

JAY M. JACKSON

The idea norm is now such a familiar one that its meaning in ordinary discourse is generally assumed. Yet, as with many abstractions that fall readily into general use, this concept refers to highly complex phenomena within which many component processes can be recognized and a large number of meaningful characteristics distinguished. For example, norms may be described as ambiguous, highly restrictive, poorly crystallized, or very potent, although it is not clear how these characteristics are related to one another or precisely what they mean.

In the absence of some scheme for representing the structure of a norm, much of its potential as a tool for analysis of groups fails to be realized. In this paper a model is introduced which tries to incorporate the essential properties of the idea. A large number of characteristics of this model will then be examined, and each will be related to observable phenomena.

A MODEL FOR ANALYSIS AND MEASUREMENT OF NORMS

A Dimension of Behavior

A norm is always about something; it has an object. Ordinarily its object is some behavior on the part of a person that is considered to be appropriate or inappropriate. A student is expected to wear certain articles of clothing and not others in the classroom. There are norms about coming to class on time, about being absent, about disagreeing with the instructor—in fact, about most aspects of behavior in an instructional situation. One essential element of a model for describing norms is, therefore, a *behavior dimension*. Norms also exist for attitudes, or tendencies to behave. There may be a norm regarding the

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Characteristic of a norm is the specification of the amount or degree of behavior that is expected of a person. The instructor may be expected to control the activities of the group. How much control is appropriate? Either too much or too little may be disapproved. A student may be frowned upon by others for over- or under-participation. Some behaviors, such as overt sexual behavior, are so taboo in an instructional group that most persons may consider it unnecessary to think of them as varying in degree. A qualitative dimension might still be useful, however, for describing a norm in this area. For example, behavior could be located on a dimension from "highly overt" to "completely covert." Thus, it is desirable to think of any behavior as varying in degree along a dimension of quantity or quality.

A Dimension of Evaluation

Implicit in almost every conception of the norm is the idea of evaluation. Even when we refer to a person's individual norms for perceiving or judging the objects in his environment, we clearly imply that he has expectations about what he will consider to be appropriate or inappropriate. A norm that exists in a group involves shared tendencies to approve or disapprove a particular dimension of behavior. If, for example, a student relates to an instructor in too obsequious a manner, he may arouse strong feelings of disapproval among the other students. In some instructional situations the identical behavior might be considered quite acceptable, and in others might even

be highly approved. In medical school, according to Merton and his colleagues, "If he acts presumptuous about his knowledge, a student will be reproached by his classmates, whereas an admission of ignorance on his part may evoke their approval" (1957). The evaluation of an act of behavior can vary from strong approval to strong disapproval through some middle point of indifference. An *evaluation dimension* is thus an essential element of any scheme for describing norms.

The behavior dimension and the evaluation dimension are the two main components of the model presented in Figure 1. The following section describes how they are put together to derive a number of structural characteristics of norms.

Distribution of Approval-Disapproval

For any particular behavior dimension, the amount of approval or disapproval felt by members of a group toward a particular act may in principle fall anywhere along the evaluation dimension. It is possible, therefore, in any con-

crete situation, to plot a curve to describe the feelings of the members of a group. Figure 1 shows what the distribution of approval-disapproval might be in a group over a behavior dimension. Suppose that the behavior dimension represents the number of times a member speaks in an hour's session of a discussion group. The scale varies from zero participation to speaking eight times, an arbitrary maximum. Instead of referring to approval-disapproval we have adopted the neutral term, *return*, for the evaluation dimension. It is also convenient to apply a numerical scale to this *return dimension*. If a person behaves in an approved manner he potentially could receive some positive return; if he behaves in a disapproved manner he potentially could receive some negative return. If group members are indifferent to his behavior, the person could receive a neutral or indifferent return.

The curve itself is referred to as a *return potential curve* and is plotted by taking the mean of group members' feelings about each scale position on the behavior dimension. In the example in Figure 1,

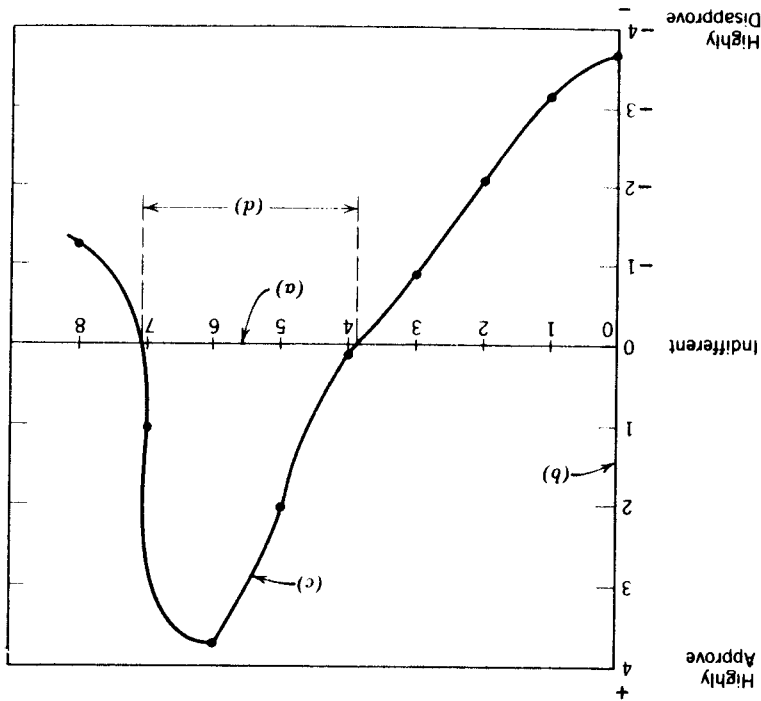


Figure 1. Schematic diagram showing the Return Potential Model for representing norms. (a) A behavior dimension; (b) an evaluation dimension; (c) a return potential curve, showing the distribution of approval-disapproval among the members of a group over the whole range of behavior; (d) the range of tolerable or approved behavior.

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In the analysis and measurement of norms, it is desirable to distinguish among their various properties and to describe each as rigorously as possible. This will facilitate the study of problems such as how norms differ from group to group; how norms of a group change, or how changes in norms affect the members of a group. A precise description of the properties of a norm will also clarify the meaning of certain expressions in common usage, such as "norm conflict" or "internalization of norms."

Range of Tolerable Behavior

If one were asked to describe the norm represented in Figure 1, a number of different answers might be given. Is the norm to be defined as the particular point on the behavior dimension which is most approved by the members, as in this case about 6.5? A different definition of norm might be the *range of tolerable behavior*, to use a term introduced by Sherif (1956). Behavior between 3.8 and 7.4 on the scale would constitute the norm by this definition. In one sense, however, the entire return potential curve defines the norm, since it describes how behavior is regarded over the entire range.

The *range of tolerable behavior*, (d) in Figure 1, is that part of a behavior dimension which members of a group approve. The range might be relatively narrow or broad, depending upon whether a norm imposes high or low restrictions upon behavior. It has been suggested (Sherif and Sherif, 1956) that the greater the consequence behavior has for a group and its central concerns, the narrower will be the range of tolerable behavior. The norms about behavior of members with different status in the group might also vary with respect to this characteristic. In important matters, Sherif states, the range of tolerable behavior for a leader is narrower than for other members. Others have pointed to the lack of adequate studies in this area but have suggested that a certain degree of deviation from particular norms may be permitted leaders (Riecken and Homans, 1954). The issue is especially pertinent as it relates to instructional groups. Is the range of tolerable behavior narrower for the instructor than for the students? If so, is this true for all behavior or only for certain types of behavior? These are questions that can be answered empirically, providing the range of tolerable behavior can be measured with adequate precision.

group members highly disapprove a member who does not participate in any of the discussion. In fact, unless a member participates at least four times his behavior is disapproved. At the other end of the scale, there is a tendency to decrease approval of a person's participation when it exceeds six times, but disapproval is not felt unless a member participates more than seven times. The curve does not specify how much return the actor will receive but how much he potentially could receive if all members of the group were to express their feelings toward his behavior.

The return potential curve describes the distribution of feelings of approval and disapproval by a particular group of persons for a given dimension of behavior. It incorporates the essential elements of the *idea norm*. Yet, clearly, the curve tells us nothing about the actual behavior that occurs in the group, only about the feelings held in abeyance, waiting to be triggered off if certain acts of behavior occur. Sometimes the term *norm* is used in describing the standard behavior in a group, i.e., for what is "normal." A more appropriate word for this idea is *mode*, since in many cases behavior "piles up" at a certain point on the behavior dimension even when no feelings of approval or disapproval exist. It would be possible, for example, to count the number of times each member of a group crossed and uncrossed his legs and establish the modal frequency of this behavior. Only under rare circumstances, however, would a norm as defined in this paper exist for this activity. It is important to distinguish between common behavior which represents parallel responses to the same environmental conditions and behavior which is normatively regulated by shared feelings of approval and disapproval.

CHARACTERISTICS OF A NORM

In the situation illustrated by Figure 1, the norm for participation is very restrictive for members of the group; it places a premium upon active participation; strong feelings exist about conformity and deviation; and over the entire behavior dimension there is a greater probability of a member being disapproved than approved. Each of these statements about the return potential curve describes a property of the norm. In some groups, the shape of the curve would be entirely different. Perhaps failure to participate would be quite acceptable a return potential curve approved. In principle, a return potential curve can take any form. In studies now under way, it

Intensity of a Norm

In certain areas of behavior, a transgression is punished severely; in others there seems to be little concern by members of a group regardless of how individuals behave. There are some behavior dimensions where ideal behavior is accorded tremendous approval and reward; for example, in instances involving acts of heroism or self-sacrifice. Norms differ greatly with respect to the intensity of approval or disapproval evoked by appropriate or inappropriate behavior.

The intensity of a norm can be described in terms of the return potential curve. An index can be developed by summing the ordinates or height of the curve at each scale position on the behavior dimension, and represents the total area encompassed by the curve. This measure describes the over-all intensity of feeling in the group, whether of approval or disapproval, regarding the particular behavior. The steeper the curve in either direction, the greater is the intensity of the norm. In areas where behavior is not strictly regulated or controlled, members of a group are relatively indifferent to a person's behavior regardless of where it falls on the continuum. The curve for such a norm is relatively flat, and the intensity is quite low. Norms about matters of personal taste, such as style of speaking, walking, or dress, usually have lower intensity than those about behavior of vital concern to a group, such as the instructor's behavior in relating to individual members.

One of the areas where there is both concern and disagreement about norms for instructional groups is that of discipline. Our analysis of norms suggests is the question, "What properties of norms are involved in this problem?" For example, does a "strict" discipline imply a narrow range of tolerable behavior, high intensity of both approval and disapproval, or just the latter? Does it perhaps refer to the proportion of behavior dimensions in the situation which are regulated by norms, defined in a later section as the *scope* of the norms? Answers to such questions would make more meaningful findings like the one recently reported by Kent and Davis (1957), that the children of more "demanding" parents develop intellectually more rapidly than do those whose parents are somewhat "unconcerned."

Approval-Disapproval Ratio

When the range of tolerable behavior is narrow for a particular norm, one would expect a noticeable effect upon the learning atmosphere of an

instructional group. This property of a norm expresses the proportion of the possible range of behavior that would be approved; and its complement signifies the proportion that would be disapproved. Thus, a narrow range of tolerable behavior implies a greater likelihood that a person's behavior will elicit disapproval rather than approval, unless he perceives accurately the structural properties of the norm. If many behavior dimensions in a group were characterized by similar narrow tolerances, life in the group would be essentially threatening rather than promising. One might predict a low level of initiative and creativity among members, high concern for the opinions of others, especially of those possessing high status, and a relatively high level of anxiety.

Thus, in terms of its implications for the feelings and behavior of members, a ratio of approval to disapproval appears to be a meaningful property of a norm. A better method of expressing this property is to compute a *potential return ratio*, the mean intensity of positive potential return divided by the mean intensity of negative potential return over the entire behavior dimension. Where feelings of approval for appropriate behavior are just as strong as feelings of disapproval for inappropriate behavior, the potential ratio would be 1. When the ratio is below unity, the atmosphere for the behavioral area in question is threatening; to the degree that the ratio exceeds unity, the atmosphere is correspondingly supportive. In recent work we have found it preferable, for technical reasons, to substitute the *potential return difference*, *PRD* is calculated by taking the difference between the sum of the positive ordinates and the sum of the negative ordinates of the return potential curve (see Jackson, 1962a, b, c).

An experiment by Schachter and Hall (1952) illustrates the importance of threatening and non-threatening atmospheres for members' behavior. They found that more students were willing to volunteer to participate in an experiment when the "group restraints" were reduced. But when the atmosphere was more threatening, a higher proportion of those who had volunteered to participate actually appeared for their appointments. Thus, depending upon whether an instructor wants to encourage spontaneity and initiative, or "good" behavior, he should strive to increase or decrease the potential return ratio of behavioral norms in the group.

Expressions of feeling concerning the role of the psychiatric aide in the mental hospital were

model. The query could be in terms of the intensity of return. Where the over-all intensity of the norm is very low, it could be said that a norm does not exist for that type of behavior. There are a number of other conditions, however, which might also imply the nonexistence of a norm. Suppose, for example, that there is little agreement among the members of a group in regard to a given area of behavior. Feelings of approval or disapproval might be widely scattered for any given position on the behavior dimension. The return potential curve in this situation would typically be quite flat, indicating a low over-all intensity. But since the points on the curve are plotted by taking the average return potential for all members of the group, the flatness of the curve might be concealing very intense feelings of approval-disapproval by members who are in disagreement.

A measure called the *crystallization* of a norm can be derived from the return potential model by summing the total variance or dispersion of the return potential for all scale positions on the behavior dimension. When the amount of dispersion is large, indicating that members' ideas of appropriate or inappropriate behavior do not coincide, the degree of crystallization is low. In recent studies Cronbach's, 1953, distance function, D^2 , has been used as a measure of crystallization. This provides an index which can then be employed in analyses of variance or other statistical analysis (see Jackson, 1962b; Glick, 1962).

Although both low intensity and low crystallization of a norm could signify that a norm does not exist, they represent different conditions in the group's culture. Gibb (1963) maintains, for example, that the experiences in a T-group can be understood in terms of the development of a number of norms critical for effective group functioning. Initially these norms do not exist, and members typically suffer confusion and strain before the requisite norms emerge from the interaction. In the early stages of such a group, the crystallization of norms would be low, in spite of high intensity of individual feelings. Even in its final hour, however, there would be norms for certain areas of behavior whose intensity would be low in spite of high crystallization. The statement that no norm exists in a group for a particular behavior dimension might, thus, have different implications for predicting interaction among members, depending upon whether it meant low crystallization of the norm with high intensity or low intensity in spite of high crystallization.

obtained by the author from psychiatric nurses in a workshop setting. When the return potential curves were drawn, it was discovered that on certain behavior dimensions on aide could not elicit any positive return but only disapproval or indifference. It is likely that norms of this type, having very low potential return ratios, are often shared by higher status members of an organization with respect to the behavior of lower status members, such as service personnel. Since it is impossible for these people to obtain approval, it is likely that they will not be motivated to meet expectations and that much of their energy will be devoted to nonwork problems. Similar consequences might be expected in instructional groups where the potential return ratios for behavioral norms are too low.

Point of Maximum Return

Another interesting characteristic of a norm is the point on the behavior dimension which would be maximally approved. This *point of maximum return* represents ideal behavior in the eyes of group members, assuming that they are the "norm-setters." It is probable that this point varies for different members of a group according to their status. On certain behavior dimensions it would be located differently for male and female members. Discovering the point of maximum return would be another way of determining whether, as Sherif (Sherif and Sherif, 1956) suggests, norms are more exacting for leaders than for ordinary members. This property of a norm also lends itself to comparisons of a group's norms over a period of time or of the norms of different groups for the same behavior dimension.

Crystallization of a Norm

In most instructional groups that have a history, a high proportion of the behavior of the members, and the instructors will be regulated by norms, either those brought into the group from previous situations or those generated by interaction of the participants of the group. The instructor, leader, or trainer, as he is variously called, is the most influential norm-setter. Yet there will be many aspects of behavior for which norms are not available, especially in a new group, since it takes time for them to develop or to become crystallized. One of the important questions in regard to any instructional group is whether a norm exists for a particular dimension of behavior. The question is quite ambiguous in this simple form and needs to be formulated in terms of the return potential

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When crystallization is high and intensity low, it might mean that the behavior dimension is not considered to be important by most group members or that they are apathetic. When crystallization is low, it may permit a number of interpretations, depending upon other conditions of the group. As Gibb (1963) has pointed out, this condition might simply point to the relative "immaturity" of the group. If the group is well established, some writers would take low crystallization of norms to be a sign of disintegration (Sherit and Sherit, 1956). A study by Georgopoulos (1956) of an industrial organization found that agreement concerning norms, or high crystallization, was positively related to organizational effectiveness. He selected behavior dimensions that were judged to be of central importance. There will be many areas of behavior in a group or organization, however, in which the degree of crystallization may not be so significant. In Merton's (1957) study of medical education, for example, a faculty member points to low crystallization without exhibiting great concern, saying

One might also devise a measure, crystallization of an individual's norm, by obtaining repeated spaced measures of an individual's approval-disapproval tendencies and calculating the average variation for all positions on the behavior dimension. This would be, in effect, a measure of reliability of his norm but would indicate to what degree he had stabilized tendencies to approve or disapprove the behavior. Comparisons between the degree to which a norm had crystallized for a group and for individual members would also yield information about the latter's membership position.

Ambiguity of a Norm

A special case of low crystallization of a norm is found when the total consensus among a group's members is low for some behavior dimension but consensus within cliques or subgroups is high. The return potential curve would be quite flat for this norm, as in Figure 2(c). For the total group

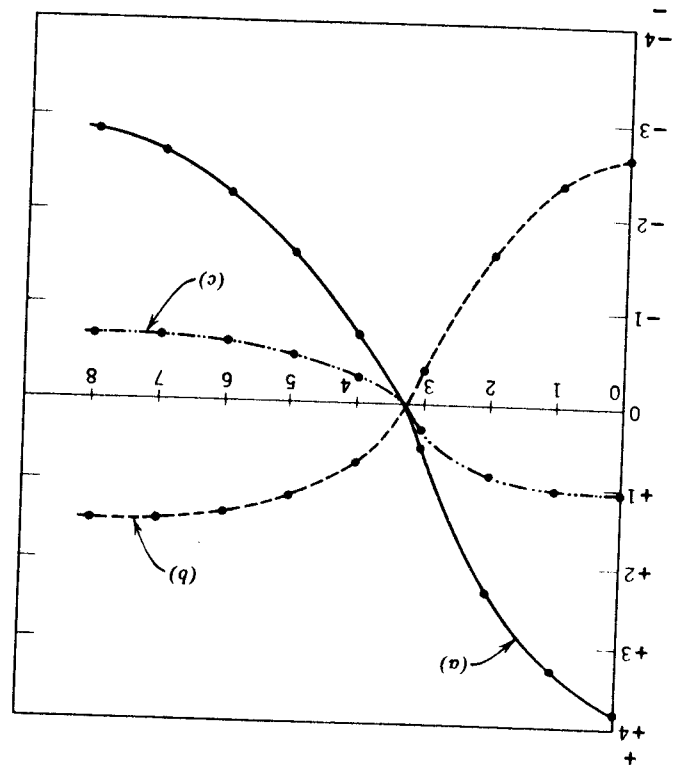


Figure 2. Schematic diagram for representing the ambiguity of a norm. In this situation there are two distinct return potential curves: (a) curve representing feelings of one subgroup; (b) curve representing feelings of a different subgroup; (c) return potential curve for total group where norm has high ambiguity.

develop similar concepts for describing the *normative structure* of a group, that is, the characteristics of its total pattern of norms for regulating members' behavior on many different dimensions. An adequate description of a group's normative structure may offer a more differentiated, systematic, and operational approach to the study of social environment. A number of properties that appear to be useful for this purpose can be derived from the return potential model.

Scope of Norms

One way in which groups differ that is significant for their internal social environment is in the *scope* of behavior regulated by norms. In families, for example, there are norms with high crystallization and intensity for most behaviors that a member engages in, including motor activities, language, manners, dress, sexual activity, and work. The behavior dimensions for which norms exist are numerous and cover a broad scope of activity. In contrast with this extensive regulation of a member's behavior, some groups have norms for only limited areas of behavior. A curriculum committee, for example, might have well-developed norms defining the responsibilities of members' behavior by and toward authority, and activities deemed essential to the achievement of the group's objectives. The scope of its norms is narrow, however, compared to that of the family. The scope of norms probably varies greatly among instructional groups. In some classes, for example, the only norms that affect members' behavior are those set by the instructor, since interaction among members is highly restricted. Such norms may regulate work activities only or may also include "disciplinary" matters. There has been an increasing tendency in American education, however, to conceive of the school or classroom group as a "second family" that accepts major responsibility for socialization of the child. The degree to which this is the appropriate function of an instructional group is a controversial question and is much discussed in the current re-evaluation of our educational system. One aspect of this important issue can be described in terms of the scope of norms of an instructional group, that is, the number of different behavior dimensions for which there is high intensity and crystallization of approval-disapproval tendencies.

In his discussion of the emotional dimensions of group life, Cartwright (1952) suggests that if members of a group have little freedom to pursue

it would be appropriate, in one sense, to say that there is no norm, since there is both low crystallization and low intensity. To stop at this point in the analysis, however, would be to ignore a crucial property of the group's normative structure, which might be responsible for much of the subsequent behavior of group members.

In the situation depicted in Figure 2, two distinct norms exist in the group for the same behavior dimension. Each has high intensity and may be highly crystallized. These norms might serve to identify the persons who have opposite feelings as belonging to different subgroups; in this sense there is not one group but two. For example, the two return potential curves might represent the feelings (a) of the faculty and (b) of the students or training participants. A newcomer to this group would be confronted with a highly ambiguous situation, as would any member who was trying to identify with the group as a whole. Thus the *ambiguity* of a norm may be a useful concept for describing conditions in some instructional groups. It can be defined in terms of the bimodality of distribution of return; that is, by the presence of two highly crystallized but different curves for the same behavior dimension.

PROPERTIES OF A GROUP'S NORMATIVE STRUCTURE

Many educators have welcomed such "atmospheric" concepts as *democratic, autocratic, group-centered, teacher-centered, permissive, and supportive*, since they were badly in need of terms to describe the instructional group's internal social environment. Yet, such concepts have serious limitations. They are often used in an evaluative rather than a descriptive sense to express the speaker's agreement or disagreement with the values that he thinks are represented in the group's atmosphere. Another difficulty is that precise meanings of these labels are not widely shared; how many instructors agree on exactly what behaviors are involved in being "democratic"? In the absence of clear and common conceptualization, it is impossible to develop adequate methods of measuring these attributes of a group's internal social environment.

In the preceding sections, each of the concepts introduced was a property of a single norm which could vary from one time to another or from one group to another. The study of the development, change, and consequences of norms in the instructional group should be facilitated by the use of concepts such as these. It is desirable, however, to

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If it is possible for a member of a group to engage in behavior that is considered to be appropriate according to the several norms involved, these norms are integrated into a system. But, if a member is always in danger of violating some norms in order to adhere to others, there is a low degree of integration among the norms. In many groups and institutions with long traditions, new norms are continually being developed without the older norms being modified or discarded. Unless considerable care be given to the integration of norms, a normative structure can evolve in which it becomes increasingly difficult for members to avoid disapproval and which places them periodically in a state of conflict.

A common conflict in educational institutions is found between norms about scholarship and those about participation in social activities. Some students make a practice of staying up all night to study once or twice a week in an attempt to resolve the conflicting demands of their social responsibilities and their course work. But this makes it difficult for them to adhere to the norm about staying awake in class. Instructors often find themselves in conflict, too, arising from poor integration of norms about productivity, on the one hand, and about behavior by and toward authority, on the other. High output of work may be demanded by an instructor, perhaps because this is the norm for the larger educational system of which the instructional group is a part. If he then helps to establish a norm that approves initiative and self-direction on the part of group members, the students may find themselves in a normative structure in which it is impossible for them to behave appropriately.

The lack of integration of norms regulating behavior in the areas of authority, achievement, and membership account for much of the conflict and anxiety found in many training groups. As Gibb (1963) points out, however, human relations training groups have as an objective the sensitizing of members to interpersonal and group processes involved in the development of norms, both crystallization and integration of norms. In his discussion of the sociology of medical education, Merton (1957) lists a number of incompatible norms in the practice of medicine and concludes that "medical education can be conceived as facing the task of enabling students to learn *how to blend* incompatible or potentially incompatible norms into a functionally consistent whole." In its broader sense, all education is confronted with essentially the same problem.

Their personal goals they are likely to suffer frustration. If the scope of norms is broad, there will remain few areas of privacy for the individual in which he is free to behave "as he likes" without being concerned about his effect upon the group or the consequences of his behavior for his membership position. A similar theme is elaborated by both Riesman (1950) and Whyte (1956) in their provocative discussions of the society's and organization's effects upon individual members. They deplore the overregulation of individual behavior, the "other-directedness," with its feared consequences of mass-produced personalities and the attenuation of the courageous and creative strains in our citizenry. Neither of these seductively convincing works, unfortunately, rests upon the systematic evidence that is required to provide definitive answers to the questions it raises.

There is evidence against the position that a broad scope of norms in a group (including an organization, community, or society, to use the term loosely) is necessarily harmful to the individual. To return to an earlier example, the family, most students seem to agree that membership in this primary group provides security, support, and orientation to the degree that it embraces many areas of an individual's life. Action research in England directed toward readjusting returned prisoners of war has demonstrated the effectiveness of transitional communities which provided a normative structure of broad scope for the members' behavior (Curie and Trist, 1947). Many of the newer techniques of adult education, including the re-education of the socially maladjusted, involve the creation of an all-encompassing social environment—a "cultural island" (Bradford, *et al.*, 1953), a "therapeutic community" (Jones, 1953)—to achieve changes in individual members. It would appear that the problem of determining the optimal scope of norms in an instructional group is far from resolved and that research might lead to some specification of the conditions under which a broad or narrow scope will produce particular consequences in members of the group.

Integration of Norms

Another important characteristic of a group's normative structure is the degree of *integration* among its norms. Although for purposes of analysis it is useful to distinguish single behavior dimensions, people behave in meaningful sequences of activities that are multidimensional.

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framework for more precise conceptualization of such phenomena.

Congruence of Norms among Groups

An individual belongs to many different but overlapping groups. Groups may be said to overlap in a number of ways. The fact that even a single person belongs to two different groups makes them overlap with respect to membership. More important for the person who is a member of both groups, it is inevitable that some dimensions of his behavior will be regulated by norms in each group. If it happens that the norms of one group are the same as those of another, persons having membership in both groups will have a consistent environment and feel little conflict between the demands of dual membership. Congruence of norms of different groups may result when norms are determined by some central authority in a larger organization; although it is likely that such official rules and regulations are reinterpreted and modified within each group in the system. Congruence may also develop by parallel experience of groups in similar situations or by conscious cooperation guided by shared values or goals.

Since norms can vary in so many different ways, it is difficult to define a unitary measure of congruence of norms among groups. One can compare the ranges of tolerable behavior and discover that some groups are more permissive or restrictive than others. In his analysis of conflicting norms, Stouffer (1949) says that an individual's behavior in one group can be understood only by an examination of how the ranges of tolerable behavior overlap in all the groups to which he belongs. Groups can also be compared with respect to the crystallization of norms for a given dimension of behavior, or a group may be compared with itself at different periods in its history (Click, 1963). For some purposes it may be instructive to examine these properties of norms across different dimensions of behavior, asking questions like: "Is the norm for attendance more crystallized than that for lateness?" or "Are members of the group more tolerant of deviation with respect to completing individual assignments than completing group assignments?" Ordinarily, however, a comparison of norms will be most productive when a single dimension of behavior is involved, simply because the scales on both behavior and return dimensions vary in their interpretation from one item of behavior to another. For example, is tolerating three absences

Derived Properties of Normative Structure

There are undoubtedly many other properties of a group's normative structure that warrant precise conceptualization, measurement, and study. A number of these, each a *group* measure of one of the individual characteristics described previously, will be listed. The major problem involved in arriving at the following indices is the selection of the behavior dimensions to be included. For example, if a group property is the average of a number of individual properties of norms, it will be necessary to establish some criterion of crystallization and/or intensity and to include in the group measure all those behavior dimensions that meet the criteria.

The *mean range of tolerable behavior* is one such property. It may be useful in describing the degree to which behavior is regulated in a group and for comparing the atmospheres of different groups. The *mean intensity of norms* in a group describes the strength of feelings in the group about members' behavior. Thus, it appears to be another index of the extent to which behavior is regulated and should be positively related to the mean range.

The *mean return ratio* was utilized in one study to describe the degree to which norms of a group are "punitive" or "supportive" (Jackson and Butman, 1956). This seems to be an important characteristic of a group's internal social environment.

The *mean crystallization of norms* in a group may be indicative of its "maturity" or degree of development. A longitudinal study of groups utilizing such an index might yield much-needed data about the growth, development, and change of groups under various conditions. (This measure has been employed successfully in a longitudinal study of the changes in behavioral norms of students in a church-related liberal arts college; see Click, 1963).

The list might be expanded by utilizing other parameters, but those presented serve to illustrate the possibilities of the approach.

Comparative Analysis of Norms

Much of the empirical research in the area of group norms has been concerned with questions of comparison rather than description of single norms or normative structures. Investigators have focused on problems of conflicting norms, role conflict, and accuracy of perceptions of norms (comparison between perceived and objective norms). The return potential model provides a

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a month more or less tolerant than tolerating three
 latenesses a month? Such comparison is ob-
 viously meaningless.

One measure of *congruence* between norms
 and, at times, desirable to make comparisons
 between the norms of individuals or between
 those of a person and a group. Theories about the
 socialization of children, for example, commonly
 describe the process of "internalizing" norms.
 Similarly, the stages by which a person becomes a
 full-fledged member of a group can be described
 in terms of the gradual assimilation of the group's
 norms. At any point in the process, a measure of
congruence would be useful to describe the
 degree of similarity between the person's norm on
 a particular behavior dimension and that of the
 group. Such a measure can be developed from the
 return potential curves, using the same procedure
 employed for defining congruence between the
 norms of different groups.

An illustration of correspondence of norms is
 seen in Figure 3, in which the return potential
 curves are presented for three psychiatric nurses
 about patients' "eating behavior." There is high
 correspondence between the norms held by Nurse
 A and Nurse B, but low correspondence between
 their norms and that of Nurse C. One could pre-
 dict that if all three nurses were coming into con-
 tact with the same patient at different times, it
 would be difficult for the latter to understand why
 his behavior sometimes evoked approval and
 sometimes disapproval. When there is low
 correspondence among the internalized norms of
 key authority figures, such as different teachers in
 a school or teachers and parents, the children
 concerned suffer the anxieties implicit in such
 inconsistent social environments. Their resolution
 of such conflict may be to conform publicly but to
 maintain their own private standards and behavior,
 as Newcomb (1950) has pointed out, from
 cut off, the possibility of modification because they can-
 not be communicated.

One of the areas of behavior where high cor-
 respondence between norms appears to be critical
 for group functioning is the amount of direction
 and control asserted by its leader. In the Georgo-
 poulos (1956) study it was found that, when
 supervisors and subordinates did not share
 norms regarding the amount of pressure it was
 appropriate for the former to apply to the latter,
 the effectiveness of the organization was judged to
 be low. In a different organization that was
 studied (Jackson, Butman, and Schlesinger, 1958),
 utilizing the present framework, the norms
 approved a high degree of control by chairmen of
 executive committees over members, and there
 was very high correspondence between the leaders

between the norms of different groups and describe
 just as it is possible to make comparisons
 Norm Correspondence or Noncorrespondence

It seems likely that the ability to make exact
 comparisons between the norms of instructional
 groups depends upon some measure such as the
 congruence of norms. Very low congruence, i.e.,
 a high index, could be interpreted as conflict
 between norms and should have implications for
 understanding the behavior of individuals caught
 between conflicting demands.

measure of organizational effectiveness.
 agree with those of employees is related to a
 or the degree to which the norms of management
 (1956) has reported that "normative consistency"
 groups to which they belong. Georgopoulos
 depend upon the congruence of the norms of all the
 members adhere to norms in one group will de-
 Sheriff, 1956), has stated that the degree to which
 classroom lack congruence. Sheriff (Sheriff and
 conditions in which the norms of the family and the
 ground but probably has implications for situa-
 study was conducted in an experimental play-
 with contradictory directions (Meyers, 1944). The
 from adults' commands that provided children
 constructive activity and oscillating behavior resulted
 authority upon the child reported that uncon-
 One investigation of the effect of conflicting
 tualized and measured this property rigorously.
 who have multiple memberships, although the
 portant determinant of the behavior of those
 between the norms of different groups is an im-
 There is some evidence that congruence be-
 on the behavior dimension.

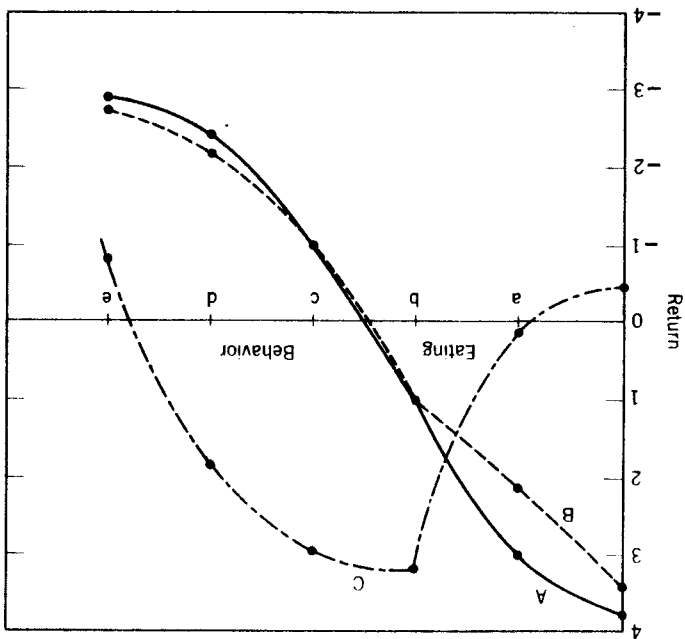


Figure 3. Return potential curves for three psychiatric nurses on a dimension, patients' "eating behavior," illustrating correspondence or noncorrespondence among norms. The *return* dimension was phrased in terms of whether a patient was judged healthy enough to live in the community without specialized assistance or sick enough to require further hospitalization. (From an unpublished study by the author.)

and the led. It should not be assumed that an authority figure can always set the norms for the group; it will depend upon the degree to which a norm has previously become crystallized in the group. For example, in his study of nursery-school children, Merel (1949) found that once a group had established norms about its activities, dominant members who had formerly been its leaders were often unable to change the norms and could only reassert their "leadership" by accepting the norms of the group.

One of the determinants of an individual's ability to behave appropriately in a social situation is the accuracy with which he perceives the existing norms. When, for one reason or another, the person is prevented from perceiving or understanding the approved and disapproved regions of behavior, it is likely that his needs will be deprived rather than gratified, regardless of how much he is motivated to conform, especially where the range of tolerable behavior is narrow. Thus, in the most important areas of behavior, those in which norms are most crystallized, most

intensive, and deviation least tolerated, the individual with inaccurate perception of norms is most likely to receive negative return in his interaction with others. Once this process has begun, it is extremely difficult to reverse, because, as Newcomb (1950) has pointed out, the individual cannot communicate successfully to others and will cut himself off from communication if he is receiving too much negative return. Cartwright (1952) observes that the power of a group either reinforces or reduces the individual's security, depending upon whether or not he accepts the group's norms. "It would appear from experience with groups," he says, "that a particularly disturbing situation is one where the member cannot anticipate with certainty which forms of his behavior will produce group support and which group hostility."

Accuracy of perceiving norms is a special case of correspondence. Instead of describing the amount of discrepancy between a norm of a group and of an individual, or between norms of two individuals, it describes the discrepancy between the norm and an individual's perception of it. Thus, for every member of a group, it is

high correlation between the norms of the group and the individual's perception of them. The higher the correlation, the more accurate is the individual's perception of the group's norms. This is the accuracy with which he perceives the existing norms. When, for one reason or another, the person is prevented from perceiving or understanding the approved and disapproved regions of behavior, it is likely that his needs will be deprived rather than gratified, regardless of how much he is motivated to conform, especially where the range of tolerable behavior is narrow. Thus, in the most important areas of behavior, those in which norms are most crystallized, most

possible comparisons between norms, becomes a described groups' measure of the norm on it of the from the procedure level norms is potential nurses is high by Nurse between could pre- into con- times, it why and is low forms of achers in children in such solution ly but to behavior out, they can-

possible to obtain a *perceived* return potential curve, namely, the curve attributed by him to the other group members, collectively, and to compare this curve with the members' actual return potential curve. The resultant measure, derived like any measure of congruence or correspondence, is an index of the person's accuracy in perceiving the group norm for the behavior dimension in question. It would be possible, similarly, to obtain a more general measure of the person's perceptual accuracy by averaging accuracy indices across many different behavior dimensions. This was done in one study of the accuracy with which informal leaders perceived norms in an office situation (Jackson and Butman, 1956). It was found that their accuracy depended upon the area of behavior and also upon the characteristics of the social environment.

THE CONSEQUENCES OF NORMS FOR INDIVIDUALS

Conformity and Deviation

It will be apparent that any discussion of a person's *conformity* or *deviation* must take into consideration a number of the issues discussed in preceding sections. When a person's behavior is judged to be inappropriate, who is doing the judging? What degree of correspondence is there between the norms of actor and judge? Does the person perceive the norm in question with relative accuracy, or does he fail to do so and believe that he is behaving appropriately in terms of his perception of the norm? Would he like to conform, but finds the range of tolerable behavior defined too narrowly for his abilities or skills? Are the norms ambiguous or poorly crystallized in the group, making it difficult for members to perceive them accurately? Or is the person behaving in a manner calculated to obtain most gratification, since the potential return for deviation has less intensity in this group than for that conformity in some other group to which he belongs? These and other questions suggested by the return potential model indicate that the problem of conformity is somewhat more complex than it is generally represented to be.

Gratification-Deprivation and Self-Esteem

An analysis of norms in instructional groups appears to be of considerable importance for understanding the attitudes, feelings, and behavior of individual members. There are several ways in which individual behavior can be influenced by group norms. One process of gaining conformity to norms involves the transmission of cues of approval or disapproval by group members to one another, rewarding appropriate and punishing inappropriate behavior. Thus, behavior is brought within the tolerated range; or, if it remains outside, the deviant risks criticism, snubs, or various forms of rejection including outright exclusion. However, instructional group managers customarily attempt to solve the problem of social control by increasing sources of gratification within the group rather than by adding to the deprivations for deviation.

Much more common and effective for socialization in any society or group is the creation of an environment which perpetuates and reinforces a particular culture. The norms of this subculture are "internalized" by individual members, just as a child grows up with the prejudices of its family. The individual thus becomes his own judge, approving or disapproving his behavior in terms of internal standards. This is essentially the idea of Freud's concept of super-ego. Without discussing here the various theoretical explanations for the individual's learning the norms of his society, in varying degrees for different individuals. We have already discussed concepts and measures that can be used to describe the correspondence or noncorrespondence between a person's own standards or norms and those of some person or group. It is possible thus to determine whose norms the individual has internalized. This knowledge is important for an understanding of his personality structure, since his self-system develops by a continuous process of interacting with others and developing attitudes toward himself which are influenced by others' attitudes and evaluations. A person's self-evaluation or self-esteem, and his attendant level of confidence or anxiety, is highly susceptible to the acceptance and evaluations of other group members, especially members with high status and power such as parents or instructors. Evidence for this generalization can be found in many studies. Bemis and Burke (1958) found, for example, that after the intensive give-and-take of a human-relations training group, members' self-concepts had changed in the direction of a more realistic self-image.

One measure of the amount of gratification a member of a group is receiving, relative to his deprivation, can be called *total potential return*. By determining where his habitual behavior falls on

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individual member, that is, if high correspondence exists between his own return potential curve and that of the group, he not only receives gratification in his interaction with others but he receives high return from himself. He approves his own behavior. But under the same circumstances, when the person accepts the norms of the group but is deficient in ability, skill, or control, so that his behavior falls outside the tolerated range, he will receive negative return, not only from the group but also from himself. He will disapprove of his own behavior. Such a state of the self-system could lead to increased striving, or it could lead to defensive changes in perception to avoid anxiety. It is important to our understanding of the individual member of an instructional group to determine just what return he is receiving from himself.

The concept *return self* may be useful as an index of self-evaluation or self-esteem. By obtaining measures of the individual's own return potential curve on relevant behavior dimensions, and then determining where his actual behavior falls on these dimensions, his *return self* can be determined. There are many questions related to the development of the self-system of persons in instructional situations that require systematic investigation. One such question is: "Do individuals have the same return potential curve for their own behavior that they have for others?" Do they judge themselves by the same standards they use in judging others? The ideas and methods developed in this selection have proved useful in the preliminary exploration of such questions.

If the norms of the group are internalized by an individual, increasing the accuracy with which norms are perceived is one approach to decreasing frustration and its unfortunate consequences for the individual.

If a member's accuracy of perceiving the group's norms is low, the discrepancy between his perceived return and his actual return from the group may be substantial and may lead to frustration and anxiety. Studies of the behavior of persons in frustrating situations indicate that, if highly motivated behavior does not lead to gratification, the result is withdrawal, aggression, or rigidity. Increasing the accuracy with which norms are perceived is one approach to decreasing frustration and its unfortunate consequences for the individual.

In his analysis of educational problems, Jensen (1957) points out the importance for the person-ability of achieving an optimum "gratification-deprivation balance."

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selection 10 The Formal Analysis of Normative Concepts

ALAN R. ANDERSON AND OMAR K. MOORE

Although mathematical logic has been applied in several empirical disciplines, logicians have only recently begun to develop formal systems that are likely to be of special interest to sociologists. From the point of view of modern logic, indefinitely many systems can be constructed; but whether such tools are to be of use to sociologists depends in part on the amount of interchange across disciplinary boundaries. This article is written in the hope of enlisting the support and interest of investigators treating problems to which such notions as *rule, norm, obligation*, etc. are central. Concepts of this kind are of obvious importance for sociological theory; almost all sociologists

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