Children and Compliance

A Comparative Analysis of Socialization Studies

SHEILAH R. KOEPPEN – *University of Minnesota*

Popular compliance with prescribed patterns of behavior is the fundamental constraint on social disruption.[1] Even the effectiveness of control by legal sanctions depends on the public's acceptance of their use by authorities. Inquiry into the sources of popular adherence to norms conducive to compliance with authorities has been an aspect of socialization research. This essay comments on political science research on socialization, and points out how it differs from the research reported by psychologist Joseph Adelson and his associates (1970) in this journal and in a previous study (1966). The socialization studies are compared in order to determine their utility for discerning the sources of compliant behavior.[2]

SOCIALIZATION: DEFINITION AND INTERPRETATIONS

Socialization is a process whereby the members of a society learn its norms and acquire its habits, values, and patterns of behavior. The theories of socialization are theories of behavioral development from early childhood to maturity and adulthood. (See Clausen, 1968.)[3] Three broad categories respectively entitled (1) psychoanalytic, (2) social-learning, and (3) cognitive-developmental, subsume socialization theories.

The following discussion points out the inducements for compliant behavior that are proposed by each type of socialization theory. Spokesmen for the socialization theories suggest how a child acquires the norms of moral behav-

https://doi.org/10.2307/3052820 Published online by Cambridge University Press

ior that are critical to ensuring that his actions contribute to, or at least do not threaten, the persistence of the social order. They all consider a child's awareness of his obligations toward others to be rooted in norms of moral behavior. They concur that for these norms to be effective in directing a child's judgment, he must internalize them. Internalized norms can be counted on to set continual restraints on a child's behavior. External controls are imposed by some agent other than the child himself and are, by themselves, insufficient restraints on behavior, varying as does the presence of the control agent and/or the child's awareness and response to the agent. Of course, it is difficult to determine to what extent adherence to moral behavior may result from both internalized values and an awareness of external sanctions against misbehavior (Maccoby, 1968: 258-262; Bandura and Walters, 1963: 206-207).[4] While acknowledging this problem, socialization theorists maintain that moral behavior rests on the comprehension of societal norms and the volition to comply with them.[5] The theorists agree also in citing conscience as the mechanism of internal control. Accordingly, a person's failure to honor his obligations to respect the rights of others is sanctioned by his conscience in the form of guilt feelings. The theorists differ with regard to the source of conscience and the relative importance of cognitive and environmental factors in the development of conscience. But there are points of similarity as well as differences among the theorists, and I shall delineate these as I discuss each theory.

PSYCHOANALYTIC LEARNING THEORY

A psychoanalytic interpretation of social learning, proposed by Harry Stack Sullivan (1953), and one proposed and developed by Erik Erikson (1963, 1968), describes a process whereby the child's acceptance of his parents' modes of conduct, which include norms of social behavior, is determined by how effective his parents are in providing him with the nurturance, instruction, and examples of how to act that he requires if he is to satisfy the particular drive or need appropriate to his (age) level of development.

According to psychoanalytic theory, conscience, manifest as guilt feelings, induces the child to comply with social norms. Erik Erikson (1968: 54-55, 71-74, 92-106) suggests that a child can feel guilt at any age because it results from his experiences rather than from a conscious understanding of taboos. In fact, he contends that a child can feel guilty over his misbehavior before he can understand why his behavior is inappropriate or wrong. A psychoanalytic theory of development attributes guilt to experiences and feelings. And Erik Erikson's (1969) psychoanalytic model treats cultural factors as determinants of the attainment of conscience.[6] He urges analysts to study child-rearing practices—which are culturally conditioned—because these are a critical source of children's experiences and how they learn to adhere to social norms.

https://doi.org/10.2307/3052820 Published online by Cambridge University Press

SOCIAL-LEARNING THEORY

Social-learning theories have a more extensive bibliography than the other socialization theories.[7] The contemporary exposition of social learning, and the one followed here, draws on the work of Robert Sears (1957)[8] and Albert Bandura and R. H. Walters (1963). Social-learning theories and psychoanalytic theories provide parallel descriptions of how the child learns because both emphasize that learning is contingent on the affective relationship between the child and his parents. Social-learning theorists adopt and extend the analysts' stress on the effect proximal adults, notably the parents, have on a child. They propose that social learning occurs because a child acquires norms of behavior by imitating or identifying with "models," defined as persons whose activities he observes and who offer him rewards or inducements to reinforce his desire to act in a similar fashion. Robert Sears (1957: 154-157) suggests that an added or "secondary" reinforcement for learning comes from the child himself; the child is motivated to learn because he values identification with the model, and self-esteem is his reward for imitating or behaving like the model. Social-learning theorists allow that to some extent the child's ability to learn is associated with his level of maturity, and that his ability to learn affects how successfully he learns. For example, Robert Sears describes learning as an additive process whereby the child learns by imitating the behavior of persons with whom he identifies, and each successful identification is the basis for an identification at a higher and more complex level of development (Bandura, 1969: 255).[9]

The social-learning theorists share the analysts' emphasis on the role played by feelings in determining guilt. However, some social-learning theorists posit that guilt is learned in the same way as other responses, via identification with models. John Whitting (1961) suggests that guilt results from identification with the male role which is more punitive and unforgiving than is the female role. And social-learning theorists emphasize that the internalization of moral judgment is associated with the methods parents use to discipline their child. If external controls, such as physical punishment and verbal assault are used, the child is not likely to internalize moral norms. But when norms are communicated clearly to the child and punishment for transgression is withdrawal of love or the threat of withdrawal, he learns to value moral behavior (Sears, 1957; Aronfreed, 1961; Stephenson, 1966).

Social-learning theorists have reservations about whether all children learn to internalize moral norms. They recognize change and flexibility in behavior, and they point out that a child's behavior may be regulated by his fear of external sanctions and/or by his conscience, or may not be regulated at all. In the absence of models who act morally, or in the presence of stronger, more attractive models who are not acting morally, a child may not learn to adhere to moral norms. The realization of the possibility of another impediment to

https://doi.org/10.2307/3052820 Published online by Cambridge University Press

moral behavior is built into social-learning theory through its aforementioned proposal that if a child has experienced a punitive upbringing, he does not learn to value moral norms.

The social-learning theorists' attention to child-rearing practices is demonstrative of the importance they assign to culture (Whiting and Child, 1953). One cross-cultural survey based on social-learning theory reports an association between patterns of child-rearing and the incidence of theft in society.[10] And generally these theorists contend that cultural variation is maintained via the socialization process. They propose that as a child learns by imitating models, and as the models are "carriers" of cultural norms, a child learns to follow culturally acceptable patterns of behavior.

COGNITIVE-DEVELOPMENTAL THEORY

The cognitive theory of development, as introduced by Jean Piaget (1965, 1955, 1952)[11] and explicated and extended by Laurence Kohlberg (1964, 1969) posits that the ability to learn is critical; the child learns what he is able to learn, according to the level of development of the structure and organization of his thought processes (1969: 349-350). Kohlberg (1969: 352) explains that the core of the cognitive-developmental position is a doctrine of cognitive stages, each representing a level and a type of cognitive ability. A child's passage from one stage of cognitive maturity to the next is sequential and involves a transformation from simple to increasingly complex cognitive structures.

Cognitive-developmental theory shares the psychoanalytic view of development as a progression of stages, each of which rests on the previous stage, and both propose that what a child learns is associated with his level of maturity. The use of developmental stages by cognitive theorists differs from that by psychoanalysts with regard to the time encompassed by the stages. The stages posited by cognitive-development theory terminate in maturity, i.e., when cognitive structures attain their final form, whereas the stages of development examined by psychoanalytic theory cover the entire life cycle.[12]

Cognitive-learning theory does not overlook the role of the parents in the socialization process since it acknowledges the importance of communication between the child and an agent or model. Piaget also suggests that children learn a great deal from each other, in many instances more than they learn from their parents. However, according to the theory, whether the child absorbs the information communicated depends on how appropriate or how digestible the information is, given the child's level of development. The child's acquisition of social norms is associated with his ability to comprehend and conceptualize these norms himself. Hence the child cannot be expected to comply of his own volition with social norms until he learns them.

Piaget (1965) argues that the child cannot feel guilt until he has the

https://doi.org/10.2307/3052820 Published online by Cambridge University Press

intellectual ability to understand the cause and the nature of his guilt. According to Piaget, there are stages of moral development. In the first stage a child is able to judge the gravity of a deviant act according to the consequences of the act as determined by the extent of damages caused or the punishment incurred from authorities. In the second stage, which occurs after the age of seven, the child is capable of judging an act in terms of its intent and the punishment inflicted by his own conscience. These stages may overlap,[13] but there is a clear distinction in Piaget's scheme of moral development between moral conduct occasioned by the child being subject to external control, i.e., punishment by an adult, and moral conduct resulting from the child's belief in its desirability.

Laurence Kohlberg (1969: 398-412) distinguishes between moral judgment and moral behavior, recognizing that although a person comprehends social norms and is aware of his responsibilities toward others, he still may not adhere to norms. Kohlberg agrees that the internalization of moral judgment requires a change in the logical operations of thought processes. He develops the distinction between the objective and subjective bases of moral judgment into a complex, finely graduated schedule consisting of six stages. The final stage of the schedule marks the internalization of moral norms. At this point personal conduct is guided by the recognition and rational judgment as to the consequences of actions, and the desire to have a clear conscience. Kohlberg (1964: 407-409) reports that when children are found to progress at different rates in learning moral behavior, it is due to their having different abilities and being exposed to different values and beliefs. But he maintains that by adolescence all children can discern right from wrong; all children then have the capacity to exercise moral judgment.[14] In support of his contention, he has cited the findings of a cross-cultural study showing that regardless of country or cultural group, as children age, they come to judge acts in terms of motives (Zigler and Child, 1969).

Laurence Kohlberg (1964: 390-391, 398-399) recognizes that cultural variables influence child development. He claims that Piaget acknowledged cultural differences, especially differences in child-rearing practices, to be critical environmental factors that influence both the rate at which a child progresses through the stages of development, and the choice of norms by children at a similar stage of development. Cultural factors influence a basic developmental process in which cognitive maturity is a necessary but not always sufficient condition for the acquisition of moral judgment and maturity. Justin Aronfreed (1969: 303-306), in a review of cognitive theories of development, comments that cognitive capacity is not a sufficient source of compliance with social norms. Environmental conditions such as cultural norms, child-rearing practices, and particularly a minimal amount of parental nurturance also help to foster the internalization of norms of behavior.

https://doi.org/10.2307/3052820 Published online by Cambridge University Press

TABLE 1

COMPARISON OF PSYCHOANALYTIC, SOCIAL-LEARNING, AND COGNITIVE-DEVELOPMENTAL THEORIES

		LEARNING THEORIES	
	Psychoanalytic	**Social-Learning**	**Cognitive-Developmental**
SOCIALIZATION:			
THE ACQUISITION OF MORAL BEHAVIOR			
1. How the child learns social norms:	From the affective relationship with parents who communicate the norms.	Children identify and imitate parents who adhere to norms.	From parents and peers and himself according to his ability to comprehend the norms.
2. How the child internalizes norms:	Guilt feelings.	Desire for parental approval and for his own self-esteem.	Ability to reproduce them through logical operations.
3. Effectiveness of internalization depends on:	The quality of his relationship with his parents.	The presence of attractive models and the choice of child-rearing practices.	The development of the ability to conceptualize and reason.
4. Influence of culture:	Critical: a determinant of the parent-child relationship.	Critical: a determinant of child-rearing practices.	Important in addition to cognitive development.

https://doi.org/10.2307/3052820 Published online by Cambridge University Press

SUMMARY

The theories of socialization treat the internalization of moral norms as the basis of compliant behavior, but they differ in the relative importance given respectively to emotional, cognitive, and environmental factors. Each socialization theory acknowledges that cognitive maturity is a factor in learning. But only cognitive-developmental theory asserts that it is the fundamental condition for learning moral norms and exercising moral judgment. Each theory recognizes that culture, the overarching environmental factor, is a critical determinant of what children learn. But the view that cultural factors are an ancillary influence in relation to cognition is distinct to cognitive-developmental theory. Psychoanalytic and social-learning theories of development stress emotional experiences and the varieties of cultural experiences. The following table summarizes the learning theories' interpretations of the socialization process.

A description of how social norms are acquired and how they contribute to compliant behavior is derivative, in large part, from the socialization theory which is its reference. This point is brought out by distinguishing between the theoretical sources relied on by the psychologists and by the political scientists who study socialization.

SOCIALIZATION AND COMPLIANCE: POLITICAL AND PSYCHOLOGICAL STUDIES

The sources of compliant behavior will be delineated by examining data collected for the most part by survey research studies conducted by political scientists. In so doing the socialization theories applied by the political scientists will be contrasted with those applied by the psychologists with reference to their respective descriptions of how children develop ideas about the government. It would appear that their descriptions of this process are contradictory. For example, see Adelson and Beall's (1970) report in this journal on the decline of the authoritarian image of government from childhood to adolescence. They find that as children mature, they ascribe less punitiveness to government. Robert D. Hess and David Easton (1960), in one of the earlier political socialization studies, report that young children believe governmental authorities are kindly disposed to them, but that as they grow older, they grow wary of government.[15] Their findings have been replicated in other surveys on the political socialization of American children (Greenstein, 1965; Hess and Torney, 1967; Easton and Dennis, 1969; Jaros, 1967).[16]

Actually both the psychologists and political scientists provide a similar description of one aspect of socialization: the process whereby children learn about authority (Jaros, 1967: 372-376).[17] They report that as children

https://doi.org/10.2307/3052820 Published online by Cambridge University Press

acquire more information and the ability to comprehend it, children change their earlier views about government in favor of more complex and more realistic views (Hyman, 1959: 54).[18] Adelson and Beall (1970) say that children replace their belief that government is authoritarian first by a belief that government's laws are beneficial, and later by a belief that laws are useful devices for regulating society and assisting its members. The first change of view occurs when children are between eleven and thirteen years of age. The second occurs when they are between thirteen and fifteen. Hess and Easton (1962) find that the idealized image of authority held by young children is replaced progressively by a more realistic and critical view of authority. They find a change in attitudes among children from the fourth through the eighth grades, or among children from the age of ten to the age of fourteen.

The socialization studies concur also in finding that culture discriminates among children of a similar age. Adelson and his associates (1970) report finding cultural differences in adolescents' views of community and laws. Political socialization surveys explore differences in political attitudes that are attributable to cultural differences (Almond and Verba, 1963; Lambert and Klineberg, 1966; Hess, 1963).[19]

Notwithstanding the similarity of their descriptions of the process investigated, the political scientists and psychologists employ different indicators of law and authority as well as different theories of socialization. Adelson and his associates want to determine whether norms of moral behavior and compliance with laws have been internalized. He questions adolescents about what they would do in particular hypothetical situations. His inquiry is based largely (and implicitly) on a cognitive-developmental view of the learning process (Adelson and O'Neil, 1966: 296-297).[20] Political studies of socialization seek to determine the extent of children's attachment to political authorities as indicated by their evaluations of the President and the policeman. Children are asked to evaluate familial and governmental authority figures.[21] Social-learning theories and aspects of the psychoanalytic view of child development have guided political socialization research (Easton and Dennis, 1969: 14-15).[22]

Since the psychologists focus on the development of moral judgment and compliance with the laws and political scientists on perceptions about legal authorities, a comparison between their studies may be unfair. It is obvious that the questions raised, and answers suggested, by the psychologists are more pertinent to a determination of the source of popular compliance with laws. However political scientists claim, on behalf of their inquiries, to contribute to an understanding of compliance. For example, David Easton and Jack Dennis (1969: 54) report the results of a recent survey based on the indicators and proposals used in other political socialization studies, and propose: "Socialization represents an important mechanism that may help members of a system to internalize the need to comply or, as we say in legal

https://doi.org/10.2307/3052820 Published online by Cambridge University Press

systems, 'a need to obey legally constituted authority'."[23] Insofar as socialization studies in both disciplines are concerned about the source of compliant behavior, a comparison between them is in order. In the next section, through an analysis of the assumptions of the political science socialization studies, suggestions are made about how learning theory contributes to an understanding of compliant behavior.

POLITICAL SOCIALIZATION AND POPULAR COMPLIANCE

Why do political institutions persist and why do people comply with political procedures and prescriptions? These questions have encouraged political scientists to study the socialization process. There are several surveys of national and local populations that record the expectations that children have about how fairly political authorities use power, whether they believe the authorities use power for their own ends or for the public good, whether they believe it is important to obey the authorities (Greenstein, 1965; Hess and Torney, 1967; Easton and Dennis, 1969; Jaros, 1967). The findings from these surveys on American children's attitudes toward authorities are consistent, and show that by the age of seven, children are aware of the existence of political and legal authority as personified by the President and the policeman. Furthermore, children expect supportive, helpful, "benevolent" treatment from the laws and authorities, and they cannot conceive of themselves as disobeying them (Greenstein, 1960).[24]

The suggestions about the sources and implications of children's attachment to the President and policeman are illustrative of the political scientists' application of social-learning and psychoanalytic theories of child development. The most frequently cited suggestion about the source of children's affection for political authority figures is that young children, unable to differentiate between proximal and public figures, transfer both the high regard and the feelings of dependency they have for their father to other persons in authority (Hess and Easton, 1962: 262, 1960: 642-643; Easton and Hess, 1962: 161; Hess and Torney, 1967: 40, 99, 213-215; Greenstein, 1965: 46-47; Easton and Dennis, 1969: 137; Merelman, 1969: 758-759). A benevolent image of authority is said to result from this transference because, in general, American fathers are helpful rather than harsh and controlling, and because children defend themselves from feeling anxious about their helplessness and dependence by hoping for support from authorities (Hess and Easton, 1962; Hess and Torney, 1967: 47-48; Greenstein, 1965: 46).[25] One objection to this interpretation is that the experiences American children have with their fathers are not sufficiently similar to account for their common view of political leaders. There are many children whose fathers do not exercise authority benignly (Sigel, 1965: 36),[26] and the proportion of Ameri-

https://doi.org/10.2307/3052820 Published online by Cambridge University Press

can children growing up in fatherless homes is increasing (Rainwater and Yancey, 1967: 55, 75; Moynihan, 1969: 8-9). Another objection to this interpretation is that it has not been confirmed by research. A survey of Detroit school children did not disclose an association among them between feeling dependent on authority and viewing the President as a benevolent leader (Jaros, 1967: 383). A survey of children in Appalachia did not find any connection between their affection for their fathers and their esteem for the President (Jaros et al., 1968: 572). And the most recent analysis of the national political socialization surveys of samples of white metropolitan-area public school children used by Hess and Torney does not find support for the proposed association between the affection children have for their fathers and the affection they have for the President.

A possible alternative explanation as to why American children, regardless of familial environment, have such similar and strikingly positive views of public authority is that, for the most part, children's sources of information—the family, churches, schools, and the media—portray the President, and (for the most part, until recently) the policeman as responsible men exercising power with the best intentions and to the utmost of their abilities (Easton and Dennis, 1969: 365-366). Parents who convey information about politics are predisposed to portray the President positively, regardless of their own beliefs (Greenstein, 1965: 45; Orren and Peterson, 1967: 398-402). Hence, a benevolent image of an official may be one that is taught to children rather than one adopted by them in order to cope with their fears and familial experiences.

The finding on children's attachment for the President and the policeman is interpreted, usually, as a source of support for the politcal order and for its rules. Analysts of the findings of political socialization surveys suggest that as children grow up and are able to differentiate between familial and governmental authorities, they retain a good deal of their earlier positive regard for political leaders and symbols (Hess and Easton, 1960: 643-644; Greenstein, 1965: 52-54; Hess and Torney, 1967: 58-59, 236-237; Easton and Dennis, 1969: 67-68, 116, 284-288; Dawson and Prewitt, 1969: 107-109). David Easton has expressed this interpretation often, and it is exemplified by his and Jack Dennis's (1969: 281) suggestion: "The favorable sentiments first extended to the personal figures he [the child] tends to shift toward those very organizations that he previously failed to notice."

This suggestion that the young child's regard for and deference towards leaders remains a part of his perceptions about politics as he grows up is an application of the "early learning" hypothesis. According to the hypothesis, the earlier in his life an attitude or value is learned, the greater endurance it is likely to have.[27] What is learned at an early stage of development is retained in the form and/or content of learning acquired at a later stage. Attitudes learned early in childhood persist into adulthood. Adoption of the emphasis

https://doi.org/10.2307/3052820 Published online by Cambridge University Press

on early learning prompts the inference that the youngsters' first view of authorities remains the basis for their later–adolescent and then adult–view of authorities. Although there have been criticisms about placing too great a stress on the impact of early learning on political behavior, the hypothesis has remained a source of inferences about children's retention of political attitudes. Fred I. Greenstein (1965: 71) explicitly invokes the hypothesis when he says, "Early learning takes place during a formative period and early learning affects later learning."

Easton and Hess (1961: 243-244) rest a claim for the relevance of the study of children's political attitudes on the importance of early learning.[28] And when Hess and Torney (1967: 31) report that around 95% of the second graders in their national survey agree, "America is the best country in the world," they comment: "Early attachment to the nation then is basic to political socialization and to subsequent learning and experience."

The political scientists' interpretation of the endurance of early learning requires them to explain how children cope with the information and sentiments about politics and government they acquire as they grow up. These explanations can be analyzed, and the utility of the inference on the retention of views assessed, if the political attitudes attributed to children are examined in terms of their components. Children's attitudes about government and authority have two major components: cognitions and affects. A third component, called value in some studies (Almond and Verba, 1963: 15-17), or evaluations in others (Easton and Dennis, 1969: 101),[29] represents orientations to political objects and is the manifestation, i.e., the active component of attitudes (Almond and Verba, 1963: 536). The formation and structure of attitudes is examined in terms of their affective and cognitive components. Cognitions are the knowledge pertinent to the attitude: the information about the subject of the attitudes and the intellect's organization of that information. Affects express the feelings, the emotive force of the attitude. In the political socialization studies, what children learn later is interpreted as information that alters the cognitions about authorities but has limited impact on their affects or feelings toward authorities. Greenstein (1965: 35, 53) expresses this interpretation as follows: "Political information increases substantially over the brief age span of the New Haven sample, but the structure of factual knowledge is erected on a foundation of feelings, assessments and opinions."

This description of social learning is based on either one or two of the following implicit assumptions about political beliefs. The first assumption is that a change in one component of an attitude may be independent of a change in the other component. A second assumption is that affect makes a particularly great–greater than cognition–contribution to the organization of the attitude.

The critical role given the affective component of children's attitudes seems to be a derivative of the social-learning theories used in the political studies.

https://doi.org/10.2307/3052820 Published online by Cambridge University Press

Social-learning theory shares with psychoanalytic theory the view that affective needs are motivations for behavior whose direction and strength, formed at an early age, is a force for later action. In contrast, cognitive-developmental theory stresses the cognitive components of attitudes and the capacity for attitude change. The reasoning is that each stage of cognitive development represents a further unfolding and utilization of capacities which, when applied to external phenomena, enable children to develop new appraisals of the phenomena. The new attitudes are inherently richer due to their greater complexity, and they supplant the older, more primitive attitudes. Cognitive development necessitates affective development. The child's ability to feel an attachment for an object is associated with his ability to understand, to conceptualize that object. Each new level of cognitive capacity necessitates an adjustment of feelings, as Piaget (1962: 205) argues:

> Affective life, like intellectual life, is a continual adaptation, and the two are not only parallel but interdependent since feelings express the interest and the value given to actions of which intelligence provides the structure. Since affective life is adaptation, it also implies continual assimilation of present situations to earlier ones–assimilation which gives rise to affective schemas or relatively stable modes of feeling or reacting–and continual accommodation of these schemas to the present situation.[30]

I suggest that this interpretation of learning is appropriate to an understanding of the development of moral behavior and attitudes toward authority. Cognitive development is at least as critical to social learning and assessments of authority as is emotional experience. Studies of attitude change indicate an association between cognitions and affects. Their emphasis on early learning notwithstanding, political socialization studies record changes in levels and information and in feelings about political and legal authority associated with maturation. And the utility and meaning of the responses children give about political phenomena is limited when account is taken of the fact that before a certain age children do not understand the concepts in the questions they are asked.

Milton J. Rosenberg (1960) reports the results of experiments designed to determine the existence of an association between affect and cognition in the course of attitude change.[31] In these experiments manipulation of the affective component of the subjects' beliefs on a public issue important to them produced not only a change in their feelings toward the issue but also in their appraisal of information relevant to the issue. As Rosenberg manipulated the affective component of attitudes in order to observe a change in affects and cognitions, it might be argued that his results support, rather than challenge, the critical role assigned to affects by psychoanalytic and social-learning theories. But Rosenberg suggests that:

> The description of affective-cognitive congruence by alteration of either of the two components sets in motion processes of congruence restoration which will, under

https://doi.org/10.2307/3052820 Published online by Cambridge University Press

> certain conditions, lead to attitude reorganization through complementary change in the previously unaltered component. [Rosenberg et al., 1960: 12]

Rosenberg's comment on affective-cognitive congruence is supported by earlier reports of experiments finding that changes in affects followed changes in cognitions (Carlson, 1956; Woodruff and DiVesta, 1948). All told, these studies support an argument for assigning equal strength to attitudinal components.

Political socialization studies report that adults have far less idealistic and affectionate images of authority and the laws than do children, and describe the loss of idealism about authority among children as they grow up. Yet, the studies suggest that older children, and by inference adults, do not feel so differently about authority. Their evidence does not support this interpretation.

No study investigating the development of attitudes among children as they mature has been completed, although Roberta Sigel (1969) has reported on a study of the same children over a two-year interval.[32] The only source of data available about how children's political ideas change as they grow up comes from the aforementioned surveys which question children in a progression of school grades at one time. The surveys report findings that the older the children are, the more they can and do learn about the government and laws (Greenstein, 1965; Hess and Torney, 1967; Easton and Dennis, 1969),[33] and they acquire different evaluations of the President and the policeman.

Older children have a more substantive view of the responsibilities and attributes of the President and the policeman (Hess and Torney, 1967: 45-49; Easton and Dennis, 1969: 176-177, 225, 236-238; Hess and Easton, 1960; Sigel, 1968: 221). For example, children's evaluations of President Kennedy were derived to a much greater degree from assessments of his policies than from an attachment to the symbolic value of the presidential role (Sigel, 1968: 225). Increasing the knowledge children have about the difference in skills between public authority figures and their fathers results in their making clearer distinction between how they feel toward officials and how they feel about their fathers. Older children have less affection for public officials than they do for their fathers (Hess and Easton, 1960; Greenstein, 1965: 70, 81-82; Hess and Torney, 1967: 39-40; Easton and Dennis, 1969: 274-277). In general, as children acquire information about what authorities do, their feelings about them change. Edward S. Greenberg (1969) reports that black children lose their affection for the President and the political system as they gain information that the treatment they can expect is far less benevolent than the treatment they anticipated earlier in their childhood and the treatment accorded to their white peers.

Once cognitive-affective interaction is acknowledged, evidence suggests that it is not valid to use children's expressions of affects toward symbols of authority such as the nation or the President in order to describe adult attitudes toward authority. Evaluations about politics and government that are

https://doi.org/10.2307/3052820 Published online by Cambridge University Press

made before cognitive maturity is attained are likely to change especially as there is information that children do not understand what national and political phenomena are or how to relate to such phenomena. Young children do not understand what a country is nor what their nationality is. Piaget and Anne-Marie Weil (1951)[34] questioned Swiss children of seven and eight. They report that their respondents could not correctly conceive of the spatial or power relationships among a city, state, and country. Not until the age of ten or eleven could the children distinguish town from country correctly. Gustav Jahoda's study (1963b: 58; 1963a: 143-153) of Scottish children suggests that even ten or eleven year olds may not comprehend such geographical or political entities, much less be able to relate to them. The Scottish children said they were both Scottish and British but could not conceive of Scotland as a part of Great Britain.

Cognitive development is associated closely with orientations toward authority. The results of one survey of grade school children in metropolitan areas throughout the United States reports that intelligence, as measured by standard IQ tests and age, as indicated by grade are associated with political efficacy while social class and participation in social group activities show little and no association (White, 1968: 716).[35] Roberta Sigel's (1965: 50) exploration of children's responses to Lee Harvey Oswald's assassination reports differences according to age illustrative of the cognitive-developmental description of moral learning. While children were, on the whole, more likely than adults to be glad Oswald was "punished" for assassinating President Kennedy, older children expressed less desire for vengeance which, Sigel suggests, may indicate greater awareness of the existence of more appropriate procedures for punishment.

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

Political socialization studies have focused on children's attachment to authority as a source of compliant behavior (Easton and Dennis, 1969: 54; Hess and Torney, 1967: 50-59). Evidence which casts doubt on this interpretation of compliance has been presented. Children change their opinions of authority as they grow up, and in doing so, they arrive at different estimates about the value of compliance. If this contention that attitudes toward authority change during maturation is acceptable, then an alternative interpretation of the findings that American children continue to have fairly positive attitudes toward their government is necessary. I suggest that this consistency is due largely to a lack of contradiction between what children are learning and what they learned earlier. While children do not seem to alter their appraisal of politics and government drastically, it is likely that as they grow older they have different reasons for expressing approval. People who have

https://doi.org/10.2307/3052820 Published online by Cambridge University Press

been exposed to congruent messages and who have not experienced critical change in their social and political institutions may have orientations to government that appear similar to those held in childhood.

But a general orientation to authority is no more adequate as a condition than it is as an explanation of compliance. And while emotional experiences and the imitation of "models" can be associated with behavior, these factors cannot tell us if a person is aware of the consequences of his behavior. If the socialization theorists' stress on the internalization of moral norms is accepted as the basis for compliance, then the cognitive-developmental theorists' insight and evidence on the acquisition of the ability to comprehend moral norms—to exercise moral judgment—are useful guides to expectations about standards of behavior. The cognitive-developmental interpretation has much to recommend it to a legal system based on premises about individual accountability. Cognitive-developmental theory proposes that by adolescence, an individual can be expected to discern right from wrong and to value the social utility of laws that punish misconduct. The interpretations and studies of development made by the social-learning theorists and the psychoanalysts offer insights as to why someone may not acquire an awareness of the value of law "on schedule," or why someone behaves contrary to moral standards. The information supplied by these socialization theories may be applicable in some phases of the legal process, for example, where rehabilitation is being considered. But a reliance on this information may create burdens for judges and attorneys who do not know what kind of evidence of child-rearing practices and early emotional experience to consider, and what kind of perspective to take with regard to weighing the impact of these experiences on the individual's ability to take responsibility for his behavior.

NOTES

1. John A Clausen (1968) recognizes that this proposition is a major source of interest in the study of socialization. He reviews the development of research in this field.

2. An example is the question as to whether or not juveniles can be responsible for deciding to waive the privilege against self-incrimination. On this problem and court procedures, see Lefstein et al. (1969).

3. Goslin (1969) is an encyclopedia of the literature and critical evaluations of it.

4. Abraham S. Goldstein (1967) notes that the indicator of the ability to distinguish right from wrong in criminal cases is not only the defendant's conscience, but also his awareness of external sanctions. One dissenting view, offered by Dennis H. Wrong (1961) is that conformity is due to the desire people have to conform with the expectations of other people rather than with internalized norms.

5. Aronfreed (1969) posits cognitive and emotional maturity as critical to the development of conscience because maturity is the basis of the ability to internalize norms.

6. See Erikson's (1963: chs. 9, 10) interpretations of the motives and responses of

https://doi.org/10.2307/3052820 Published online by Cambridge University Press

the subjects of his biographical studies. A statement on the psychoanalyst's concern with the interaction of the individual and his culture and its history is found in Erikson (1968: ch. 5).

7. For a summary, see Maccoby (1968: 240-242). Seminal studies in this area are Miller and Dollard (1941) and Whiting and Child (1953).

8. See especially Sears (1961) and Sears et al. (1957).

9. Henry W. Maier (1965: 196) attributes this view to Sears.

10. This study of 48 societies finds that deprivation of love in childhood is correlated with the incidence of theft in society (Bacon et al., 1963). See also McCord and McCord (1959) for an interpretation stating that crime is associated with the presence of a deviant model.

11. For an explication of Piaget's theory and investigations see Flavell (1963).

12. For more comments comparing cognitive with psychological and sociological interpretations of development, see Maccoby (1968: 290-292) and Baldwin (1969).

13. According to Flavell's interpretation (1963: 291-296) of Piaget, they may overlap. There are two phases within this stage. Until the age of eleven or twelve, the child demands that all misconduct receive equal punishment, while after, he becomes more attentive to what punishment is appropriate to the particular offense and offender.

14. Kohlberg (1964) says that such attributes as class and culture are not critical determinants of the ability to discern right from wrong but do influence expectations of treatment and of implications of behavior.

15. See also another analysis of this study, Easton and Hess (1962).

16. Greenstein (1965) questioned New Haven public school children and Jaros (1967) questioned Detroit public school children. The other studies are based on surveys of national samples of public school children. But the first review of political socialization hypotheses and research, based on a survey of the literature, was made by Hyman (1959).

17. Dean Jaros (1967) found that many children picture the President as both authoritarian and benevolent. He suggests that there is no inconsistency between these two images.

18. Herbert Hyman (1959) reports a survey showing that political knowledge increases between the lower and higher elementary school grades. The surveys of grade school children report a similar finding. See Greenstein (1965), Hess and Torney (1967), Easton and Dennis (1969), Jaros (1967), and Sigel (1968). Adelson and O'Neil (1966) report a growth in comprehension of what is a political community and what are the obligations of its citizens during the adolescent years.

19. Almond and Verba (1963) point out that persons having more than secondary education have similar orientations toward political authority regardless of country.

20. This interpretation of Piaget's theory is made by Henry Maier (1965: 140-141).

21. One recent paper reports on the application of another method of inquiry in political socialization research, a method that would allow the investigator to tap some of the richness of political ideas of children (Greenstein and Tarrow, 1969). Richard Merelman (1969) has suggested a means of applying some of the insights of cognitive developmental theory in political studies with regard to the conjunction between the development of moral behavior and of political ideologies.

22. In his review of political socialization research, Richard Dawson (Dawson and Prewitt, 1969) says that psychology, social anthropology, role theory, and small group studies have influenced political science research.

23. Hess and Torney (1967) discuss compliance with the law and images of the law as indicative of political socialization.

24. Greenstein (1960) introduced this term to characterize children's affective responses about the President and the policeman. See also Hess and Easton (1960), Hess and Torney (1967), and Easton and Dennis (1969). A study of children in Appalachia

https://doi.org/10.2307/3052820 Published online by Cambridge University Press

found that despite disaffection from politics, they held a highly positive image of the President (Jaros et al., 1968).

25. Greenstein comments that children aggrandize adults.

26. The inquiry into the relationship between beliefs and personality traits of Americans is based on a premise that there are Americans who are raised by authoritarian fathers (Adorno, 1950). Fred L. Strodbeck (1958) reviews and assesses studies comparing the impact on children's behavior of authoritarian and democratic fathers. For an interpretation that authoritarian fathers have little impact on their sons' political beliefs, see Lane (1962: 272-279).

27. An example of an explicit statement of this hypothesis and an application of it, in this instance to a case of acculturation is Edward M. Bruner (1956). Benjamin S. Bloom (1964: 4-5) has collected, organized, and analyzed longitudinal studies on a variety of personal traits to determine the extent to which each is formed early in life and the extent to which each remains stable. He notes that interest in particular objects, learning particular subjects, and more superficial personality characteristics are less likely to be stable than are such traits as height, intelligence, and academic achievement. Alex Inkeles (1968: 92) suggests later social learning experiences can be critical for the acquisition of norms and skills, and he calls these experiences a "second wave" in the socialization process. Almond and Verba (1963) point out that school and job experiences and organizational membership and activity influence the acquisition of political values. Theodore Newcomb's study (1957) of Bennington students demonstrates that values acquired in college that conflict with parental values are likely to be retained after graduation. On the impact of grade school experiences see Langton (1969: Ch. 5).

28. They apply this interpretation in Easton and Hess (1962: 156) as do Easton and Dennis (1969: 162).

29. Jack Dennis (1968: 92-93) charts these components of attitude studies in socialization surveys.

30. See also Flavell (1963: 80-81) on Piaget.

31. See also Rosenberg et al. (1960: Chs. 1, 2). A summary and appraisal of Rosenberg's experiments and others on the components of attitudes is offered by Fishbein (1965).

32. Sigel (1969) points out that children's attitudes about politics are influenced by issues and events, and a change in these produces a change in their evaluations of the government.

33. The development of cognitive abilities is acknowledged as the source of this change.

34. Piaget has been criticized for having a cultural bias, and it may be pointed out that the nation is a less salient entity to Swiss children than to those in many other nations. Nonetheless, Piaget is concerned with children's abilities to comprehend concepts, and his observations here may be pertinent.

35. The findings may be qualified by the fact that a child's intellectual ability may be what is measured by the questions on efficacy. But this criticism may be made of many of the instruments used in the other socialization studies.

REFERENCES

ADELSON, J. and L. BEALL (1970) "Adolescent perspectives on law and government." Law and Society Rev. 4 (May).

ADELSON, J. and R. O'NEIL (1966) "Growth of political ideas in adolescence: the sense of community." J. of Personality and Social Psychology 4 (September): 295-306.

https://doi.org/10.2307/3052820 Published online by Cambridge University Press

ADORNO, T., E. FRANKEL-BRUNSWIK, D. J. LEVINSON, and R. N. SANFORD (1950) The Authoritarian Personality. New York: Harper.

ALMOND, G. and S. VERBA (1963) The Civic Culture. Princeton: Princeton Univ. Press.

ARONFREED, J. (1969) "The concept of internalization," pp. 263-324 in D. A. Goslin (ed.) Handbook of Socialization Theory and Research. Chicago: Rand McNally.

--- (1961) "The nature, variety, and social patterning of moral responses to transgression." J. of Abnormal and Social Psychology 63 (September): 223-240.

BACON, M. K., I. L. CHILD, and H. BARRY III (1963) "A cross-cultural study of the correlates of crime." J. of Abnormal and Social Psychology 66 (April): 291-300.

BALDWIN, A. E. (1969) "A cognitive theory of socialization," pp. 339-345 in D. A. Goslin (ed.) Handbook of Socialization Theory and Research. Chicago: Rand McNally.

BANDURA, A. (1969) "Social learning theory of identificatory processes," pp. 213-262 in D. A. Goslin (ed.) Handbook of Socialization Theory and Research. Chicago: Rand McNally.

--- and R. W. WALTERS (1963) Social Learning and Personality Development. New York: Holt, Rinehart, & Winston.

BLOOM, B. S. (1964) Stability and Change in Human Characteristics. New York: John Wiley.

BRUNER, E. M. (1956) "Cultural transmission and cultural change." Southwestern J. of Anthropology 12 (Summer): 191-199.

CARLSON, E. R. (1956) "Attitude change through modification of attitude structure." J. of Abnormal and Social Psychology 52 (March): 256-261.

CLAUSEN, J. A. (1968) "Introduction: socialization, a concept and as a field of study," pp. 1-72 in J. A. Clausen (ed.) Socialization and Society. Boston: Little, Brown.

DAWSON, R. E. (1966) "Political socialization," pp. 4-11 in J. A. Robinson (ed.) Political Science Annual, Vol. I. Indianapolis: Bobbs-Merrill.

--- and K. PREWITT (1969) Political Socialization. Boston: Little, Brown.

DENNIS, J. (1968) "Major problems of political socialization research." Midwest J. of Pol. Sci. 12 (February): 85-114.

EASTON, D. and J. DENNIS (1969) Children in the Political System. New York: McGraw Hill.

EASTON, D. and R. HESS (1962) "The child's political world." Midwest J. of Pol. Sci. 6 (August): 229-246.

--- (1961) "Youth and the Political System," pp. 226-251 in S. M. Lipset and L. Lowenthal (eds.) Culture and Social Character: The Work of David Riesman Reviewed. New York: Free Press.

ERIKSON, E. (1969) Gandhi's Truth. New York: W. W. Norton.

--- (1968) Identity, Youth, and Crisis. New York: W. W. Norton.

--- (1963) Childhood and Society. New York: W. W. Norton.

--- (1958) Young Man Luther: A Study in Psychoanalysis and History. New York: W. W. Norton.

FISHBEIN, M. (1965) "A consideration of beliefs, attitudes, and their relationship," pp. 107-120 in I. Steiner and M. Fishbein (eds.) Current Studies in Social Psychology. New York: Holt, Rinehart, & Winston.

FLAVELL, J. H. (1963) The Developmental Psychology of Jean Piaget. Princeton: D. Van Nostrand.

GREENBERG, E. S. (1969) "Children and the political community: a comparison across racial lines." Canadian J. of Pol. Sci. 2 (December): 471-492.

GREENSTEIN, F. I. (1965) Children and Politics. New Haven: Yale Univ. Press.

--- (1960) "The benevolent leader: children's images of political authority." Amer. Pol. Sci. Rev. 54 (December): 934-943.

GREENSTEIN, F. I. and S. G. TARROW (1969) "An approach to the study of comparative political socialization: the use of a semi-projective technique." Delivered

https://doi.org/10.2307/3052820 Published online by Cambridge University Press

at the American Political Science Association meeting, Washington, D.C., September.
GOLDSTEIN, A. S. (1967) The Insanity Defence. New Haven: Yale Univ. Press.
GOSLIN, D. A. (1969) Handbook of Socialization Theory and Research. Chicago: Rand McNally.
HESS, R. D. (1963) "The socialization of attitudes toward political authority: some cross-national comparisons." International Social Sci. J. 15, 4: 542-559.
--- and D. EASTON (1962) "The role of the elementary school in political socialization." School Rev. 70 (Autumn): 257-265.
--- (1960) "The child's changing image of the president." Public Opinion Q. 24 (Winter): 632-644.
HESS, R. D. and J. V. TORNEY (1967) The Development of Political Attitudes in Children. Chicago: Aldine.
HYMAN, H. (1959) Political Socialization. New York: Free Press.
INKELES, A. (1968) "Society, social structure and child socialization," pp. 73-129 in J. Clausen (ed.) Socialization and Society. Boston: Little, Brown.
JAHODA, G. (1963a) "Part II: national symbols and themes." British J. of Educational Psychology 33 (June): 143-153.
--- (1963b) "The development of children's ideas about country and nationality. Part I: the conceptual framework." British J. of Educational Psychology 33 (February): 47-60.
JAROS, D. (1967) "Children's orientation toward the president: some additional theoretical considerations and data." J. of Politics 29 (May): 368-387.
---, H. HIRSCH, and F. J. FLERON, Jr. (1968) "The malevolent leader: political socialization in an American subculture." Amer. Pol. Sci. Rev. 62 (June): 564-575.
KOHLBERG, L. (1969) "Stage and sequence: the cognitive-developmental approach to socialization," pp. 347-481 in D. A. Goslin (ed.) Handbook of Socialization Theory and Research. Chicago: Rand-McNally.
--- (1966) "A cognitive-developmental approach to socialization–morality and psychosexuality." Unpublished paper.
--- (1964) "Development of moral character and ideology," pp. 383-431 in M. L. Hoffman (ed.) Review of Child Development Research, Vol. I. New York: Russell Sage Foundation.
LAMBERT, W. E. and O. KLINEBERG (1966) Children's Views of Foreign Peoples, A Cross-National Study. New York: Appleton-Century Crofts.
LANE, R. (1962) Political Ideology. New York: Free Press.
LANGTON, K. (1969) Political Socialization. New York: Oxford Univ. Press.
LEFSTEIN, N., V. STAPLETON, and L. TEITELBAUM (1969) "In search of juvenile justice: Gault and its implementation." Law and Society Rev. 3 (May): 491-562.
MACCOBY, E. E. (1968) "The development of moral values and behavior in childhood," pp. 227-269 in J. Clausen (ed.) Socialization and Society. Boston: Little, Brown.
MAIER, H. W. (1965) Three Theories of Child Development. New York: Harper & Row.
McCORD, W. and J. McCORD (1959) Origins of Crime: A New Evaluation of the Cambridge Summerville Youth Study. New York: Columbia Univ. Press.
MERELMAN, R. (1969) "The development of political ideology: a framework for the analysis of political socialization." Amer. Pol. Sci. Rev. 63 (September): 750-767.
MILLER, N. E. and J. DOLLARD (1941) Social Learning and Imitation. New Haven: Yale Univ. Press.
MOYNIHAN, D. P. (1969) "Toward a national urban policy." Public Interest 17 (Fall): 3-20.
NEWCOMB, T. (1957) Personality and Social Change. New York: Holt, Rinehart, & Winston.
ORREN, K. and P. PETERSON (1967) "Presidential assassination: a case study in the dynamics of political socialization." J. of Politics 29 (May): 388-404.

https://doi.org/10.2307/3052820 Published online by Cambridge University Press

PIAGET, J. (1965) THe Moral Judgment of the Child. New York: Free Press.
--- (1962) Play, Dreams, and Imitation in Childhood. New York: W. W. Norton.
--- (1955) The Child's Construction of Reality. London: Routledge.
--- (1952) The Origin of Intelligence in Children. New York: International Universities Press.
--- and A. WEIL (1951) "The development in children of the idea of the homeland and of relations with other countries." International Soc. Sci. Bull. 3 (Autumn): 561-578.
RAINWATER, L. and B. YANCY (1967) The Moynihan Report and its Critics. Cambridge: MIT Press.
ROSENBERG, M. J. (1960) "A structural theory of attitude dynamics." Pub. Opinion Q. 24 (Summer): 319-333.
---, C. I. HOVLAND, W. J. McGUIRE, R. P. ABELSON, and J. W. BREHM (1960) Attitude Organization and Change. New Haven: Yale Univ. Press.
SEARS, R. (1961) "The relation of early socialization experiences to aggression in middle childhood." J. of Abnormal and Social Psychology 63 (November): 466-492.
--- (1957) "Identification as a form of behavioral development," pp. 149-161 in D. Harris (ed.) The Concept of Development. Minneapolis: Univ. of Minnesota Press.
---, E. MACCOBY, and H. LEVIN (1957) Patterns of Child Rearing. Evanston: Row, Peterson.
SIGEL, R. (1969) "Two years after: change and stability in youth's political views." Presented at the Midwest Political Science Association, Ann Arbor, Michigan.
--- (1968) "Image of a president: some insights into the political views of school children." Amer. Pol. Sci. Rev. 62 (March): 216-226.
--- (1965) "An exploration into some aspects of political socialization: school children's reaction to the death of a president," pp. 30-61 in M. Wolfenstein and G. Kliman (eds.) Children and the Death of a President. Garden City: Doubleday.
STEPHENSON, G. M. (1966) The Development of Conscience. London: Routledge & Kegan Paul.
STRODBECK, F. L. (1958) "Family interaction, values, and achievement," pp. 135-191 in D. C. McClelland et al. (eds.) Talent and Society. Princeton: D. Van Nostrand.
SULLIVAN, H. S. (1953) The Interpersonal Theory of Psychiatry. New York: W. W. Norton.
WHITE, E. S. (1968) "Intelligence and sense of political efficacy in children." J. of Politics 30 (August): 710-731.
WHITING, J. (1961) "Socialization process and personality," pp. 335-339 in F. L. K. Hsu (ed.) Psychological Anthropology, Approaches to Culture and Personality. Homewood, Ill.: Dorsey.
--- and I. L. CHILD (1953) Child Training and Personality: A Cross-Cultural Study. New Haven: Yale Univ. Press.
WOODRUFF, A. D. and F. J. DiVESTA (1948) "The relationship between values, concepts, and attitudes." Educational and Psychology Measurement 8 (Winter): 645-660.
WRONG, D. H. (1961) "The oversocialized conception of man in modern society." Amer. Soc. Rev. 26 (April): 183-193.
ZIGLER, E. and I. L. CHILD (1969) "Socialization," pp. 450-589 in G. Lindzey and E. Aronson (eds.) The Handbook of Social Psychology, Vol. III. Reading, Mass.: Addison Wesley.

https://doi.org/10.2307/3052820 Published online by Cambridge University Press