propos given undesirable symptoms, also involves the classification of people on the basis of certain observed characteristics; normally abnormalities (Dictionary of behavioural science, 1975 : 98). As the therapeutic relationship progresses, the diagnosis may become more specific, intimate and idiosyncratic. Generic ideas are left further behind (Kell & Mueller, 1966 : 16 - 7).

The role of the librarian becomes prominent in the preventive type of bibliotherapy. Darling (1957 : 296) claims that the most promising mode of bibliotherapy seems to be of the preventive variety. It can be applied in the 'normal' situation, for example, among school children who are trying to strengthen their sense of self-worth so that they will

be able to defend themselves adequately in the event of any future threat to their security. Preventive therapy is ideal in this context, since it can also be applied with ease to groups.

In a bibliotherapeutic experience the role of the librarian extends beyond merely making reading material available. It is one of active engagement. The librarian observes, listens and reports on activities engaged in bibliotherapy. Egan (1965 : 67-72) rightly agrees that listening is not simply a passive process. Even less so is conversation, which involves techniques, suggestion and clarification in such a way that the patron can restructure the matter he experiences in a communication process of this kind. It is usually argued that the librarian should assume responsibility for prescribing (cf. par. 3 - 10) reading material for their therapeutic value (Ryan, 1959 : 198). In certain cases psychiatrists and nurses also prescribe literature for their patients.

Michelman (1953 : 292) suggests that the provision of literature should be authentic, pertinent and adequate in content, if it is intended to enhance educational opportunities, social relationships and personal development.

Assistance to individuals in locating and interpreting the reading matter is an imperative component for problem-solving. There are a multitude of factors governing the therapist's choice of books, which may vary from group to group and from one individual to another (Brown, 1975 : 188). Books are judged according to the criterion of therapeutic content, i.e. what effect it will be assumed to have on the person for whose specific emotional state it has been selected.

Of equal importance to the issue of selection of books is the therapeutic relationship itself. It is to the credit of Freud that he was the first to understand and describe the therapeutic process in terms of an interpersonal experience between patron and therapist (Fromm-Reichmann, 1970 : 3). Freud taught that all our relationships with other people, including the relationship of patron and therapist, are patterned by our early relationships with the dominant people (e.g. parents, siblings and teachers) of our environment during infancy. This view of the impact of environmental influences in

early life is, of course, one of Freud's less contentious, and apparently self-evident observations.

A very effective way to understand the patron is through the conversational method. In contrast to the Freudian approach to therapy, developmental counselling and preventive bibliotherapy are focussed primarily on the present and future situations rather than those of the past (Penland & Mathai, 1974 : 22). The therapist in other words, is mainly concerned with the patron's destination, as distinct from his origin. Patrons are considered to be capable of choosing goals, making decisions and generally assuming responsibility for their own behaviour and future development.

Through discussion and guidance the therapist opens up new avenues for the patron and it will largely depend on him if he is going to take the responsibility of choosing a way of life with which he will be able to cope. Although the therapist will avoid imposing his values, feelings and standards on the patron, it does not mean that he has to hide them (cf. par. 3.1.2; 3.8).

3.14.1 PREREQUISITES FOR SUCCESSFUL THERAPY

The first prerequisite for successful therapy is the respect that the therapist must extend to the patron (Freeman, 1978 : 9).

In dealing with the problems of individuals or groups, the question arises as to whether the therapist is to act as an agent of social control or encourage him to do what he pleases. It is important that the therapist should take into account cultural influences in his value judgements. It goes without saying that no member or leader of a therapeutic situation can be entirely objective in a clinical or ontological sense. At best he should strive to approximate objectivity.

A therapist should be physically well, emotionally stable and have a pleasing personality. He should communicate spontaneously with the patron, indicating genuine concern and involvement (Altmann & Nielsen, 1974 : 285). The empathy on which a group or individual is

so highly dependent, refers to the therapist's ability to understand accurately their feelings, experiences and intentions (May, 1967 : 75 - 82) so as to enable them to communicate effectively.

3.14.2 THE THERAPIST AND THE PROCESS OF CHANGE

It is possible that the therapist may inhibit the client by virtue of his anticipatory fears and projections about the consequences of an imagined relationship (Kell & Mueller, 1966 : 21). (Cf. also par. 3.9.4).

The change in the patron must be understood in terms of what has transpired between the patron and the therapist or counsellor. In the course of listening, therapists may find some recurring themes (such as frequent reference by the patron to his teacher or father) which might serve as clues to reveal his problems. The language (e.g. aggressive expressions) used by patrons may also be used by the therapist, as a means of drawing inferences from their attitudes and feelings. Many words appear to be manifestations of deeper meanings. Patrons may use expressions which suggest aggression, uncertainty, ambivalence, aloofness or other danger-signalling preoccupations, or they may avoid the use of certain words completely (Swart & Wiehahn, 1979 : 28).

The symptoms and problems of patrons, of course, are numerous. The therapist should afford patrons ample opportunity to express themselves freely. However, it remains the therapist's duty at all times to control the situation in hand, and to decide which strategy of approach or which technique is likely to be the most effective for the particular patron.

3.14.3 THE THERAPIST AS LEADER

In order for a group to achieve its goal, such a group should be cohesive. The cohesiveness of a group depends largely on the role played by the group leader (Hansen, 1976 : 290 - 96). Hemphill (1949) conducted a survey in which 500 respondents described which qualities and abilities they felt a leader should possess.

Many felt that a leader should have the ability to advance the purpose of the group, have administrative competence and motivation, contribute to the patron's feeling of security and he should have freedom from activities serving his own interests.

Brammer and Shostrom (1968 : 218) distinguish two modes of leading in the therapeutic situation, viz. (a) leading indirectly, when a client is aided in extending the topic of his choice to start an exploration. Examples are, 'Would you mind to elaborate upon that a little more?', and 'What do you mean by that?'; (b) leading directly implies initiating or stimulating the area of discussion desired by the patient, e.g.: 'Tell me more about your mother', and 'What do you think that is?' Brammer and Shostrom advise that therapists should lead the client just enough to stimulate his therapeutic growth.

3.14.4 TRAINING OF BIBLIOTHERAPISTS

As in the case of psychotherapy, the idea that bibliotherapy can be practised by virtually everyone is regrettably still all too prevalent today.

However, effective training in most aspects relating to bibliotherapy is essential. It is vital, or at least highly desirable, for a bibliotherapist to have formal knowledge of, and background in, inter alia, psychology, sociology, public health and library science (Moody, 1969 : 104). To this list Rongione (1978 : 270) adds the biological sciences of anatomy and physiology, as well as elementary psychiatry. The predicament remains, of course, of finding a single bibliotherapist possessing the combined requirements.

In all parts of the world librarians, even those trained and experienced in bibliotherapy, are not licensed, as is customary among, for example, social workers and clinical psychologists. (Hinseth, 1975 : 21). However, the Association for Poetry Therapy in the United States do licence poetry therapists. Centres have been established in the United States with the object of enhancing the knowledge and interests of those attracted to the study of bibliotherapy. Among these are The Bibliotherapy Research Institute (in Columbus, Georgia,

Ohio), The Institute for the Study of Bibliotherapy (Indiana), The Bibliotherapy Round Table (Washington, D.C.), The Bibliotherapy Discussion Group of the A.L.A. (Chicago) and The Mental Health Librarians of the American Psychiatric Association (Washington, D.C.). Closely related to these organisations are the Association of Poetry Therapy (New York) and the Poetry Therapy Institute (Encino, California).

Despite the lack of formal education and training opportunities to produce competent bibliotherapists, it can be assumed that persons educated in the disciplines mentioned would develop the ability to supervise the procedure involved in bibliotherapy effectively.

3.15 THE LIMITATIONS AND ADVERSE EFFECTS OF BIBLIOTHERAPY

Lawler remarks that the almost limitless proliferation of therapies is often dissipated by professional practitioners. He argues :

'We have therapeutic techniques based on virtually everything under the sun: feeling and touching, talking and walking, rising or sleeping, seeing or smelling - and one can only say, the more the better if they are genuinely healing' (Lawler, 1972 : 227).

The problem, however, remains that the multiplicity of novel therapies, some good and some bad, will discredit proven effective ones.

The chief limitation of bibliotherapy appears to reside in the technique itself. Bibliotherapy seeks to offer second-hand experience by serving as a bridge '... to let the personality out and to let the outside world in' (Rubin, 1973 : 15).

Many practitioners of bibliotherapy believe that it is beneficial to anyone, regardless of whether the individual has problems or not. It remains problematical, however, to determine whether or not an individual will benefit from bibliotherapy or, for that matter, from any form of bibliotherapy.

Likewise, it is difficult to determine who will be harmed by it.

Brown (1975 : 190) lists the following potentially harmful results of bibliotherapy:

- (a) the emotional condition of the patron may be aggravated if the literature is not used judiciously;
- (b) instead of gaining insight into his problems a patron may merely rationalise them;
- (c) the bibliotherapist and the patron may naively believe that the mere act of reading literature will cause the problem to disappear (in fact, however, reading serves merely as a stimulus for discussion and thinking);
- (d) the bibliotherapeutic relationship between the therapist and patron may be impaired by antagonism and unfriendliness.

In the event of upsetting the patron, Bogard (1965 : 11 - 17) maintains that bibliotherapy, like medication, should be carefully prescribed in regard to (a) indication of use, (b) contra-indications, (c) dose, (d) duration of application, (e) when to stop, (f) what possible adverse effects may be foreseen.

Bogard's concern with prescriptive measures can be viewed as an oversimplified statement, since bibliotherapy focusses on complex phenomena (i.e. man's emotional life) and not on the individual's biological processes, in which event a tablet that is meant to cure a given complaint will generally relieve that ailment in practically everyone. Individuals, as argued earlier, are unique, and depending on the nature and intensity of his situation, will invariably need individual attention. Bogard's suggestion, therefore, can only be followed to a certain extent in the case where the person is hospitalised.

Viewing bibliotherapeutic treatment comprehensively, it is not always possible to foresee any definite adverse effects until one has become actively engaged in the process. If the therapist is inadequately acquainted with books and readers, and the principles of bibliotherapy, severe problems may arise.

Insight into the patron's problems is the ultimate goal of bibliotherapy. If an unskilled bibliotherapist forces a book on a patron it may cause him to dislike reading. If a book has not had the desired effect, the therapist should try another. The amount of reading should not

surfeit or confuse the patron, but should only be enough to help the individual to cope with problems. In fact, the purpose of reading in bibliotherapy is simply one of setting the individual's thinking into motion, which in turn will work through to the solution.

In conclusion, it is fallacious to think that bibliotherapy is a cure-all technique and as such cannot be used wholly independently as in the case of physio- or occupational therapy (Lauer, 1978: 79). To ensure that bibliotherapy prompts psychological change it should be combined with other related therapies, such as music therapy or psychodrama. These complementary therapies should, however, not be allowed to overshadow bibliotherapy, thereby weakening its effects.

3.16 SUMMARY

Having surveyed a wide range of views on the process of bibliotherapy, it would appear that if the expected values of bibliotherapy are to be achieved, we need more than simply communication between a book and a competent reader. In referring to the young child Lejeune (1978 : 209) cautions:

'The process by which the reading of a book affects a child should not be oversimplified - for the child is not quite so plastic a creature that he is easily changed by what he reads.'

According to various authorities, literature promotes among other matters the mechanisms of identification, compensation and catharsis. This implies that the reader must be able to identify with characters or elements in the story. In this way, Brown, in referring to children, contends that identification is seen essentially as a mechanism of augmenting the self-esteem concept:

'Maximum growth and self-fulfilment cannot be realized if the individual has not resolved personal conflict and satisfied his needs' (Brown, 1975 : 186).

Moreover, he believes:

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'Only as the student is assisted toward self-understanding and self-direction early in his school career, whenever a problem arises, can the deepening or multiplication of problems be prevented. Thus the developmental or preventive aspect of bibliotherapy becomes much more socially desirable than the traditional remedial aspects applied after a problem has become serious' (Brown, 1975 : 186).

However, one realises that the process of reading is not the only means of effecting personal growth, and therefore it is difficult to assess accurately its contribution to personal and social adjustment, the self-concept and other significant aspects relating to the individual's development. As a consequence Spache (1978 : 245) warns that one should realise

'... the nature of the bibliotherapeutic process and the factors which hinder its development.'

Finally, the effects of reading a book, like the effects of any other experience, must be measured in terms of the changes in attitudes and behavioural manifestations displayed by a particular individual; at a particular time.

4 THE READING ACT

4.1 INTRODUCTION

'The reading process should be the fundamental study to all librarians everywhere, since librarianship involves all those bibliographical activities to bring the book and the reader, together in an intellectually rewarding experience' (Shera, 1973 : 97).

4.1.1 LIBRARIANSHIP AS A PROFESSION

Librarians generally claim that librarianship is a profession (in terms of a given definition), but their claim is often based on shaky foundations. MacLeish remarks aptly:

'Certain professions define themselves. Others are defined by those who practise them. The librarian's profession is of neither nature' (MacLeish, 1976 : 13).

It would appear that conceptual clarification regarding the standardisation of the term 'profession' has yet to be achieved. In general, the term 'profession' refers to

'a vocation in which a professed knowledge of some department of learning is used in its application to the affairs of others, or in the practice of an art founded upon it' (Shorter Oxford English dictionary, 1970 : 1593).

When one considers that '... an occupation is expressed more precisely by specifying that it is, for example, an art, or a craft, skill, trade or profession' (Bekker, 1976 : 17) it becomes confusing as to what semantic difference there is between an occupation and a profession (cf. also Fouché, 1972 : 4). Simplistically, an occupation refers without further qualification to any wage-earning employment in which one is engaged, while a profession has the additional prerequisite of an advanced education, usually embracing special training as well. However, the nature of both concepts remains relatively obscure. It will be well to realise that 'profession' is being used as a descriptive term (i.e. it possesses certain circumscribed characteristics)

and as a normative term (i.e. it denotes a desirable kind of work) (Bekker, 1976 : 20). As a descriptive term (Carr-Saunders and Wilson, 1933 : 283 - 9) suggest that a profession should comply with given requirements relating to aspects of expertise, service, altruistic motivation, self-organisation and autonomy. As an evaluative term 'profession' has been largely confined to medicine, law and divinity in historical perspective.

It becomes apparent that professionalisation (i.e. the process of aspiring to the full characteristics of a profession - cf. Blumer, cited in Gates, 1976 : 95) assumes a continuum stretching from professional to non-professional occupations. Along this spectrum all occupations are placed in a consecutive order in accordance with the degree of professional qualities it possesses (cited in Bekker, 1976 : 21). This view is supported by Vollmer and Mills (1966 : vii) who contend that no single occupation displays all the characteristics required by a profession; rather, they suggest each profession should be regarded as an ideal type of occupation. In this sense 'occupation' is the inclusive concept, 'profession' always implying the possession of a given set of occupational criteria.

Commenting on the position of librarianship within this framework, Gates (1976 : 97) argues that, although it embraces many of the qualities that constitute a profession, its status, among the higher echelons of occupations has often been questioned.

Fouché considers the problematical predicament regarding the professional status of the librarian. He argues that the relatively low professional status which the librarian enjoys may be ascribed to what he calls the 'bureaucratic element':

'... the bureaucratic organisational structure of the library does allow of a professional role for the librarian; and whether the traditional organisational structure in a library is not a serious obstacle to the further professionalisation of librarianship' (Fouché, 1972 : 2).

Among earlier writers on the subject, Pierce Butler, however, takes a more positive position, viz.:

'... the professionalism that we recognize in librarianship is unlike the professionalism of a craftsman or an artist, but like that of a physician, a lawyer or an engineer' (Butler, 1976 : 27).

In Butler's view, therefore, librarianship is accorded a firm position of dignity and social standing in society. Since medicine, law and divinity share the collective function of service to people, McGarry (1975 : 5) endorses Pierce Butler's perception of librarianship as a profession essentially on the grounds of the personal service it renders to literate society.

One of the major problems resulting in librarianship's comparatively low regard as a profession in the eyes of society arises from the stale image projected by the librarian among the public at large, an image that has been vulgarised in the humorous reference to librarianship as 'a genteel occupation for the slightly maladjusted', (ascribed to D.H. Varley, while Chief Librarian of the South African [Public] Library, from 1938 to 1961), and in satirical portrayals of forbidding old maids ruling the roost in vast chambers filled with dust-covered books and sparsely populated by intimidated, obedient readers.

Fouché quotes Bundy and Wasserman (1968) whose contention regarding the professionalisation of librarianship which to a large extent still holds for the present:

'Viewed against the perspective of history, librarianship can be seen to have made only slow and gradual evolution as a profession and exists now as only a marginal entry in the competitive race for professional status' (1972 : 11).

Despite its generally unfavourable image, however, librarianship has undoubtedly progressed along the continuum of professionalisation, and, at its worst, enjoys a general regard today of a promising semi-profession, or, perhaps, rather, a full-fledged profession in the making.

It can be claimed with justification that, as greater professional content is given to the practice of librarianship, the more solid its philosophical foundations are likely to become, progressively giving it more meaningful direction.

4.1.2 THE READING PROCESS AS A QUALITY OF PROFESSIONAL ACTIVITY

Whatever the priorities of the professional librarian may be in a search for the essence of his activities, there can be little doubt that more highly specialised knowledge of the reading process and its impact on individual and society (which surely lies at the very root of librarianship) will enhance its status as an emergent profession. If we know more precisely what happens when we read, it is likely that book selection and reader service policies and practices (including such aspects as the interrelatedness of book selection and censorship, Shera's idea of 'social epistemology', and the potential application of bibliotherapy in innovative situations) will lead to a fundamental review of the role of librarianship in the community. Malan (1978 : 3) likewise places special emphasis on the significance which is being attached to one of the central objects in library services, viz. that of the reading phenomenon.

4.1.3 AIMS, OBJECTIVES AND FUNCTIONS OF LIBRARIANSHIP

All activities of the library, including those of stimulating reading and guiding the reader in the selection of literature which is suitable for his needs, are performed for the purpose of serving the users. The library is regarded as an indispensable agency in contributing to the growth of human civilisation:

'... no one plan can describe the form, nature, purposes and services of the library throughout history, for they have been determined by the needs of the people who have produced and used "the book" in its multiple forms - from the clay tablet to the original scientific report and the magnetic tape and disc of today' (Gates, 1976 : 89).

The library serves the fundamental higher needs of man (in terms of a quest for self-actualisation (cf. par. 2.4.4.1.1), such as education, research, civic responsibility, aesthetic appreciation and recreation (Gates, 1976 : 93). Library service can therefore be expounded in terms of aims, objectives and functions predetermined by the community's manifest and potential needs.

The concepts of aims, objectives and functions imply effectiveness in their fulfilment since they denote the direction of human effort in the endeavours to attain ultimately meaningful results (Bekker, 1976 : 117). Bekker suggests clear distinctions between aim (or goal), objective (or purpose) and function, which is useful in our discussion:

'... the function of any activity can be contrasted with "purpose" by saying that it is the means and not the end, the role and not the goal ...' (Bekker, 1976 : 128).

In terms of reader services (which, inter alia, embrace the sphere of activities emanating from the application of bibliotherapy) these aims, objectives and functions are narrowed down to the specific questions surrounding such services.

4.2 READING COMPETENCE

Since education is generally accepted as the overriding aim of librarianship (Malan, 1978 : 28) reader guidance (an aspect of making literature accessible to the reader) becomes a significant function of the library. In this way the librarian acts as an appropriately qualified mediator between recorded knowledge and users in quest of the content of knowledge.

When literature is made available to an individual, it is assumed that such a person is able to read independently, i.e. to interpret the written or printed word. Since this section deals with the reading phenomenon, we will confine ourselves to the literate person who has learnt to perform certain mental tasks such as reading (Hatt, 1976 : 23). As a consequence such a person is called a 'reader'. Hatt maintains that adequate literacy, access to reading material, the environment which stimulates reading and the time to read are prerequisites to effective and efficient reading (Hatt, 1976 : 23). However, these conditions are clearly not the only ones that apply. Reading skills depend for their development upon the existence and availability of a certain range of sources of knowledge on the one

hand, and given standards of cognitive competence on the part of the reader on the other.

4.3 READING AS COMMUNICATION

Since the ultimate aim of reading is to establish meaningful communication, it demands from the reader linguistic skills as well as communicative ability. Although communicative ability is to a certain extent interrelated with linguistic skills, it does not wholly rely upon it. Linguistic skills do not always guarantee communicative ability. Widdowson's claim that 'communicative abilities embrace linguistic skills but not the reverse' (1978 : 67) is an endorsement of this supposition.

The reader and the record are dynamically merged in the reading process. The record is a product of human thought. Owing to the limitations of man's memory he commits his thoughts to record. The recorded word, image or sound now serves a surrogate for man's collective memory.

Coherent (i.e. intellectual, intuitive, aesthetic and mystical) access to the recorded word presupposes the ability on the part of the individual to decode it, i.e. the ability to read. Reading, an aspect of the more encompassing process of communication, is the very fabric of civilization:

'... progress (especially scientific and technological advancement) in any civilisation is dependent on the ability of that civilisation to record its knowledge in an interpersonal or symbolic manner so that this memory can be shared and expanded from generation to generation' (Kesting, J.G., 1980, South Africa, libraries in the republic of, cited in Encyclopedia of library and information science, New York: Dekker, 28 : 151).

A text contains a 'message' and the study of communication embraces the aspects pertaining to messages, their senders, their receivers and what transpires during the interaction among the three (Hätt, 1976 : 16).

Man's communicative operations are based upon two different forms of symbolisation, viz. verbal and non-verbal systems (Schramm, 1974).

During the reading act, which is so unique and highly complex in nature (Timm, 1959 : 143), the reader projects the worlds, which is known to him through his senses, upon objects (Bechtel, 1957 : 218) (cf. par. 4.8.2). Non-verbal operations are the principal operations during the reading process:

'Non-verbal communication, which rests upon the analogue principle, refers to the inner experiences of man and thus consists of movements that are continuous, while governed by biological necessities or the natural order of things' (New encyclopedia Britannica, 1974 : 1007).

Non-verbal communication is of an international, intercultural, inter-racial and interspecies nature, which implies that it is highly flexible:

'Since the semantic, lexical, grammatical and syntactical aspects of this type of communication are not rigidly controlled, non-verbal codification permits redundancy, has emotional appeal and is used for the expression of intimate sentiments' (Encyclopedia Britannica, 1974 : 1007).

Non-verbal operations fulfil both symbolic and practical functions.

Communication should be viewed as a relation or rapport between different entities, or between the parts of one organic entity. The Latin concept 'communicare' literally implies 'to give to another as a partaker; to impart, confer, transmit' (Shorter Oxford English dictionary, 1970 : 352). There are at least two kinds of communication, viz. intercommunication (which takes place between two or more different entities) and intracommunication (which takes place within an entity):

'Intrapersonal communication is an esoteric topic, but the notion that all interpersonal communication is also, to some extent intrapersonal, lies buried as a hidden foundation in much of the discussion of messages and their makers' (Hatt, 1976 : 16).

To a certain extent every human being can be viewed as a cybernetic

organism who performs intracommunication. This implies that he has the ability to perceive, think and, as a result, manifest his behaviour overtly (Eysenck, 1972 : 239). Transfer of information between like-minded entities is generally accomplished efficaciously.

The involvement of man as an element in the dynamic process of reading increases its complexity immensely (Shera, 1973 : 95). On the other hand, the printed word, coded in language, constitutes the message. Language has been devised by man, but it is apt to remember that, as in the case of other manifestations of human thought, man as specialist - referring here to linguists who have studied it - does not fully understand it (Shera, 1973 : 95).

4.4 READING AND LANGUAGE

The author's thoughts, which are transferred through the medium of language, form the most important bridge between the writer and reader.

The origin and evolution of language, in order to be explained adequately, need extensive elaboration, but such an effort is beyond the range of this study. However, a very cursory treatment of language may suffice for the purpose of this study. Jespersen defines language as

'... an agreed-upon or commonly accepted set of vocal sounds (with their concomitant and "mummified" written formulations) by means of which human beings exchange understanding and by which the cultural heritage is transmitted from generation to generation' (cited in Encyclopedia of the written word, 1968 : 234).

From Jespersen's definition it can be inferred that language has no life of its own (Bonny, 1939 : 7), but only acquires a state of dynamic being in a process of communication of which writing is of our immediate concern. Therefore, the development of language has been intimately associated with the invention of writing. Rubinstein (1975 : 45) argues:

'Culturally, written language is late, but historically it is early because recorded history could not exist without the written language to record it.'

4.4.1 THE ORIGIN OF WRITING

Writing is claimed to be

'an art [which is] peculiar to man, even more so than speech, and [it] presupposes language' (Encyclopedia of the written word, 1968 : 410).

The notion that as an event the invention of speech was concurrent to the origin of man, is of course, mere speculation. We have no direct or other incontrovertible knowledge about the origin of language. Regarding the absence of empirical evidence of the origin of language Cohen wisely cautions us against the urge to conjecture:

'Can the desire to know the development from anthropoid stage to modern stage ever be satisfied? We can at least show the way by summoning various types of research, but we must refrain carefully from all idle speculations' (Cohen, 1970 : 17).

Evolutionists hold that man's brain among all living organisms on earth is uniquely capable of abstract thought. According to their theories Homo erectus is assumed to be the earliest prototype of human being with a brain volume of 1050 cc. Much later Homo sapiens, i.e. modern man, with a brain volume of 1700 cc., is claimed to have emerged. He, it is believed, was capable of manipulating tools, of hunting with a bow and arrow and lived in caves (Animal stories ... 1974 : 366). Cohen postulates that the stages of development of man's brain can be related by way of hypotheses

'... to the stages of development of the brain, tools, and social organization' (Cohen, 1970 : 21).

It is generally maintained that it is actually the sophistication of social organisation that placed the written word on a sound footing. Thousands of years, however, elapsed between the beginning of speech and the appearance of the cuneiform writing of the Sumerians, a people who are believed to have lived in the Mesopotamian Valley between 4000 and 3000 B.C. (Spitz, 1957). Diringier dates the origin

of the Phoenician alphabet at about 1800 - 1700 B.C. (Encyclopedia of the written word, 1968 : 16).

Rubinstein (1975 : 45) claims that the evolution of writing can be presented in five consecutive stages:

- (a) Thing-picture
- (b) Idea-picture
- (c) Word-sound picture
- (d) Syllable-sound picture
- (e) Letter-sound picture

The thing-picture represented simple pictorial designs denoting the thing itself. Stage (b) represented a higher level of abstraction, called an ideograph. Stage (a) and (b) experienced severe limitations since it attempted to communicate directly the visual experience of objects. Stages (c), (d) and (e) endeavoured to present oral language as they would refer to objects symbolically. (Rubinstein, 1975 : 46). The Phoenicians perfected the phonetic alphabet - which was later adopted by the Greeks and eventually by the Romans (Diringer : 1960).

There is, however, no need for dilating upon the development of the alphabet for our purpose. The importance of the use of the language will be assumed to be self-evident in this study. It should suffice, therefore, to conclude this discussion with Bloomfield's claim that

'... the art of symbolizing particular forms of speech by means of particular visible marks adds a great deal to the effective uses of language' (Bloomfield, 1969 : 40).

4.4.2 CONCLUSION

The diverse ways in which we profit by language are generally self-evident. One way in which language aids us and which is relevant to this study is that it relays communication. Here reading steps in:

'Closely connected with the relay character of speech is its abstraction' (Bloomfield, 1969 : 28).

Once we embark on an abstract phenomenon such as reading, the matter tends to become idiosyncratic. Stahlecker (1963 : 417) argues that readers differ in terms of how they read (i.e. level of reading achievement or mode of interpretation, e.g. the depth); what they read (i.e. the range of scope or difficulty in their reading matter) and why they read (i.e. their personal motivation for reading). Stahlecker's argument implicitly warrants further elucidation concerning the phenomenon of reading.

4.5 TOWARDS A DEFINITION

There seems to be as many opinions and approaches as there are writers on the subject of reading. The plethora of literature on the topic, from which no clear consensus emerges, in a sense, testifies to its complexity. Authorities in various cognate disciplines whose object of study includes reading (e.g. psychology, education, linguistics, semantics, communication science, librarianship and information science) tend to have their own range of epistemic views and approaches to reading as related to their needs.

Fair (1973 : 418) argues that the phenomenon of reading is not an inherited skill, but a complex acquired ability. Moreover, it requires visual and intellectual ability, some amount of background experience, motivation and interest on the part of the reader.

Etymologically the verb 'to read' means 'to interpret words' (Etymological dictionary of the English language, 1974 : 502). Reading, accordingly seems to be an interpretive act. Widdowson sees the act of interpretation as

'... a psychological process which, unlike talking, is not realized as actual social activity. Talking is overt behaviour which is open to direct observation, whereas interpreting is a covert activity in the mind' (Widdowson, 1978 : 64).

Since interpretation is the ability to process language as a means of communication, thereby underlying all use of language, it follows that interpretation gives meaning to the use of language. The word 'mean'

and its cognates are intended to convey many semantic and functional connotations. However, all words function syntactically but not necessarily semantically.

4.6 LANGUAGE AND MEANING

The perception of language utterances is insufficient, and in many cases misleading. Every language utterance is accompanied by the desire for explanation (communicative competence) (De Villiers, 1975 : 1). Nordenfelt (1974 : 12) draws attention to the meaning of 'explanation' as a process designed '... to recharacterize, to show its appropriateness, to display its purpose and to make logical inferences.'

A commonly held view postulates the existence of a universal language ability (grammar) which is at the root of all languages, the many 'apparent' differences notwithstanding (De Villiers, 1975 : 1). Moulton elaborates:

'Paradoxically, the very richness of language as a communicative system is the source of many human problems. Every language exists in many styles, it offers different ways of speaking and writing appropriate for different occasions' (Moulton, 1975 : 3).

In the same vein Chafe contends that

'Language is a system which mediates, in a highly complex way, between the universe of meaning and the universe of sound' (Chafe, 1970 : 15).

If we examine language in the broad sense, there seems to be no need to debate its nature as a link between meanings and sound, since the conversion of meanings into sounds or thought allows us to transfer ideas from one to another. Thus, the printed word provides the reader a means of converting the marks he detects on the page into ideas. The question arises as to whether greater clarity and explicitness concerning the concepts which have been transferred are attained by the reader. What is it for a concept to have meaning? What kinds of meaning are there?

4.6.1 THEORIES OF THE MEANING OF LANGUAGE

A propos these questions Hudson (1970) postulates four different theories relating to the meaning of language, known as the referential, the verificationist, the intuitionist and the emotivist theories respectively.

The emotivist theory of meaning stresses the fact that the meaning of a linguistic form refers to the situation in which the speaker utters it and the response which it elicits in the hearer (Ayer, 1960 : 25). This theory is considered to be absurdly oversimplified, as there is nothing common to all these situations which is distinctive of the meaning of the word (Hudson, 1970 : 147 - 50).

The intuitionist theory of meaning as propounded by phenomenologists, insists on what is called 'intuition of essences'. These essences turn out to be meanings which are regarded as entities (Ayer, 1960 : 7). This theory has been discredited by the influence of Wittgenstein (Hudson, 1970 : 84 - 7), as we will indicate later on.

The logical positivists have propounded the verificationist theory, on the assumption that the meaning of a sentence is yielded by the description of the observation which could verify it. Ayer (1960 : 21) explains that

'... animists' language is translatable into our own, inasmuch as the statements which it is used to express are verified by the same observations as serve to verify the statements which we make about physical objects.'

Hudson rejects this theory, on the ground that it suffers from vagueness, vindicates ordinary language and that it has never been adequately formulated (Hudson, 1970 : 35).

The referential theory of meaning postulates that a word acquires its meaning by being matched with an object. A word is defined by pointing to its referent (Ayer, 1960 : 7). Wittgenstein's Tractatus logico-philosophicus (repr. 1963) is an embodiment of this theory. Denotative theories (e.g. referential theory) deal with problems which arise when

the meaning of an expression is considered to be identical with the object it denotes.

Russell's theory of descriptions (1964) is seen as an attempt to resolve these difficulties. The meaning of an expression of the form 'the X' is not given by the object denoted, but a series of descriptions which avoid using the original expression. Russell's view that the grammatical forms of language tend to lead one to erroneous beliefs about meaning and existence is reflected in Wittgenstein's statement, viz:

'Language disguises thought - so much so, that from the outward form of the clothing it is impossible to infer the form of the thought beneath it ...'
(Tractatus, section 4.002).

Unlike Russell, however, he does not abandon the referential theory of meaning. Wittgenstein nevertheless insists that

'A name means an object. The object is its meaning'
(Tractatus, section 3.203).

Wittgenstein, in later life, realised that his theory had oversimplified the concept of meaning, since not all linguistic forms refer to an object.

The later Wittgenstein (in Philosophical investigations (1953)), enjoins us to look at the use of language in order to establish its meaning. Language is woven into forms of life. The meaning of a word is a form of thought or knowledge that the speaker or writer presupposes and expects from his listener or reader. Meaning in the linguistic sense is thus communal and never individualistic (De Villiers, 1975 : 47). Widdowson (1978 : 32) lends support to this supposition:

'The speaker [or writer] provides as many clues to his intended meanings as he judges to be necessary for the listener [or reader] he is addressing to recover them, relying on knowledge of the world, of the conventions of the language code and of the convention of use which he assumes to be shared'.

Words are therefore not autonomous, semantic phenomena as would appear from their listing in dictionaries, but are rather abstracted representations of reality.

4.7 THE NATURE OF READING.

Jennings (cited in Pienaar, 1968 : 10) describes reading as a two-directional process between the writer and the reader, who shares the message conveyed by the author through an act of understanding. The process also involves what happens because of this understanding. In the narrow, or technical sense 'reading' refers merely to the recognition of written symbols, while 'reading' at its profound level, assumes a clear grasp of the meaning implied by the symbols used (Gray, 1947 : 19 - 21).

Interpretation of an artefact is an aposterioric process, i.e. it is dependent on experience. The phenomenon of interpretation takes into account the objectives of the interpreter, his motives, mental condition and the basic attitudes held by the interpreter towards the content of the communication act (Coetzee, 1975 : xi).

Goodman (cited in Robeck & Wilson, 1974 : 33) describes reading as a psycho-linguistic game consisting of perceptual images and the reader's anticipations. Yet other noteworthy definitions of reading have been postulated by such authorities as Nafziger (1948), Hatt (1976), Sartre (1970), Headley (1932) and Robinson (1966).

Robinson (cited in Hatt, 1976 : 10) concludes that reading is a discrete and sequential process comprising such psychological actions as perception, comprehension, reaction and assimilation. These actions occur almost simultaneously. On the whole these actions are not distinctly differentiated, since they overlap.

Jean-Paul Sartre (1970 : 30) offers the following contribution to an understanding of the concept of reading:

'Reading seems in fact to be the synthesis of perception and creation. It supposes the essentiality of both the subject and the object. The object is essential because it is strictly transcendent, because it imposes its own structures and because one must wait for it and observe it.'

The subject, in Sartre's model, is also important because it is required

to disclose the object (i.e. to make it possible for an object to exist):

'In a word, the reader is conscious of disclosing in creating, of creating in disclosing' (Sartre, 1970 : 30).

4.7.1 CONCLUSION

However, the term 'reading', like the term 'literature', is far too broad to be dealt with adequately within the framework of this thesis, and a few generalisations need to suffice for our purpose. We will confine ourselves mainly to the mind of the reader during the reading act.

The problem, of course, is that the reading act remains an abstruse and impermeable phenomenon. Slender evidence exists regarding the nature of reading and what ensues from reading.

Research in reading has mainly focussed on physiological factors (e.g. sex differences; neurological factors and cerebral processes); environmental factors (e.g. socio-economic and cultural influences); emotional factors (e.g. motivation and reading readiness), and intellectual factors (e.g. mental age, intelligence, perceptual skills and reasoning abilities).

In our assessment of the reading act as presented in research studies, it becomes apparent that the majority of investigators fail to reach the crux of the matter.

In the final analysis, reading does not only involve the correlation of a sound image, with its corresponding visual image, but also the art of reconstructing the author's ideas, feelings and moods. What transpires during this reconstruction process is important, especially when one observes what emanates from this process. The process of reconstruction during the reading act is highly relevant to this thesis. When Wittgenstein asks us to consider the notion of 'reading' he does not in fact direct our attention to the multiplicity of uses of this notion, but what actually happens when one reads. He contends that, since word-reading involves far more than the decoding of a series of written

symbols, the total act of reading constitutes 'a special conscious activity of mind' (cited in Ayer, 1960 : 25). This statement of Wittgenstein, we submit, offers a significant contribution to an understanding of the process of interpretation.

4.8 INTERPRETATION

Clarity as to what happens when one reads, is a sine qua non for an understanding of the rationale of bibliotherapy.

The reading process is clearly more complex than a series of events taking place in a mechanical system. Coetzee (1975 : x) argues that one cannot isolate the reading of a text from its antecedent production. Reading should be viewed and explained in terms of the reader's physiological constitution, environmental, emotional and intellectual make-up. The various motives and goals of the reader are unique, and, as such, play an important role during the reading process. Regarding the reader's disposition, Hatt (1976 : 41) comments:

'Often we have little control over our needs, they operate below the surface. What we have at a more conscious level are 'goals'.'

When a reader involves himself fully in a reading situation, it must be in response to a relatively deep and often subconscious level of needs. Shera (1961 : 767 - 70), in referring to Platt's system of human needs, identifies a fifth need of man, other than air, water, food and shelter, viz. the need for information and the continuous flow of stimuli. The concept 'information' refers to knowledge that has been put into communicable form and is consequently dependent on people who can either talk, write or gesticulate (Bekker, 1976 : 183). The knowledge on which information is based, refers to interpreted and organised data, such as correlated sensations, stimuli and impressions (Bekker, 1976 : 181).

During the reading act the mind normally selects, softens, stresses, correlates and organises perceived information, thereby establishing a form of communication. This process takes place under the right mental set or purpose or demand of the reader (Gray, 1951 : 3). When reading,

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people tend to attach divergent and often unique meanings to a text. Holland (1975) postulates that readers respond to literature in terms of their own life-style, character, personality or identity. He maintains that

'Such a style will have grown through time from earliest infancy. It will also be what the individual brings with him to any new experience, including the experience of literature' (Holland, 1975 : 8).

Richards (1940 : 49) expresses the view that in interpreting anything we are letting parallels from our past guide our choice or construction of a meaning, viz. '... no interpretation without parallelling'. In a sense reading, like reasoning, is a process of comparing. We perceive ourselves essentially by reflection as in a mirror and draw a comparison with others (Brill, 1956 : 16). It is by virtue of comparison (which leads to identification) that the reader discovers himself, augments his life-style, thereby maintaining himself (Du Mott, 1967 : 183).

4.8.1 METACOMMUNICATIVE READING

Stories do not present unities in themselves. It is the reader who provides the unity, apparently because he needs to derive sense from the printed text. Literature does not exist in isolation. Rather the content of literature represents an aspect of reality. It is essentially that aspect which is central in the author's presentation of his experiences of reality (Strydom, 1976 : 10).

The metacommunicative aspects of reading involve those devices that instruct the participants of the communication act how to phrase or interpret a message. In psychological terms, Marcel Proust states:

'In reality, each reader reads only what is already within himself. The book is only a sort of optical instrument which the writer offers to the reader to enable the latter to discover in himself what he would not have found but for the aid of the book' (cited in Holland, 1975 :19).

It follows that the text of a book inherently has the potential of

setting the human mind into action, a process which will eventually result in an idiosyncratic interpretation of such a text. Lee maintains that meanings do not adhere in words but in people (cited in Bechtel, 1967 : 210). This implies that it is the reader who attributes meaning to a text when he interprets it. What actually happens is that the reader, involved in fictional reading, interprets written symbols in terms of his personal viewpoint rather than what is being conveyed by the author of the text. This does not mean that he has read inaccurately, but merely that his total predisposition determines what he will read into the text.

In summary, it appears that reading as an interpretive act is in fact a re-encoding process in terms of the reader's needs. Of such communicative abilities Widdowson says:

'Essentially they are ways of creating or re-creating discourse in different modes' (Widdowson, 1978 : 68).

Lucas' reference to the mystical nature of the act of interpretation as a creative process may serve as an apt conclusion to the brief debate in this section:

'... it goes on and emerges from unconscious levels, with their amazing powers of association. Hence the importance in creative work of some general principle for helping, or at least not hindering, this unconscious or preconscious activity (1962 : 167).

4.8.2 BIBLIOPSYCHOLOGY

Bibliopsychology has demonstrated the validity of the principle that the content of a book can only appear identical to readers if they are identical (Simsova, 1968 : 11), which, of course, is an impossibility.

Hatfield reminds us aptly that

'If the reader's associations and the mental 'set' are approximately the same as those of the writer, real communication takes place, ... but, if the reader's associations or frame of mind differ seriously from the writer's misunderstanding or blank incomprehension is practically certain' (Hatfield, 1940 : 78).

Every event or phenomenon, whether internal or external, leaves traces in man. Semon (cited in Simsova, 1968 : 96) calls these memory traces engrams. The engram or neurogram is an 'intervening variable hypothesized to account for retention and thought' (Dictionary of behavioural science, 1973 : 122). An engram may also be defined as

'an enduring change in the nervous system which is a result of temporary excitation ...' (Eysenck, 1972 : 329).

Engrams are normally inherited, or they may have been accumulated during the individual's life and form what is called one's mnema or memory store (Eysenck, 1972 : 329). The mnema is closely associated with all the anamnesis, which can be regarded as the total store of information pertaining to an individual's life which is retrieved while questioning that person (Eysenck, 1972 : 53).

Primary engrams originate from direct contact with reality, while secondary or mnemonic engrams are ecphories or groups of ecphories. 'Ecphore' in psychoanalysis means 'to evoke or revive by means of a stimulus' (Shorter Oxford English dictionary, 1970 : 583).

It is clear that readers lacking certain engrams cannot appreciate a book which to others would seem interesting and intelligible (cf. par. 4.3).

The Humbolt-Potebnia law of reading (cited in Simsova, 1968 : 13) coincides with Proust's observation (cited in Holland, 1975 : 19) that linguistic signs are only stimulants of mental states. This implies that the reader knows only his own projection of the book, and that the book does not transmit any ideas as it appears to do. Holland (1975 : 203) elaborates on this point:

'Readers read differently because of their personalities, and we can understand both the large and the small interactions of a reader with what he reads by relating them to an invariant "identity theme" abstracted from his ego choices.'

4.8.3 REINFORCEMENT OF EXISTING VALUES

One of the consequences of the reading process is that it may have a cathartic effect on the reader, i.e. the reader has merely reinforced his existing set of values (Hall & Lindzey, 1957 : 41; cf. also par. 3.11.5). Such reinforcement of values is quite possible if we take Taine's supposition into account. He maintains that the reader's mnema is conditioned by three interrelated factors, viz. the environment, race and historical moment (cited in Simsova, 1968 : 197). This implies that the reader's beliefs regarding these three factors are corroborated while reading a book which portrays such familiar matters. Taine's explanation of the process of creativity is therefore expressed in terms of social factors (Wellek & Warren, 1963 : 105).

Hennequin (cited in Simsova, 1968 : 197) considers that a book will have the strongest influence on the reader whose psyche (mind) is organised in a matter analogous to that of its author, while Tarde (cited in Simsova, 1968 : 197) suggests that the greater the intermental exchange among the ancestors of two given individuals the easier it will be for them when they communicate with each other. Such assumptions as a matter of course do not imply conflict with the absolute refutation of mind-to-mind identity by Simsova, as cited at the beginning of this section.

Beyond doubt, however, is the assertion that the mental set or store (mnema) of the reader plays a vital role during the reading process. For this reason there is some justification in explaining the strength or impact of the content of the book in terms of the reader's mnematic processes.

4.8.4 HOLLAND'S PRINCIPLES OF LITERARY EXPERIENCE

Holland (1975 : 113 - 21) postulates four principles of literary experience which are ideally applicable to the reading experience, viz.

- (a) style seeks itself
- (b) defences must be matched
- (c) fantasy projects fantasies
- (d) character transforms characteristically.

4.8.4.1 ADAPTATION

The first principle posits the notion that if the reader has reacted favourably towards certain features or combinations within a text, he has perceived it as a process of acting out within that text his hopes at any moment towards the whole. Thus, he has merged elements of the text in order to act out his own life-style.

If the reader has reacted in a positive manner to the text, he must have synthesised or adapted it in order to cope with his needs.

Holland (1975 : 115) calls 'adaptation' the

- 'progressive, constructive and maturational mastery of inner drives and outer reality'.

4.8.4.2 IDENTIFICATION

The second principle of Holland acknowledges the significance of the concept 'identification' (cf. par. 3.11.1). Identification becomes important to the reader as a means of adaptation, while the concepts of projection and introjection facilitate means of defending himself:

- 'For a reader to match his defences by means of elements in the story, he must be able to satisfy his ego with them at all levels, including his 'higher' intellectual functions' (Holland, 1975 : 116).

4.8.4.3 FANTASIES

The third principle of Holland is based on the assumption that fantasy projects fantasies. The reader uses the elements he has assimilated from the text to create a wish-fulfilling fantasy characteristic of himself. One acts and experiences oneself and others in reality and in imagination. Susan Isaacs recognises fantasy as a mode of experience and relates the following facts of fantasies (cited in Laing, 1961 : 4 - 5):

- (a) Fantasy, as a mode of experience, lies at the root of one's instinctual, conscious processes. It normally aims at objects and is basically wish-fulfilment.

- (b) The concepts of primary identification (cf. par. 3.11.2), projection (cf. par. 3.11.3) and introjection (cf. par. 3.11.4) form the basis of fantasy life.
- (c) Although fantasies are not usually verbalised, they nevertheless tend to be capable of verbalising under certain conditions.
- (d) Fantasies are sensory experiences, and therefore have both psychological and somatic effects.
- (e) The act of adaptation to reality requires the dynamics of concurrent unconscious fantasies.
- (f) Unconscious fantasies dominate the lives of both normal and neurotic personalities.

Isaacs (cited in Laing, 1961 : 5) remarks that the difference lies in the specific nature of the dominant fantasy, the desire or anxiety associated with them and their interplay with external reality:

'Fantasy is not in the book, but in the creative relation between reader and work' (Holland, 1975 : 117).

4.8.4.4 LITERARY EXPERIENCE AS CONDITIONING FACTOR

Holland's fourth principle, viz. that of literary experience, is that the reader will transform the fantasy content of the text into some literary theme. In doing so, he will apply his literary experience, interpretive skills, his experience of human character, his sensitivity and other relevant abilities and modes of being.

4.8.4.5 CONCLUSION

These principles are valid only insofar as there is a tacit, fundamental understanding that the act of reading cannot be divorced from the creative personality of the reader (Holland, 1975 : 123).

4.8.5 COETZEE'S PHENOMENOLOGICAL APPROACH

P. C. Coetzee (1975 : 24), who adopts a phenomenological approach to the interpretation act, has investigated the participation mystique between the participants of the communication model (e.g. the reading

act). Since the individual's intuition is the object of study in phenomenology, it means that the essence which he extracts from the content of fictional literature is mainly that which he has projected into it.

Gilbert Ryle (1969) states that one is only able to understand the message after one has followed the given lead. An objection to this view, however, is that one may be able to follow certain words and yet not attribute the total meaning they are intended to convey. We can only speak of a degree of understanding to the extent that our 'kenwêrelde' (Coetzee) are the same.

The laws of Hennequin and Tarde regarding the interpretation of content is significantly related to Coetzee's notion of the identity of the reader's 'kenwêrelde'. It is only to the extent that the reader approximates the author's 'kenwêrelde' that there can be a degree of understanding and attunement of ideas.

4.8.6 CONCLUSION: NATURALISM AND POSITIVISM VS PHENOMENOLOGISM

In our exposition of reading we have shown that the reader is an active being who does not simply reflect ideas passively. Rather, he is someone who acts creatively. In terms of phenomenological principles one has no option but to reject naturalist and positivist approaches to interpreting literature. Such rejection arises from the fact that the empiricist fallaciously assumes that all concepts are reduceable to sensuous data, as the intellectualist imagines that a concept can be produced from sensuous data through the instrumentality of special rational abilities in man.

The phenomenologist finds the empiricist's description of perception unacceptable and the intellectualist's presentation of attention and interpretation inaccurate. The phenomenological approach would rather concentrate on the structure of the ego or person who performs these statements.

The phenomenological approach implies the universal suspension (albeit only temporarily) of the objective world independent of the individual.

It is rather important for the individual to have association and fellowship with the world. The reader associates himself with the world as presented by the author in the book in terms of his own experience, perception, memory, thought, judgement and evaluation.

4.9 THE INFLUENCE OF THE CONTENT OF A TEXT

The question is often asked as to whether the content of any reading material has significant influence, personally and socially, on the individual or society respectively. Does a specific book affect different readers in different ways and are such influences predictable? It is important to note whether a specific book or collection of books hold any significance for a person or group of people during and after bibliotherapeutic activity.

Discussing the educative influence of books, Melnik and Merritt assert that reading as a social phenomenon should be of major interest to librarians (cited in McClellan, 1977 : 38). Librarians are often more readily identified with the book and its sources of information, rather than with the act of reading as an organic process. The librarian is usually epitomised by the public as an assistant who engages in practical work (e.g. shelving book) or disseminating information (cf. also par. 4.1.1). He is not customarily associated with the theory of reading, especially insofar as this has bearing on what happens during the reading act.

However, through knowledge - based on rigorous research regarding the influence of books on the reader - the librarian will greatly enhance his capacity for understanding the principles and practices of bibliotherapy.

4.9.1 SITUATION

It is important that we elaborate briefly on the effects that reading has on the reader. The speaker and listener are brought into relation with each other in a dynamic talking situation, whereas a writer and a reader are associated with the aid of recorded words. A message emanates from a specific person who finds himself in a specific situation

and is normally directed towards a specific idea of a reading audience comprising individuals or groups. In every message that is conveyed, the situation from which it emanates is of decisive importance. De Villiers (1975 : 2) argues that the concept 'situation' is wider than that of 'context'. 'Situation' encompasses a varied number of complex factors, such as the speaker, time and place of the message. All messages are thus related to a situation. Although situation is important, not all messages are tied to space and time. It is characteristic of man that he strives for unrestrictedness.

The concept of 'situation' renders significance to the written text since the writer invariably uses situational words (e.g. I, we, here, now, you etc.)

Words are thus either directly related to a situation or used in the context of being indirectly related to a situation. The linguistic philosopher, Bühler, however, reaches the conclusion that there are only Zeigwörter (indicative words) and Nennwörter (naming words). Related to this view, Sandman distinguishes two main classes of words, viz. 'orientational' and 'descriptive' words (cited in De Villiers, 1975 : 3).

4.9.2 IMPLICATION

Writers frequently use language in such a manner that its meaning is not sufficiently clear to facilitate immediate comprehension. However, the message often only becomes apparent as the story or presentation of an argument progresses. Certain words used by the writer may help to unravel the meaning. In order to understand a text one should guard against attributing meaning to it which is out of context or completely erroneous. The concepts 'meaning' and 'implication' are often contrasted in linguistic circles. Van Wyk Louw (1970 : 15) argues that a text suggesting symbolism has only one meaning but more than one implication. The term 'implication' refers to that extra cognitive aspect which one adds to a given message in a text. Implication is a sort of tacit message which is not overtly expressed and is normally situated in an apparently unrelated aspect. Before a message can have any impact on the reader he needs to have commensurate linguistic

competence, i.e. the ability to decode at the given level of that specific language before him.

4.9.3 'WISSEN' VS 'KENNEN'

In the use of language there are two mental skills which are required, called *wissen* (*savoir*) and *kennen* (*connaître*). Russell (1970 : 23) suggests that we have knowledge of things by acquaintance and by description. Knowledge of things by acquaintance is anything of which we are directly aware without an intermediary, or a process of inference, e.g. the table, its colour, shape, smoothness, etc. Knowledge of things by description illuminates the proposition and enables us to go beyond the limit of our private experience.

The reader is an explorer and in his exploration of the world he forms a dual vision of the world, consisting of reality as described in scientific literature and the world of invention as created by artists and popular authors which we may call autistic literature (Coetzee, 1961 : 7).

4.9.4 RELATIVITY OF PERSPECTIVES

Man as an object of study often seems too elusive to lend himself to the scientific process of abstraction and generalisation. In his search for individuality and genuine meaning in life, man survives one conflict situation after another. Since his views are personal, he can only formulate conclusions from his own position (i.e. the phenomenological approach). Man, accordingly, accepts the self in its unique existence and singular experience. This implies that the reading of a text is not tied up in one fixed perspective. The specific perspective that the reader holds implies other potential perspectives of viewing the contents of a text.

4.9.5 ONTOLOGICAL APPROACH

Philosophical and psychological approaches to an understanding of the existence of man have become entangled as a result of their mutual ontological bases. This is why there are such great similarities in philosophy and psychology regarding man and his existential problems.

The author of a text, who operates in the same fashion as the philosopher and psychologist moves continually between these two poles (i.e. psychology and philosophy). The object of the ontological approach, which is deeply seated in philosophy and psychology, is to reveal the essence of man, his existence and consequently to give a better understanding of himself.

4.9.6 INTEREST VS MOTIVATION

In their pioneering user studies Hofmann, Waples and Tyler, as well as other contemporaries, assumed that the reader's motive was 'interest'. On the whole, this concept has yet to be defined clearly. Fryer (cited in Young, 1950 : 321) views 'interest' as the acceptance-rejection aspect of reaction. The term 'interest' has been defined as

'... a state of engaged attention and curiosity: disposition to such a state ... to concern deeply ... to engage the attention of' (Chamber's twentieth century dictionary, 1968 : 553).

Vernon views the pursuit of interests as being generated by complex patterns of thought, activity and motivation, organized and centred around certain aims. It is obvious that interests are dynamic in their manifestation. The most salient characteristic of an interest is that it is an acquired or learned disposition. This is evidenced by the fact that interests were found to be affected by such variables as personality structure, age, sex, intelligence and environment (Mulder, 1976). Mulder distinguishes between reading motivation and reading motives in the reader. The concept 'motivation' is normally viewed as a hidden urge which impels us to behave in a particular way (Vernon, 1971 : 1). Mulder sees reading motivation as an intrinsic force, i.e. self-motivation, while reading motives are normally viewed extrinsically, i.e. external forces sustaining one's interest in reading.

4.10 THE READING EXPERIENCE

The reading experience involves inter alia a person engaged in the art of reading a publication, and such a reader may either be influenced

significantly in different ways and levels of intensity, or, at the other extreme, he may not be affected at all. The effects of literature on personality are difficult to determine.

It is, of course, risky to generalise about mental processes in the context of a study of this kind. The manner in which the reader will be influenced depends both on the publication and the reader's projection. It is always important to distinguish between the content of the book, the reader's predispositions and other factors responsible for referential or perceivable effects on behaviour. Sartre (1970 : 32 - 3) considers that the writer of a text appeals to the reader's freedom to collaborate in the production of his work and that such a text does not serve one's freedom, but rather requires it.

4.10.1 READING RECEPTIVITY

A significant factor in the reading process is the content of the book, since it stimulates the reader's disposition. Problems surrounding the reading act arise from the reader and that which is read. The influence of literature is determined by the interaction between the susceptibility of the reader and the content of the publication.

Coetzee (1975) classifies reading receptivity into three forms: (a) the servile (acceptance without further thinking); (b) the sceptic (rejection without further ado); and (c) the neutral which may imply either an autistic or realistic disposition. Servility and scepticism are quite compatible because the same person will be inclined to reject one content without consideration and to accept another content without further thought. Coetzee thus speaks of a servile-sceptic receptivity. Regarding the neutral mode of receptivity Coetzee prefers to distinguish between an autistic-neutral receptivity and realistic-neutral receptivity (1975 : 42 - 7). The servile-sceptic mode of receptivity contains an element of autism, but remains basically realistic.

The terms 'autism' or 'autistic' as used in the context of reading, Coetzee derives from Bleuler (cf. par. 3.11.4). Bleuler's concise concept, 'autistic', refers to a quality in an individual who is intensely involved in himself and who relates everything he experiences

to his own interests, needs and fears. This self-centred mode of emotional disposition can also be applied to the way in which one reads.

4.10.2 CONTENT

Sartre comments on the aspect of 'content' regarding literature:

'... the author guides him (reader), but all he does is guide him (reader). The landmarks he sets up are separated by the void. The reader must unite them; he must go beyond them. In short, reading is directed creation' (1970 : 31).

It is necessary that we know into what direction and towards what intensity the publication will stimulate the reader. It is evident that the publication has to be described, and for this purpose there are a number of ways of doing it. Our guiding principle in analysing a publication should be the reader's needs. The analysis of the content may be done with reference to the intrapersonal or the interpersonal attitude of the reader.

Duverger offers a simplistic definition of content analysis, viz. that it

'... is characterized by the fact that the entities analysed are not usually words but meanings ...' (1968 : 105).

Content analysis can therefore be employed as a powerful instrument to estimate the extent and significance of influences of messages on the individual or the crowd. Content analysis can be explained by way of answers to questions such as: will the publication under certain conditions contribute to the alleviation of the reader's anxieties and fears?; will the publication flatter or offend the reader?; etc.

The stylistic qualities, complexity of language, level of sophistication and maturity of content may have a bearing on the influence of reading. Maturity and sophistication in literature refer to content that is well thought out, i.e. that which has mellowed perfectly.

4.10.3 INSTRUMENTAL EFFECTS OF READING

The instrumental effect of reading in all likelihood constitutes the most significant influence on the reader. A reader may, for example, read to acquire information (Waples, 1940 : 117) (cf. par. 3.11.2). Waples suggests another effect of reading, viz. the reinforcement of the reader's attitudes (1940 : 117) (cf. par. 4.8.3). In this case the reader reads a specific content in which he expresses his attitudes more efficiently. The reinforcement of attitudes is closely related to the susceptibility of the reader. It can therefore not be denied that messages have a meaningful influence on the interpreter (reader) of a text.

4.11 CONTENT ANALYSIS

Analysis of content constitutes an integral part of the librarian's professional work. It is of central concern to both library and information science. Without content analysis in its most rudimentary sense, the standard processes of book selection, descriptive cataloguing, classification, evaluation of reference tools, the writing of annotations for reader guidance, etc. are inconceivable. Asheim remarks that

'... content itself is the message space of the library collection' (1967 : 158).

The basic assumption underlying the use of content analysis is to identify the intentions of the communicators. The content analyst intends to interpret, infer and describe hidden messages or 'reading between the lines' (Gerbner, in Hatt, 1976 : 57). This implies that cognisance is taken of what is meant by the author, rather than what is actually stated. Communication is 'perfected' and 'packaged' to the extent that the recipient understands the message as intended by the sender, i.e. insofar as satisfactory transmission has taken place.

Besides 'perfecting' communication, content analysis also attempts to define those causal descriptions of the content so as to show objectively the nature and relative strength of the stimuli applied to the reader or listener (Waples, 1940 : 2).

Nordenfelt describes 'causation' as

'... the total sum of determinants for an effect,
i.e. a binary relation between facts' (1970 : 46 - 7).

Asheim, moreover, asserts that content analysis is concerned with the flow of 'who says what to whom', and if identification is to be meaningful, the 'who' and the 'what' should be seen in relation to each other.

The identification of the 'whom' (i.e. the reader) is important to the librarian. By revealing the probable intent of the author, or the possible effects upon the reader, content analysis can provide a relatively accurate and reliable description of messages. Rubakin's Special method of bibliopsychology (cited in Simsova, 1968 : 14) predicates that semantic differences could be used to identify and define the nature of either the reader who acts as reagent on the book or the book that acts as reagent on the reader. He advocates that literary texts should be analysed by the special method and given a bibliopsychological coding.

4.11.1 BERELSON'S CLASSIFICATION

Having analysed a representative range of definitions Berelson identifies six distinct characteristics of content analysis (cf. his Content analysis in communication research (1952):

4.11.1.1 IT APPLIES ONLY TO SOCIAL SCIENCE GENERALISATIONS:

An important feature of the social sciences is that they deal specifically with the phenomenon of communication and all its ramifications. It studies both intrapersonal and interpersonal (social) communication. Content analysis in the past has often been applied to written texts in the social sciences. In contemporary counselling, psychology, and therapy the principles and methods of content analysis are applied inter alia to improve interview effectiveness. Duverger emphasizes the fact that content analysis must refer to general characteristics which occur in universal propositions of the social sciences (1961 : 28 - 31).

4.11.1.2 IT APPLIES ONLY OR PRIMARILY TO THE DETERMINATION OF THE EFFECTS OF COMMUNICATION:

Communication between participants is generally affected by the presence of an observer. Objective observation and analysis contribute significantly in the assessment of possible effects. Content analysis purports not only to infer, but to interpret as well. This implies that content analysis is a dynamic process which does not only observe, but also seeks to give meaning by way of description. In this way it also illuminates non-content areas. Hays, however, contends that content analysis identifies the effect of the content upon the attitudes and actions of the reader or listener (1967 : 14). The identification of effects should in fact be elaborated by way of descriptive interpretation.

4.11.1.3 IT APPLIES ONLY TO THE SYNTACTIC AND SEMANTIC DIMENSIONS OF LANGUAGE:

Strictly speaking, content analysis is limited to what is said and not why it is said. As soon as meanings are attached to written symbols, the psychological predisposition of the reader becomes involved. There are, of course, as many 'readings' of a printed text as there are people. Berelson points out that content analysis deals with relatively denotative rather than relatively connotative communication. Denotative communication (e.g. reading) stresses the semantic implications of its operations, i.e. how we read a text. The term 'connotation', on the other hand, refers to a concept of phenomenon as it is in itself, rather than how it appears to the reader.

4.11.1.4 IT MUST BE OBJECTIVE

This, as a matter of course, is a relative ideal. In fact, the term 'objective' refers to 'the character of a real object existing independently of the knowing mind in contrast to subjective' (The dictionary of philosophy, 1944 : 217). The matter becomes complex as soon as the human element is taken into consideration. Since reading is a personal and private activity it may hamper clear objectivity when analysed. But since reading is also to a large extent a social process (Benge, 1970 : 103), the analyst, who seeks

greater precision and reliability, may relatively well approximate the level of objectivity in his search for meaning.

4.11.1.5 IT MUST BE SYSTEMATIC:

The act of systemisation is inherent in any research project. A 'system' refers to 'a group of related elements organized for a purpose' (The Fontana dictionary of modern thought, 1977 : 621). All relevant aspects pertaining to the meaning of a text are gathered during analysis to contribute to greater clarity regarding the implicit effects of reading on the individual. Content analysis, however, suffers from inadequacies regarding the science of reading and the absence of a reader-typology schedule, according to which readers can be classified. It is apparent how difficult it is to perform content analysis adequately in the area of reading. Systemisation of the elements in the text can contribute greatly to an understanding of the reading act and its possible effects.

4.11.1.6 IT MUST BE QUANTITATIVE:

Kaplan and Goldsen hold that content analysis aims at a quantitative classification in terms of a system of categories which are devised to yield information relevant to specific hypotheses concerning the content (1943 : 230 - 47). Quantification seems to be the single characteristic regarding content analysis which virtually all theorists appear to have consensus upon. The techniques and descriptions involved in analyzing the written text should be couched in quantitative terms. Although the frequency of occurrence of various features of the content can be quantified, it remains obscure as to how other aspects pertaining to reading can be quantified. It is arguable whether description is not a more adequate method for analysing the deeper implication of reading as such.

It is evident that content analysis is concerned with empirical inquiries into messages, particularly as a means of assessing what messages may convey within a social communication process and how information embodied in such messages may be measured.

Yet, it seems that little has been achieved in the development of systematic methodologies for empirical inquiries into their nature. However, studies of what messages actually convey have become prominent with the increasing dominance of the mass media of communication. Content analysis is considered the primary research and investigative attempt of communication (Duverger, 1968 : 102), and quite rightly so in reading.

4.12 SUMMARY

To recapitulate, it is important to note that in our assessment of the influence of reading, it seems that we cannot isolate the act of reading from other interpretive modes and the flow of the message.

The question is whether literature has the power to bring about a change - whether slight or substantial - in the individual's conceptual system and attitudes. It is, for example, commonly accepted by society at large that bad company is bound to exercise a corruptive influence on an innocent or naive person. In the same manner it will be assumed that the message in the printed text will have the same potentially corruptive effect on the reader.

Jackaman (1975 : 133) repudiates the latter view by adopting a neutral stance:

'... the act of reading has no inherent virtue but is merely a tool, to be used for a variety of purposes, information, recreation, reassurance, etc.'

As has been argued elsewhere in the thesis, it is generally accepted that every human being is unique and it is understandable, therefore, that ego-needs (i.e. pertaining to one's self) differ considerably. The idiosyncratic nature of man is moreover characterised by the fact that what seems to be prestigious, admirable or important to one person may not appeal to another. We may therefore infer that since people may also differ with regard to their preferences and needs, this will reflect when they become involved in the reading situation. It appears that the influence of reading will greatly depend upon the

reader's receptivity and his level of interpretation.

Scepticism generally clouds the argument that reading has contributed to attitudinal changes in the reader. Coetzee (1975 : 81) considers, for example, two parties engaged in a conversation. Party A may have sown a seed of doubt in party B's mind concerning a particular view-point. It then happens that B reads a book on the topic concerned. If the content is influential, Coetzee argues, it can be expected to contribute partially, if not fully, to the solution of B's problem and thus illuminate and corroborate existing opinions and assumptions. In short, according to this view, literature as such cannot change anybody in a fundamental or all-encompassing sense.

By contrast, Hanneman and McEwen postulate the idea that once a communication network has been formed (and this applies to a reading network, i.e. the reader and the author united via the printed text), the transmission and reception of messages has impact on the participants. They assert that the impact of influences is psychological (perceptions and attitudes) and behavioural in their manifestation (Hanneman & McEwen, 1975 : 242). The question is often posed as to what extent this opinion applies to reading. Dance and Larson claim that

'Communication is that which ties, links, or connects any elements of life together' (1976 : 60).

This covert activity of synthesising (Sartre, 1970 : 30) applies to reading as an art of creation in the broad sense. It becomes apparent that what we call 'influence' of fictional literature appears to be the manifestation of the reader's own needs, fears and life-style. This state of affairs ties up heavily with the reader's age and level of maturity and sophistication. Therefore, if we bear in mind all these variables - which, at their extremes may have either a considerable impact or absolutely no effect at all on the reader - reading can be viewed as mere reinforcement of existing opinions and conceptions of the reader. If reading is used in a positive manner to foster or reinforce desirable traits in the individual, bibliotherapy will accomplish much of the significance it deserves.

5. LITERATURE AND THE BIBLIOTHERAPEUTIC ACTIVITY

5.1 INTRODUCTION

The employment of bibliotherapy is considered an effective technique to correct or remedy certain behavioural patterns, which as a result of specific problems or catastrophic events experienced by an individual or individuals, have caused an upheaval in both personal and social inadequacies or malfunctioning (cf. also par. 3.2.5).

Apart from the generally assumed corrective or potential of bibliotherapy, it is suggested that the application of bibliotherapy is equally well suited for the advancement or cultivation and reinforcement of good and positive values, which will enable the individual to become sufficiently equipped, within reason, to resolve most of the personal and social conflicts he is likely to encounter in the future (cf. also par. 3.1.3(b)).

5.2 THE INFLUENCE OF LITERATURE

Bibliotherapy, which seeks to augment or correct one's beliefs and attitudes through the employment of literature (cf. par. 3.2.2), has a strong stimulating component (cf. par. 3.2.5) which directs itself at the reader's idiosyncratic psychological make-up.

The question arises as to whether or not there is a fully reliable and consistent method of evaluating the influence of literature with a reasonable degree of certainty or objectivity. The question of the influence of literature on the value-systems of readers presupposes some critical understanding of the essential nature or quality of literature.

5.3 THE CONCEPT OF LITERATURE

Wellek and Warren (1966) considers the problem of defining literature. Having examined an especially expansive demarcation of the perimeters of literature, viz.

'one way is to define 'literature' as everything in print' (1966 : 20).

which they reject, a tidier workable definition is suggested:

'Another way of defining literature is to limit it to "great books", books which, whatever their subject, are "notable for literary form or expression" or that

'The term "literature" seems best if we limit it to be the art of literature, that is, to imaginative literature' (Wellek & Warren, 1966 : 21 - 23).

In this discussion no attempt will be made to examine the full implications of such a statement. However, the equation of literature to so-called great books, in the second definition, calls for a critical response at a primary functional level, since such a broad classification raises more issues than it can resolve.

Literature, in the latter sense, normally encompasses all writings of an imaginative nature as distinct from scientific writings or the products of journalism, and is usually assumed to retain its intrinsic value permanently as 'classics' (Collins concise encyclopedia, 1977 : 336).

However, any broad restriction imposed on the many-sided forms that writings have assumed in all cultures, may, if applied to the material employed in bibliotherapy, severely hamper its scope of operation. Therefore, it is suggested that the appropriateness of given forms of literature should be governed by the unique circumstances prevailing in every bibliotherapeutic situation. A broader approach to criteria of selectivity is clearly necessary.

Types of literature, and especially types of children's literature, will now be examined, as a preamble to a discussion of the selection of material considered suitable for the purposes of the empirical experiment to be conducted in this research.

5.4 LITERATURE AS A MEANS FOR PSYCHOLOGICAL TRANSFORMATION

Men of letters who have examined the phenomenon of literature closely

down the years, concluding that literature is regarded as literature not because of its artistic features, in the sense of constituting 'art for art's sake', but rather because of 'the artist's transformation of reality' (Literature for children, 1973 : 9).

Likewise, the reader's responses to literature involve a transformation by means of defences, drives, impulses and fantasies. Chambers quotes Richard Hoggard as saying that in literature the reader

'explores, re-creates and seeks for the meanings in human experience ...' (1973 : 4).

In terms of the dynamic and continuous process of transformation (cf. par. 4.8.1) one can shed light on the way in which readers normally respond to literary characters as though they were real people, even when they are not portrayed realistically. Within the framework of psychological processes, such as fantasising, it is important to emphasise that these processes do not occur in the reading text but in the reader (cf. also par. 4.8.1 and 4.8.4.3).

Chambers' argument, which refers to the semantic qualities of literature for children, is equally valid for the adult reader:

'Language in literature, however, is used in such a way as to fuse disparate experiences into coherent wholes; the subjective and the objective, the personal and specific with the general and universal' (Chambers, 1963 : 9) (cf. also par. 4.8.4.1).

5.5 GOALS OF LITERATURE

The following goals of literature, as extracted from those postulated by Russell (Literature for children, 1973 : 9), are of especial relevance to bibliotherapeutic reading:

- (a) it develops the individual's taste and interest in literature;
- (b) it offers the individual the opportunity to live and re-live the experiences and ideas of other people;
- (c) it renders enjoyment and opportunity for escape by means of imagination;

- (d) it enriches the individual's life experiences;
- (e) it provides a means for gaining insight into one's own personality and related problems;
- (f) it facilitates the means by which the individual will understand the problems of other people; and
- (g) it leads to the discovery of sound morals common to all people.

5.6 CHILDREN'S LITERATURE

5.6.1 DIFFERENCE BETWEEN ADULT AND CHILDREN'S LITERATURE

In response to the issue as to the implied difference between children's and adult literature, it is submitted that there is no difference in essence, since children's reading needs are fundamentally similar to those of adults. As Lohann contends:

'Daar is dan 'n graadverskil, nie 'n wesensverskil nie'
(1972 : 46).

Children may read to satisfy their physical, emotional, intellectual and recreational needs respectively. This claim refutes the validity of the commonly-held assumption that children on the whole tend to read to gratify a superficial need for amusement (Chambers, 1973 : 11), rather than to search for deeper meaning in the perplexities of their unfolding world of perceived reality.

The apparent difference between adult and children's reading, however, is to be sought in the levels of sophistication and maturity which invariably determine one's ability of understanding. Children and adults differ to the extent that the manifestations of adulthood (i.e. the attainment of spiritual, psychological, emotional and physiological maturity) are marked characteristics of adults, while children are still in the process of growing towards the condition of adulthood. As a general rule, a given condition of states of maturity will be reflected in the reading ability, reading patterns and degree of receptivity of the individual concerned.

5.6.2 LITERATURE: A STIMULUS IN THE CHILD'S MIND

It is generally agreed that the intensity of the child's imagination to a large extent governs his interest and enjoyment of a story. It appears as though the intensity of the child's imagination will largely determine the degree of influence a story will exercise in the child's psychological make-up and resultant form of behaviour.

This does not mean that, having been exposed to such 'influential' literature, the child will tend to emulate the behaviour of the literary characters as a matter of course. Rather, it may be inferred that the young reader's responses to the 'influential' ingredients of the book are likely to illuminate the perplexities of his life, heightening his awareness of unfolding reality. The printed text serves essentially as a point of departure in the development of the child's imagination. This mental process, which is inherent in the reading act, usually perpetuates itself in the child's future without the support of the text.

Care needs to be taken by the educationist (i.e. teacher, librarian, parent, etc.) that the innate value of imaginative reading material for children, in particular, should not be neutralised or destroyed by attempting to employ it as a means of either teaching (i.e. the didactic function) or preaching (i.e. the moral function) (Wilson, 1936 : 125).

In its most elementary form the child learns to distinguish adequately between good and bad, and reward and punishment in the reading of a fairy tale. In a more subtle manner, the realistic story, on the other hand, tends to reflect the behaviour patterns endorsed or rejected by adult society. Without realising how or why, it is claimed, the typical child grows morally (Pienaar, 1978 : 107).

5.6.3 LITERATURE: A FORM OF THERAPY AND ESCAPE

It is generally held that imaginative reading material has significant therapeutic value. In the fairy tale, myth, legend and fable, values normally associated with manifest reality often do not feature, thereby

ostensibly constituting a firm basis for escapism. However, myths, legends and fables generally serve in an indirect manner as appropriate material for resolving profound, but largely unconscious, conflicts in the child. Reading is often supplemented by active play in which conflict and problem are acted out cathartically (cf. par. 3.11.5).

Therefore, the book does not constitute a mere mode of escapism, but, as a matter of course, serves as a mirror to enhance self-perception. This introspective activity, in turn, will normally facilitate insight as to how one ought to respond socially when exposed to difficult situations, thereby contributing to the resolution of conflict and to a culmination in the manifestation of joy in life.

5.6.4 SELECTION OF LITERATURE FOR CHILDREN'S READING

Whether books are selected for reading purposes in general or for specialised applications, such as bibliotherapy, book selectors (i.e. librarians, teachers and parents, etc.) ought to exercise reasonable discretion to be circumspect in selecting books that will best suit the needs of the child concerned. Such circumspection is at odds with the commonly-held view among many adults engaged in the provision of books for children that as long as a child reads, irrespective of the nature or quality of the material, reading is ipso facto bound to be beneficial. The counter-argument to this permissive approach is that one should be mindful of the fact that the young child is still developing his standards (which would as a matter of course preclude the ability to discriminate adequately in terms of his prevailing value system), and that the direction of his value system as an adult is bound to be governed by the influences shaping his perception during the developmental processes of childhood.

Children, moreover, are generally regarded as being highly receptive, enthusiastic and impressionable and as such do not yet have the ability to act judiciously in the choice of their literature.

5.6.5 STANDARDS FOR EVALUATING SUITABLE LITERATURE FOR CHILDREN

An important issue is to consider the determination of appropriate standards for the evaluation of literature commensurate to the purposes of use envisaged in given circumstances. It is generally agreed that the purpose of children's literature in its ultimate educational sense is to aid the young reader in increasing his knowledge of himself, thereby providing him with the fund of equipment required to cope with the challenges and opportunities of adult existence towards which he is steadily growing.

Currie (1965 : 11) maintains that it is important to provide books for the child comprising interesting reading matter about topics which are of personal interest to him. It is generally held that children will only read with pleasure those books which fascinate, interest and stimulate them. McColvin (1957 : 63), however, argues that growth is a process of overcoming obstacles and that if we want the child to grow, we should encourage him to read a little beyond his cognitive capacity. However, caution needs to be exercised so as to ensure that a book's level of difficulty is not too advanced for its reader, resulting in its unintelligibility and causing dislike. Of equal importance, of course, is the need to guard against the error of underestimating the child's ability.

Broderick (1965 : 21), again, warns us that children of our contemporary society are on the whole better informed than their predecessors, owing to various factors which necessitate a better preparedness for the potent effects of external stimuli such as those disseminated by the modern mass media. This clearly implies an acknowledgement of their relatively higher level of maturity in a collective sense. Broderick suggests, furthermore, that it is easier to work with children in each of their divergent areas of concern, than to approach their needs on a less individualised basis, since, as the intensity of their interest is generally high, they are eager to learn, have fewer preconceived ideas and are more amenable to the ideas and suggestions that librarians and teachers have to offer them (1965 : 21).

5.7 MATCHING LITERATURE WITH THE CHILD'S DEVELOPMENTAL LEVEL

In one's selection of books for bibliotherapeutic sessions conducted in a scholastic situation one must bear in mind that such literature serves as an educational aid towards the fostering of character-development, psychological maturity and a preparedness for life on the child's part, rather than fulfilling a corrective or remedial function.

A pupil who exhibits severe introversion and inhibition, for instance, may succeed in identifying himself with one of the characters featuring in a story or a poem in the process of discussing such literature in a class situation (cf. par. 3.11.1 and 4.8.4.2). Through the process of identification with certain admirable traits of the literary character - traits lacking in his own life - the reader may gain sufficient self-confidence to facilitate more normal social intercourse with his fellow-pupils, teachers and parents.

5.7.1 THE CHILD'S COGNITIVE DEVELOPMENT

The librarian, teacher or parent as bibliotherapist is often charged with the responsibility of selecting suitable reading material for specific groups of children of given age-ranges. It is impossible, in general terms, to predict with reasonable certainty, what type of literature a child will accept or reject at a particular stage in his life, regardless of our degree of knowledge of the child's needs.

There will therefore always be some degree of uncertainty concerning an individual's capabilities and limitations at any given maturational level. Of relevance to this issue are such factors as the relative influence of heredity, age, intelligence, environment, personality and special aptitudes in the child. Most of these variables are elaborated by theories designed to interpret the causal processes which result in behavioural manifestations characteristic of such variables.

Among these theories those of behaviourists (cf. par. 3.11 especially the first two paragraphs), such as Watson, Thorndike, Pavlov, Skinner and Hall, and that of Jean Piaget on concept formation, are especially helpful in providing an adequate conceptual framework on which the investigation proposed for this thesis can be based.

5.7.2 AN EXPOSITION OF PIAGET'S DEVELOPMENTAL THEORY

Piaget's theory is based, mainly, on genetic, maturational and hierarchical principles (Child, 1977 : 119). This theory posits the notion that human adaptation occurs in a set sequence of stages which are generally associated with successive mental, as distinct from chronological, ages. Piaget proposes the following stages of development (cf. Beard : 1976):

- (a) Sensori-motor stage (i.e. mental age of 0 - 2 years)
- (b) Pre-operational stage (i.e. mental age of 2 - 7 years)
- (c) Concrete operations (i.e. mental age of 7 - 11½ years)
- (d) Formal operations (i.e. mental age of 11½ +)

(a) SENSORI-MOTOR STAGE (0 to 2 years)

During the sensori-motor stage the child achieves mental ability by virtue of the influence of walking, talking and playing on the establishment of a self-identity framework.

A child's actions are initially limited to reflexive processes, e.g. grasping and sucking (cf. Ginsberg & Opper, 1969 : 29). Later on, new activities - known as purposeful behaviour - emerge, which are more directed: for example, the child begins to move objects in an effort to obtain a desired toy. Play, of course, constitutes an important activity during this stage of a child's development.

(b) PRE-OPERATIONAL STAGE-(2 to 7 years)

This stage is characterised by a dual phase, viz. the pre-conceptual phase (2 - 4 years) and the intuitive phase (4 - 7 years). During the pre-conceptual phase the child is not yet able to formulate concepts in the same way as older children and adults (cf. Ginsberg & Opper, 1969 : 73). Therefore, the child cannot successfully form classes of objects. He is basically egocentric in his behaviour because he is unable to see matters from someone else's point of view. The intuitive phase generally marks the beginning of intellectual development. The child forms superficial impressions and perceptions pertaining to his

environment. However, he can still only grasp one dimension or relationship at a time (cf. Beard, 1976 : 57 - 70).

(c) CONCRETE - OPERATIONAL STAGE (7 - 11½ years)

Initially the child's reasoning powers are exclusively connected to concrete experiences. He is to a large extent able to describe, and thereby to explain, the nature of his environment in terms of his perceptions. He is able to grasp the worth of quantity, such as number, weight, volume and area. His mind is no longer fixed on one relationship or dimension as during the pre-operational stage. This implies an ability to visualise classes of objects (Langer, 1969 : 26).

It is held that the child is now able to grasp the concepts of similarity, dissimilarity and subordination (cf. Ginsberg & Opper, 1969 : 119 - 33). (This feature in development, it should be noted in passing, has a significant bearing on this investigation, which proposes to deal with children in a commensurate category of mental ability (cf. par. 6.1.3 5).) The child is capable of attaining a reasonable level of objectivity in judgements of the self and of others.

Beard (1976) maintains that the child is capable of comprehending formal concepts, such as death, justice, cruelty and love, at the mental age of 9 and 10 years in Piaget's scale. This claim is reinforced by the observation that, as a rule, children of this mental age-group are no longer dependent upon concrete evidence to support their arguments (Langer, 1969 : 26).

As a result of his ability to abstract as from his tenth year, the child displays what is referred to as pseudo-maturity. This is the result of the level of stability he has reached and the formation of peer-groups. They are now highly receptive and relatively mature to engage in group therapy, such as bibliotherapy.

(d) FORMAL - OPERATIONAL STAGE (11½ years to adolescence)

During this stage the child is capable of fairly advanced hypothetical reasoning. As a consequence, he will test his arguments to establish real solutions to problems. His reasoning ability now goes beyond tangible evidence (Ginsberg & Opper, 1969 : 202 - 6).

5.7.3 COMMENTS

Despite its duly acknowledged merits in the literature, the Piagetian view has been subjected to some criticism. He is generally criticised for formulating events which occur in prescribed ages and stages in the development of the child, resulting in the misconception of the role of individual differences which are dominated by both innate and environmental factors (Child, 1977 : 128).

The various stages postulated by Piaget are not demarcated absolutely, but tend to overlap. Therefore, one may apply the pattern of development to each child as a means of assessing achievement, both in respect of the child's individual growth process and in respect of the expectations of his mental age-group.

5.8 LITERARY GENRE FOR CORRESPONDING CHRONOLOGICAL AGE

Cook (cited in Literature for children, 1973 : 35 -6) suggests the following literary genres as being suitable for and likely to appeal to readers at particular chronological age levels:

(a) Familiar stories (4 to 5 years): children who have just begun to learn to read generally prefer stories pertaining to the familiar, e.g. pets, toys and children;

(b) Folk-tales (6 to 9 years): such tales often convey a sense of security to children in this age-group. Since this period extends into the later period of childhood, which is characterised by a sense of stability and peer-group formation (e.g. gangs), folk-tales suit them well;

(c) Allegorical tales (8 to 11 years): These stories often reflect an urge on the part of the author to impart moral precepts, but in such a manner that they are likely to appeal to the child's vivid imagination; and

(d) Myths and legends (7 to 12 years): Characters in these two genres are not realistic portrayals of people, animals and other personifications of the universe. In most cases their actions are rooted in

the circumstances of clearly-defined environmental contexts. Myths and legends are likely to appeal to children whose reasoning is capable of functioning beyond observations of the concrete.

5.9 GENRE SELECTED FOR BIBLIOTHERAPEUTIC READING

For the purpose of this bibliotherapeutic study among Std 4 pupils (whose ages range from 9 to 11 years) the investigator, apart from presenting poetry for reading sessions, also relied to a large extent on the presentation of myths as bibliotherapeutic reading material.

5.9.1 MYTHS

5.9.1.1 INTRODUCTION

In some literature sources myths, legends and fables are used interchangeably as being semantically synonymous. This viewpoint is a probable result of the fact that the common denominator (which dominates the nature of each type of these stories) is their escapist element. However, myths, legends and fables are also regarded as having implicit distinctions characterising each type of story.

In this study myths, legends and fables will be used as synonymous terms regardless of the claim that they display subtle nuances of distinctions.

5.9.1.2 THE CONCEPT OF 'MYTH'

Arising from their innate profundity and their appropriateness for the investigation, it was decided to present Greek myths that have been favourites through the centuries to the young readers selected in the sample.

At this point conceptual clarification regarding the concept 'myth' will deepen our understanding of its nature, scope and functions.

Two general distinctions, one from an authoritative encyclopaedic source, and another suggested by an acknowledged expert seem apt

for our purposes here:

'The body of stories concerning the gods, heroes and rituals of the ancient Greeks is the subject matter of Greek mythology' (Encyclopaedia Britannica, 1976 : vol. 8 : 402).

Barbour, in turn, emphasises the transcendent quality of myths:

'In broad terms, a myth is a story which is taken to manifest some aspect of cosmic order' (1974 : 19-20).

In the following quotation the evolution of the myth in ancient Hellenism is briefly referred to. As early Greek culture became increasingly sophisticated and complex, so, too, did myths:

'... the Greeks, like many other people, passed through a primary stage in which they worshipped an impersonal force, believed to pervade all aspects of the universe: sun, moon, crops and rivers. The early Greeks performed rites to propitiate these bodiless forces so that they would grant to the world fertility and life. Later these nature forces were personified in myths' (Sutherland & Arbuthnot, 1977 : 184).

Huck (1976 : 216) suggests that myths can be enjoyed in themselves, i.e. without demanding of the reader or listener to command a deep knowledge of general mythology, since it contains, like most narratives, elements of suspense, conflict and human or inanimate relationships.

5.9.1.3 TYPES OF GREEK MYTHS (cf. also 5.11.3.1)

The following types of myth, as encountered in Greek culture, are identified in the Encyclopaedia Britannica (1976, vol. 8 : 404-5):

- (a) Myths relating to origin and cosmogonies, e.g. Uranus (Heaven), Chaos (Space) and Eros (Love);
- (b) Myths relating to the ages of the world, e.g. the Bronze, Iron and Golden ages;
- (c) Myths of the gods, e.g. their births, victories, love affairs and special powers;

- (d) Myths of heroes: this type includes elements of tradition, folklore and fiction;
- (e) Myths relating to seasonal renewal: gods were normally temporarily incarcerated in the underworld to renew themselves; and
- (f) Myths involving theridatry, i.e. characters undergoing animal transformations, e.g. Poseidon was turned into a stallion, while Io was turned into a heifer.

5.9.1.4 THE DEEPER LAYERS OF MEANING IN MYTHS

Myths convey a potent meaning. Sutherland and Arbuthnot (1977 : 185) quote Le Guin's powerful characterisation of myth-like material, stressing its layers of unconscious meaning:

'The great fantasies, myths and tales are indeed like dreams: they speak from the unconscious to the unconscious, in the language of the unconscious-symbol and archetype.'

Eliade (1974 : 62), on the other hand, reminds us of the need to draw a clear distinction between superfluous and profound nuances pertaining to the myth:

'... myth is always related to a "creation"; it tells how something came into existence, or how a pattern of behaviour, an institution, a manner of working were established (this is why myths constitute the paradigms for all significant human acts).'

5.9.1.5 THE FUNCTIONS OF MYTHS

'... the foremost function of myth is to reveal the exemplary models for all human rites and all significant human activities - alimentation or marriage, work or education, art or wisdom' (Eliade, 1974 : 61).

Barbour (1974) expounds on the significance of myths in both private and social life. He comments on the private or psychological function of myths:

'In the psycho-analytic interpretation, myths, like individual dreams, are symbolic expressions of unconscious wishes' (Barbour, 1974 : 23).

The social function of myths is highlighted in another extract from Barbour:

'Myths promote the integration of society. They are a cohesive force binding a community together and contributing to social solidarity, group identity and communal harmony' (1974 : 23).

5.9.1.6 BARBOUR'S EXPOSITION OF THE DYNAMICS OF MYTHS

Barbour (1974 : 20 - 1), in an acknowledgement of the personal and social impact of myths, outlines their function to humanity:

(a) 'myths offer ways of ordering experience'

Myths deal with situations one encounters daily and, as a result, attempt to structure them in accordance with reality;

(b) 'myths inform man about himself'

Myths cast light on one's self-identity and enables one to place the past and future in perspective; and

(c) 'myths express a saving power in human life'

Man is constantly in pursuit of an ideal of some kind. The ideal often differs from one's actual level of attainment, resulting in wide gaps between the two levels. Barbour argues that it is possible to close the gap without undue effort, thereby attaining the desired goal in an instant: '... it may take the form of a personal redeemer, or a law, ritual or discipline to be followed' (1974 : 21).

(d) 'myths provide patterns for human actions'

Myths generally display prototypes for human behaviour and its imitation. These prototypes are usually exemplary, portraying moral and practical modes of behaviour. Such myths tend to have emotional and evaluative overtones;

(e) 'myths are enacted in rituals'

Barbour argues that the symbolism which myths reflect can be produced in symbolic actions, such as dance and drama.

5.9.1.7 COMMENT

Although harsh criticism has been levelled by theorists in their

demythologising attempts, notably by Rudolf Bultmann and his "demythologising existentialism" (cf. especially his statements:

'Myth should be interpreted not cosmologically, but anthropologically, or, better still, existentially' (1974 : 76), and

'... myth contains elements which demand its own criticism - namely, its imagery with its apparent claim to objective validity. The real purpose of myth is to speak of a transcendent power which controls the world and man, but that purpose is impeded and obscured by the terms in which it is expressed' (1974 : 77),

which declare the mythological view as being obsolete (Bultmann, 1974 : 71)) - there can be little doubt that myths attempt to reduce conflict in both personal and social contexts. Moreover, myths express man's emotions, aspirations and fears, and are designed to resolve them.

As far as children are concerned, they tend initially to enjoy myths as stories, but begin viewing them gradually as the embodiment of spiritual truths (Hyde, 1967 : i). Referring to closely related literary genres, Lerner contends that

'Beneath the fable and parables of ancient times lay man's never ending search for meaning' (1978 : 17),

reinforcing the notion that the myth and its literary counterparts are vehicles for the communication of profound perceptions of reality, within the reach of adult and child alike.

5.9.2 POETRY

It was decided to employ poetry, to a lesser extent than myths, in the bibliotherapeutic experiment.

It has often been said that poetry cannot be defined at all. Many have simply called it 'verse'. However, this will not suffice. Reeves (1970 : 29) quotes A.E. Housman's well-known distinction between

its what and how in an attempt at capturing the essence of poetry, as distinct from prose:

'Poetry is not the thing said but a way of saying'.

The implication of this statement is therefore that form is of paramount importance, while meaning and subject matter are subordinated to lesser positions. However, Reeves believes that form is an inseparable aspect of meaning:

'Poetry is the thing said and a way of saying it' (1970 : 29),

thereby taking the complementary, rather than the categorical position.

The essential difference between the poetic mode of expression, as distinct from the scientific method of abstraction, is perhaps most aptly epitomised in the well-known adage of the French symbolist poet, Stéphane Mallarmé: 'To define is to kill; to suggest is to create' (cited in Nevitt, 1975 : 210). It is through the suggestive function of poetry that a chord is struck in the psyche of the reader or listener, which prompts him to respond creatively by supplementing the substance of suggestion with emanations derived from the store of his own psychic and mental equipment. Thus, poetry is an especially potent medium of literature to fire the imagination of the child as highly responsive being.

5.9.2.1 THE DEEPER IMPLICATION OF POETRY

Reeves (1970 : 10) suggests a sound foundation for poetry, in particular insofar as it lends itself to purposeful application in bibliotherapy, a process which presupposes the exertion of influence:

'The desire to communicate, to express, to give voice to emotion, is the root from which all poetry springs. All poetry has to do with communication; but it is not merely saying something in a special way, although many poets have written in this belief. It is a special form of words which has the power, magical power to evoke certain responses in the hearer or reader, and this power never leaves it'.

It is generally asserted that poetry as literary material often demands a wide variety of responses from the reader or listener. Mindful of its broad-spectrum appeal, poetry is applied in the experimental facet of this study in an attempt to stimulate the child's taste, ability and interests directly. It endeavours, moreover, to direct the child's responses and imagination in a positive manner. To attain this constructive goal poetry needs to avoid any suggestion of a patronising approach: it needs, rather, to challenge the child. In this way the child will appreciate that poetry is not what he had generally been led to believe: that it is designed, in essence, to help him grow spiritually and in other meaningful ways.

Poetry, which is '... necessarily an intellectual manifestation of the human spirit' (Reeves, 1970 : 11), should in turn aim at building other 'human spirits' (in our context the child in Piaget's 'concrete operational' stage - cf. par. 5.7.2(c)) in a comprehensive manner which will strengthen them for the future.

5.9.3 THE ASSIMILATION OF LITERATURE IN BIBLIOTHERAPEUTIC ACTIVITY

A myth or poem, as has been suggested, comprises far more than its ostensibly limited confinement to 'mere words'. They embody images, metaphors, characters and events which are given life by the reader. The operation is performed in accordance with the reader's desires, needs and aspirations (cf. par. 3.11.3). As the reader responds, he synthesises and adapts the content of the printed text to his own psychological disposition (cf. par. 4.8.4.1). It is therefore not possible to determine how a reader will respond from the single act of reading a text.

It is only when the reader's personality comes into play, i.e. when he re-creates the elements in the text, that it becomes possible to predict how he may respond. However, it goes without saying that no single reader's make-up or momentary frame of mind will correspond one hundred per cent to that of the author (cf. par. 4.8.2) or, for that matter, that of any other reader, while reading an identical text. All individuals respond differently to a particular text at different times of their lives. It seems evident, therefore, that the reader cannot assimilate anything into his mind that presents itself by virtue of a text. It is only possible for an investigator to observe the

reader's responses after the experimenter himself has experienced the processes of re-creation and synthesis which emanate from his own private reading.

It would seem warranted, within reason, to speculate about the nature of the responses likely to result from reading a text, and to predict it with some confidence.

A reader will tend to search for meaning in a story or poems in the process of attempting to make sense of a text (cf. par. 4.8 and 4.8.1).

Since the aim of this study involves reading which is directed at strengthening or reinforcing the child's self-esteem, the characters depicted in the literature should ideally reflect characteristics related to healthy self-esteem (cf. par. 2.4.3). For this reason the characters in the literature, selected for therapeutic reading, must act as models for the child to whom he can compare himself.

It is generally held that the child will learn to respect and to emulate the portrayed versions of men and women who have achieved much in life, whether spiritually, materially, or in some other respect. However, the contrary may be equally true. The child can also be made aware of the inadequacies and weaknesses of literary characters, and in his rejection of the values they represent, be prompted not to follow suit, but rather to establish positive avenues of corrective behaviour. During discussion sessions in the bibliotherapeutic experiment the reader will imperceptibly come to realise the implication of behavioural forms that will not be to his advantage in either a private or social sense. Thus, the reader will tend to acquire an understanding of his internal states by comparing himself to literary characters. In order to compare adequately, the reader has to relive the experiences of others, not only by way of reading the text, but also, if possible, by acting out the various roles.

This is precisely the intention of the bibliotherapeutic experiment in this study, i.e. the reader is to be exposed to the literary text, in conjunction with other activities, such as role-playing and discussion,

in an attempt at creating within the reader/listener a dynamic psychological process that will transform the literary elements into stimuli that will aid the subject in attaining optimum self-esteem.

5.9.4 SELF-ESTEEM

Self-concept, as has been argued earlier, is the individual's perception of himself or herself as a person (cf. par. 2.3.2). When such perception of oneself is given a value judgement, it is called self-esteem.

The questions arise as to how we can predict the self-esteem of school-age children accurately and as to which factors are more commonly assumed to be related to self-esteem than others in school children (cf. par. 5.10.4).

In this study the researcher endeavoured to establish the subject's level of self-esteem by means of a self-esteem questionnaire, supported by data related to his personal life circumstances. This aspect will be further elucidated in the research design dealing with the questionnaires conducted with subjects.

6. THE METHODOLOGY OF THE BIBLIOTHERAPEUTIC EXPERIMENT

6.1 THE SAMPLE: SELECTION AND APPROACH

6.1.1 FIRST CRITERION OF SELECTION

In this bibliotherapeutic investigation conducted between March and June 1980 in Wynberg, in the city of Cape Town (R.S.A.), thirty English-speaking, standard-four boys and girls comprised the volunteer bibliotherapeutic group. This was the first criterion according to which all subjects were allowed to participate in the study.

6.1.2 SECOND CRITERION OF SELECTION

The subjects were selected at random from the two different standard-four classes of the same primary school on the basis of their willingness to participate. The sample was delimited after a brief explanation of what bibliotherapy entails, viz. that books are suggested, read, discussed and often acted out, under the guidance of a librarian and/or teacher. Reading, it was said, stimulates the pupil to think and to discuss relevant issues in the story or poem. The reading of literature and related activities (e.g. role-playing), it was explained, aim at the growth of personal values (Brammer & Shostrom, 1977 : 310 - 12).

6.1.3 THIRD CRITERION OF SELECTION

The nature and composition of the population was further characterised by the following criteria of selection:

6.1.3.1 PREDOMINANTLY MIDDLE-CLASS COLOURED PUPILS, i.e. children coming from a class of coloured

- (a) people who occupy professional and commercial vocations;
- (b) enjoy a relatively median income; and
- (c) have attained secondary or higher levels of education
(cf. Larousse illustrated international dictionary, 1972 : 553).

- 6.1.3.2 NON-PATIENT, i.e. 'NORMAL' PUPILS: This implies that these pupils attended school in the standard manner. They did not exhibit any deviant or abnormal behavioural patterns in the usual sense. According to observation and their personal school guidance files they functioned fairly adequately as individuals and collectively.
- 6.1.3.3 LIMITED AGE-RANGE, i.e. falling in an age-range of 9 to 11 years, with an average age of 11 years.
- 6.1.3.4 INSTITUTIONALISED, i.e. they attended a normal primary school on a full-time basis.
- 6.1.3.5 IDEAL FOR THERAPEUTIC ACTIVITY: The researcher assumed that pupils falling in this age-range are less inhibited than adolescents, being more spontaneous in group participation in particular. It is further assumed that such pupils have fewer preconceptions or beliefs than older children and adults, which make them more amenable to group bibliotherapy.

The sample falls in the concrete-operational stage (7 to 11½ years) according to Piaget's model (cf. par. 5.7.2) of concept formation. Children belonging to this stage of development are characterised as being able to comprehend their environment and personal perceptions fairly intelligibly. As a result of these abilities they seem to be more stable in their behavioural manifestations, a trait which is usually displayed by their gregariousness. Finally, they are able to a marked degree to grasp formal concepts, an ability which facilitates the process of discussion in bibliotherapy quite considerably (cf. par. 5.7.2.(c)).

6.1.4

The researcher explained to the subjects what involvement in the study would entail for all participants in terms of time required for data-collection and therapeutic sessions; gave his personal guarantee that all data collected would be treated confidentially and that anonymity of all participants would be upheld throughout the study and thereafter.

6.1.5

Although this study involved group research work, each participant selected from the total population of standard four pupils enrolled at the school chosen for the experiment had an equal chance of being included in the sample.

The size of the sample is defended on the grounds of its being large enough to be representative (i.e. 30 pupils out of a total population of 55) and small enough to be manageable from the point of view of intensive group-therapeutic research.

6.2 THE NATURE AND RATIONALE OF THE STUDY (cf. also par. 1.2).

This study operated on the two basic premises that:

- (a) the occurrence of certain problems can be prevented while the child is growing; and
- (b) a healthy image can be built up by the child if he is guided in the right direction.

Bibliotherapy is acknowledged as one of these known valid methods which can be effectively applied as a means of boosting a child's self-esteem and of developing his/her resourcefulness on a broad scale.

6.2.1 FACETS OF BIBLIOTHERAPEUTIC PRACTICE

6.2.1.1 CHANGE

In discussing the phenomenon of change in social and personal life, the Study Group (Mental health in a changing world, 1965 : 36) preferred the concept growth to adjustment if change as such is to be effected:

'By this approach there might be developed a concept of self-realization through change instead of a concept of adaptation and alteration.'

The researcher conducted this study along lines comparable to those of the Study Group.

6.2.1.2 PREVENTION

Biblioprophylaxis (cf. par. 3.1.3(b)) which, by general consensus, is acknowledged to constitute part of the larger framework of bibliotherapy, is a measure designed to prevent psychological disorders. Gruenberg (1957 : 944 - 52) distinguishes three levels of action in prevention of mental and emotional disorders, viz:

- (a) primary prevention: all activities that tend to prevent the occurrence of mental and emotional problems;
- (b) secondary prevention: all activities that tend to prevent the aggravation of mental and emotional problems;
- (c) tertiary prevention: activities that tend to prevent the return or re-occurrence of mental and emotional problems (e.g. after-care treatment).

Biblioprophylaxis and bibliotherapy, as applied in this study, are assumed to be primary preventive activities in essence.

6.2.1.3 GUIDANCE AND COUNSELLING

By way of definition, preventive bibliotherapy entails nuances of other psychological aids, such as guidance and counselling (cf. par. 3.1.1).

Since this study is limited to a school situation, guidance (especially vocational guidance) affords the pupil the opportunity of gaining a clear understanding of himself, his aptitudes, abilities, resources, limitations and their causes (Parsons, 1969 : 5).

Of particular relevance to this study is the claim by Arbuckle *et al* (1967 : 144) that the methods of counselling and therapy cannot be clearly distinguished. Furthermore, it is argued that it is not the counsellor's duty to attempt to repair any psychological damage, but rather to assist the pupil in attaining an adequate sense of personal identity and worth.

This study emphasises the involvement of the researcher as a means

of ensuring that the subjects may be prevented from adopting either an unduly low and negative, or high and positive, self-image arising from external factors unrelated to the neutral preconditions of scientific research. Due cognisance has been taken of the exacting nature surrounding the implementation of a scientific investigation of such a nature. Note was taken of the caution expressed by the Study Group in this regard, viz. that

'... virtually no field of prevention had been adequately opened up by scientific investigation' (Mental health ... 1965 : 38).

Despite this forbidding qualification, it was considered worthwhile to attempt making a contribution to this rapidly evolving field of research within the perimeters of library-user studies.

6.2.1.4 A HEALTHY SELF-CONCEPT

A healthy and strong self-image will lead to what Brammer and Shostrom (1977 : 74 - 9) believe to be the 'healthy self-actualising personality'. They see such a healthy personality as having the qualities of:

- (a) independence, i.e. to be relatively self-sufficient;
- (b) spontaneity, i.e. to be open to one's own and others' experience;
- (c) living here and now, i.e. to live each moment to the full;
- (d) trust, i.e. to have a sense of self-worth and confidence;
- (e) awareness, i.e. to be responsive to one's and others' feelings;
- (f) authenticity, i.e. to be one's genuine self;
- (g) responsibility of action, i.e. making decisions which will benefit one's own welfare;
- (h) effectiveness, i.e. to be relevant at each developmental stage one experiences.

The concept of a healthy self-esteem in children implies that therapy in this study proposes to assist the subjects in attaining a state of

- (a) faith, which leads to self-worth;
- (b) acceptance, which enables one to see oneself as a person of worth; and
- (c) self-respect, i.e. to function personally in an adequate manner.

This bibliotherapeutic study was designed to benefit school children who had not specifically asked for help. The methods implicit in bibliotherapy of this nature aim at strengthening those qualities which will lead the child towards healthy self-esteem.

6.2.1.5 THE GROUP-SITUATION

In dealing with the bibliotherapeutic group, full cognisance of the following factors was taken in the study, viz.:

- (a) Differentiation: The researcher acknowledged that there were individual differences among subjects in the group (cf. the principle of personal uniqueness, par. 3.13.4);
- (b) Social organisation: This is a therapeutic group structure and the researcher was aware of the pattern of interaction and resultant influence among subjects (cf. par. 3.13.8.2);
- (c) Initiative: This aspect of the study refers to the part played by subjects and the extent to which they manipulated the therapeutic situation;
- (d) Content: Myths and poems were the sources of therapeutic activity (cf. par. 5.9). These were combined with other activities, such as role-playing; and
- (e) Variety: As mentioned earlier, a spectrum of activities were included in therapy to attain the desired goal (cf. par. 3.13.9).

6.2.1.6 THE SCHOOL-SITUATION

The study, conducted in a school situation, was designed with the intention of facilitating a means of integration in the subject's private life. In this regard the Study Group (Mental health ... 1965 : 40) cautions:

'It is essential, from the mental health point of view, to secure congruence between educational and other social development ...'

It is evident that mental-health considerations are not in any way separable from those of education in general. This study therefore recognises the need to establish a means of integration between school life and adult life, which implies that the present therapeutic activity aim at preparing and strengthening the child in school for a stable and relatively healthy adult life.

6.3 MEASURING INSTRUMENTS

For hypothesis-testing three questionnaires (copies of each of the three are appended as Annexures 1, 2 and 3) were developed by the researcher for application in this study, viz.

- (a) a personal questionnaire, and
- (b) two paper and self-report inventories, each of which was designed to yield information related to the individual subject's concept of his/her self-esteem.

6.3.1 PERSONAL QUESTIONNAIRE

6.3.1.1 THE PERSONAL QUESTIONNAIRE FACILITATED:

- (a) minimal researcher influence on the subject's responses;
- (b) readily quantifiable information, precluding misinterpretation and the researcher's personal bias;
- (c) objective and systematised information; and
- (d) comparability of data relating to the self-esteem questionnaire.

6.3.1.2 THE STRUCTURE OF THE PERSONAL QUESTIONNAIRE

In general terms the questionnaire was designed to elicit information from the subjects, covering the following areas:

- (a) factual biographical data;
- (b) information relating to family relationships;
- (c) information relating to school-environment relationships; and
- (d) information relating to socio-economic relationships.

To obtain biographical and related data, the researcher found the written self-report more suitable than the personal interview. Owing to the nature of the data and the relatively fresh relationship between researcher and subjects, the researcher, in agreement with Davis (1929), was of the opinion that the subjects might find the physical presence of the researcher, as in the interview situation, an inhibiting and threatening influence. Hammond *et al* (1977) has argued convincingly that owing to shyness and lack of spontaneity - features considered normal to the initial phase of therapy - some difficulty may be expected.

On the whole, it appeared that the personal-interview method of collecting biographical and related information was not likely to have contributed more to this study than would a carefully worded and explicit questionnaire. As regards the content of the questionnaire the researcher did not probe into private or confidential matters related to the child, his home and family. Questions relating to such matters of privacy were phrased discreetly and in a detached manner, but nevertheless designed to ensure the comparability of data.

6.3.2 SELF-REPORT QUESTIONNAIRES RELATING TO THE NOTION OF SELF-ESTEEM

Since 'attitudes mediate overt behaviour' (Byrne, 1966), the researcher believed that a study of the needs of children would yield greater insight into their personality dynamics, as compared to that of adults.

It was assumed that children are more honest in their expressions and

less inhibited in their behavioural manifestations. It was on these assumptions that the researcher depended for a relatively reliable version of the child's level of self-esteem on a self-report questionnaire.

This study employed self-report questionnaires, since they constitute one of the most obvious ways of establishing the salient features of one's opinions, beliefs and attitudes (Duverger, 1968 : 196). On the other hand, Vernon (1953 : 144) claims that the majority of attitude tests only elicit verbal statements, and, accordingly, the extent to which they penetrate the private level of the individual's life remains doubtful. However, Vernon reassures the researcher that

'Whatever kind of test is adopted, the conception of attitude measurement necessarily involves a unidimensional variable (i.e. a definite object or issue towards which some people are more favourable than others)' (Vernon, 1953 : 145).

Scientific objections have been levelled against self-rating tests. These tests imply that the subject must observe and analyse himself. The dilemma becomes acute when children are the subjects expected to complete self-rating tests. They are often characterised as experiencing a fleeting, changing and ever-shifting psychological condition.

It is generally held that spiritual or psychological phenomena of a significant kind normally manifest themselves once only and cannot be arbitrarily repeated. This means that self-rating questionnaires cannot be controlled adequately insofar as such phenomena are presupposed (Goode & Hatt, 1952 : 2).

It is often assumed that an individual understands himself sufficiently and that he will report personal details exactly as he perceives it. In this regard Kinsey et al (1953) contents that the researcher gains an understanding of the phenomenological meaning life experiences have for each subject individually. A child may be inclined to

convey information about himself as he would like us to believe he is, rather than the way he truthfully feels about himself (Schell, et al, 1975 : 244).

In his evaluation of therapy and counselling among school children, Vernon (1969 : 12) found that it yielded essentially negative results, which he was able to attribute to the fact that 'adjustment' is an evaluative rather than a scientific concept, thereby rendering it relatively unquantifiable.

Realising fully the limitations of self-report questionnaires, this study - which was designed after having considered all available means of data-collection for use in psychological research - led the researcher to conclude that while self-report inventories, like all measuring instruments, have clear advantages and disadvantages alike, the advantages nevertheless seem to outweigh the disadvantages to a significant extent.

Self-esteem questionnaires 1 and 2, (cf. Annexure A), constructed according to a consensus model (cf. par. 6.4) are seen to constitute effective and practical devices designed to obtain the most reliable overall impression of each subject's inner life, including in particular information on attitudes relating to his self-esteem.

6.4 CONSENSUS MODEL

Post-Freudian psychologists (Adler, 1929; Horney, 1951; Sullivan, 1953 and Coopersmith, 1967) speculate that there are four major sources of self-esteem. In attempting to gain some clarity on the subject's positive self-regard or self-esteem (cf. par. 2.4) the researcher used the following four points to comprise a representative model for the construction of items in the compilation of self-esteem questionnaire 1 and 2 :

- (a) a feeling of significance (or importance), based upon acceptance and affection from others;
- (b) an awareness of personal competence, based on past and present achievement and accomplishment;

- (c) a sense of power and authority, i.e. the ability to influence and manipulate others; and
- (d) a sense of personal virtue - attained from upholding one's moral principles (Orford, 1976 : 53).

According to this consensus model a number of notions related to self-esteem emerge, e.g. worthiness in the eyes of parents, teachers and peers; power, dominance; helpfulness, usefulness; success; achievement; competition; compatibility; goodness; confidence; efficiency; a sense of security; acceptance by parents, teachers and peers; authority; physical attractiveness and intelligence.

Bearing the above indices to self-esteem, in mind, the researcher, on the authority of Geis (1978 : 149) believes that the main point of a personality test is that each item in the test (of which there are 25 in this study) serves as a clue to the subject's response on the variable:

'No single clue is perfect. But the sum of a whole series of clues can be accurate' (Geis, 1978 : 149).

Thus, the accuracy of this self-esteem test as a whole depends upon the joint clue values of all the individual items.

The researcher, however, remains mindful of the fact that subjects may have distorted the picture of their personality and of their self-esteem in particular, since to many subjects the enquiry may have been directed at a very sensitive and private area of their awareness of self, their maturity level notwithstanding (cf. par. 5.7.2).

6.5 SCORING SYSTEM

The response to each question was accorded either a positive or a negative value, both, however, directed in a random distribution at eliciting a high self-regard for the subject's worth. When a subject had ticked his answer in the appropriate box (which was either 'yes' or 'no') carrying a positive value answer, he scored one point. Conversely, a tick in the opposite box was accorded a nil value. Thus,

a system employing only plus and nil values - thus excluding minus values - was used.

Self-esteem questionnaires 1 (i.e. the 'before' test) and 2 (i.e. the 'after' test) both included twenty-five items, which means that scores could range from 0 to 25 points in terms of self-esteem, in the case of either questionnaire.

6.6 ADMINISTRATION OF MEASURING INSTRUMENTS

In this study the conditions under which the various questionnaires were completed were standardised as far as possible.

In order to motivate the subjects to give honest and reliable information during questionnaire completion, the researcher stressed the fact that fellow subjects would not be able to establish private information divulged in each anonymous questionnaire, and that such information would only be used for research purposes. They were assured that the information would in no manner impinge on their present life-situation or future opportunities.

6.6.1 THE PHYSICAL SETTING FOR QUESTIONNAIRE COMPLETION

All subjects completed the three questionnaires in a reasonably big classroom at the school selected for the study. The subjects were seated in single desks, which stood in single file to ensure that no subject would in any way be able to interfere with another. In each case the subjects remained seated until everyone had completed the questionnaire concerned.

6.6.2 TIMES AND DURATION OF QUESTIONNAIRE COMPLETION

Questionnaire completion took place as soon as the schoolday had ended (i.e. 14h15), as the researcher had no formal affiliation to the subjects' institution, and therefore needed to conduct his research beyond normal school hours. As the size of the sample was easily manageable one session for the completion of each questionnaire was found to be sufficient. All participants completed the questionnaires in the three single sittings. No time-limit was

set for the completion of questionnaires, but it was found that the time required to complete the personal questionnaire ranged from 30 to 45 minutes, while the time-range for the completion of self-esteem questionnaires 1 and 2 was 20 to 30 minutes. Thus, no extremes were recorded.

In order to uphold anonymity of all sample subjects, each subject's questionnaire bore a sample number for administrative identification purposes. All participants were reminded of the times and days for bibliotherapeutic sessions. In addition, the researcher informed the principal of the institution (whose full co-operation he enjoyed throughout the investigation) by telephone, a day in advance of each session, requesting her to remind the subjects of the researcher's bibliotherapy visits.

6.7 BIBLIOTHERAPEUTIC GROUP SESSIONS

6.7.1 PRELIMINARY QUESTIONS

Bibliotherapeutic involvement afforded the researcher an opportunity of posing certain preliminary questions concerning the

6.7.1.1 subjects, viz.

- (a) who are the subjects, in which class, what number, sex, age-range and intellectual level?
- (b) what are their needs?
- (c) how can they be motivated to form healthy attitudes towards life?
- (d) in this study, what does bibliotherapy attempt to do for the subject?
- (e) how will the subjects react to bibliotherapy?

6.7.1.2 reading material, viz.

- (a) is one obliged to use any particular reading material?
- (b) is one obliged to go through the reading material meticulously page by page?
- (c) of what quality and detail ought the material to be?

- (d) what is the general objective for reading any particular book?
- (e) what ideas in the book should one consider important and worthwhile for discussion?

6.7.1.3 situation:

- (a) are there any special difficulties in the therapeutic sessions?
- (b) how many different activities will the subjects engage in during bibliotherapy?
- (c) what different ways of organising the group will one employ during therapy?
- (d) what situations can be used to introduce a new session?
- (e) how will one ensure the maximum participation of group members?
- (f) how long will one spend on each sub-session and on one whole session per day?
- (g) what role does the therapist play in therapeutic activity?

6.7.2 SELECTION OF LITERATURE FOR THERAPY

The myths and poems selected on the basis of their nature, content and quality received the researcher's careful consideration. By and large the selected literature appealed to the subjects

- (a) structurally (i.e. in terms of syntax and grammar);
- (b) lexically (i.e. in terms of vocabulary); and
- (c) intellectually (i.e. in terms of the level of difficulty of the ideas).

Owing to the grading of texts, reading was relatively easy, requiring little or no reference to dictionaries and no assistance from the researcher. Guidance from the researcher was always available when required. The researcher assumed that pupils had acquired adequate primary skills in reading, i.e. recognising and identifying letters, groups of letters, words and sentences, as well as adequate higher skills appropriate to their level of development (cf. par. 5.7.2)

such as understanding the meaning of the organisation of the text (Moyle, 1968 : 38-65).

In this study the following considerations of reading were taken into account:

- (a) Reading was considered to constitute a natural unit of the subject's development;
- (b) Reading was considered an integral part of other activities in the study;
- (c) Care was taken to ensure that reading an activity appealed to all subjects;
- (d) Reading aimed at being meaningful;
- (e) Every reading activity was related to the whole bibliotherapeutic study.

In this investigation the use of activities, such as conversation-skill workshops, drama, role-playing and movement were considered as aids to bibliotherapy and not designed to be applied in isolation. They were intended to foster confidence and a sense of self-worth among pupils. The researcher realised that the subjects who comprised group therapy were to a marked degree dependent on their parents, brothers and sisters, and peers. The researcher endorses the opinion of authorities like Slavson (1950), that children will benefit from peer relationships within group therapy and subsequently become independent confident persons.

At all times the therapist was mindful of the subject's sensitivity and dignity. Care was taken to avoid acting authoritatively and talking condescendingly to the subjects. It was the researcher's aim to appear natural and relaxed throughout the study.

The researcher was constantly aware of the inherent limitations of bibliotherapy (cf. Brown, 1975 : 190), and that subjects might easily derive erroneous conclusions from it instead of growing in a positive manner and establishing real insight into their self-worth.

6.7.3 BRIEF DISCUSSION OF THE CONTENT OF LITERATURE SELECTED FOR BIBLIOTHERAPY

The following Greek myths applied in the bibliotherapeutic experiment were taken from Hyde, L. Favourite Greek myths, London: Harrap, 1967. They are, respectively:

- (a) Prometheus;
- (b) How troubles came into the world;
- (c) The seven sisters;
- (d) Adonis;
- (e) King Midas and the golden touch; and
- (f) Why King Midas had asses' ears.

The following two poems used in the same study were:

- (a) 'Confessions of a born spectator', by Ogden Nash (In: Skull, J. ed. Themes: sport and leisure, London, : Heinemann.
- (b) 'The enchanted shirt', by John Hay (In: Felleman, H. ed. Best loved poems of the American people, New York: Garden City Publishing Company, 1936.

6.7.3.1 GREEK MYTHS (cf. also 5.9.1)

The Greeks are reputed to have descended from an ancient Aryan race who believed that everything is alive with spirit: sea, lightning and wind (Larousse world mythology, 1965 : 97 - 100). Father Dyaus ruled over everything. As time passed, some of the Aryans settled in the land and surrounding islands now called Greece (Cox, 1870 : Vol. 1 : 68). They took their quaint stories of nature with them. In ancient Greece these stories (i.e. myths) were passed on from generation to generation, and were believed to be true. Kirk comments:

'In a sense the history of Greek culture is the history of its attitudes to myth; no other important western civilisation has been so controlled by a developed mythical tradition (1971 : 250).

As the stories were retold, sung or changed by laymen, poets, scholars and kings, they undoubtedly underwent changes in terms of structure,

content and style (Larousse world mythology, 1965 : 97 : 98):

'However, in spite of all the confusion that prevailed over the elements of Greek mythology, this huge body of material was classified and put in order. Myths tended to become international, and mythology emerged as the common vehicle of Hellenic thought Now, at last, mythology came into its own and played its essential part, which was to be a system of thought destined to explain the things that defy reason' (1965 : 99 - 100).

As time passed, the Greeks replaced Dyaus by Zeus, as the greatest of their gods. The Roman god Jupiter was identified with him, and the Greek myths transferred to him. Jupiter was henceforth heralded as king and father of the gods and men, reigning from Mount Olympus in Greece. He became the supreme god of the Romans, known as the 'father of the bright heaven'. Other important gods in the Graeco-Roman myths are:

- (a) Neptune, the god of the sea;
- (b) Pluto, the god of the underworld, where people go in the afterlife;
- (c) Juno, Jupiter's wife, hence worshipped as the supreme goddess;
- (d) Minerva, goddess of wisdom, helper of heroes;
- (e) Apollo, the son of Zeus and god of prophecy, music and poetry;
- (f) Helios, the sun-god, and
- (g) Diana, the twin sister of Apollo (while Apollo was the god of light that comes from the sun; she was the goddess of light that comes from the moon);
- (h) Selene, the god of the moon;
- (i) Venus, the goddess of love and beauty, being regarded the most beautiful of all goddesses;
- (j) Mars, the god of war who loved shedding blood and warfare;
- (k) Mercury, the messenger of the gods;
- (l) Pan, the god of shepherds and country folk;
- (m) Satyrs, who were inferior gods and followers of Bacchus; and
- (n) Bacchus himself, the god of the vine.

6.7.3.1.1. PROMETHEUS

Prometheus was a member of the Titan giants who loved fighting among themselves (Larousse world mythology, 1965 : 102 - 4). Prometheus could not bear this any longer and with his brother, Epimetheus, took leave from the Titans in order to serve Jupiter (Bulfinch's mythology, 1855 : 13).

Prometheus helped other gods to conquer the Titans, who, in turn, were incarcerated in the underworld. Despite the fact that the Titans were imprisoned, trouble increased on earth. Jupiter planned to destroy them, but Prometheus intervened and Jupiter, as a result, yielded to Prometheus' plea and spared them (Larousse world mythology, 1965 : 112).

Man now lived in caves and everything was dark. Prometheus rendered a helpful hand in stealing light for the people from Mount Olympus. Man was now able to make weapons, to plough and defend himself. Jupiter saw the progress among the people and was extremely displeased when he discovered that Prometheus had helped them by stealing fire. For this deed Prometheus was imprisoned and was hung on a rock for hundreds of years.

Jupiter was in difficulty and Prometheus advised the king constructively. His advice earned him his freedom (Larousse encyclopedia of mythology, 1959 : 99).

6.7.3.1.2 QUALITIES DISPLAYED BY PROMETHEUS

- (a) He displayed a preference for eternal values such as wisdom, peace and consultation:

'What is the use of wasting so much strength?
In the end, wisdom and forethought will win'
(p.17).

- (b) He was wise in his decisions:

'Come, Epimetheus, we can do nothing among
these Titans' (p.17).

Prometheus avoided confrontation, since it would only have led to quarrelling or fighting:

'... by the help of the wise counsel of Prometheus - conquered the Titans' (p.18).

(c) He loved man and always showed his kindness and helpfulness where he could'

'But Prometheus the Titan, who was earth-born himself, and loved these men of the earth, begged Jupiter so earnestly to spare them, that Jupiter consented to do so' (p.19).

'... Prometheus taught them to build simple houses' (p.19).

(d) He displayed steadfastness and courage. This is evident throughout the story, especially when he risks his life to steal fire for man.

(e) He displays endurance and staying-power in times of difficulty and hardship. While hanging on the rock for the good deed he had done for man these qualities are prominent:

'The sun shone on him pitilessly, by day - only the kind night gave him shade' (p.20).

(f) Prometheus was always optimistic and had a keen vision of the future:

'Prometheus himself knew that, some day, he should be set free ...' (p.20).

During the reading of this myth and while discussing its content during the bibliotherapeutic experiment the subjects were alerted to the positive qualities of Prometheus. It was assumed that the myth made them realise that life consists of the good as well as the evil. They would appreciate, as Prometheus did, that life goes on despite obstructions, and that the prospect of a great future loomed beyond the trials and tribulations of life. In this manner they were seen to strengthen themselves in gaining confidence and increasing their self-esteem as a means of maintaining themselves as people of worth.

6.7.3.1.3 HOW TROUBLES CAME INTO THE WORLD

The story opens, depicting a comfortable, idyllic form of life where everything is in abundance, 'rivers flowing with milk and nectar' (p.22).

The Golden Age forms the background of this peaceful and opulent life. The world was then in perfect harmony with itself and the gods. People never clashed with nature or the gods; no one fell ill and everybody remained forever young.

Prometheus and Epimetheus were brothers who shared a blissful existence in this world. Having stolen the fire to be used for the benefit of man, Prometheus decided to depart for a while, carefully instructing Epimetheus not to accept gifts from the gods under any circumstances.

After Prometheus' departure Mercury presented a beautiful maiden called Pandora, to Epimetheus as a gift from the gods. Having forgotten Prometheus' warning he became overwhelmed with joy and pleasure and took Pandora into his hut. Life proved to be so much more bearable while Pandora was around (Larousse world mythology, 1965 : 112).

Soon afterwards the satyrs with their horns and furry ears presented Epimetheus with another gift from the gods. This time it was a heavy box which was not to be opened. He accepted it gladly.

While Epimetheus was out hunting one day, Pandora, driven by curiosity, opened the heavy box. At once, hundreds of little creatures, all being evils and distempers, escaped from the box, and Pandora immediately dropped the lid, shutting in the last of them, called Hope. The troublemaking, evil creatures that had escaped, began to sting everybody, including Epimetheus and Pandora. Now people fell ill, quarrelled and even died. Even nature was contaminated by the trouble that had come into the world (Bulfinch's mythology, 1855 : 14).

Hope, the little creature that was shut in the box, begged for her release. After being freed by Pandora, Hope undid all the evil and succeeded largely in restoring welfare and peace to the world. However, trouble was not to be eradicated and remained with man forever.

6.7.3.1.3.1 QUALITIES DISPLAYED BY EPIMETHEUS

- (a) He was easily impressed by outward appearances, being entranced by the beauty of Pandora, for example.
- (b) He was often indecisive in his plans or actions. Prometheus always had to instruct or guide him what to do. This became clear when, on the advice of Prometheus, he departed from the Titans and refused to receive gifts from the gods. Both of Prometheus' suggestions were aimed at Epimetheus' welfare.
- (c) He was quite gullible and often agreed to a plan of action taken by others on his behalf.

'Epimetheus could not help believing that the gods had sent her to him in good faith' (p.23).

Epimetheus, however, was destined to be deceived for a second time, thereby allowing trouble to enter the world.

- (d) He displayed disobedience and untruthfulness towards his brother on more than one occasion. This was clearly due to his love of material things. As a result, he even broke a promise:

'So he paid no heed to the warning of Prometheus ...' (p.23)

A universal truth emerges from the disobedience of Epimetheus: evil has affected man's health, age, personality and even nature in all its beauty was not left unharmed.

- (e) Epimetheus enjoyed pleasure and a comfortable life. This became evident when he discovered that the days passed more swiftly and that life was so pleasant when Pandora was around.
- (f) Epimetheus was nevertheless also fond of nature:

'Epimetheus was away all day, hunting or fishing or gathering grapes from the wild vines ...' (p.23 - 4).

6.7.3.1.3.2 QUALITIES DISPLAYED BY PANDORA

'Pandora is the first woman, the beautiful mischief'
(Panofsky, 1956 : 3).

- (a) Her curiosity urge was strong. She lacked the power of endurance and in a moment of weak resistance she yielded to her desire to establish what was in the box.
- (b) Pandora was often idle:

'On such days, Pandora had nothing to do ...'
(p.24).

It was because of her idleness that her mind became preoccupied with ideas that would lead to misfortune.

- (c) She was very easily stricken with terror in situations which posed a threat to her comfort or peace of mind:

'She dropped the lid and ran out of the cottage, screaming' (p.24).

- (d) Pandora was vain. This may be inferred from the way in which she attired herself with rose buds, a veil and gold chains. This, however, may be viewed as legitimate vanity, since she had exceptional natural beauty.
- (e) Pandora clearly had a pleasant personality, otherwise the days spent in her company would not have passed so quickly for Epimetheus.
- (f) Pandora had a kind heart. She responded easily to Hope's appeals for her release. It is through Pandora's kindness (or perhaps her sense of remorse) over what she had done that, through the kind mediation of Hope, she ultimately re-established welfare and the restoration of prosperity for both man and nature.

The subjects were exposed to both the negative and positive qualities of Epimetheus and Pandora. The positive qualities, on the one hand, were believed to have manifested themselves in the subject, while on the other the negative served the function of alerting the subjects to the consequences of vain or frivolous

behaviour. During the ensuing discussion, the natural responsiveness of the subjects to suggestions of human virtue was reinforced by subtly stressing the fact that qualities such as steadfastness, truthfulness, obedience and hard work contribute towards the making of a person of worth. They shared in an experience which demonstrated that false vanity, laziness, material greed and indecisiveness are detrimental qualities. The subjects came to realise that such qualities are not esteemed in society, and that they needed to mould their mode of behaviour in accordance with that of persons esteemed by society as people of worth.

6.7.3.1.3 THE SEVEN SISTERS

Diana, twin sister of Apollo, and goddess of the light of the moon, employed the seven beautiful daughters of Atlas, the Titan, as her maids of honour.

As the goddess of hunting, Diana was often swift and graceful in all her actions. She loved the woods, the deer and all wild beasts. She, as well as Apollo, could experience intense anger when they were provoked. Despite this trait in her personality she was loved by the country people, who were nevertheless often in awe of her.

On moonlight evenings the seven nymphs of Diana's train danced in the forest. One night Orion, a hunter, saw them and became so entranced by their beauty and grace while dancing. He decided to go nearer, only to frighten the nymphs. As they fled, Orion followed them. The panic-stricken maidens called on Diana for help.

As Orion was about to touch them, they changed into seven pigeons. When they reached the sky, they changed into seven bright stars, known as the Pleiades.

Orion was struck with sadness, and when he died he, too, was placed among the stars. It is said that the Pleiades still flee before Orion (Larousse encyclopaedia of mythology, 1959 : 164 - 5).

6.7.3.1.4.1 QUALITIES DISPLAYED BY DIANA

- (a) She was bold and daring in her actions. It seemed that she used these qualities only for the benefit of man, since she was the guardian of women and children.
- (b) Although Diana was easily aroused to intense anger, she had a kind heart. This became evident when she came to the rescue of the seven nymphs, although she knew that the pursuing Orion meant no harm.
- (c) Diana served as an example of one esteemed and honoured by seven fine maidens. Although privileged in this respect, she retained her spontaneous warm-heartedness for man and nature.

6.7.3.1.4.2 QUALITIES DISPLAYED BY ORION

- (a) He had a strong sense of curiosity. This was combined with a keen sense of adventure, which made him an imaginative man of action.
- (b) He became easily spell-bound by such aesthetic things in life as groups of dainty maidens dancing in the moonlight.
- (c) Orion showed determination in his pursuit of a goal. He followed the maidens to the very end, only to discover that all his endeavours were in vain.

During the bibliotherapeutic sessions subjects were enabled to experience the reality that one does not always attain everything one plans, envisages or covets in life. They sensed, also, the truth of the lesson that we should not desire everything we see. (Orion never accomplished his wish to see the maidens at close quarters.) Although our goals in life are often beyond our grasp, as they learned from Orion's experience, we should sustain our efforts with determination: it is in our earnest pursuit of the beautiful things in life (cf. the nymphs dancing in the forest in the moonlight) that we are valued as people who have determination, courage and an appreciation of aesthetic values.

In identifying themselves with Diana's example, the subjects were led to the conviction that position and wealth should only make one a humble being, for it is humility and sincerity that command respect and admiration among others. Orion was ultimately honoured (cf. the belt around his waist and the sword in his hand in the stellar constellation) for his courage, bravery and innate virtue. Subjects were assumed to have been reminded consciously that such qualities would always be approved, honoured and esteemed.

6.7.3.1.5 ADONIS

The ancient myth of Adonis was told to the Greeks to explain why plants and trees flourished and died every year.

Adonis was the most handsome of all gods. The goddess of love and beauty, Venus, loved him dearly (Larousse encyclopaedia of mythology, 1959 : 80 - 1).

All, including nature, adored Adonis. The fact that everything worshipped the ground on which Adonis trod did not mean that he had no enemies. In fact, Venus was constantly aware of the threats to his safety and followed him protectively everywhere he went.

Mars, the evil war-god, sent a wild boar to attack Adonis with his sharp tusks.

When Venus discovered Adonis, he was bleeding himself to death. Each drop of blood that dripped from Adonis turned into a little flower. When Adonis descended into the underworld he was mourned by everybody. Even the flowers withered and the nightingales sang sad songs.

The Muses, the night daughters of Memory who presided over poetry and the arts, bereaved his death (Larousse encyclopaedia of mythology, 1959 : 126 - 7). Jupiter observed the mourning of the people and thought it wise to bring Adonis back to life. As he ascended to the earth, nature reawakened and the birds began to sing again.

In this myth Venus is depicted as the devout, warm and loving protectress. It is evident that no matter how greatly one treasures anything, or how intensely one cherishes something which means much to one, it remains impossible to have complete control of it. In other words, things which have temporary existence and endurance do not last for ever. There are forces such as death that will sever us from a loved one or material possessions. Our hope should therefore be in things of a more enduring nature. We may cherish the memories and thoughts of those things which are no longer with us or in our possession.

The mythical nature of the story enabled Adonis to return to life in an ostensibly physical state, which is not the case in reality. Adonis' return to earth only brought the story to a soothing culmination, but during the ensuing discussion subjects were given the opportunity of apprehending the real implication of such a situation of the trials and tribulations of earthly existence.

In another respect Adonis was a perfect example of physical and inner beauty. The natural course of events such as hardship (cf. Mars, the evil war-god) is no respecter of beauty and sound values, in the sense that these are spared the afflictions of transient beings. In a moment of negligence Venus allowed the evil work of Mars to run its destructive course.

Subjects were exposed to the idea that, although beauty has immense advantages which are highly valued in society, one should be on one's guard against the power of destructive forces in society that may subdue one's spirit of enthusiasm, competition and confidence. A total onslaught on such qualities may force one to withdraw into oneself in a manner analogous to Adonis' descent to the underworld. One may, as a consequence of the suppression of one's finest ideals, become so preoccupied with oneself that one feels insignificant and unnoticed. Being ignored is ample cause for the development of feelings of inferiority and for a tendency to overcompensate indiscriminately and for the emergence of undesirable personal and social traits.

6.7.3.1.6 KING MIDAS AND THE GOLDEN TOUCH

The story depicts Silenus, an old satyr, who was found wandering in the vineyards of King Midas. The peasants found him and brought him to the king. Midas ordered the peasants to take the old satyr to Bacchus (Bulfinch's mythology, 1855: 46 - 7). In return for his kindness Bacchus promised to grant King Midas whatever he might ask. Midas, who as a child was always fascinated at the ants working so hard, thought that he would work hard one day to gather enough treasure. Midas asked Bacchus that whatever he touched might be turned into gold. His wish was granted (Larousse world mythology, 1965 : 139). Midas soon realised that his wish was not as pleasant as he had thought, especially when the liquid in his mouth turned into solid gold.

Midas rushed to Bacchus and begged him to take the gift back. In order to rid himself of the gift, Midas was advised to bathe himself in the Pactolus River.

6.7.3.1.6.1 QUALITIES DISPLAYED BY MIDAS

(a) Midas was observant. This is evidenced by the fact that Midas as a little child used to watch the ants.

(b) Midas was helpful and human:

'... King Midas sent the peasants to carry the satyr safely to Bacchus' (p.138).

(c) Midas was hard-working:

'... he had gathered treasure together so industriously ...' (p.139).

(d) Midas was ambitious:

'Midas made up his mind, then, that when he grew up, he would work very hard and gather treasure together' (p.139).

- (e) Midas was possessed with the desire for more material gain. Despite the fact that his treasury contained so much wealth he wanted more.
- (f) Midas never transgressed the boundaries of hubris:

'He thought himself the luckiest of men'
(p. 139).

'Nothing gave him more pleasure than to add
to the collection in his treasury' (p.139).

- (g) Midas was capable of remorse:

'... all his bright treasures began to look
ugly to him, and his heart grew as heavy
as if that, too, were turning into gold' (p.141).

- (h) Midas showed concern and consideration:

'... he began to fear that his queen, his
little children, and all his kind friends,
might be changed to hard, golden statues' (p.141).

In Midas we observe a multitude of both good and bad qualities. Despite his greed for material possessions he remains a sympathetic, caring and considerate man in this story. He enjoyed the security and comfort which goes hand in hand with wealth. His apprehension of the abhorrence which wealth brings about reminded him that material wealth was neither enduring nor conducive to any real happiness. He realised that the happiness of his family and his friends was being jeopardised by his materialistic pursuits. He sacrificed his riches, and made the effort of bathing himself in the Pactolus River in order to restore his contentedness and peace of mind.

During the ensuing discussion the subjects were made aware of the wisdom that dependence on unenduring values, such as wealth, is no firm foundation for inner tranquility, serenity and happiness. Had Midas adhered to his initial inclination towards hard work, he would obviously have earned more respect.

Therefore, the subjects had cause to reflect, in the process of advancing financially or in other ways respected by society (e.g. intellectually) one should continue to apply oneself to the task of living fully as a human being and not to rest on one's laurels when fortune has smiled on one.

6.7.3.1.7 WHY KING MIDAS HAD ASSES' EARS

In notable contrast to the characteristics of Midas in the preceding myth, he now deserts his great material security, including a comfortable home, to follow Pan.

Pan guarded the flocks, herds and bee-hives. He was, on the whole, an easy-going, lazy person. He loved nothing better than his afternoon nap and reacted vengefully to those who had disturbed his tranquility by a sudden loud shout from his cave. He was often paid little respect.

Pan jokingly challenged Apollo's lyre. A contest was planned between the two with Tmolus, the god of the mountain, as judge. Apollo won the musical contest, becoming the acknowledged god of music (Larousse encyclopaedia of mythology, 1959 : 124).

Pan did not take the contest seriously at all. Listening to an announcement of the outcome of the contest, Midas thought that the judgement passed had been unfair. Thereupon, Apollo turned Midas' ears into long furry, asses' ears (Larousse encyclopaedia of mythology, 1959 : 174).

Midas was highly embarrassed by the appearance of his unsightly ears and wore a turban to hide them. When a barber discovered Midas' secret while shaving his hair, he feared that he might be executed if he would reveal the secret. To avoid a revelation, the barber dug a hole, whispered the secret into it and closed it.

In the course of time reeds began to grow there, and when the wind blew over the reeds, the secret was spread to everybody.

6.7.3.1.7.1 QUALITIES DISPLAYED BY PAN

- (a) Pan was lazy and lived a care-free life.
- (b) He was boastful and short-tempered, but retained a sporting spirit:

'Pan took this in good part; he knew that the contest had been only a joke' (p.143).

- (c) Pan loved nature, relishing in particular the fresh air blowing from the mountain.
- (d) Pan was humble:

'Pan was the god of the flocks, the friend of shepherds and country folk. He lived in a cave ...' (p.142).

This myth portrays Midas as being quite unreasonable in his fury over the results of the contest. Despite Pan's cool and nonchalant manner Midas exploded into a rage in response to the judgement passed. This earned him a pair of asses' ears. In the first instance, Midas had no reason to become involved in the contest between Pan and Apollo. Having exhibited such ill-temper Midas' wings were clipped by Apollo in punishment. As had been the case in his ultimate reaction to the implications of his golden touch, Midas soon realised in his sensitivity what had happened to him. This time there was no turning point. In his folly he had not learnt his lesson while experiencing the consequences of his golden touch.

During the bibliotherapeutic sessions subjects were once more reminded of the results of laziness and ill-temperedness personified by Pan, and of the fact that Pan earned himself no admiration for displaying these characteristics. Even if one's pipe is made of humble material, such as that of Pan's, this does not entitle one to having less regard for it. The subjects were assumed to have acknowledged that there can only be one winner, and that is the one best equipped to come out on top in the contest.

They were also brought to a realisation that the fact that their endeavours were not as good as those of more intelligent or better-endowed subjects, did not mean that they were necessarily inferior as human beings; a universal law ordains that everybody is rated according to individual merit and ability.

Subjects were also exposed to the manifestations and consequences of the folly of Midas, and were given the opportunity of appreciating the fundamental truth that one learns by one's mistakes in life. In this way life is made bearable, and one is enabled to gain confidence in the face of tribulations. Erring continuously or repeating the perpetration of previous follies tends to lessen one's sense of confidence, courage and spirit of competition.

Midas, as the personification of the individual who is unable to learn life's lessons timeously, now had to live all his life the rest of his days with a tangible reminder of his innate folly; permanently equipped with incongruous asses' ears. To crown it all, despite his attempts to ensure that secrecy would be maintained about the furry ears, the horrendous truth eventually reached the ears of the public.

During therapy the subjects were enabled to learn of the impact of public opinion when one's errors are exposed. A consequence of this lesson is that one is readily esteemed in society in terms of its perceptions of one's blatant follies.

6.7.3.2 POEMS (cf also 5.9.2)

6.7.3.2.1 THE ENCHANTED SHIRT

The king was so accustomed to his life of ease and abiding state of well-being that he could no longer appreciate his privileged position. His sense of achievement had dissolved in the aura of well-being around him. It appeared as though there was nothing for him to strive for, yet he wanted something to be wrong so as to pose a challenge to him to remedy the ensuing defect. In

essence, he was discontented with the fact that there was nothing wrong with himself.

The king insisted that he was sick while his outward appearance alone proved that it could not be so:

'His cheek was red and his eye was clear and bright'.

He could not even complain of sleepless nights as

'... he peacefully snored at night'.

One needs to draw attention to the qualification of the adverb 'peacefully', since this quality characterised his very tranquil, trouble-free existence.

The poet also intimates that the king was unduly opinionated. The king insisted that he was indisposed, in the face of the conflicting diagnoses of a number of doctors. However, his overriding wish was to be proved right: consequently, he kept summoning more doctors. Not for a moment did he consider that his 'illness' lay within himself, which meant that only he could cure himself.

The first doctor's life was meaningful. He had experienced self-fulfilment. He therefore did not have time to practice self-indulgence as was the case with the king. Instead he had spent his life in 'studious toil' with hardly enough time to eat. He represents a striking contrast to the king, whose only interest was himself.

This doctor was also self-assured. He did not hesitate to proclaim in definite terms that the king was in sound health. He had the courage to express his opinion, even though it led to his death sentence.

The second doctor's sheer urge for survival was much stronger than that of his predecessor. However, in his determination to save his

life, he practised his shrewdness in such a manner that it led to the king's cure. He realised that the task of finding a happy man within the kingdom would be a lengthy and exacting one. Sleeping one night in the shirt of a happy man would have 'cured' the king, bringing him happiness.

Self-examination, and a comparison of his life with those of his subjects resulted in the king being ashamed of his unfruitful life. His melancholy and gloom were transformed into joy, however, when his life became meaningful, enabling him to appreciate his prosperity and to develop a compassionate interest in the problems of his subjects.

The subjects participating in the bibliotherapeutic experiment witnessed how a comfortable trouble-free existence was not the only or most worthy goal to pursue, insofar as such an existence would deprive one of the motive to strive after any ideals whatsoever. Such a situation would unavoidably culminate in utter boredom for people who enjoy all conceivable comforts, but are bereft of the challenges to be channelled into fresh labours which would render life eternally interesting.

Undeveloped areas in one's personal make-up and ability need to be explored to add to a reasonable sense of achievement, pride and content. When the king's ambitions became diverted into more meaningful channels of concern, his life-horizons broadened, enabling him to perceive new perspectives in his own life which soon extended into a major consideration for his fellow human beings. As a result he gained the self-respect and admiration of others. He was now able to act as boldly as the first doctor had done.

His initial life of ease and his sense of hubris is typical of the qualities which characterised the second doctor's life, viz. self-preservation, or self-concern. Life consists not merely of receiving, but, more importantly, of giving. It is to the extent that one gives and relates to others that happiness and spontaneous self-confidence become one's spiritual reward.

These are the qualities which the subjects were able to derive from the narrative of the poem and the ensuing discussion. It is assumed to have served as an opportunity of appreciating the importance of sharing one's interests and possessions with others a noble motive which in turn contribute towards the development of one's sense of achievement and courage of conviction.

6.7.3.2.2 CONFESSIONS OF A BORN SPECTATOR

The poet considers how people differ in their various aspirations.

During infancy everybody is mentally on more or less the same level. It is while growing up and maturing that individual changes take place in every child. The poet appreciates the different roles assumed by infants as they grow and regards these roles as part of their natural development. He expresses pleasure at not being one of the multitude of infants. In fact, he is pleased for what he had achieved and what he is presently experiencing. The poet therefore leaves the impression that he has come to terms with himself.

From the poem it is evident that the poet's self-concept is well-developed and firmly grounded. He can admire and appreciate the things other people do and at the same time gracefully accept, without any feeling of either regret or dissatisfaction that which he is able to do. Unashamedly, his

'limp and bashful spirit feeds on other people's heroic deeds'.

The subjects engaged in the consequential bibliotherapeutic discussion were assumed to appreciate the analogy that persons participating in highly competitive sporting activities have to extend themselves immeasurably before they are able to achieve a sense of self-satisfaction. To attain this goal they inevitably place themselves in considerable physical danger.

Considering the poet's 'limp and bashful spirit' one would imagine that he admires athletes to such an extent that he has a craving to be one of them. On closer examination, however, it seems, rather, that he regards their actions as merely physical, encompassing little or no consideration for each other's well-being or feelings.

It seemed to have become apparent to the subjects that the poet's feeling of self-worth and consequent self-esteem did not need to be boosted by physical prowess, since his poem conveys the clear message that he did not consider this essential as a prerequisite for qualifying as a person regarded by others as being of any worth. Rather, it seems to be suggested in the poem, being world-wise, discreet and knowledgeable are far more important human qualities worthy of our higher aspirations. Ogden Nash's message to the bibliotherapeutic group came loud and clear: viz. that 'prudence wins' in every battle between the ego (i.e. self-interest) and the higher self (i.e. prudence and compassion in one's social existence).

Subjects were exposed to the idea that in spite of the physical strength of athletes, they need the inner qualities displayed by the poet whose 'lean and bashful spirit' may well constitute the lasting source of reinvigoration to treat them when 'swollen eye needs gnarled fist' or 'when snaps the knee or cracks the wrist'.

The poet appears to be in the superior position. He becomes to their aid and seems truly thankful for being 'most modest of physique'. It is through this very apparent deficiency that the poet has been able to develop an awareness of his self along a current diverging from those of the athletes. The poet displays spiritual self-sufficiency and manages to survive on it. His vision is beyond the here-and-now situation.

He admires athletes and will pay much to see them performing, but every time he watches them he is filled with gratitude for being the person he is:

'Athletes, I'll drink to you or eat with you,
Or anything except compete with you,
Buy tickets worth their weight in radium
To watch you gambol in a stadium,
And reassure myself anew
That you're not me and I'm not you'.

During the discussion sessions the subjects could appreciate that people are different, not only in their aspirations, but also in

0-30

their actual ability. There is no need to feel inferior, the subjects were able to consider, for not being able to perform as well as another person with whom they are in competition. Everyone, it had become evident, is esteemed for his own capabilities, which should be viewed in enduring spiritual terms rather than in transient material values.

6.7.4 STRUCTURE OF VARIOUS SESSIONS

6.7.4.1 GENERAL GOALS AND PURPOSES

The general topic of goals as applied in counselling (Arbuckle, 1951 ; Rogers, 1951) can be applied with reasonable confidence to bibliotherapy.

This study is directed, in general terms, at an observation of the development of the whole pupil, so that he will experience a stable sense of self-esteem or self-regard. In this context Prochaska (1979 : 124) argues that

'The solution lies not in increasing self-esteem but rather in expanding our conditions of worth so that we can prize all that we can be and not only who we believe we are supposed to be'.

Since the individual has to work on his own needs and problems, the selected study group was guided to focus on democratic group functioning, i.e. each participant contributed his own ideas to the group as a whole. The researcher was aware of the reciprocally influencing nature in terms of the principles of group dynamics (cf. par. 3.13.2).

With regard to the function of the researcher acting as therapist (cf. par. 3.14.2) Rotter's advice served a sound guideline in this study:

'In most group techniques, the therapist is there to stimulate, control, interpret, structure, and so on ... but the participants interact mainly with one another' (1971 : 100).

6.7.4.2 SPECIFIC GOALS AND PURPOSES

The bibliotherapeutic investigation was divided into various activities, all aiming at the creation and stimulation of the subject's personal initiative, self-reliance, self-confidence and ultimately self-worth.

These goals were accomplished through the aid of the discussion of myths and poems (cf. par. 6.7.3) and the consequential activities of roleplaying and movement (cf. par. 6.7.4.4.2).

On the recommendation of Hannigan (1962 : 189) the researcher conducted the therapeutic sessions in group fashion on a small, manageable scale (cf. par. 6.1.5 and 6.2.1.5).

The research programme itself was well-planned and conducted on the basis of standard principles of consistency (regularity) normally required of such experiments. The purposes and objectives of all sessions (cf. par. 6.2) were interrelated, in that it stressed healthy confident self-expression. These aims were fostered by changing the method of approach for each session.

The stimulation of interests was initiated by reading in each session. Reading was supported in the first place by discussion by the whole group, then by the various sub-groups and normally culminated in other activities such as role-playing, for example.

6.7.4.3 SUPPORTIVE ACTIVITIES IN THE BIBLIOTHERAPEUTIC STUDY

The following activities sustained the bibliotherapeutic sessions:

6.7.4.3.1 LISTENING TO SOUND RECORDINGS

The researcher used the following recordings:

- (a) Listen to the wind in the bush: a sound picture by Sue Hart and narrated by Don McCorkindale;
- (b) The carnival of the animals, by Saint Saëns;

(c) Peter and the wolf, by Prokofiev.

(Both recordings were narrated and conducted by Leonard Bernstein with the New York Philharmonic Orchestra.)

The researcher's motive for selecting and presenting these sound recordings was to stimulate the subjects' imagination and resultant creative powers. The selected recordings were found to be amenable to bodily movement and the interpretation of emotions, thereby facilitating excellent opportunities for spontaneous expression and enhancement of self-confidence.

6.7.4.3.2 SELF-EXPRESSION THROUGH SOUND AND MOVEMENT

The researcher used the following sources as bases of advice:

- (a) Meyer-Denkman, G. 1977. Experiments in sounds: new directions in musical education for young children. London: Universal Press.
- (b) Paynter, J. 1967. All kinds of music: voices. London: Oxford University Press.
- (c) Paynter, J. & Aston, P. 1970. Sound and silence: classroom projects in creative music. London: Cambridge University Press.
- (d) Self, G. 1967. New sounds in class: a contemporary approach to music. London: Universal Press.
- (e) Wishart, T. 1974: Creativity and environment. London: Universal Press.

The explicit relevance of the use of these sources was found to be analogous to that of listening to sound recordings. Whereas the sound track served as a point of departure for the stimulation of the subject's imagination on the one hand, the researcher relied on themes for self-expression through movement postulated by the authors mentioned on the other. Subjects further composed their own music according to various themes. The music, however, was simple, involving mainly rhythm and performed on their self-made instruments.

6.7.4.3.3 CONVERSATION-SKILLS WORKSHOPS (cf. par. 6.7.4.4.5).

6.7.4.3.4 ROLE-PLAYING AND SIMULATION (cf. par. 6.7.4.4.2)

6.7.4.4 PLAN OF SESSIONS AS CONSTRUCTED AT THE BEGINNING OF THE INVESTIGATION

This study was conducted from 24 March to 16 June 1980.

(a) 1st month

- | | |
|--|---|
| 1. Literature discussion
Groups
Role-playing
Summary | 2. Literature discussion
Groups
Self-expression and
improvisation
Summary |
| 3. Literature discussion
Group-formation
Role-playing
Summary | 4. Literature discussion
Groups
Movement and music
improvisation
Summary |

(b) 2nd month

- | | |
|--|--|
| 1. Literature discussion
Listen to sound
recording - discussion
Summary | 2. Literature discussion
Conversation - skill
workshop
Summary |
| 3. Literature discussion
Groups
Role-playing
Summary | 4. Literature discussion
Listen to sound
recording - discussion
Summary |

(c) 3rd month

(i) first two weeks

- | | |
|---|--|
| 1. Literature discussion
Conversation-skill
workshop
Summary | 2. Literature discussion
Groups - role-playing
Summary |
| 3. Literature discussion
Groups - role-playing
Summary | 4. Literature discussion
Sound improvisation
Summary |

(ii) last two weeks

- | | |
|---|--|
| 1. Literature discussion
Conversation-skill
workshop
Summary | 2. Literature discussion
Sound recording
Summary |
| 3. Literature discussion
Groups - role-playing
Summary | 4. Literature discussion
Groups - role-playing
Summary |

The completion of questionnaires took place before bibliotherapeutic discussions had started and after they had been completed.

6.7.4.4.1 LITERATURE READING AND DISCUSSION

Every subject was exposed to the literature selected by the researcher for the bibliotherapeutic experiment. The researcher endeavoured to attain the maximum exposure of subjects to both the myths and the poems by encouraging and stimulating the subjects to attend every bibliotherapeutic session as far as possible.

The group normally started each session by reading the story as a group, copies of which the researcher had duplicated for every session. Care was taken to ensure that every subject had a relevant copy to him- or herself.

After the group had read the literary passage as a whole, reading was repeated by the researcher or the individual subjects reading various roles or taking the role of the narrator.

When reading sessions had been completed, a discussion of the literature ensued. After the discussion, which was directed by the researcher, the total sample was divided into sub-groups as a means of elaborating a particular point, sub-plot or idea of the complete myth or poem. These sub-groups, which did not necessarily comprise the same individuals on every occasion, were then engaged in the role-playing and simulation exercises.

It was found that it was not always easy or possible to adhere to the proposed schedule every week. Each session and situation determined its own pattern of development and needs which, as a

matter of course, could not be ignored if effective results were to be obtained.

The researcher would normally start a discussion of characters appearing in the selected sample of myths and poems by providing the subjects with adequate background. The description and analysis of the characters normally served as a useful point of departure for further discussion. After a cursory literal discussion of the content of the literature concerned, the group would subtly be guided by the researcher into personality description of literary characters. Discussion then progressed towards the deeper meaning and implication of the story. The subjects were elaborately guided in the development of themes which lent themselves to further analysis among sub-divisions of the total group. For example, in discussing King Midas and the Golden Touch, themes such as work, ambition, remorse and helpfulness were developed and ultimately improvised into a story for enacting.

Discussion was aimed at giving the subjects an opportunity of gaining insight into their position as opposed to that displayed in the literature under discussion. Aspects of self-worth and confidence were not deliberately highlighted, but the implicit goal was achieved by way of analogy and implication, which is inherent in discussion. The therapist took pains to approach the qualities relating to self-esteem as subtly and unobtrusively as possible.

Taking into consideration that each bibliotherapeutic session did not exceed an hour and a half, at least half of the time was spent on discussion and group-formation before the subjects proceeded to participate in role-playing or listening to sounds. These activities, however, were never seen as isolated entities of the exercise rather as units integrated into the total process of investigation.

6.7.4.4.2 ROLE-PLAYING AND SIMULATION

The aim of role-playing was to give subjects an opportunity of coming to terms with the cultural and social environment as found in reality, in a conscious and critical manner. Role-playing normally constitutes improvised actions which follow from the discuss

ion of the literature. This implied that the subjects were not to practise or rehearse the roles they would be playing.

Analogous to role-playing is the concept of simulation which was used extensively in bibliotherapy. Simulation is described as imitation or pretence:

'... to have the characteristics of ... to give the appearance or effect of ...' (Webster's third new international dictionary, 1961 : 2122).

Taylor and Walford (1972) expand thus on the idea of simulation:

- (a) players normally take the roles which are representative of the real world and, as a result, make decisions in response to their assessment of the situation in which they find themselves;
- (b) they are exposed to simulated experiences which relate to their decisions and general behavioural expressions; and
- (c) they channel the results of their actions in a directed manner and are prompted to reflect upon relationships between their decisions and the resultant consequences.

All activities were designed to culminate in expressions related to self-exaltation and self-aggrandisement, in such a manner that self-respect, self-worth and self-esteem were boosted in a positive, yet healthy, direction.

6.7.4.4.3 SELF-EXPRESSION

Besides developing the individual's sense of creativity, self-expression through movement and sound, it was also intended to stimulate the individual's initiative and spontaneity. This was an attempt on the part of the researcher at releasing inhibitions and facilitating further growth. In his approach the researcher was influenced by the argument of Paynter and Aston (1970 : 3):

'We should believe that young people deserve a truly liberal education, alive with the excitement of discovery'.

Meyer-Denkman (1977 : 1) elaborates this argument:

'We must help children to come into lively contact with their environment. Their experiences should involve materials, objects, instruments, noises of daily life, work should include movement alone, with a partner, or in a group, and movement producing or accompanied by sound.'

This study focussed attention on both individual and group efforts to produce bodily movement as well as sounds with self-made instruments, but especially with the voice. Since the human voice is a fundamental and many-faceted instrument, this study made extensive use of it other than during reading discussions. To enable the pupils to act in a certain way, they were actively involved in real-life situations.

The group, for example, sounded out an imminent storm and related it also to actions. Those subjects who represented the wind imitated 'z' and 's' sounds. The sounds would become louder or softer as the storm raged or subsided. As the rain descended steadily, in like manner the subjects would imitate the raindrops with their arms and fingers, while producing appropriate sounds with their tongues and teeth. Lightning and thunder were represented by heavy bodily movements. This was yet another way in which subjects were prompted to release their inhibitions. On one occasion the subjects were requested to make musical instruments at home and bring these to the therapeutic session. Most of the instruments were containers with various solid objects, such as beans or stones. Other instruments consisted of strings of various lengths and fibres of all kinds. Total free expression was granted, once more to assist in releasing subjects' inhibitions, but also to elicit sheer enjoyment. Subjects' newly-established freedom was further exploited in the therapeutic experiment by requesting the subjects to compose their own rhythmic music in sub-groups and to perform it to the rest of the total group population.

6.7.4.4.4 SOUND RECORDINGS

The researcher produced recorded sound from the wilderness. Subject

listened to these sounds in a dark, semi-dark and sun-lit classroom respectively. They had to imagine being present in the wilderness under these various conditions. The subjects had divergent perceptions of the wilderness, which ranged from vast open spaces, dense tropical forests, jungles with crocodile-infested rivers, to steep mountain cliffs which rise out of the impenetrable forest.

On other occasions the subjects had to identify a mixture of voices and other sounds under varying conditions. Sounds heard by subjects, for example, included the cry of a newly-born baby and that of an animal registering fear or hunger. These sound perceptions served as themes for further discussion and were also tied up with conversation-skill workshops - all aimed at promoting self-expression and confident behavioural manifestations, which were assumed to be contributory factors to the covert development of self-esteem in its multi-faceted dimensions (cf. par. 6.4).

6.7.4.4.5 CONVERSATION-SKILLS WORKSHOPS

Conversation-skill workshops facilitate the development of the subject's verbal expressions appropriate to a certain social setting. In this way the subject is enabled to experience a situation which he has never been exposed to, such as for example, a public speech or a court situation. In expressing himself adequately the subject learns to remain confident and yet to express himself in clear terms.

Sessions were designed for this study to give the subjects an opportunity to imitate conversation in specific situations. This was accomplished in a manner which would be socially acceptable, thereby leading to the attainment of personal satisfaction of the subject. Subjects were, for example, individually exposed to a situation in which he or she had to start, maintain and terminate an interview.

On another occasion the therapist designed impromptu telephone calls, e.g. reporting to a police or fire station. The rest of the group served as a feedback device for the others' efforts.

The chief reason for conversation-skill workshops lies not only in reducing speech deficiencies or habits that may interfere with effective interpersonal communication, but rather in bolstering spontaneity and, as a result, manifest self-confidence.

6.7.4.5 CONCLUSION

The bibliotherapeutic sessions consisted of a diverse range of activities intended to form a tightly-knit unitary master activity at all times.

Of paramount importance to the study was the principle that all activities should relate to an aspect designed to promote self-esteem. Pupils were constantly made aware of the fact that the main practical objective of the therapeutic session was the reading of literature and an ensuing discussion in terms of the deeper psychological implications of the text concerned. This is why every bibliotherapeutic session did not end with role-playing or any other related activity, but in a winding-up session instead, which summarised the position in the light of the literature which had been read or of what had emanated from the literature during the subsequent discussions.

7. FINDINGS AND CONCLUSIONS OF EMPIRICAL STUDY

7.1 INTRODUCTION

This part of the study was designed to attempt obtaining empirical evidence as to the general validity or otherwise of the three main hypotheses as well as the theoretical foundations relating to the practice of bibliotherapy conducted under given experimental conditions (cf. par. 6.1 - 6.3).

The researcher succeeded in gaining valid information of relevance to the subjects' general level of self-esteem and related this to the bibliotherapeutic activity. Thus it was possible to ascertain whether the application of bibliotherapy had a significant effect on each subject's self-esteem. This was accomplished by comparing pre- and post-test results after bibliotherapy had been applied.

The experimental investigation was aimed mainly at facilitating spontaneous adjustment and at lessening psychological conflict in each subject, rather than correcting behavioural and/or emotional disturbances (cf. Rongione, 1978 : 269).

It was attempted in this manner to increase the subject's self-esteem in terms of an appreciation of his intrinsic worth and of his harmonious acceptance of the conditions of life at large.

For the purpose of the investigation a sample of 30 normal, pre-high school pupils (i.e. Std 4) were randomly selected among a total Std 4 population of 55 pupils in the school chosen for the experiment (cf. 6.1.1 - 6.1.3), and on the additional basis of their willingness to participate in bibliotherapeutic discussion and related activities, such as role-playing (cf. par. 6.1.2).

The sample comprised English-speaking middle-class coloured pupils who were collectively exposed to selected literary texts (cf. par. 6.1.3 and 6.3.1.5).

It was assumed (an assumption to be confirmed later by observation) that the size of the group was of such a nature that the planning and imple-

mentation of activities inherent in bibliotherapy could be executed in a relaxed and spontaneous manner.

A questionnaire (cf. Annexure A₂) was conducted before therapy, yielding relevant information pertaining to the notion of self-esteem. The compilation of the questionnaire was based on a consensus model of indices to self-esteem (cf. par. 6.4 and Annexure A₂), modified by the researcher for the purposes of this study. An identically constructed questionnaire (Annexure A₃), relating to different aspects of the notion of self-esteem elicited in the first questionnaire was conducted after therapy had been applied. The self-esteem questionnaires (cf. Annexures A₂ and A₃) were supplemented by a questionnaire designed to elicit personal information of each subject of relevance to the investigation (cf. Annexure A₁).

The bibliotherapeutic literature comprised Greek myths (cf. par. 5.9.1 and 6.7.3.1) and poems (cf. par. 5.9.2 and 6.7.3.2) selected on the basis of its assumed potential to contribute towards the subjects' ability to transcend the mere material considerations in life, and to motivate each subject individually to conceive of values in spiritual and moral terms.

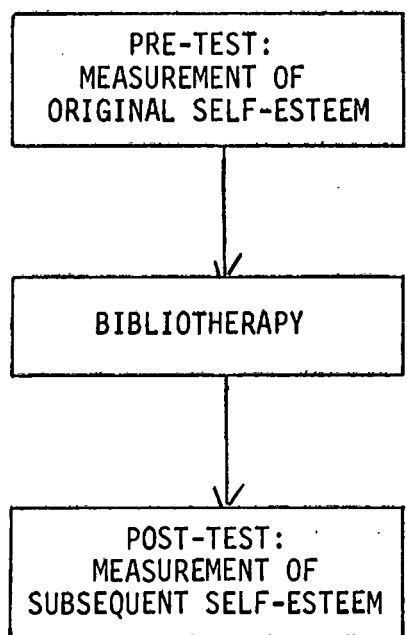
Bibliotherapeutic discussions assumed the form of informal group activity. Subjects were encouraged to articulate their opinions regarding the chosen topic of discussion. The discussion, which always emanated from the reading-matter, was conducted under the subtle direction of the researcher to ensure that subjects adhered consistently to the purposes of the study.

The literature discussion was related discreetly to the hidden indices underlying the self-esteem concept, such as self-worth, trustworthiness, achievement, success, competition, intelligence, physical attractiveness and leadership qualities (cf. par. 6.4). During the bibliotherapeutic process an attempt was made to stimulate the subjects' imagination by the reading of the myths and poems, such stimulation being reinforced by the ensuing discussion.

Under the guidance of the researcher the group explored various themes

related to the literary text by pointing out that for the individual there is more than one solution to the problem with which he may be confronted in different situations. While ample scope was afforded to subjects for a free and natural exchange of ideas, opportunities were often provided to reinforce behavioural forms by suggesting specific precepts and examples related to the range of notions of self-esteem implicated in both the questionnaires and the experimental texts. The bibliotherapeutic goal was accomplished, further, by way of role-playing, as a means of aiding subjects to come to terms with reality and to bring constructive forms of behavioural expression to fruition.

Schematically the bibliotherapeutic investigation can be presented as follows:



7.2 HYPOTHESES

As a primary step in testing the hypotheses (cf. par. 1.2.1 - 1.2.3) the researcher scanned the relevant literature on self-esteem, bibliotherapy and the reading act. Also, the systematic scrutiny of the literature was designed to provide an elucidatory preamble to the empirical investigation which would attempt, jointly, to shed light on the problem of understanding more clearly the role of literature at facilitating the therapeutic encounter.

The specific aim of the empirical investigation, in turn, was to attempt gaining insight into the manner in and extent to which bibliotherapy would be instrumental in enhancing the subjects' self-esteem. As a means of determining the effects of bibliotherapy, due cognisance has to be taken, as a point of departure, of the following functional hypotheses:

- 7.2.1 NULL HYPOTHESIS (H_0): This presupposes no significant difference between the pre- and post-test scores.
- 7.2.2 ALTERNATIVE HYPOTHESIS (H_a): A significant difference between the pre- and post-test scores is implied.
- 7.2.3 EXPERIMENTAL HYPOTHESIS (H_e): In terms of this hypothesis it is assumed that the application of bibliotherapy will result in raising the level of self-esteem of subjects.

7.3 MEASUREMENT CRITERIA FOR POPULATIONS

The functional hypotheses (cf. par. 7.2.1 - 7.2.3), which derive from the theoretical hypotheses (cf. par. 1.2.1 - 1.2.3), were applied by obtaining scores of the pre-test relating to self-esteem and comparing the results to those of the post-test scores of self-esteem to ascertain whether any meaningful difference had emerged. The data of each test were computed independently, and it was assumed for the purpose of this study that the data relating to both tests would satisfy the criteria for the application of a parametric test, viz. that

- (a) the pre- and post test scores display a normal distribution;
- (b) the variances display homogeneity; and that
- (c) there are interval measurements of data.

7.3.1 THE PRE- AND POST TEST SCORES DISPLAY A NORMAL DISTRIBUTION

The grouped-frequency histograms of the pre- and post test samples (cf. Annexures B₁ and B₂) indicate that the two scores do not in fact closely follow a normal distribution pattern. This result may be attributed partly to the assumption that normal growing children, such as those tested in this study, are often characterised by fleeting psychological dispositions (especially in respect of factors relating

to their self-perception and the growth of the self in particular - cf. Purkey, 1970: 28-42), thereby resulting in relatively inconsistent responses to the individual items of the tests. (It is possible, of course, that negligence on their part in comprehending fully the meaning of the questions posed may, at least partially, account for such inconsistency). The fact that the scores do not follow a normal distribution pattern closely may, on the other hand, also be explained on the grounds of a failure to form the grouping in the statistical analysis in multiples of three (cf. Annexure B, especially the histograms). Often, when a grouping interval has been changed, the distribution may appear quite different (cf. par. 2.4.8).

On balance, however, it seems unlikely that the problem encountered will affect the outcome of the statistical test in an appreciable way (see par. 2.4.8.1 and 2.4.8.2 in this regard).

7.3.2 HOMOGENEITY OF VARIANCE

Measures of variability express in quantitative terms the extent to which the scores in a test are scattered or clustered. In this study the variance is assumed to represent a summary measurement which describes the general spread of the entire set of scores, called its homogeneity. The characteristic of homogeneity can be tested with an F-test. This is achieved by postulating the hypotheses in order to determine the significance level of the two variances (i.e. S_1^2 and S_2^2), thus:

$$H_0 : S_1^2 = S_2^2$$

$$H_a : S_1^2 \neq S_2^2$$

∴ 5% significance level

7.3.2.1 PRE-TEST - VARIANCE CALCULATION:

$$\begin{aligned} \bar{X} \text{ (mean of scores)} &= \frac{\sum x_i}{n} \\ \bar{X} &= 16,1667 \\ S_1^2 &= \frac{1}{n-1} (\sum x_i^2 - n\bar{X}^2) \\ &= \frac{1}{29} (8263 - 30 (16,1667)^2) \\ &= \frac{1}{29} (8263 - 7849, 8324) \\ &= 14,5575 \end{aligned}$$

7.3.2.2 POST-TEST - VARIANCE CALCULATION:

$$\bar{X} \text{ (mean of stores)} = \frac{\sum x_i}{n}$$

$$\bar{X} = 18,2667$$

$$S_2^2 = \frac{1}{n-1} (\sum x_i^2 - n\bar{X}^2)$$

$$= \frac{1}{29} (10424 - 30 (18,2667)^2)$$

$$= 14,2713$$

7.3.2.3 F-TEST CALCULATION:

$$F_{n_1 - 1 ; n_2 - 1} = \frac{S_1^2}{S_2^2} = \frac{14,5575}{14,2713}$$
$$= 1,02$$

0,05

$$F_{29 ; 29} \approx 1,84$$

$$1,02 < 1,84$$

The observed value of F (1,02) is less than the critical value (1,84). Therefore we accept H_0 .

7.3.3 INTERVAL MEASUREMENT OF DATA

The data in this experiment display the characteristic of interval measurement, since the nature of such data is such that there is a meaningful arithmetic difference between elements of each category as well as of each unit of measurement. Having established that we have parametric data, the statistical test to be employed is the t-test. The t-test is a statistical technique which allows the experimenter to deal with the significance of differences between means. The hypotheses of the means of the pre- and post-test scores are as follows:

$$H_0 : \bar{X}_1 = \bar{X}_2$$

$$H_a : \bar{X}_1 < \bar{X}_2$$

A one-tailed test was employed for the computation of the experimental data. A one-tailed test of significance was applied to compare two sets of data to demonstrate whether or not the one test was more

effective than the other. For the purposes of this study there was an especial need to establish whether test 2 had exercised an appreciable effect, thereby implying the relative success of bibliotherapy.

A one-tailed test seemed particularly appropriate, as it is of crucial importance to establish whether $\bar{X}_2 > \bar{X}_1$.

In terms of this test the experimental hypothesis would not be validated unless $\bar{X}_2 < \bar{X}_1$ be proved.

7.3.3.1 COMPUTATION OF DATA

The following table of figures represents the preliminary computation to enable the researcher to derive meaningful data pertaining to the relatedness of the two sets of scores yielded respectively by the pre- and post-test

	X_1 (Pre-test)	X_2 (Post-test)	d $X_1 - X_2$	d^2
1.	17	17	0	0
2.	14	16	-2	4
3.	12	21	-9	81
4.	22	24	-2	4
5.	19	19	0	0
6.	14	16	-2	4
7.	12	15	-3	9
8.	12	22	-10	100
9.	15	16	-1	1
10.	14	15	-1	1
11.	12	13	-1	1
12.	11	14	-3	9
13.	21	24	-13	169
14.	19	20	-1	1
15.	14	19	-5	25
16.	13	14	-1	1
17.	23	23	0	0
18.	15	17	-2	4
19.	20	20	0	0
20.	12	11	1	1
21.	14	20	-6	36
22.	25	23	2	4
23.	11	11	0	0
24.	19	20	-1	1
25.	15	20	-5	25
26.	18	23	-5	25
27.	15	15	0	0
28.	16	21	-5	25
29.	16	17	-1	1
30.	15	22	-7	49

$$\sum di = -83 \quad \sum di^2 = 581$$

The mean difference:

$$\begin{aligned}\bar{d} &= \frac{1}{n} \sum di \\ &= \frac{-83}{30} \\ &= -2,7667\end{aligned}$$

Then, the variance of the di

$$\begin{aligned}S_d^2 &= \frac{\sum di^2}{n-1} - \frac{(\sum di)^2}{n(n-1)} \\ &= \frac{581}{29} - \frac{(-83)^2}{30(29)} \\ &= 20,0344 - \frac{6889}{870} \\ &= 20,0344 - 7,9184 \\ &= 12,1161\end{aligned}$$

The standard error of the di

$$S.E._d = \frac{S_d}{\sqrt{n}}$$

We have $S_d^2 = 12,1161 \therefore S_d = 3,4808$

and
$$S.E._d = \frac{3,4808}{\sqrt{30}} = 0,6355$$

Then, t_{n-1}

$$\begin{aligned}&= \frac{\bar{d}-0}{S.E._d} \\ &= \frac{-2,7667}{0,6355} \\ &= -4,3535 \Rightarrow -4,35\end{aligned}$$

7.3.4 The computed t-value is compared to the lower 1% point of the t-distribution with $n-1 = 29$ degrees of freedom.

$$t_{29}^{0,01} = -2,462$$

$$-4,35 < -2,462$$

In terms of this result H_0 is rejected, resulting in the conclusion that \bar{X}_2 is significantly greater than \bar{X}_1 at the 1% level.

7.4 CONCLUSIONS OF THE EXPERIMENTAL INVESTIGATION

On the basis of the preceding statistical analysis regarding the difference of pre- and post-test scores of subjects' measurement of self-esteem, one may conclude that the critical variable (i.e. bibliotherapy) had a meaningful effect on the subjects - thereby corroborating the experimental and theoretical hypotheses (cf. 7.1.3 and 1.1), viz. that bibliotherapy and its co-activities (such as role-playing) have the potential of exercising a beneficial influence in the psychological make-up of the individual.

The null hypothesis, which posits that there will be no significant difference between pre- and post-test scores was disproved, since the motivational impact of bibliotherapy seemed to have enhanced the general measurement of self-esteem in the subjects. In statistical terms, \bar{X}_2 proved to be significantly greater than \bar{X}_1 at the 1% level. The relevance of this being significant at the 1% level, is that there is a 1 in a 100 chance that the result obtained was due to chance and that, in fact, $\bar{X}_1 > \bar{X}_2$ or $\bar{X}_1 = \bar{X}_2$ in the population.

7.4.1 IMMEDIATE CHANGE

The result of this study does not imply that the enhanced self-concept of subjects is due to mere exposure to the reading text and the superficial transfer of information relating to psychological traits of literary characters (cf. par. 4.8 - 4.8.3). It appears, rather, as though thorough discussion, reflection and decision, - mental actions inherent in the bibliotherapeutic activity - were instrumental in

contributing so significantly to the relative success which bibliotherapy had accomplished in this investigation (cf. par. 3.8 and 3.14.1 and 7.4).

7.4.2 DEFERRED CHANGE

Subjects who, on the basis of significant differences in the pre- and post-test scores, did not appear to have benefitted from the bibliotherapeutic activity, however, cannot be readily assumed to have remained unaffected by its influence. The post-test evidence is not the only proof as to whether or not the subject's self-regard had increased. The apparent lack of evidence relating to improvement in one's psychological make-up may in due course be disproved, as bibliotherapy may be assumed to have relevant effects later in subjects' lives (cf. Lejeune, 1978: 200-203).

7.4.3 RESPONSES TO THE TWO TESTS

All subjects responded differently to the variety of texts presented, because each pupil is unique in his total make-up as a being, hence the patterns of idiosyncratic responses to the self-esteem stimuli before and after the therapeutic activity. This observation is evident from a close examination of the dual responses of every subject.

Moreover, generally high scoring rates in each of the two tests demonstrate that the subjects projected relatively high levels of self-esteem both before and after bibliotherapy had been applied. The scores of the group for each item in both questionnaire 1 (pre-test) and questionnaire 2 (post-test) respectively, are as follows:

QUESTIONNAIRE ONE:

	<u>YES</u>	<u>NO</u>
1. Are you good-looking? (physical attractiveness)	25	5
2. Are you hardworking at school? (diligence, a sense of duty)	28	2
3. Do your plans usually succeed? (achievement)	14	16
4. Are you athletic? (physical approval)	7	23

	<u>YES</u>	<u>NO</u>
5. Do your parents trust you? (trustworthiness in the eyes of the parents)	29	1
6. Are you intelligent? (intellectual ability)	18 (one abstention)	11
7. Are you popular among your class-mates? (peer acceptance)	17	13
8. Do you usually feel strange at a new place? (social adjustment, adaptability)	23	7
9. Do you expect to fail your standard this year? (scholastic achievement)	1	29
10. Do your parents often praise you? (parental approval and reassurance)	21	9
11. Do you often feel that you are left out by your friends? (peer acceptance)	11 (one abstention)	18
12. Do you feel upset if a friend does better than you? (competition)	4	36
13. Do you think that others feel you are worthless? (adequacy, social acceptance)	8	22
14. Do people easily take a liking to you? (social approval)	24	6
15. Do your class-mates consider you a leader? (leadership)	10	20
16. Do you care what other people think about you? (sense of worthiness)	8	22
17. Do you usually feel that everybody is against you? (social approval)	3	27
18. Do you often take the lead in group activities? (competence and status)	14	16
19. Do you become angry with yourself for not doing right? (achievement and success)	23 (one abstention)	6
20. Can your teacher always depend on you? (trustworthiness in the eyes of the teacher)	27	3
21. Are you happy with your physical appear- ance? (physical attractiveness and self-confidence)	21	9
22. Are your parents wealthy? (pride and status)	20	10
23. When you are with friends do you always talk the most? (dominance, self-confidence)	16	14

	<u>YES</u>	<u>NO</u>
24. Do you usually feel out of place among people whom you regard as being socially better? (social status)	12 (one abstention)	17
25. Do you think that you will be famous one day? (pride and confidence)	20	10

QUESTIONNAIRE TWO:

	<u>YES</u>	<u>NO</u>
1. I talk freely about myself, even to casual friends. (pride and confidence)	11	19
2. I generally prefer the company of talented or superior people. (social status)	26	4
3. I often argue strongly for my point of view against others. (dominance and self-confidence)	24	6
4. I usually feel nervous and anxious in the presence of my superiors. (pride and status)	11	19
5. I prefer to be stared at rather than not to be stared at. (physical attractiveness)	16	14
6. I often feel bad if I have not carried out the teacher's instructions. (trustworthiness in the eyes of the teacher).	27	3
7. I like best those things which I cannot easily get. (achievement and success - material possession)	25	5
8. I usually go my way regardless of the opinions of my school-mates. (independence)	19 (two abstentions)	9
9. I often reprimand my friends when I disapprove of their behaviour. (authority)	27	3
10. I am usually depressed by my feelings of worthlessness in schoolwork, sport, music. (worthiness)	11	19
11. I find it fairly easy to lead a group of boys or girls and maintain discipline. (leadership)	20	10
12. I often enjoy it when people express admiration for whatever I do. (social approval)	25 (one abstention)	4

	<u>YES</u>	<u>NO</u>
13. I sometimes think of myself as neglected and unloved by my class-mates. (peer acceptance)	7	23
14. I tend to compete with the more intelligent pupils in my class. (intellectual ability)	21 (two abstentions)	7
15. I am unable to do my best if my parents do not encourage me. (trustworthiness in the eyes of the parents)	15	14 (one abstention)
16. I pay a good deal of attention to my clothes, hair, etc. (physical attractiveness)	29	1
17. I enjoy work more than play. (sense of duty)	20 (two abstentions)	8
18. I set difficult goals for myself which I attempt to reach. (moral achievement)	25	5
19. I prefer not to be surrounded by friends when I receive bad news. (confidence - not losing face)	21 (one abstention)	8
20. I resist when my class-mates attempt to force me against my will. (independence)	19 (one abstention)	10
21. I usually do well in the examinations. (scholastic ability)	22	8
22. I usually influence others more than they influence me. (adequacy and competition)	21	9
23. My friends think I am too humble. (dominance)	5	25
24. I dream a good deal of my future success. (ambition, optimism)	4	26
25. I am pleased if I am called upon in class to tell a story or make a speech. (pride and confidence)	20	10

7.4.4 PERSONAL DETAILS

The relative high self-regarding attitudes of all the subjects may be attributed generally to the fact that each one of the sample displayed the characteristics of normal healthy developing pupils. This is evidenced by their responses to questions posed in the personal questionnaire (cf. Annexure A₁). For example, the total sample

claimed to be happy in their parental homes, and to share a companionship with their parents. The entire sample indicated, also, that they were on the whole content and happy at school. The exception to the rule were 4 of the 30 subjects (16,7%) who registered complaints about the routine nature which characterised their school day, rather than the more serious emotional nature of the psychological problems.

7.4.5 STATISTICAL ANALYSIS

The personal questionnaire also reflected that their sense of affiliation to various organisations appeared to be fairly well established. This may well account for the fact that 26 of the subjects (83,3%) claimed to belong to a public library. The remaining subjects did not acknowledge the need for belonging to a public library, as they already had access to their school library. The results of the questionnaire also show that 24 (80%) of the entire sample belong to other organisations, such as the boys' scouts, girl guides, sport clubs and ballet or speech and drama classes, reflecting once more a significant trend towards social activity of an affiliatory nature.

The subjects therefore seemed to be well-adjusted in their social contexts. Everybody, excluding 4 subjects (i.e. 16,7%) preferred being with friends, to being alone.

In reviewing, in statistical terms, the results that emanated from the application of bibliotherapy, it is apparent that 21 subjects (i.e. 70% of the sample) had increased their self-esteem, 7 (i.e. 20,3%) had remained unaffected, while 2 (i.e. 9,7%) had attained lower scores than in the pre-test. The question arises as to whether or not there is cause for concern that a general heightening of self-esteem among only 70% of the sample was recorded, whereas the remaining 30% either remained unaffected by the therapy or registered a decline.

The answer, it is suggested, is to be sought first of all in (a) the concept of self-esteem: its nature and scope and ultimate measurability; especially as manifest in growing children; and (b) the implicit nature of reading, especially in its special context of bibliotherapeutic activity.

7.4.6 GRAPHIC REPRESENTATION

A graphic representation of the test results (cf. Annexure B₃) indicates in broad terms a significant difference between self-esteem before and after therapy, viz. $p < .01$ (one-tailed). However, on closer examination, it seems that the increase in self-esteem was predominant among 70% of the sample, whereas 30% recorded relatively neutral results. A general conclusion is therefore that the majority of the sample had responded more dramatically to the bibliotherapeutic treatment than the mean difference between the results of the pre- and post-test would suggest.

7.4.7 THE AGE FACTOR

There seems to be some degree of uncertainty concerning the child's capabilities and limitations at any given maturational level. According to the Piagetian view, it is held that the child that epitomised the sample (viz. the concrete-operational child - 7½ to 11 years of age) is to a large extent able to comprehend formal concepts (cf. par. 5.7.2(b)). Closely allied to this ability is the relatively substantial evidence that because he displays what child psychologists often call pseudo-maturity, his self-esteem has become relatively well-established, but that self-esteem, by virtue of its very nature, is 'neither global nor fixed' (cf. Gergen, 1971 : 37 and par. 2.4.7.3). It seems that age is the decisive factor in determining genuine and substantial self-esteem.

7.4.8 FROM DEPENDENCE TO EMANCIPATION

However, there is reasonably firm evidence in the literature that the child's measure of self-esteem, though idiosyncratic in its manifestations (cf. par. 2.4.7.2), nevertheless proves to be spontaneous and stable. The spontaneity and stability which generally mark the behaviour of children in the concrete-operational stage are largely attributable to such factors as parental influence and warmth (cf. par. 2.4.6.4.1), as well as the influence and encouragement displayed by the teacher (cf. p. 2.4.6.4.2). Their dependence on these forces for sustaining their sense of security and consequential sense of

self-worth can be lessened by virtue of therapeutic activity i.e. to enable them to grow progressively in the direction of independence, thereby establishing their own worth. Davis (1967 : 3) sheds more light on the issue:

'To become a self-directed individual a child has to go through a long process of moving away from dependence on his parents or [teachers]. This process is his 'emancipation'. In the course of moving away, he is also working hard toward a higher goal, that of becoming a person who finds satisfaction in his own uniqueness, yet one whose belief in his own worth and integrity quickens his faith in others'.

7.4.9 THE VALUE OF SELF-REPORTS:

Therefore, although the study recognises the general significance and genuineness of the child's expression of self-esteem by virtue of the self-report (cf. par. 2.4.8.5), it does not overlook its possibly inherent defects, especially when it appears that 30% of subjects remained unaffected after therapy or registered a decline. The 30% is a reflection of the child's self-evaluation, i.e. how he perceives himself. It is thus a manifestation of his ability and willingness to relate to others matters pertaining to his self-perception and ultimate self-evaluation.

If the reflection of the subject's responses in the post-test did not seem to endorse the assumption that therapy increases self-esteem, one should not forget that children, on the whole, have fleeting psychological dispositions which may as a consequence yield inconsistent responses to the self-report questionnaires. Similarly, it appears as though low scoring was attributable either to misinterpretation or unintelligibility in regard to questions posed, or in fact to sheer unwillingness to react to a particular question (i.e. an abstention from rating himself). Oppenheim (1966 : 84) suggests in forceful terms that:

'The use of rating invites the gravest dangers and possible errors, and in untutored hands the procedure is useless.'

7.4.10 SENSITIVITY TOWARDS ATTITUDINAL QUESTIONS

The pre- and post-tests contained basically the same ingredients which comprise the sensitive notion of self-esteem. For example, the questions 'Do people easily take a liking to you?', in self-esteem questionnaire 1, and 'I sometimes think of myself as neglected and unloved by my class-mates', or 'I am unable to do my best if my parents do not encourage me', in self-esteem questionnaire 2, seemed to have yielded reluctant responses from subjects, especially where the implicit assumptions were seen to be accurate.

Therefore the post-test was essentially a device to control the same variable (viz. self-esteem), but from a different angle. Oppenheim (1966 : 74) adds a note of caution, of which one should perhaps not entirely lose sight, viz.

'Since attitudinal questions are more sensitive than factual questions to changes in working context, emphasis, and so on, it becomes almost impossible to assess reliability by "asking the same question in another form".'

7.4.11 SUPERVISION AND CONTROL

However, this study ensured the greatest measure of precaution in conducting the questionnaires, and the researcher pursued the application of the questionnaires methodically by adhering closely to external factors, such as taking care that pupils did not consult each other during questionnaire completion, and by reading the questions to the subjects to ensure the maximum amount of comprehension.

Furthermore, they were not coerced in any way to complete their self-rating questionnaire in a limited timespan, or by omitting certain questions which would have resulted in lower scores.

7.4.12 READING AS VICARIOUS OR PURPOSIVE EXPERIENCE

It appears that the reading act, particularly in the manner in which it manifests itself in bibliotherapy, seems to have affected the

reader either directly or indirectly. The reading of fiction, by its very nature, constitutes a vicarious experience, since it offers to readers other people's ideas as a basis of escapism, projection and other like qualities of response (cf. par. 3.15). This consideration appears to constitute the chief criticism levelled against bibliotherapeutic reading in the literature.

Whether reading is applied for general or for therapeutic purposes, it is likely that in both instances such reading may have the potential of bringing the reader's personality into play. Since this study was directed at heightening the group of subjects' self-worth, it appears to have involved indirectly purposive reading in a therapeutic sense. The results of the post-test scores reflect how purposive and, in fact, successful such therapeutic reading has been. Readers were collectively exposed to myths and poems (cf. Annexure C) and it is assumed that the internal states of the various readers, as manifested by means of universalisation, identification, projection, introjection, catharsis and insight (cf. par. 3.11.1 - 3.11.6) were steered into wholesome avenues through discussion and role-playing. Subjects were guided from their self-centredness to transcend into the world as presented by the literary material.

7.4.13 THERAPEUTIC READING

The empirical investigation reflects that the significance of the effects of bibliotherapy on the subjects was $p < .01$. The relevance of this is in the first place that the researcher had judiciously chosen the literature for therapy. Knowing beforehand what was to be achieved by reading the literature (viz. attaining greater self-regard) the researcher was able to direct the reading in that manner for discussion. Although literature is a unique and profitable modality in either treating or guiding (to facilitate psychological growth), it is, however, a single technique that one is able to apply to bring about a change in the subject or to ensure positive growth. It therefore becomes essential, in the event of deriving irrelevant uses from literature, that one should always endeavour to improve the efficacy of using literature therapeutically.

7.4.14 INDIVIDUAL vs GROUP BIBLIOTHERAPY

The study furthermore demonstrates the likelihood of having attained success in a group context. Since individual bibliotherapy is largely based on the prescription of literature for single patients at a time, the approach followed by the researcher in conducting bibliotherapy in a school-group sample, was quite different. The subjects were normal school children, thereby implying that they displayed no serious psychological or other emotional disturbances which warranted the prescription of certain reading material in terms of their maladjustment or the avoidance of certain literature in the event of aggravating their diagnosed problem. The subjects subjected to study were generally exposed to non-controversial reading material that suited their interest at a specific developmental level (cf. par. 5.7 and 5.7.2(c)).

The success accomplished by this experiment was largely due to the incorporation of a comprehensive range of activities (e.g. role-playing and conversation skill workshops) to support the literature-based therapy.

7.5 CONCLUDING RECOMMENDATIONS

The process of bibliotherapy may be conceived as an attempt which unites practices at school, at home, and, in particular, within the bibliotherapeutic encounter. The researcher appreciates that bibliotherapy is regarded as only one phase of a larger-scale study of relationships between the reading material and the reader. In reviewing fictional literature for the reader, it generally appears that research in the past tended to be conducted in terms of its own structure and in terms of the person producing it. However, a more important aspect is literature involves the potential influence that emanates from it, especially in terms of behavioural manifestations, which are the direct or indirect outcome of reading such literature.

Although there is evidently no firm guarantee that a particular passage or extract from a work of literature will necessarily exert an appreciable influence on a particular child, or for that matter that potential influence, if it exists, will operate in the desired direction, the need

for comprehensive studies of the effects of literature upon the reader is long overdue. Research on bibliotherapy should, as has been demonstrated in the experiment, prove fruitful for hypotheses to be tested among children, particularly in ordinary classroom situations. In view of the present paucity of research in this area and the relative freshness of the concept of bibliotherapy as applied in school environments, research as an indirect means of facilitating psychological growth and adjustment, should be accorded greater pertinence and priority.

Moses and Zaccaria very aptly condense the crux of the worth of bibliotherapy in the course of developing mature self-insight:

'Although bibliotherapy, like all other techniques, does have its limitations and may even be detrimental if inappropriately used, it also has definite potential which should be capitalized on and exploited by those working in a helping relationship [e.g. the teacher and librarian] with others' (1978 : 233).

This study, therefore, in acknowledging that bibliotherapy cannot replace other techniques (in the sense of holding out hopes of panacea), nevertheless suggests and appreciates the relevant potency adhering in bibliotherapy on the grounds of the conclusions of both the empirical investigation and the literature survey, especially in the context of contributing significantly to the state of heightened self-esteem among the sample of subjects in the post-test.

A N N E X U R E A

QUESTIONNAIRES

1. PERSONAL QUESTIONNAIRE
2. SELF-ESTEEM QUESTIONNAIRE
3. SELF-ESTEEM QUESTIONNAIRE

PERSONAL QUESTIONNAIRE

Answer all these questions

1. Full name _____
2. Place of birth _____
3. Sex _____
4. Age _____
5. Present home address _____

6. Are both your parents still alive?

Yes	No
-----	----

If not, with whom do you stay? _____

Comments: _____

7. What is your father's occupation? _____
8. Does your mother go out to work? _____
9. If she does, what is her occupation? _____
10. Specify the number of children in your family
boys _____ girls _____

11. State your position in the family.
1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10 (ring one)

12. Do you enjoy going out with your parents?

Yes	No
-----	----
13. Do you spend more time with your father or your mother? _____

14. State your reason: _____
15. Do any relatives or non-relatives stay with you?

Yes	No
-----	----

If yes, please specify _____

16. Does your mother employ a maid?

Yes	No
-----	----
17. Does your father own a vehicle?

Yes	No
-----	----

Comments: _____

18. Do you enjoy being at school?

Yes	No
-----	----

State the reason: _____

19. How do you get to school? _____
20. Are you happy at home?

Yes	No
-----	----

Comments: _____

21. Have you ever had to repeat a standard?

Yes	No
-----	----

If yes, whose fault is it? _____

22. Which career do you have in mind? _____

23. Which subjects do you like
best: _____
least: _____

24. Do you devote a lot of your time to your schoolwork in the afternoon?

Yes	No
Yes	No
Yes	No

25. Do you enjoy viewing television?

26. Do you prefer adult television programmes to children's programmes?

Comments: _____
27. Do you think reading is a waste of good time?

Yes	No
-----	----

Comments: _____
Do you belong to a library?

Yes	No
-----	----

If not, where do you get books from? _____

28. Do you belong to any youth groups, clubs or any other organization?

Yes	No
-----	----

If yes, please specify: _____

29. Do you have any hobbies?

Yes	No
-----	----

If yes, please specify: _____

30. Do you have more male or female friends?
31. Do you prefer to be alone or with friends ?

SELF-ESTEEM QUESTIONNAIRE 1

Think carefully before answering "yes" or "no" to the following questions.
 Tick your answer in the correct block e.g.

YES	NO
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

	YES	NO
1. Are you good-looking?		
2. Are you hardworking at school?		
3. Do your plans usually succeed?		
4. Are you athletic?		
5. Do your parents trust you?		
6. Are you intelligent?		
7. Are you popular among your class-mates?		
8. Do you usually feel strange at a new place?		
9. Do you expect to fail your standard this year?		
10. Do your parents often praise you?		
11. Do you often feel that you are left out by your friends?		
12. Do you feel upset if a friend does better than you?		
13. Do you think that others feel you are worthless?		
14. Do people easily take a liking to you?		
15. Do your class-mates consider you a leader?		
16. Do you usually feel that everybody is against you?		
17. Do you care what other people think about you?		
18. Do you often take the lead in group activities?		
19. Do you become angry with yourself for not doing the right thing?		
20. Can your teacher always depend on you?		
21. Are you happy with your physical appearance?		
22. Are your parents wealthy?		
23. When you are with friends do you always talk the most?		
24. Do you usually feel out of place among people whom you regard as being socially better?		
25. Do you think that you will be famous one day?		

Think carefully before answering "YES" or "NO" to the following questions.

Tick your answer in the correct block e.g.

YES ✓	NO
----------	----

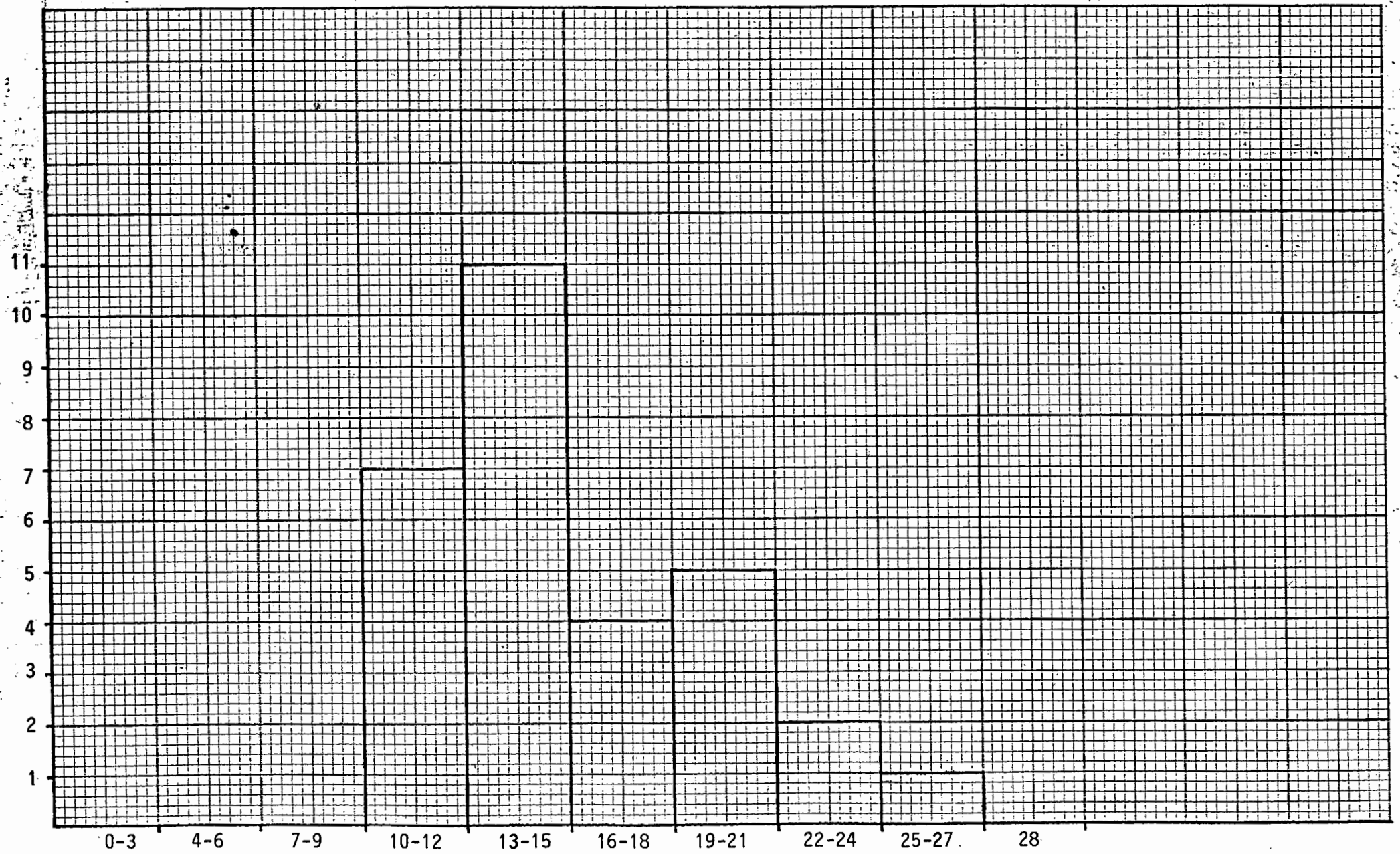
	YES	NO
1. I talk freely about myself, even to casual friends		
2. I generally prefer the company of talented or superior people.		
3. I often argue strongly for my point of view against others.		
4. I usually feel nervous and anxious in the presence of my superiors.		
5. I prefer to be stared at rather than not to be stared at.		
6. I often feel bad if I have not carried out the teacher's instructions.		
7. I like best those things which I cannot easily get.		
8. I usually go my way regardless of the opinions of my school-mates.		
9. I often reprimand my friends when I disapprove of their behaviour.		
10. I am usually depressed by my feelings of worthlessness in schoolwork, sport, music, etc.		
11. I find it fairly easy to lead a group of boys or girls and maintain discipline.		
12. I often enjoy it when people express admiration for whatever I do.		
13. I sometimes think of myself as neglected and unloved by my class-mates		
14. I tend to compete with the more intelligent pupils in my class.		
15. I am unable to do my best if my parents do not encourage me.		
16. I pay a good deal of attention to my clothes, hair, etc.		
17. I enjoy work more than play.		
18. I set difficult goals for myself which I attempt to reach.		
19. I prefer not to be surrounded by friends when I receive bad news.		
20. I resist when my class-mates attempt to force me against my will.		
21. I usually do well in the examinations.		
22. I usually influence others more than they influence me.		
23. My friends think I am too humble.		
24. I dream a good deal of my future success.		
25. I am pleased if I am called upon in class to tell a story or make a speech.		

A N N E X U R E B

HISTOGRAMS AND GRAPH

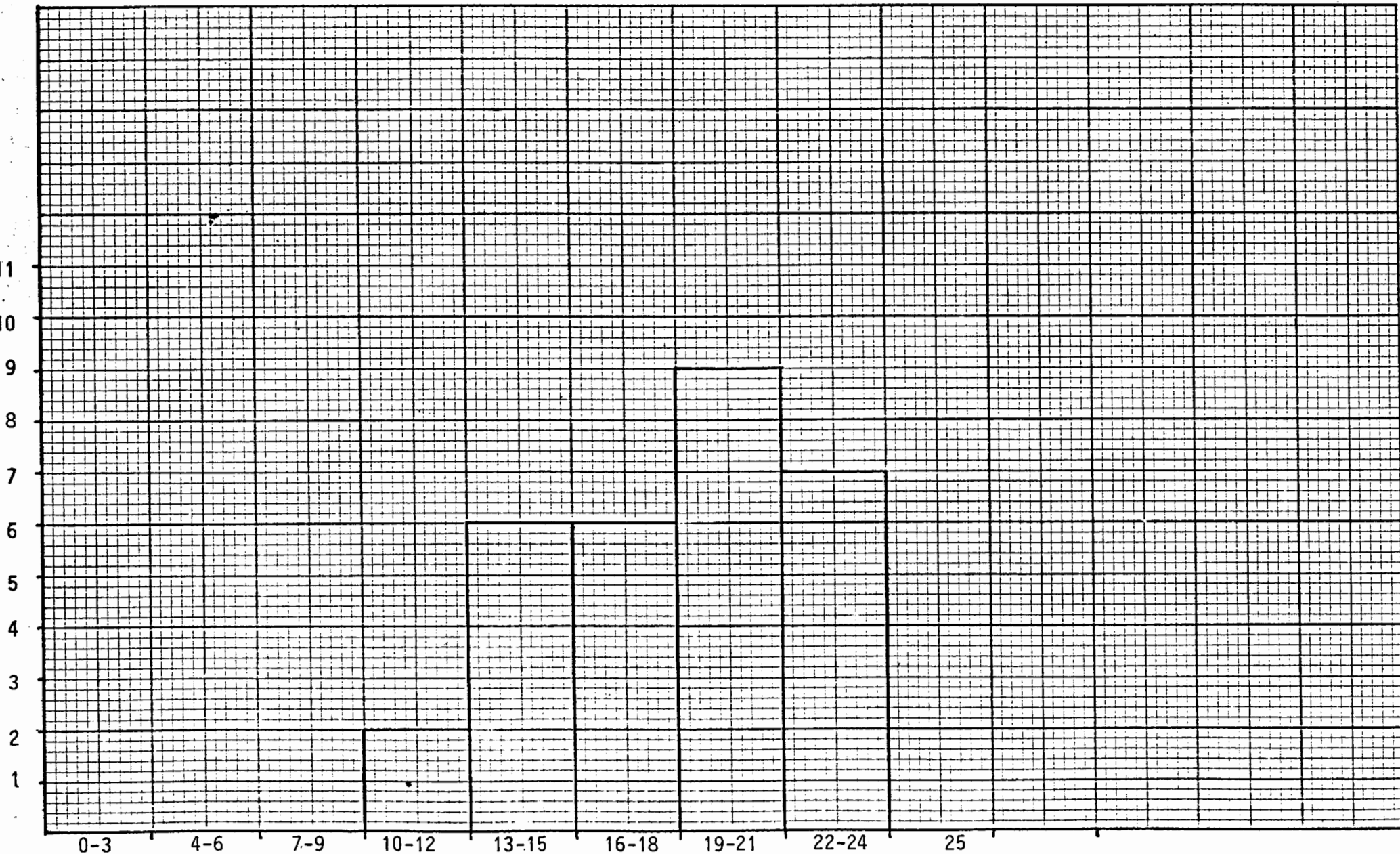
1. PRE - TEST HISTOGRAM
2. POST - TEST HISTOGRAM
3. PRE - AND POST - TEST GRAPH

PRE-TEST - GROUPED FREQUENCY HISTOGRAM

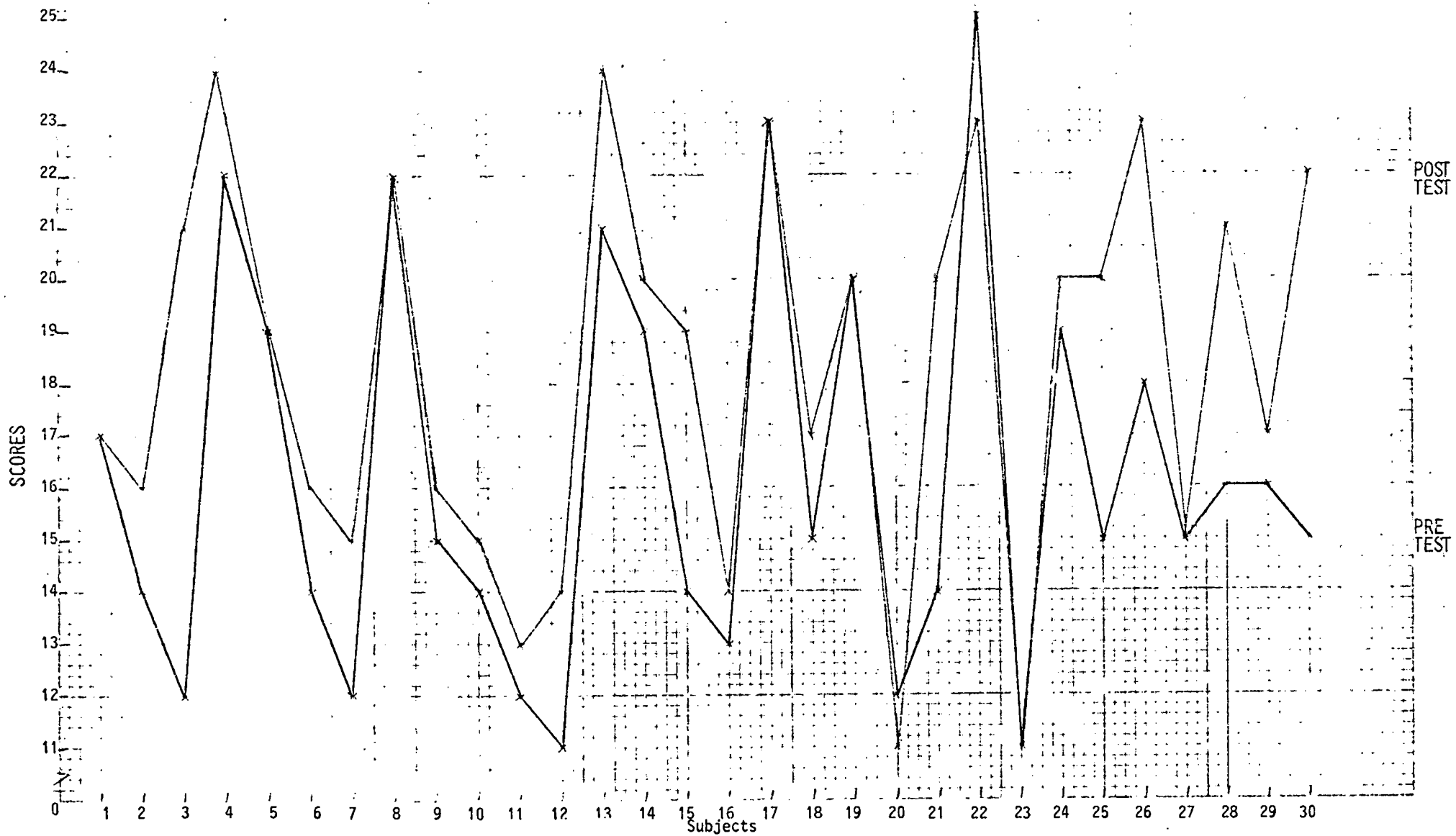


G R O U P S

POST TEST - GROUPED FREQUENCY HISTOGRAM



G R O U P S



THE GRAPH INDICATES A SIGNIFICANT DIFFERENCE BETWEEN SELF-ESTEEM SCORES BEFORE AND AFTER THERAPY, $p < .01$ (1 TAILED).



A N N E X U R E C

LITERATURE

1. MYTHS

2. POEMS

P R O M E T H E U S

There once lived a race of huge giants called Titans. These giants were fierce, turbulent, and lawless - always fighting among themselves and against Jupiter, the king of the gods.

One of the Titans, whose name was Prometheus, was wiser than the rest. He often thought about what would be likely to happen in the future.

One day, Prometheus said to his brother Titans: "What is the use of wasting so much strength? In the end, wisdom and forethought will win. If we are going to fight against the gods, let us choose a leader and stop quarrelling among ourselves."

The Titans answered him by a shower of great rocks and uprooted trees.

Prometheus, after escaping unhurt, said to his younger brother: "Come, Epimetheus, we can do nothing among these Titans. If they keep on, they will tear the earth to pieces. Let us go and help Jupiter to overcome them."

Epimetheus agreed to this, and the two brothers went over to Jupiter, who called the gods together and began a terrible battle. The Titans tore up enormous boulders and cast them at the gods, while Jupiter hurled his thunderbolts and his lightnings in all directions. Soon the sky was a sheet of flame, the sea boiled, the earth trembled, and the forests took fire and began to burn.

At last the gods - partly by the help of the wise counsel of Prometheus - conquered the Titans, took them to the ends of the earth, and imprisoned them in a deep underground cavern. Neptune, the sea-god, made strong bronze gates with heavy bolts and bars, to keep the giants down, while Jupiter sent Briareus and his brothers, three giants with fifty heads and a hundred hands each, to stand guard over them.

All but one of the Titans who had fought against the gods were imprisoned in this cavern. This one who was not shut in with the others was Atlas, whose enormous strength was greater than that of his brothers, while his disposition was less quarrelsome. He was made to stand and hold up the sky on his head and hands.

As the Titans could now make no more trouble, there was comparative peace and quiet on the earth. Nevertheless, Jupiter said that, although the men who remained on the earth were not so strong as the Titans, they were a foolish and wicked race. He declared that he would destroy them - sweep them away, and have done with them, forever.

When their king said this, none of the gods dared to say a word in defence of mankind. But Prometheus, the Titan, who was earth-born himself, and loved these men of the earth, begged Jupiter so earnestly to spare them, that Jupiter consented to do so.

At this time, men lived in dark, gloomy caves. Their friend, Prometheus, taught them to build simple houses, which were much more comfortable than the caves had been. This was a great step forward, but men needed more help yet from the Titan. The beasts in the forests, and the great birds that built their nests on the rocks, were strong; but men were weak.

The lion had sharp claws and teeth; the eagle had wings; the turtle had a hard shell; but man, although he stood upright with his face toward the stars, had no weapon with which he could defend himself.

Prometheus said that man should have Jupiter's wonderful flower of fire, which shone so brightly in the sky. So he took a hollow reed, went up to Olympus, stole the red flower of fire, and brought it down to earth in his reed.

After this, all the other creatures were afraid of man, for this red flower had made him stronger than they. Man dug iron out of the earth, and by the help of his new fire made weapons, that were sharper than the lion's teeth; he tamed wild cattle by the fear of it, yoked them together, and taught them how to draw the plough; he sharpened strong stakes, hardening them in its heat, and set them around his house as a defence from his enemies; he did many other things besides with the red flower that Prometheus had made to blossom at the end of the reed.

Jupiter, sitting on his throne, saw with alarm how strong man was becoming. One day he discovered the theft of his shining red flower, and knew that Prometheus was the thief. He was greatly displeased at this act.

"Prometheus loves man too well," said he. "He shall be punished." Then he called his two slaves, Strength and Force, and told them to take Prometheus and bind him fast to a great rock in the lonely Caucasian Mountains. At the same time he ordered Vulcan, the lame smith-god, to rivet the Titan's chains - in a cunning way that only Vulcan knew.

There Prometheus hung on the rock for hundreds of years. The sun shone on him pitilessly, by day - only the kindly night gave him shade. He heard the rushing wings of the sea-gulls, as they came to feed their young who cried from the rocks below. The sea-nymphs floated up to his rock to give him their pity. A vulture, cruel as the king of the gods, came daily and tore him with its claws and beak.

But this frightful punishment did not last forever. Prometheus himself knew that some day he should be set free, and this knowledge made him strong to endure.

At last the time came when Jupiter's throne was in danger, and Prometheus, pitying his enemy, told him a secret which helped him to make everything safe again. After this, Jupiter sent Hercules to shoot the vulture and to break the Titan's chains. So Prometheus was set free.

HOW TROUBLES CAME INTO THE WORLD

A very long time ago, in the Golden Age, every one was good and happy. It was always spring; the earth was covered with flowers, and only gentle winds blew to set the flowers dancing.

No one had any work to do. People lived on mountain strawberries, which were always to be had for the gathering, and on wild grapes, blackberries, and sweet acorns, which grew plentifully in the oak forests. Rivers flowed with milk and nectar. Even the bees did not need to lay up honey, for it fell in tiny drops from the trees. There was abundance everywhere.

In all the whole world, there was not a sword, nor any weapon by means of which men might fight with one another. No one had ever heard of any such thing. All the iron and the gold were buried deep underground.

Besides, people were never ill; they had no troubles of any kind; and never grew old.

The two brothers, Prometheus and Epimetheus, lived in those wonderful days. After stealing the fire for man, Prometheus, knowing that Jupiter would be angry, decided to go away for a time on a distant journey; but before he went, he warned Epimetheus not to receive any gifts from the gods.

One day, after Prometheus had been gone for some time, Mercury came to the cottage of Epimetheus, leading by the hand a beautiful young woman, whose name was Pandora. She had a wreath of partly opened rosebuds on her head, a number of delicate gold chains twisted lightly around her neck, and wore a filmy veil which fell nearly to the hem of her tunic. Mercury presented her to Epimetheus, saying the gods had sent this gift that he might not be lone-some.

Pandora had such a lovely face that Epimetheus could not help believing that the gods had sent her to him in good faith. So he paid heed to the warning of Prometheus, but took Pandora into his cottage, and found that the days passed much more quickly and pleasantly when she was with him.

Soon, the gods sent Epimetheus another gift. This was a heavy box, which the satyrs brought to the cottage, with directions that it was not to be opened. Epimetheus let it stand in a corner of his cottage; for by this time he had begun to think that the caution of Prometheus about receiving gifts from the gods was altogether unnecessary.

Often, Epimetheus was away all day, hunting or fishing or gathering grapes from the wild vines that grew along the river banks. On such days, Pandora had nothing to do but to wonder what was in the mysterious box. One day her curiosity was so great that she lifted the lid a very little way and peeped in. The result was

similar to what would have happened had she lifted the cover of a bee-hive. Out rushed a great swarm of little winged creatures, and before Pandora knew what had happened, she was stung. She dropped the lid and ran out of the cottage, screaming. Epimetheus, who was just coming in at the door, was well stung, too.

The little winged creatures that Pandora had let out of the box were Troubles, the first that had ever been seen in the world. They soon flew about and spread themselves everywhere, pinching and stinging whenever they got the chance.

After this, people began to have headaches, rheumatism, and other illnesses; and instead of being always kind and pleasant to one another, as they had been before the Troubles were let out of the box, they became unfriendly and quarrelsome. They began to grow old, too.

Nor was it always spring any longer. The fresh young grasses that had clothed all the hillsides, and the gay-coloured flowers that had given Epimetheus and Pandora so much pleasure, were scorched by hot summer suns, and bitten by the frosts of autumn. Oh, it was a sad thing for the world, when all those wicked little Troubles were let loose!

All the Troubles escaped from the box, but when Pandora let the lid fall so hastily, she shut in one little winged creature, a kind of good fairy whose name was Hope. This little Hope persuaded Pandora to let her out. As soon as she was free, she flew about in the world, undoing all the evil that the Troubles had done, that is, as fast as one good fairy could undo the evil work of such a swarm. No matter what evil thing had happened to poor mortals, she always found some way to comfort them. She fanned aching heads with her gossamer wings; she brought back the colour to pale cheeks; and, best of all, she whispered to those who were growing old that they should one day be young again.

So this is the way that Troubles came into the world, but we must not forget that Hope came with them.

Among the nymphs of Diana's train were seven sisters, the daughters of Atlas. On moonlight nights these sisters used to dance in the forest glades; and one night Orion, the hunter, saw them dimly through the trees. They looked like a flock of beautiful wild birds, and the sight made the hunter's heart beat loud and fast. Just as he had chased the deer so many times, he began now to chase these nymphs. Not that he meant to hurt them, but he wanted to go near enough to them to see them better. The nymphs were frightened and ran away swiftly through the trees. The faster they ran, the faster Orion followed.

At last the poor frightened sisters came out into an open place, where it was almost as light as day, and there Orion nearly overtook them. Seeing how near he was, the sisters called to Diana for help; and then, they were almost in the hunter's grasp, they suddenly disappeared, and seven white pigeons rose from the grass where they had been, and flew away - up, up, into the night sky.

When they reached the sky, the seven pigeons became seven bright stars. There the stars shone, in a little group, close together, for hundreds of years. They were called the Pleiades.

Long after the time when the frightened nymphs were changed first into pigeons, and then into stars, one of the sisters left her place among the Pleiades, that she might not see the fall of Troy. While this city was burning, she rushed madly through space, her hair flying out behind her, and men called her a comet. She never returned to her place among the Pleiades.

At the end of his life on earth, Orion too was placed among the stars. He is there, in the sky, to this day, with his lion's skin, his club, and his jewelled belt. Some people say that the Pleiades still fly from before him.

ADONIS

Adonis was young, gentle, and very beautiful. All things loved him. Flowers sprang up under his feet, and bees and butterflies fluttered around him. When he went out hunting in the forest with his hounds, Venus, the goddess of beauty, used to follow him at a distance, keeping within the shadows. She trembled lest some accident should befall him, for she knew that the forest was full of wolves, panthers, and other beasts even more dangerous.

Mars, the cruel war-god, hated all gentle and beautiful things, and he hated Adonis worst of all. One day he sent an ugly wild boar, with his great sharp tusks, to attack the boy.

A few hours later Venus found Adonis, wounded and dying, with the bright blood falling in drops from his side. She bent over him, her tears touched the ground, they were changed to wind-flowers, while every drop of blood that fell from the wound of Adonis became a red rose.

When bright Adonis went down to the dark underworld, all things on earth mourned for him. The flowers faded in the fields, the trees cast down their leaves, the dolphins wept near the shore, and the nightingales sang the saddest songs they knew. The Muses cried, "Woe, woe for Adonis! He hath perished, the lovely Adonis!" And Echo, from the dark forests where the youth had so often hunted, answered, "He hath perished, the lovely Adonis!"

At last Jupiter said that Adonis should return, and that he should spend at least one-half of his time in the upper world and the other half in the underworld. So the Hours brought him back.

Then the flowers sprang up again, the trees put forth new leaves, and all became light-hearted and happy once more.

KING MIDAS

1

KING MIDAS AND THE GOLDEN TOUCH

It happened one day that Silenus, who was the oldest of the satyrs, and was now very feeble, became lost in the vineyards of King Midas. The peasants found him wandering helplessly about, scarcely able to walk, and brought him to the king.

Long ago, when the mother of Bacchus had died, and when Mercury had brought the infant Bacchus to this mountain and put him in the care of the nymphs, Silenus had acted as nurse and teacher to the little wine-god. Now that Silenus had grown old, Bacchus in turn took care of him. So King Midas sent the peasants to carry the satyr safely to Bacchus.

In return for this kindness, Bacchus promised to grant whatever King Midas might ask. King Midas knew well enough what he most desired. In those days, kings had treasuries in their palaces, that is, safe places where they could lay away valuable things. The treasury of King Midas contained a vast collection of rich jewels, vessels of silver and gold, chests of gold coins, and other things that he considered precious.

When Midas was a very little child, he used to watch the ants running back and forth over the sand near his father's palace. It seemed to him that the ant-hill was like another palace, and that the ants were working very hard carrying in treasure; for they came running to the ant-hill from all directions, carrying little white bundles. Midas made up his mind, then, that when he grew up, he would work very hard and gather treasure together.

Now that he was a man, and the king, nothing gave him more pleasure than to add to the collection in his treasury. He was continually devising ways of exchanging or selling various things, or contriving some new tax for the people to pay, and turning all into gold or silver. In fact, he had gathered treasure together so industriously, and for so many years, that he had begun to think that the bright yellow gold in his chests was the most beautiful and the most precious thing in the world.

So when Bacchus offered him anything that he might ask for, King Midas's first thought was of his treasury, and he asked that whatever he touched might be turned into gold. His wish was granted.

King Midas was hardly able to believe in his good fortune. He thought himself the luckiest of men.

At the time his wish was granted he happened to stand under an oak tree, and the first thing he did was to raise his hand and touch one of its branches. Immediately the branch became the richest gold, with all the little acorns as perfect as ever. He laughed triumphantly at that, and then he touched a small stone,

which lay on the ground. This became a solid gold nugget. Then he picked an apple from a tree, and held a beautiful, bright, gold apple in his hand. Oh, there was no doubt about it. King Midas really had the Golden Touch! He thought it too good to be true. After this he touched the lilies that bordered the walk. They turned from pure white to bright yellow, but bent their heads lower than ever, as if they were ashamed of the change that the touch of King Midas had wrought in them.

Before turning any more things into gold, the king sat down at the table which his slaves had brought out into the court. The parched corn was fresh and crisp, and the grapes juicy and sweet. But when he tasted a grape from one of the luscious clusters, it became a hard ball of gold in his mouth. This was very pleasant. He laid the gold ball on the table and tried the parched wheat, but only to have his mouth filled with hard yellow metal. feeling as if he were choking, he took a sip of water, and at the touch of his lips even this became liquied gold.

Then all his bright treasures began to look ugly to him, and his heart grew as if that, too, were turning to gold.

That night King Midas lay down under a gorgeous golden counterpane, with his head upon a pillow of solid gold; but he could not rest, sleep would not come to him. As he lay there, he began to fear that his queen, his little children, and all his kind friends, might be changed to hard, golden statues.

This would be more deplorable than anything else that had resulted from his foolish wish. Poor Midas saw now that riches were not most desirable of all things. He was cured forever of his love of gold. The instant it was daylight he rushed to Bacchus, and implored the god to take back his fatal gift.

"Ah," said Bacchus, smiling, "so you have gold enough, at last. Very well. If you are sure that you do not wish to change anything more into that metal, go and bathe in the spring where the river Pactolus rises. Teh pure water of that spring will wash away the Golden Touch."

King Midas gladly obeyed, and became as free from the Golden Touch as when he was a boy watching the ants. But the strange magic was imparted to the waters of the spring, and to this day the river Pactolus has golden sands.

WHY KING MIDAS HAS ASSES' EARS

After his strange experience with the Golden Touch King Midas did not care for the things in his treasure chests any more, but left them to the dust and the spiders, and went out into the fields, and followed Pan.

Pan was the god of flocks, the friend of shepherds and country folk. He lived in a cave, which was in a mountain not far from the palace of Midas. He was sometimes seen, playing on his pipe, or dancing with the forest nymphs. He had horns and legs like a goat, and furry, pointed ears.

Pan was a sunny, careless, happy-go-lucky kind of god, and when he sat playing on his pipe - which he himself had made - the music came bubbling forth in such a jolly way that it set the nymphs to dancing, and the birds to singing.

When King Midas heard Pan's pipe, he used to forget that he was a king, or that he had any cares whatever. He was content to feel the warmth of the sun, and breathe the sweet air of the mountain.

One day Pan boasted to the nymphs, in a joking way, that the music of his pipe was better than that of Apollo's lyre. The nymphs laughed, and said that he and Apollo ought to play together, with Tmolus, the god of the mountain, for the judge. Pan said that he was ready to try his skill against Apollo's. Tmolus consented to be the judge. So a day was appointed for the contest.

Apollo came with his lyre. He had a laurel crown on his head, and wore a rich purple robe which swept the ground. His lyre, which was a beautiful instrument, was made of gold, and was inlaid with ivory and precious stones. This made Pan's pipe, which consisted of seven pieces of a hollow reed lightly joined together, look very simple and rustic.

Both Apollo and Pan began to play. Tmolus turned toward Apollo, to listen, and all his trees turned with him. Before they had played long, the mountain-god stopped Pan saying, "You must know that your simple pipe cannot compare with Apollo's wonderful lyre."

Pan took this in good part; he knew that the contest had been only a joke. While the nymphs and the shepherds made light of decision against their friend, Midas, who could not appreciate the lyre, but who was just suited by the music of the pipe, jumped up and cried out, "This is unjust! Pan's music is better than that of Apollo!"

At this, all but Apollo laughed. He was angry. He looked severely at the ears of Midas, which must have heard so crudely. All at once King Midas felt his ears growing long and furry. He clapped his hands over them, and rushed to a spring near by, where he could see himself. His ears had been changed into those of an ass.

So Midas was punished by the gods a second time for his foolishness. He was very much ashamed of those long, furry ears, and always after that wore a great purple turban to hide them.

One day, when the court-barber was cutting Midas's hair, he discovered the king's secret, and was so much astonished that he dropped his shears on the floor with a great clatter. He knew he might lose his head if he should tell what he had seen. So he said not a word to any mortal soul; but one day, to relieve his mind, he went to a lonely place, dug a hole in the ground, and whispered what he had seen to the earth. Then he put the soil back, and so buried the secret.

But after a secret has once been told, it is not so easy to hide it. After about a year, some reeds grew up in that place. When the south wind blew, they whispered together all day, and told one another that, under his turban, King Midas has asses' ears. And so the secret was spread.

THE ENCHANTED SHIRT

The King was sick. His cheek was red
And his eye was clear and bright;
He ate and drank with a kingly zest,
And peacefully snored at night.

But he said he was sick, and a king should know,
And doctors came by the score.
They did not cure him. He cut off their heads
And sent to the schools for more.

At last two famous doctors came,
And one was as poor as a rat,-
He had passed his life in studious toil,
And never found time to grow fat.

The other had never looked in a book;
His patients gave him no trouble,
If they recovered they paid him well,
If they died their heirs paid double.

Together they looked at the royal tongue,
As the King on his couch reclined;
In succession they thumped his august chest,
But no trace of disease could find.

The old saga said, "You're as sound as a nut."
"Hang him up," roared the King in a gale,-
In a ten knot gale of royal rage;
The other leech grew a shade pale;

But he pensively rubbed his sagacious nose,
And thus his prescription ran,-
THE KING WILL BE WELL, IF HE SLEEPS ONE NIGHT
IN THE SHIRT OF A HAPPY MAN.

Wide o'er the realm the couriers rode,
And fast their horses ran,
And many they saw, and to many they spoke,
But they found no Happy Man.

They found poor men who would fain be rich,
And rich who thought they were poor;
And men who twisted their waists in stays,
And women that short hose wore.

They saw two men by the roadside sit,
And both bemoaned their lot;
For one had buried his wife, he said,
And the other man had not.

At last they came to a village gate,
A beggar lay whistling there;
He whistled and sang and laughed and rolled
On the grass in the soft June air.

The weary couriers paused and looked
At the scamp so blithe and gay;
And one of them said, "Heaven save you, friend!
You seem to be happy to-day."

"O yes, fair sirs," the rascal laughed,
And his voice rang free and glad,
"An idle man has so much to do
That he never has time to be sad."

"This is our man," the courier said;
"Our luck has led us aright.
I will give you a hundred ducats, friend,
For the loan of your shirt to-night."

The merry blackguard lay back on the grass,
And laughed till his face was black;
"I would do it, God wot," and he roared with the fun,
"But I haven't a shirt to my back."

Each day to the King the reports came in
Of his unsuccessful spies,
And the sad panorama of human woes
Passed daily under his eyes.

And he grew ashamed of his useless life,
And his maladies hatced in gloom;
He opened his windows and let the air
Of the free heaven into the room.

And out he went in the world and teiled
In his own appointed way;
And the people blessed him, the land was glad,
And the King was well and gay.

John Hay

CONFESSIONS OF A BORN SPECTATOR

One infant grows up and becomes a jockey,
Another plays basketball and hockey,
This one the prize ring hastes to enter,
That one becomes a tackle or center.
I'm just as glad as glad can be
that i'm not them, that they're not me.

With all my heart do I admire
Athletes who sweat for fun or hire,
Who take the field in gaudy pomp
And maim each other as they romp;
My limp and bashful spirit feeds
On other people's heroic deeds.

Now A runs ninety yards to score;
B knecks the champion to the floor;
C, risking vertebrae and spine,
Lashes his steed across the line.
You'd think my ego it would please
To swap positions with one of these.

Well, ego might be pleased enough,
But zealous athletes play so rough;
They do not ever, in their dealings,
Consider one another's feelings.
I'm glad that when my struggle begins
Twixt prudence and ego, prudence wins.

When swollen eye meets gnarled fist,
When snaps the knee, and cracks the wrist,
When calm officialdom demands,
Is there a doctor in the stands?
My soul in true thanksgiving speaks
For this most modest of physiques.

Athletes, I'll drink to you or eat with you,
Or anything except compete with you;
Buy tickets worth their weight in radium
To watch you gambol in a stadium,
And reassure myself anew
That you're not me and I'm not you.

Ogden Nash

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