Effects of a collaborative feedback mode a positive cognitive-emotional set and sex of the assessor on responsiveness to unfavorable personality test feedback

Stephen J. Naifeh

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THE EFFECTS OF A COLLABORATIVE FEEDBACK MODE,
A POSITIVE COGNITIVE-EMOTIONAL SET AND SEX OF THE ASSESSOR
ON RESPONSIVENESS TO UNFAVORABLE PERSONALITY TEST FEEDBACK

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for the degree of

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The Effects of a Collaborative Feedback Mode, A Positive Cognitive-Emotional Set and Sex of the Assessor on Responsiveness to Unfavorable Personality Test Feedback (132 pp.)

Director: H. A. Walters

The purpose of the present study was to investigate the role of three situational factors hypothesized to enhance an individual's responsiveness to unfavorable personality feedback. Secondarily, three personality traits were examined to assess their relationship to subjects' responsiveness to the feedback.

Sixty-four undergraduate females were administered the Rotter Internal-External Locus of Control Scale, the Marlowe-Crowne Social Desirability Scale and the Janis-Field Feelings of Inadequacy Scale. Later in the week, subjects met individually with either a male or a female assessor to receive bogus generalized personality interpretations which they believed had been derived from their test battery results. Subjects were then randomly assigned to one of eight experimental conditions. These included whether or not they received information designed to provide them with a positive cognitive-emotional set, whether their feedback was communicated in a unilateral or a collaborative manner, and whether a female or a male assessor presented the personality feedback. The primary outcome measures included self-report ratings of feedback accuracy, importance and usefulness. A measure of feedback recall and two measures assessing interest in receiving additional personality test feedback were also utilized.

Analysis of Variance results indicated that the collaborative feedback mode yielded significantly higher ratings of importance and a greater interest in receiving additional personality test feedback. A near significant effect in this direction was also obtained on the measure of feedback usefulness. Ratings of feedback accuracy and subjects' recall of their feedback did not differ significantly as a function of the feedback modality. Neither the positive cognitive-emotional set nor sex of the assessor produced any of the predicted effects. Contrary to predictions, female subjects revealed greater impact from their feedback when it was communicated to them by a male rather than a female. This effect was obtained on the measures of feedback recall and desire for further feedback but not on the self-report measures of accuracy, importance and usefulness. Of the three personality traits investigated in this study, an external locus of control and low social self-esteem were found to relate to feedback accuracy ratings, although their contribution to the variance was small.

The pattern of results for the situational and personality factors was discussed in the context of the empirical findings in the vocational and personality feedback literature. The implications of the results were considered in terms of future research and relevance to clinical practice.
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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First, I want to express my thanks to the members of my committee, Dr. Al Walters who provided guidance and encouragement as my Chairman, and Dr. Jan Wollersheim, Dr. Phil Bornstein and Jon Bertsche who contributed to refinements in the study and were genuinely invested in its successful completion. Special thanks are also reserved for Steve Bacon and Paul Retzlaff who were seemingly always accessible when problems arose with data analysis. I would like to extend particular appreciation for the help of my four "assessors", Tom Clucas, Gyda Guenther, John Sommers and Valerie Green. Their commitment to their work, vicarious pleasure in my progress and marvelous sense of humor helped to make the process of the research much more gratifying. Finally, my friend, Peggi Gilliam, provided a special source of emotional support throughout the course of the research.
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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Psychological testing has long occupied a prominent, albeit ambivalently regarded position among the role functions of the clinical psychologist. Indeed, prior to the post World War II period, psychodiagnostic testing was often the only purpose for which the clinical psychologist was employed in a clinical setting (Rabin & Hayes, 1978). As psychologists began to assume increasing responsibility for direct therapeutic treatment, their investment in the testing role began to decline. In a recent article addressing the issue of psychological assessment in the future, Korchin and Schulberg (1981) provide several reasons for the diminished commitment. Yet, they also emphasize that the field is undergoing considerable change such that psychological tests are likely to remain an essential tool in the decision making process of the great majority of clinicians.

During the past decade social critics have offered a barrage of complaints pertaining to the abuses of psychological testing in contributing to a variety of social problems. Intelligence testing and standardized personality instruments have encountered notable antagonism from those concerned with biases against racial and lower socio-economic groups. Criticism from within the testing field itself has centered on such issues as test misuse, misinterpretation and the prevalent ignorance of the tester regarding a test's psychometric properties (Cleary, Humphreys, Kendrick & Wesman, 1975; Heney, 1981; Mischel, 1968). In spite of all the criticism, psychological testing continues to play a significant
role in a far reaching range of critical situations for the individual.

The decisions regarding selection of tests, their interpretation and the recommendations derived from the test results have traditionally been arrived at independently by the clinician with little input from the client. Typically, once the psychological report is written it is filed in the clinician's drawer or sent off to the referral source without being made accessible to the testee (Brodsky, 1972). If feedback about the assessment results is provided at all, it is likely to be brief and superficial (Fischer, 1972). Thus, in spite of the fact that major life decisions may be substantially based on the person's test results, there is usually little opportunity for the client to participate in the process.

Constance Fischer (1972, 1979) is one among an increasing number of mental health professionals who has taken issue with the secrecy reflected in traditional psychological assessment. She provides a compelling scrutiny of the historical and philosophical grounding of this professional policy (Fischer, 1979). She argues that the present socio-cultural context emphasizing greater accountability to consumers for their psychological services may force reluctant clinicians to change their procedures. Court decisions permitting citizens access to school records, credit bureau files, medical charts and psychological reports, along with newly enacted "truth-in-testing" state laws underscore this trend toward informed client participation in human services (Fischer, 1972). Furthermore, these practices reflect the psychologist's own ethical responsibility to "promote the welfare and best interests of the client . . . they respect the client's right to
know the results, the interpretations made and their bases for their conclusions and recommendations." (American Psychological Association, 1981).

From a clinical perspective, the psychological assessment situation may provide its own therapeutic benefits to the client when it proceeds in an open, highly involving manner. The experience of hearing about one's test data offers an opportunity for self-understanding as well as an experience in feeling understood. Thus, such a source of self-information may enhance the client's desire for additional feedback and mobilize his desire for change (Dana, 1981; Snyder, Ingram & Newburg, 1981).

The intent of the present study is to explore some potentially significant dimensions of the assessment feedback situation. The experiment will examine three variables hypothesized to enhance a person's responsiveness to unfavorable personality test feedback: (1) the feedback approach used to communicate the test interpretations, (2) the cognitive-emotional set a subject has as the feedback is provided, and (3) whether the test feedback is communicated by a person of the same or the opposite sex.

The following literature review will first focus on what has been termed "collaborative assessment" (Fischer, 1972, 1978) or humanistic-existential assessment (Dana & Leech, 1974) and the theoretical premises on which this approach is based. The small body of experimental studies tangentially related to this will also be reviewed. These empirical studies concern the communication of genuine test results in the vocational counseling context. The literature review will then turn to the
larger body of experimental research related to some of the personality and situational variables considered to be important in the test feedback situation. This body of analogue research has utilized a false feedback methodology to which the present investigation will also adhere.

Up to this time there has been little research on the importance of cognitive-emotional sets or the gender of the person providing the feedback with respect to their impact on subjects' responsiveness to their test interpretations. What little research has been published will also be discussed.
CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

Collaborative Assessment

The practice of sharing assessment findings with the client has been advocated by clinicians of varying theoretical viewpoints. Carl Jung (1961) was among the early psychoanalysts who provided direct test feedback to clients. He relates the story of disclosing the results of the association test to a young schizophrenic woman whose pathology then vanished and required no further psychiatric treatment. Jourard (1972) also advised the practice of "a quiet revolution", part of which involves disclosure of assessment findings to clients. During the last decade an increasing number of mental health professionals have written about their own approaches of sharing diagnostic test results with their clients (Dana, 1981; Fischer, 1978, 1981; Mosak & Gushurst, 1972).

The fundamental premise to which all of these proponents adhere is that psychological assessment must proceed in an open, disclosive manner from the inception of the evaluation process. The client is viewed as an informed participant apprised about what can be expected both in terms of the assessment procedures and the outcome. Like the psychotherapy process itself, the assessment techniques are utilized in the service of understanding the client. Importantly, the tests are as fallible and subject to error as the interpretations of the psychotherapist. The perceptions a clinician gleans from the test data offer a rich, unique source of understanding, but all the more so when they
are shared with the client who is then encouraged to comment on them. As Leary (1970) expressed it:

"the patient, after all, is the world's leading authority on the issue at hand and his own life and the transactions in which he is involved."

The emphasis is on the "phenomenological equality" between the two individuals. The assessor must give equal weight to the client's own perspective and permit the client to validate the test interpretations as they are shared. In this manner, through a "collaboration process" of sharing the "whens and the when nots", the client comes to experience the assessment procedures as personally meaningful. The primary data are the actual life events of the client. Test results, then, are recorded not as abstract interpretations or as traits but as lived events which require no secrecy from the client (Fischer, 1972).

This phenomenological perspective on psychological assessment is a major departure from the viewpoint of many humanistic clinicians who disparage the value of psychodiagnostic testing (Brown, 1972; May, 1958). In this camp it is often argued that psychodiagnostic assessment is reductionistic, artificial, impersonal and dehumanizing to the client's human dignity (Sugarman, 1978). However, the counterargument stresses that when the assessment procedures offer a genuine interpersonal relationship between client and clinician and provide the client with the opportunity to participate in the process, then psychological assessment becomes humanistic (Craddick, 1975; Dana & Graham, 1976; Fischer, 1978).
Genuine Test Feedback

There is surprisingly little research investigating the parameters of the clinician's communication of genuine test results to the client. Nearly all the published research in the personality test feedback literature has utilized a false feedback approach because of the methodological clarity such a paradigm offers (Dana, 1981). Unfortunately, there are some significant limitations to the generalizability of the findings when they are applied to the actual clinical assessment situation in which genuine test results are disclosed. These will be addressed later in the literature review when this body of research is examined. As the state of our knowledge in this area now stands, we have no strong empirical foundation from which to make decisions pertaining to the communication of psychological assessment information. Yet, the vocational counseling literature provides some empirical investigations reflecting this concern and thus requires the attention of this literature review.

Career counseling has long followed the procedure of an open discussion of the test results with the client. The test materials usually pertain to the client's general intellectual ability, special aptitudes and his interests or values thought to relate to potential vocational satisfaction (Brammer & Shostrom, 1968). During the last three decades, a small body of research has accumulated which has examined various factors considered to be important in the effective communication of test results. Particularly germane to the intent of the present study is the group of experiments investigating the effectiveness of various test feedback modes on such variables as enhancement of client self-knowledge,
ability to recall test information and the client's satisfaction with the counseling process (Dressel & Matteson, 1950; Folds & Gazda, 1966; Rubinstein, 1978).

The great majority of these studies were undertaken in the 1950's and 1960's and are replete with methodological problems which severely hamper the conclusions which might be derived from them. These flaws include overt omissions such as (1) the failure to provide a control group (Dressel & Matteson, 1950), (2) the use of outcome measures lacking in demonstrated validity or too few in number (Kamm & Wren, 1950; Lane, 1952; Tuma & Gustad, 1957), and (3) inadequate sample sizes or numbers of subjects per experimental cell (Dressel & Matteson, 1950; Gustad & Tuma, 1957). Moreover, there have been wide discrepancies in the equivalency of treatments with respect to the content of test information disclosed and the amount of counselor-client contact. Consequently, comparison among the various studies is significantly impeded. Still, since the subject matter pertinently reflects the focus of the present research, some brief attention to this feedback literature is warranted.

The basic methodological approach to these investigations has involved the assignment of students seeking vocational guidance to one of two or three experimental groups based on a particular method of test interpretation. In most instances, control groups have been employed against which pre-post changes on the dependent measures can be compared. These variables have usually related to measures of self-knowledge and recall of the test results. A few studies have also included posttest measures of client satisfaction with the feedback.
session. Typically, test batteries have been employed consisting of intelligence and/or aptitude tests as well as vocational inventories.

Among the more frequently examined variables has been the comparative efficacy of individual versus group test interpretation approaches (Folds & Gazda, 1964; Miller & Cochran, 1979; Rubinstein, 1978; Wright, 1963). The general pattern of results suggests that the self-learning dependent measures indicate no greater evidence of change as a result of individual feedback sessions. Subjects appear to learn and recall their feedback as well in either an individual or a group context. However, the studies also reveal subjects to report greater satisfaction with the feedback session when they receive the test information in the traditional one-to-one approach (Folds & Gazda, 1964; Miller & Cochran, 1979; Wright, 1963). Folds and Gazda also hypothesized changes in subjects' self-concept for those in the experimental conditions. This was not the case, although it would seem highly unlikely that one interpretive session of such tests as the Edwards Personal Preference Schedule and the School and College Ability Test would result in any significant impact on self-concept.

Another variable related to feedback modality is whether the counselor serves a necessary function in the effective communication of test results. Tipton (1969) reported a study in which programmed test interpretation was compared with an individualized interpretation of ability test results. Tipton required the counselor to follow a structured procedure in order to insure the comparability of the test information across the two treatments. He found the two modes to be equally impactful on Semantic Differential concepts after the subjects
received their feedback. However, a month after the initial test interpretations, changes in meanings diminished significantly for the programmed mode and increased for subjects who had received the individual feedback treatment. Tipton concluded that the interpersonal factor was responsible for the group differences. Tipton's sole reliance upon eight Semantic Differential concepts to assess treatment outcome limits the confidence with which his conclusions can be endorsed.

Miller and Cochran (1979) recommended the cost-effective use of a slide-sound approach to the reporting of Strong Interest Inventory results to clients. Their freshman subjects retained the vocational information as well via this mode as did subjects who received an individual counseling session or a combination of the two approaches wherein the information was repeated. Unlike several of the studies previously cited, these investigators took special care to control the similarity of informational content across treatments. In keeping with subjects' demonstrated preference for personal counselor contact (Folds & Gazda, 1964; Wright, 1963), the test interpretation experience was rated as more satisfactory when it was presented by the counselor.

Hoffman, Spokane & Magoon (1981) designed a methodologically rigorous study of the counselor's role in the test feedback situation. These investigators found the majority of studies in this area to be methodologically deficient on two important dimensions: (1) failure to provide equivalency of treatments with respect to informational content and level of counselor contact, and (2) inadequate selection of outcome or criterion measures such as recall of test results and treatment
satisfaction. Their study addressed both of these concerns. Subjects were randomly assigned to either a No contact-Strong Campbell Interest Inventory (SCII) profile group, an audiotaped counselor and SCII profile group or a 30 minute counseling interview with the SCII profile. The format and information offered by the audiotape was not altered by the counselor and no individualized interpretations were permitted. Multimodal dependent measures were employed which were designed to assess the client's capacity to use the feedback toward meeting career objectives.

Their results indicated that subjects responded best to the counselor contact treatment. Individuals in this group requested occupational information significantly more so than subjects in the other two groups. On a self-report measure tapping subjects' capacity to achieve their specific career goals, counselor contact was also shown to be significantly related. Unfortunately, the manner in which this measure was assessed was potentially reactive and jeopardized the conclusions derived on this variable.

The studies discussed above indicate that people appear to learn and retain vocational test information as effectively through cost-effective feedback modalities as they do with individual sessions with a counselor. Gains in vocational self-knowledge are as great in group feedback situations, and audio-visual or programmed instructional formats. Still, these individuals' own subjective experience of their feedback sessions is more positive and satisfaction is greatest when a more personalized interpretive mode is provided to them.

A final consideration from the vocational counseling literature
relates to the counselor's approach to the presentation of feedback to the client. This variable is particularly relevant to the focus of the present thesis investigation. The form it has taken in vocational research involves whether clients benefit most from a directive, more authoritarian mode of feedback or one that is client-centered. The nondirective approach also focuses on the broader sphere of the person's life concerns, rather than attending primarily to the test results. Research findings concerning this variable have yielded mixed results, at least in part because of the methodological criticisms addressed earlier in this section of the literature review.

In an exploratory study by Dressel and Matteson (1950), their concern with the importance of the counselor's style of presenting test results was examined with 40 college freshman clients who were seeking vocational guidance at a university counseling center. In some preliminary investigation, these authors observed that their university counselors could be distinguished on the dimension of the degree of participation which their test interpretation techniques elicited from clients. Their study investigated three hypotheses: (1) that clients participating most actively would gain most in self-understanding, (2) that high participation clients would become more certain of their vocational decisions than low participation clients, and (3) that high participation clients would report greater satisfaction with the test feedback. The results of the study indicated support for the first two hypotheses but there was no trend toward a relationship between high participation and client satisfaction. Their findings must be viewed cautiously owing to the methodological flaws in the
study, which include the absence of a control group, small numbers of clients and counselors and inadequate validation procedures for the dependent measures. Essentially, the value of the study inhered in its heuristic impact on the field by stimulating subsequent studies of counselor styles of test interpretation.

Lane (1964) also investigated the differential effects of a directive versus a nondirective counselor feedback style. High school juniors and seniors were administered a battery of educational and vocational tests after which subjects were interviewed in one of the two modes. Lane found no differences in his subjects' recall of the test information as a function of the counselor's feedback approach. Unfortunately, this was the sole outcome criterion reported in the study. Moreover, little information was provided about the manner in which the interview techniques were followed.

Rogers (1954) examined the impact of two interview techniques on subjects' self-understanding and provided excellent description of the "test-centered" and "self-evaluative" feedback approaches utilized in the study. Rogers predicted that the interview method that fostered more client participation and emphasized relevant life concerns (the self-evaluative mode) would be more effective in enhancing self-understanding than a method of test interpretation that concentrated on the test data. Rogers found both methods to be equally effective. However, when the sessions themselves were rated on the dimension of active versus passive participation, it was noted that the clients who were most active profited most from the self-evaluative feedback mode. As in the case of the Dressel and Matteson study noted earlier (1950), the
Self-Understanding Test was poorly validated. Importantly, the study suggests the potential value of investigating individual differences among clients that influence their responsiveness to particular modes of test feedback.

Two final studies concerned with the counselor's style of test interpretation were conducted by Holmes (1964) and Rubinstein, (1978), both of whom designed studies which utilized multiple outcome measures. Holmes varied the degree of counselor and student interaction and participation by careful structuring of three different methods of test feedback presentation. She also included a written feedback experimental condition. Holmes found that recall of the test battery results did not differ as a result of the method of test interpretation although subjects in the written feedback condition rated their test results as less valuable to them. Attitudes toward the counselor and the test interpretation also did not significantly differ as a function of whether student participation was facilitated or discouraged. Further analyses of the data revealed that there was considerable variability in subjects' attitudes toward particular counselors. Thus, these results emphasize that it may be less important how test results are presented than who presents them.

Rubinstein's (1978) study of counselor test feedback approaches is undoubtedly the most methodologically sound of this group of studies. Unlike the previously mentioned research, Rubinstein focused attention on only one commonly used vocational test, the Strong-Campbell Interest Inventory, and investigated three structured procedures for the feedback approach. Following up previous concerns with the dimension of active
client involvement in the test feedback process, he manipulated three feedback approaches: (1) an "integrative interpretation" in which test results would be integrated with issues raised by the client during the feedback session, (2) a traditional individual interpretation in which clients received their SCII profiles and questioned the counselor about the test results, and (3) a traditional group interpretation operating similarly to the individual traditional interpretation approach. Two control groups were also included to investigate the effects of simply receiving test results in the form of the SCII profile or receiving neither test results nor counselor contact.

Rubinstein found that the "integrative interpretation" mode yielded the most positive ratings of counseling climate. This preference did not extend to ratings of client satisfaction nor did this feedback mode result in any greater vocational choice certainty or recall of test results. As with past findings related to the efficacy of group versus individual feedback sessions (Folds & Gazda, 1964; Miller & Cochran, 1979; Wright, 1963), none of the dependent measures yielded significant differences. One other noteworthy finding of the study was the presence of some interactions between particular counselors and interpretation modalities.

In general, the results of these studies focusing on the efficacy of various modes of communicating vocational test results are equivocal. Of primary importance is the necessity for multiple outcome measures of effectiveness. Illustratively, it appears that such variables as client learning and recall of vocational test information do not seem to be significantly affected by the feedback mode of the counselor. This in-
cludes not only the various feedback styles related to eliciting client involvement but also cost-effective modalities such as group or the programmed techniques. However, when the criteria concern client preference and satisfaction with feedback modalities, it appears that individual feedback sessions with counselors who foster high client participation find the greatest favor. Furthermore, there is some suggestion of the importance of certain counselor traits and client characteristics which interact with the test interpretation approaches. Future research investigations in this area of vocational test feedback approaches should begin to consider optimal interactions of these factors.

Of some concern here is the extent to which we can meaningfully extrapolate these results from the vocational test literature to our understanding of factors influencing the communication of personality test feedback. Certainly, it would appear that differences exist in the meaning with which an individual imbibes the two types of self-information. It also makes sense to suggest that the manner of conveying personality test information to the recipient may be even more influential than it has been shown to be in the vocational context. Yet, in part because of the professional tradition among clinicians that has discouraged the disclosure of assessment results, there has not yet been any pressing reason for the empirical investigation of different procedures for presenting diagnostic test feedback.

More clinicians are now advocating open assessment procedures and describing their own approaches. As such, it becomes worthwhile to
scientifically study alternative modes of communicating psychological assessment results. Several of these clinicians (Baker, 1964; Dana, 1981; Erdberg, 1981; Fischer, 1979, 1981; Mosak & Gushurst, 1972; Richman, 1967) raise some empirical questions which could be adequately tested to provide important understanding for the assessment context. The vocational test interpretation literature provides an important source of hypothesis generation and methodological direction. At this time, actual research findings are of less utility. However, some direction may be offered by the false feedback literature in personality assessment which has contributed some relevant knowledge about several factors operating in the test feedback situation. The literature review will now turn to this body of research.

False Feedback Studies

The majority of research investigations using a false feedback paradigm falls under the rubric of what has been labeled "the acceptance phenomenon" (Layne, 1979). This refers to the consistently demonstrated tendency for recipients of bogus personality test feedback to accept it as accurately self-descriptive when they believe the interpretations are derived from an assessment device. A good share of these experiments have used "Barnum personality statements" (Meehl, 1956). These are vague, generalized statements that have a high base rate of occurrence in the population. Forer (1949) suggested that such "universally valid" statements are essentially descriptions of a cultural group. Among the bogus Barnum statements he included in his research were "You have a great
need for other people to like and admire you" and "Some of your aspirations tend to be pretty unrealistic."

The typical methodology used in these studies follows four basic steps: (1) subjects complete a personality test; (2) they wait until the test is ostensibly scored; (3) subjects then receive the written bogus feedback supposedly based on their test results, and (4) they respond to a questionnaire about their acceptance of the test interpretation (Snyder, Shenkel & Lowery, 1977).

The prototypical study by Forer (1949) is undoubtedly the most frequently cited in the literature. In a classroom format, he re-required his students to take a personality test and later provided them with identical bogus interpretation sketches while informing them they would receive individualized results. Forer found that his students rated most of the thirteen statements as exceedingly accurate descriptions of themselves and also gave similarly high ratings to the test's capacity to reveal their personality.

Forer's primary concern was with the tendency for clinicians to offer excessively general interpretations of clients' behavior and then use the client's confirmation to validate his tests and interpretive skills. Forer used the term "personal validation" to refer to this mistaken assumption that a client can objectively evaluate interpretive feedback. He warned that when a clinician's inferences are "universally valid", a client's response such as "yes, that really fits me" cannot truly reflect on the clinician's interpretive acumen. His study was the first among over forty others during the next three decades to explore the generally uncritical acceptance of personality test feedback.
The primary focus of most of this research has been an investigation of various situational factors thought to influence people's receptivity to their test feedback. Less emphasis has been given to the consideration of individual differences contributing to feedback acceptance.

Person Variables

One of the early directions taken in the "acceptance phenomenon" research was a search for personality characteristics of the "gullible person" (Snyder, Shenkel & Lowery, 1977); that is, certain people are assumed to be more easily "deceived, cheated, or duped" (Webster, 1971). Furthermore, a set of personality characteristics inhering in the individual is assumed to be responsible for the gullibility. Several of the early studies that replicated Forer's study with samples of college students (Lattal & Lattal, 1967; Mosher, 1965; Ulrich, Stachnik & Stainton, 1963), personnel managers (Stagner, 1958), and psychiatric residents (Bachrach & Pattishall, 1960) sought to explain the acceptance phenomenon in this way.

Lattal & Lattal (1967) conjectured that the blind enthusiasm of young psychology students awed by the mystery of personality tests explains why they are so easily gullied. Their replication of the Forer study included a condition in which half of their subjects received a 15 minute lecture depreciating the worth of projective drawing tests which the subjects were later administered. Still, these investigators reported that the number of "good" and "excellent" ratings of subjects' bogus personality interpretations far exceeded chance. Moreover, the subjects in the test depreciation condition were no more critical of
their results than those who did not hear the lecture. That such a factor as client sophistication might yield differences in acceptance of feedback had received some earlier support in a study by Bachrach and Pattishall (1960). These authors found that their psychiatric residents, who unfortunately only numbered nine, were significantly less accepting of the bogus feedback than were undergraduate students. Because of the small sample size of residents, however, this result must be viewed as only suggestive.

Contrary to this pattern of results, however, is the fact that neither Forer (1949) nor Stagner (1958) found any differences in age or occupational background related to the degree of feedback acceptance. Stagner noted that his college student subjects, industrial supervisors and personnel managers were comparably receptive of their false feedback interpretations.

Surprisingly few studies of the "acceptance phenomenon" have included personality tests to investigate individual differences which might relate to feedback responsiveness. Since the experimental paradigm requires subjects to proceed through some kind of assessment process, there is a plausible rationale embedded in the design of the study. The use of objective personality inventories to explore potentially important personality correlates has been limited to a handful of studies.

Sundberg (1955), for instance, asked subjects to discriminate between bona fide MMPI personality descriptions written by clinical psychologists and fake, stereotyped descriptions similar to those used by Forer (1949). Sundberg found that those subjects who selected the
bogus description over their own MMPI interpretation scored significantly higher on the Ma scale. However, in light of the ten different MMPI scales involved, chance findings would be likely. Even were this relationship replicated, it would be difficult to interpret.

Carrier (1963) found that students' acceptance of a bogus test interpretation was significantly correlated with several scales on the Edwards Personal Preference Schedule. Among male subjects, acceptance was related to achievement, deference and introversion whereas for the female subjects, "gullibility" was related to abasement and introversion and negatively correlated with the endurance scale scores. This author encouraged researchers to consider "gullibility" in this context as need motivated behavior and advocated further research into the role of individual differences. There has not been any follow-up work with this instrument either by Carrier or other investigators.

Rotter's Internal-External Locus of Control Scale has been used on a few occasions (Snyder & Larson, 1972; Snyder, 1974; Snyder & Shenkel, 1976) and found to correlate positively with greater acceptance of personality feedback. Snyder and Shenkel (1976) found that subjects high on external locus of control also reported greater faith in psychological tests and in the skill of the interpreter. These results indicate that individuals who view their behavior as less in their own control may be more prone to accept personality interpretations of others and extend this positive evaluation in a "halo effect" manner. In a study by Snyder and Clair (1977) the same "halo effect" response was observed in those subjects who rated high on the trait of insecurity as measured by Maslow's Security-Insecurity Inventory.
One other personality variable found to influence acceptance of personality feedback is self-esteem (Glenn & Janda, 1977). These authors utilized a self-ideal discrepancy measure based on the Leary Interpersonal Check List. Silverman (1964) had earlier noted that high self-esteem individuals tend to be more responsive to self-enhancing stimuli than to stimuli that devalues them, whereas an opposite pattern is descriptive of low self-esteem individuals. Glenn & Janda replicated this pattern of results, reporting an interaction between content favorability and self-ideal discrepancy. High discrepancy subjects (low self-esteem) were more accepting of unfavorable feedback and also rejected more favorable interpretations than low or moderate discrepancy subjects.

The need for social approval, measured by the Marlowe-Crowne Social Desirability Scale, has also received some experimental attention. (Mosher, 1965; Snyder & Larson, 1972). Mosher offered a unique variation of the typical false feedback design which highlighted the social approval demands in the clinician-client relationship. He required subjects who had taken the Draw-A-Person test to rate orally the descriptive accuracy of the interpretations of the purported psychologist who boasted a special interpretive approach. Mosher found that high scoring MCSD subjects were more accepting of the favorable test interpretations but significantly less likely to accept unfavorable feedback than were the low scorers. Mosher suggested that the psychologist's approval seemed to matter less to high scorers than their own needs for self-approval. He also interpreted these findings as reflecting the high scorers' need to protect their self-esteem by rejecting the unfavorable
interpretations. In the Snyder and Larson study (1972), high scores on the Social Desirability Scale correlated positively, but not significantly, with acceptance of the bogus interpretation sketch.

Another individual difference variable related to acceptance of feedback concerns whether an individual has a high or a low desire for feedback about himself. In recent research (Snyder, Ingram, Handelsman, Wells & Huwieler, 1981) a fairly complex relationship was observed which involved a person's desire for feedback, the favorability of the content and whether it was accepted. Individuals with a low desire to receive information about themselves appear to be less accepting of positive and negative feedback than those desirous of self-information. Moreover, those highly desirous are more accepting of positive than negative feedback, whereas no differences were evident for those low in desire for feedback. This may be a fruitful personality variable in this research area but presently there is no psychometrically valid scale to measure the construct. In their investigations to date, these researchers have relied upon a one-item, 9-point Likert question.

The sex of the recipient of personality feedback has been one of the more commonly researched individual difference variables. Particularly with respect to the trait of gullibility, women have tended to receive this descriptor as a parcel of the stereotype which also characterizes them as less logical and more easily duped than the male gender. Although much of the early literature in persuasion indicated that females were more easily persuaded than males (Janis & Field, 1959), changes in sex role socialization may have altered this difference. In general, the results in the feedback literature have suggested that females are no more
accepting of bogus feedback than are males (Forer, 1949; Halperin, Snyder, Shenkel & Houston, 1976; Snyder, Larsen & Bloom, 1976; Snyder & Shenkel, 1976). Sex differences have also failed to manifest in the studies involving subjects' capacity to discriminate between genuine and false test results. Males have demonstrated no better ability than females to discriminate between genuine and false feedback derived from the MMPI (Schroeder & Lesyk, 1976; Sundberg, 1955) or the Personality Research Form (Dies, 1974).

This pattern of results, however, does not seem to hold when the dependent measures go beyond simple self-reported acceptance of test feedback. For example, Snyder and Cowles (1979) found males and females to differ in their desire for further feedback depending on whether the feedback was positive or negative. Females exhibited a significantly greater desire for additional feedback when it was positive than when the feedback was negative.

The dearth of research into individual differences influencing responsiveness to test feedback is unfortunate. Perhaps the zeitgeist of psychological research during the last decade influenced this neglect by its excessive emphasis upon the situational determinants of behavior. Also, the false feedback experimental paradigm has been so well suited to the manipulation of situational variables that personality factors have been overshadowed. What is needed in this research is investigation of the contributions of the multiple factors inhering in both "the person" and "the situation" which interact to influence an individual's responsiveness to personality test feedback.

Acceptance phenomenon research has progressed well beyond the
search for the "gullible personality". Not only was this focus reductive, but conceptually misguided as well (Snyder, Ingram and Newburg, 1981). Given that Barnum statements have a high base-rate occurrence in the general population, it makes more sense to attribute rationality than gullibility to those individuals who accept the statements as self-descriptive (Layne, 1979). Snyder and Shenkel (1976) used statistical control of the base-rate accuracy of their Barnum statements and found this to significantly influence how accurate a statement was judged to be for the subject.

It is also apparent from those studies examining subjects' capacity to personally validate their test results that gullibility is not an accurate descriptor. Greene (1977) demonstrated that college students can identify generalized interpretations when asked to make the judgment. That is, students rated the bogus personality statements as accurate descriptors but also realized that the feedback could equally describe their classmates. Schroeder and Lesyk (1976) also found that students were able to discriminate between genuine and Barnum statements and could recognize differences in their informational value and usefulness. A later study by Greene, Harris and Macon (1979) reported the results of two experiments in which subjects were able to reliably distinguish between their own California Psychological Inventory profile and an inverted profile (Experiment 1) and make the same discrimination with the Differential Aptitudes Test (Experiment 2). Furthermore, in light of past studies in which subjects selected Barnum personality sketches as more descriptive of themselves than actual MMPI derived descriptions, it is understandable that a high base-rate general description would yield
greater acceptance than an imperfect, individualized interpretation more susceptible to specific error.

Although there is a significant rational component involved in subjects' acceptance of personality test feedback, there is also considerable variability between subjects. Moreover, an individual's own predisposition to accept feedback may depend on the situational context in which the person finds himself. Snyder, Ingram and Newburg (1981) suggested the term "situational persuasibility" to emphasize the prominent influence of situational factors in promoting people's responsiveness to test derived feedback. This concept stresses the fact that certain situational factors operating in the helping relationship elicit higher rates of receptivity to feedback. The literature review will now turn to consideration of some of the situational variables which have been found to be impactful in enhancing feedback responsiveness.

**Situational Variables**

Several investigations of situational influence have examined the role of the recipient's belief that the test interpretation was derived for him, personally, as opposed to "people in general" (Collins, Dmitruk & Ranney, 1974; Hinrichson & Bradley, 1974; Layne, 1978; Snyder, 1974; Snyder & Larson, 1972; Snyder, Larsen & Bloom, 1976). As one would expect, the results of these studies concur that acceptance is greater when subjects believe the feedback interpretations were individually formulated. It appears that subjects' receptivity to highly personalized information about themselves also extends to astrological interpretations (Snyder, 1974). Astrological feedback was accepted more readily when
subjects believed that their results were based on the year, month and
day of their birth rather than upon the year and month only or being
"generally true of people".

Snyder and Shenkel (1976) also examined this aspect of relevance
along with the effects of interpretation favorability and the feedback
modality (oral or written). Whereas no significance was accorded to
modality, subjects viewed their own favorable interpretations as ac­
curately descriptive of themselves and less true of "people in general".
Moreover, those subjects who received unfavorable interpretations did
not rate them as less true of "people in general" than of themselves.
Thus, while it appears that people desire uniqueness (Fromkin, 1970),
this research suggests that there are qualifications. Positive unique­
ness may well be desired but when negative characteristics are attributed
to oneself, an individual may prefer to perceive himself as more similar
to others.

Another situational variable which has received considerable study
has been the source of the test feedback, both with respect to variations
of the assessment devices and characteristics of the individual assessors.
Subjects have exhibited high rates of feedback acceptance in independent
studies employing a variety of personality measures. Cross-validation
of this pattern of results has been demonstrated with various objective
personality inventories (Bachrach, 1960; Forer, 1949; Layne, 1979),
projective tests such as the House-Tree-Person (Lattal & Lattal, 1967)
and Rorschach cards (Snyder & Shenkel, 1976), as well as graphological
and astrological procedures (Snyder, Larsen & Bloom, 1974). In
controlled experimental designs in which the type of assessment device was manipulated to assess differential acceptance of feedback, the findings have been equivocal. Some of the earlier studies suggested that projective instruments yield higher rates of acceptance (Richards and Merrens, 1971; Snyder, 1974), whereas later investigations found them to be no more impactful than objective tests (Hinrichson & Bradley, 1974; Weinberger & Bradley, 1980), nor even graphological or astrological assessment procedures (Snyder, Larsen & Bloom, 1976). What insignificance students place upon the face validity of a test instrument was revealed in a study by Collins, Dmitruk and Ranney (1977). They reported their subjects to be equally accepting of test feedback which they believed was derived from Art Buchwald's satirical North Dakota Null Hypothesis Brain Inventory (e.g., "I salivate at the sight of mittens", "I think beavers work too hard") as from the Taylor Manifest Anxiety Scale. These authors suggested that the general test-taking atmosphere in an experimental context may have overshadowed the effect of the test content.

The prestige of the test interpreter has also been subject to several investigations. The findings have varied somewhat, depending upon the design complexity of the studies and the independent variables included with the prestige factor. The great majority of studies have indicated that acceptance of personality feedback is no greater when subjects believe their interpretations were provided by psychologists compared with fellow undergraduate students (Dmitruk, Collins & Clinger, 1973; Ulrich, Stachnik & Stainton, 1963), an astrologer (Rosen, 1975), or computers (Snyder & Larson, 1972). This finding was also obtained when interpreter
status was manipulated by varying the setting to maximize the interpreter's prestige (Snyder & Larson, 1972). These studies received some criticism from Bradley and Bradley (1977) for failing to include any manipulation checks of how the prestige of the interpreter was perceived by the subjects (Dmitruk, Collins & Clinger, 1973; Ulrich, Stachnik & Stainton, 1963). Two of the studies were also criticized for tester by subject confounding (Snyder & Larson, 1972; Ulrich, Stachnik & Stainton, 1963) making the results less interpretable. Bradley and Bradley corrected for both of these faults and still found subject acceptance of the personality feedback to be equally high with high and low prestige interpreters.

The status of the person providing the feedback has emerged as an influential factor in three studies, all of which considered the favorability of the feedback provided to the subject (Binderman, Fretz, Scott & Abrams, 1972; Halperin, Snyder, Shenkel & Houston, 1976; Snyder and Newburg, 1981). Binderman et al. provided their subjects with bogus test results either positive or negatively discrepant with their self-reports on important personality traits. These authors found that subjects exhibited significantly greater self-report changes when the feedback was provided by a PhD psychologist rather than by a counseling practicum student. This status factor was found to be important for subjects receiving positive and negative feedback that was highly discrepant with their self-report.

Halperin et al. (1976) also found interpreter prestige to be important when the favorability of the feedback was considered. It appears that positive feedback yields high rates of acceptance
irrespective of whether a high status (PhD psychologist-mental health director) or a low status (undergraduate mental health technician) person provides it. Yet, their results show that when negative test feedback is provided to the subjects, the high status interpreter elicited significantly higher levels of acceptance. These findings were also obtained in a more recent, cleverly designed study wherein subjects received feedback in a group setting (Snyder & Newburg, 1981). In this investigation, the feedback from the psychologist group leader had a greater impact on subjects than it did when a fellow group member provided it. The leader whom subjects believed was a psychologist elicited greater perceived accuracy of subjects' negative feedback, more acceptance of both positive and negative feedback, as well as higher recall of the interpretations. These results are consistent with the findings on communication persuasibility and attitude change obtained in the social psychological literature which have stressed the importance of the status of the message sender (Aronson, Turner & Carlsmith, 1963; McGuire, 1969).

More importantly, these three studies reveal the complexity inherent in the interpersonal context of personality feedback. One cannot separate the nature of the feedback from who provides it, as the interactions in these studies demonstrate. In the actual clinical assessment situation, it is often necessary for the clinician to share negative personality feedback that is discrepant with how the client prefers to view himself. These findings underscore the importance of the characteristics of the person who provides the feedback.
One other major individual difference factor, particularly germane to the interests of this research investigation, is the sex of the assessor. This variable has received inadequate empirical attention in the personality feedback literature in contrast with the abundance of studies examining the effect of therapist gender on clients' preference and change in counseling and therapy contexts (Boulware & Holmes, 1970; Jones and Zoppel, 1982). Only one study undertaken by Freeman and Stormes (1977) has been reported on the effect of the assessor's gender on responsiveness to personality test feedback.

These authors focused their attention on subjects' change in self-report after receiving bogus psychological test results that were discrepant with their own ratings on several psychological characteristics. Both males and female subjects were included in the study. Freeman and Stormes noted that both male and female subjects were more accepting of negative feedback when they believed it had been provided by a psychologist who was of their own sex. Female clients paired with a male psychologist exhibited the least change in self-report. The authors conclude that women may be more resistant to consider unfavorable information about themselves from men now that they value themselves more highly as women. The implication they draw from the study's findings relates to the need to match clients in treatment with same sexed clinicians. Owing to the paucity of research in this realm of responsiveness to feedback, there is a clear need for further research to investigate the impact of gender in interaction with other important factors in the assessment context.
The situational factor of feedback favorability has already been alluded to in several of the studies reviewed thus far. It is not surprising that the most consistently demonstrated finding in the "acceptance phenomenon" literature is that subjects rate favorable feedback as more self-descriptive than unfavorable feedback. Thorne (1961) referred to this phenomenon as the "Pollyanna effect" prior to its empirical demonstration in this literature. Yet, as often as this finding was obtained in early studies (Collins, Dmitruk & Clinger, 1977; Mosher, 1965; O'Dell, 1972; Sundberg, 1955; Weisberg, 1970), a study by Snyder and Shenkel (1976) challenged the usual interpretation of the results. These authors commented on the failure of the previous presearch to consider the high base rates of the general personality statements. That is, while differential acceptance was linked to the favorability of the content, it may well have resulted from the statements being perceived as more accurate representations of peoples' personalities. Thus, a change in the interpretation favorability of a statement may mean a change in its relative base rate truthfulness.

This hypothesis was examined in Snyder and Shenkel's study in which they required subjects to rate not only how accurate their feedback (positive or negative) described them personally but also how it described "people in general". In this way they could statistically control for the degree of perceived truthfulness of the sketch as it related to favorability. Once again, subjects were found to be more accepting of positive than negative feedback but this main effect was eliminated once adjustments were made accounting for base-rate accuracy.
Snyder and Shenkel caution that what is required is for the statements to be initially equated for degree of truthfulness to diminish the risk of erroneous inferences on the favorability dimension.

A major limitation to the clinical significance of "acceptance phenomenon" research was its longstanding reliance upon single self-report measures of accuracy or acceptance of the interpretations. The great majority of studies typically required subjects to rate the accuracy of an interpretive personality sketch on a Likert type scale immediately after they were presented the feedback. Yet, in a genuine clinical setting, clinicians who provide test interpretations to their clients are interested in far more than whether their clients perceive the feedback to be descriptive of them. Pursuant to this shortcoming and impediment to the generalizability of their findings, Snyder and cohorts (Handelsman & Snyder, 1981; Snyder & Cowles, 1979; Snyder & Newburg, 1981) began to incorporate more relevant dependent variables in their studies to gain a broader understanding of the impact of the various situational factors on feedback responsiveness.

Snyder and Cowles (1979) examined favorable and unfavorable feedback from personality and intelligence tests. They included three measures related to the subjects' response to their feedback. These included the commonly used self-report ratings of acceptance but also subjects' recall of their feedback and a measure of desire for further feedback. The use of multiple dependent measures proved worthwhile. Although self-reported acceptance for both types of test feedback was high, the personality feedback was significantly more desired and
better recalled than the intelligence test feedback.

Handelsman and Snyder (1981) employed the same dependent measures and expanded on the acceptance measure by including an absolute measure of acceptance. The authors emphasized the need to distinguish between subjects' perception of an interpretation being accurate but perhaps still unacceptable. A rating of 4 or 5 on a 9-point Likert scale may or may not reflect feedback acceptance. An additional methodological refinement made in this study was its use of unobtrusive measures of feedback impact. After subjects received information purportedly derived from an inkblot test about their assertiveness, they completed the questionnaire containing the dependent measures. Shortly thereafter in another study for which they had earlier volunteered, subjects were required to rate themselves on 25 personality dimensions as to how they felt others perceive them. Five of these items involved the assertiveness feedback they had received in the preceding experiment. Thus, the investigators' intent was to examine the impact of the feedback in a context removed from the original testing situation.

Even more directly germane to the interest of the present research investigation is the "self-disclosure" manipulation designed by these authors. Subjects were either told once they finished their test that they had been self-disclosive or they received no such information. They were then presented with either positive or negative test feedback related to their assertiveness.

The results of this study indicated that subjects who were told they had self-disclosed and who received negative feedback recalled significantly more of their interpretations than subjects who received
positive feedback. Although negative interpretations were rated as less accurate and were less accepted than positive interpretations, they were equally well recalled and even more so when the self-disclosure prompt was provided. On the independent self-report measure, subjects who received the self-disclosure manipulation and who also received positive feedback made more favorable self-statements than the subjects who had earlier received negative feedback. Thus, their perception that they had been perceived as self-disclosing lead to greater impact in a situation outside of the original feedback setting. Handelsman and Snyder also stress that the pattern of results in the study underscores the need for multimodal measures of responsiveness to feedback.

Petty and Brock (1979) demonstrated that test feedback can influence subsequent cognitive behavior prior to the above-mentioned study. Their subjects completed a bogus personality inventory after which they received feedback related to the attribute of being open-minded or close-minded. Later, in a supposedly unrelated experiment, subjects were asked to respond to an attitude survey concerned with campus issues. The authors found that the subjects in the "open-minded" condition produced more balanced responses than did either the "close-minded" subjects or a control group that received no suggestion.

Two additional studies examining the potential for test feedback to effect actual behavioral change have also been reported in the literature, both of which involved enhancement of expectations for treatment. In an analogue study by Bloom and Trautt (1978) subjects received information purportedly derived from a test battery which
suggested that they could remain calm and relaxed in a stressful experimental situation. A control group of subjects received no suggestion. On both physiological and self-report measures of arousal, those subjects who received the test feedback suggestion were significantly more calm and relaxed than those subjects who did not receive the suggestive information. An important methodological improvement for this study would have been for an additional control group to have been provided, comprised of subjects who would receive the suggestive information without it being purportedly based on test results. It remains unclear to what extent the apparent impact of the suggestive information may be attributed to the tests.

A more impressive finding concerning the impact of test feedback on behavior change was obtained by Halperin and Snyder (1981) in a study using snake phobic college females. Their design included three groups of subjects: (1) subjects who received a desensitization treatment and bogus diagnostic feedback that the subject revealed a strong capacity to improve through treatment, (2) subjects who received the treatment without the feedback, and (3) a waiting list control group.

Manipulation checks revealed that the enhanced-personality feedback manipulation resulted in significantly higher expectations for change. Moreover, the results indicate that the positive expectancies may have played an important facilitative role in actual behavioral change. On both the self-report measure and the behavioral avoidance test, the enhanced-personality-feedback-with-treatment group displayed significantly more improvement than the other two groups. Halperin and Snyder advise a cautious view concerning the implications of the study. They emphasize
the need for an additional group of subjects who would receive either neutral or negative feedback. Therapeutic changes could then be more confidently attributed to either the content of the feedback or simply the subjects' response to receiving diagnostic test feedback. The authors also raise a concern over the external validity of the study. Their female subjects were only mildly snake fearful and are more likely to be susceptible to expectancy effects than more severely phobic individuals. Furthermore, they note that subjects with mild fears have been shown to be particularly responsive to experimental demands (Borkovec, 1973). They also acknowledge that the behavioral avoidance test was administered to subjects with the experimenter present, thereby increasing the demands for change. In spite of these methodological problems, the study suggests an important potential therapeutic use to which diagnostic test feedback may be applied.

Mosak and Gushurst (1974), in their advocacy of sharing test results with their clients, consider several therapeutic benefits for the psychotherapy process. The process itself of sharing diagnostic test feedback with a client communicates that the clinician is a scientifically trained, highly conscientious individual who gives careful consideration to the uniqueness of the client. In the early stages of treatment, these authors emphasize how test results disclosure may facilitate the client's own desire to reveal himself and mobilize his will to change. These psychologists provide an extensive array of situations in which psychological test results may play a significant facilitative role throughout the course of treatment.
Although the experimental findings from the "acceptance phenomenon" literature are by no means unequivocal, taken as a whole they provide an empirical basis for the clinical, anecdotal literature reflecting this point of view toward psychological assessment. This analogue research offers a wealth of pertinent findings relevant to the clinical assessment context.

In general, this body of research indicates that the subjects are highly acceptant of diagnostic test feedback and that such acceptance generalizes to enhanced confidence in the skills of the diagnostician and in the tests as well. A host of personality attributes and situational factors have also been shown to play an influential role in subjects' responsiveness to test feedback. Among the situational factors that appear to enhance the acceptance of feedback are statements that are (1) general, high base-rate personality descriptions, (2) favorably worded, (3) framed as specifically derived for the individual based on his own tests, (4) interpreted by a high status clinician, especially when the feedback is unfavorable, and in which case, (5) a same-sexed clinician provides the test information.

The investigation of personality variables has not been as extensive as the focus upon situational factors. However, there is some evidence to suggest that certain personality attributes such as a high level of insecurity, an external locus of control and strong needs for social approval may relate to greater receptiveness to test feedback.

More recently, a few studies have gone beyond the domain of feedback acceptance to explore some potentially therapeutic uses for the disclosure of diagnostic test feedback. This research suggests that it may well
influence an individual to make cognitive modifications, enhance his interest in receiving further self-information and potentially alter his expectations for change which then may actually facilitate behavioral improvement.

Several writers have questioned the extent to which these research findings have contributed to our understanding of peoples' responsiveness to test feedback in an actual clinical situation (Bradley & Bradley, 1980; Dana, 1981; Dana & Graham, 1976, Layne, 1979). Richard Dana has been among the more vocal of these critics. His primary objection is directed toward the false feedback experimental approach for its apparent allegiance to methodological clarity at the expense of clinical relevance and ethical responsibility. The following critique illustrates his point of view:

"The false feedback literature is a red herring. It does not matter in this assessment context whether or not people accept nonsense about themselves as truth. We all do it . . . . Research should be concerned with our best assessment efforts rather than with descriptions of persons that no competent, ethical assessor would ever provide consumers."

An important conceptual problem in Dana's argument relates to his assertions that Barnum feedback is nonsense experienced as truth and, secondly, that a competent, ethically bound clinician would not utilize such feedback in his disclosure of test results.

The "Barnum effect" and "acceptance phenomenon" literature indicates that these vague, generalized statements tend not to be experienced by subjects as nonsense, even when subjects are asked to objectively evaluate their descriptive value for others. Particularly in the context of
receiving such statements as test feedback, what appears to occur is a process of personalizing the feedback. The recipient uses his own experience to give them meaning and assesses their accuracy within this personal context. Moreover, clinicians cannot help but provide their clients with a good share of generalized, high base-rate personality descriptions. Psychological assessment is not simply a process of understanding a client's uniqueness but also his similarities with others. Thus, a clinician's test interpretation "you tend to be pretty critical of yourself" is neither nonsense nor unethical, in spite of its meeting the criteria for "Barnum feedback".

It makes more sense to criticize the false feedback research on methodological grounds such as the paradigm's excessive reliance on using college students for subjects (Layne, 1979). The exclusive use of college students, rather than actual clients, imposes limits on the confidence with which the above findings may be applied to the clinical setting. Depending on one's assumptions regarding client motivations and referral reasons behind psychological assessment, arguments could be generated hypothesizing stronger or weaker effects. Snyder et al. (1981) assert that most of the findings would generalize to the clinical context but recognize the need for experimentation in applied settings.

Two additional limitations of the false feedback paradigm also jeopardize the external validity of the findings. The first difficulty lies in the exclusive reliance upon false feedback results. Studies are needed which examine the effect of genuine test feedback on test recipients. Fisher suggested the need for studies in which a subject could pose genuine self-concerns and receive honest test feedback relevant to
specific problems. In effect, her appeal is for assessment involvement and outcome studies which would be directly germane to actual clinical practice (Fischer, 1981).

In this light, the second limitation relates to the manner in which the test results have been presented to the subjects. Without exception, feedback has been imparted in a unilateral manner, most often in written form without eliciting comment from the recipient. This is far removed from what usually occurs in an actual diagnostic feedback session. It is in this regard that the vocational counseling research has made some contribution toward our understanding of the test feedback context. This body of literature provides a guide for studies in psychodiagnostic test feedback with its investigation of different modes of communicating test results and use of dependent variables related to the client's subjective response to test feedback.

Purpose of the Study

The present thesis is undertaken with particular attention paid to some of the methodological problems plaguing past analogue research in this area. The primary interest is an investigation of three situational factors hypothesized to enhance an individual's responsiveness to unfavorable personality test feedback.

The first of these variables addresses the need for closer approximation of what might occur in an actual test feedback situation between clinician and client. That is, the purported test-derived feedback will be shared with the subject in what has been called a "collaborative assessment approach" (Fischer, 1979). This approach will encourage the
the subject to contextualize the test information by drawing from her own life experience. This feedback modality for sharing assessment results has been advocated by proponents of an existential-phenomenological orientation (Dana, 1981; Fischer, 1979). The inclusion of this independent variable in the acceptance phenomenon research addresses the concern for greater external validity and theoretical validity (Mahoney, 1978). It is an exploratory investigation and, as such, the study will employ some new self-report measures of feedback impact as well as some which have been used in recent research (Snyder & Cowles, 1979; Snyder & Newburg, 1981).

The second independent variable of concern involves a manipulation of what might be viewed as a cognitive-emotional set (Snyder, Ingram & Newburg, 1981) which may potentially enhance an individual's responsiveness to unfavorable personality feedback. This set involves informing the subject that her test information indicates a capacity to acknowledge her personality weaknesses as well as her personality strengths and that this reflects a character attribute of "ego-strength".

The third factor of consideration is the sex of the assessor. An increasing body of research in psychotherapy outcome literature has investigated the potential value of matching clinicians and clients on the basis of gender (Jones & Zoppel, 1982). There has been a notable lack of research in personality and vocational test feedback studies examining the impact of the gender of the person providing the feedback. Thus, this study will use two male and two females to communicate the bogus test information.
Three personality instruments will also be utilized in this study in order that personality constructs may be examined in this particular context. The Rotter Internal-External Locus of Control Scale (Rotter, 1967), the Marlowe-Crowne Social Desirability Scale (Crowne & Marlowe, 1964), and the revised Janis-Field Feelings of Inadequacy Scale (Eagly, 1967) will be used to consider personality correlates of the subjects' responsiveness to personality test feedback.

Hypothesis 1

For the collaboration group, it is predicted that subjects will rate their feedback as more self-descriptive, important and useful than those subjects in the unilateral feedback condition. Furthermore, the collaboration group will recall more of their feedback and show greater interest in receiving additional personality feedback by volunteering for a subsequent feedback experiment.

Hypothesis 2

It is predicted that subjects receiving the positive cognitive-emotional set will also find their feedback to be more self-descriptive, will recall more of their feedback and show a greater desire for further personality feedback than subjects who are not provided with this set.

Hypothesis 3

It is also predicted that subjects receiving both of these experimental manipulation will find their personality feedback to be most
impactful as indicated by their response to all eight dependent measures. Moreover, those subjects in neither of the experimental conditions will show the least responsiveness.

**Hypothesis 4**

Low scores on the Janis-Field Feelings of Inadequacy Scale, the Marlowe-Crowne Social Desirability Scale and higher scores on the Rotter Internal-External Locus of Control Scale are predicted to relate positively to greater self-reported acceptance, importance and usefulness of the personality feedback.

**Hypothesis 5**

In line with past research findings in the feedback acceptance literature regarding gender of the client and clinician (Freeman & Stormes, 1977), it is hypothesized that female clients will be more responsive to their feedback when it is provided by a same sexed person.
CHAPTER III

METHODS

Subjects

Participants in this experiment were 64 undergraduate females recruited from Introductory Psychology classes at the University of Montana. Subjects volunteered to complete a battery of personality tests with the expectation of attending an individual feedback session within a few days following their testing. Subjects received credit toward their course requirement for their involvement in the study. The subjects were randomly assigned in equal numbers to the experimental conditions.

Design

A 2 X 2 X 2 factorial design was employed in which the between-subject variables were (a) whether or not a subject received a positive cognitive-emotional set regarding her "ego strength" prior to receiving her test feedback, (b) whether the subject's feedback was provided in a collaborative or a unilateral mode, and (c) whether the subject's assessor was male or female (see Figure 1).

Materials

1) Personality Interpretations (see Appendix 1). All subjects received a common, handwritten personality description with 16 Barnum-type statements. Twelve of the statements were unfavorably worded and 4 were worded favorably. These statements were selected on the basis
Figure 1: Experimental Design

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assessor Gender</th>
<th>Collaborative Mode</th>
<th>Unilateral Mode</th>
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<td>Male</td>
<td>Male</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Ego Strength Set</td>
<td>Ego Strength Set</td>
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<td>Female</td>
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<td>Ego Strength Set</td>
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of pilot work done in a previous quarter in order to empirically derive the favorable and unfavorable statements with a comparable sample of students. Thirty-two female subjects were asked to respond to 67 statements that described personality characteristics. Subjects were asked to read each item as if it were applied to them and rate how favorably or unfavorably they perceived each statement. They were then asked to indicate whether or not each statement was self-descriptive. (The pilot questionnaire is included in Appendix 2.) Table 1 presents descriptive statistics on the 16 personality statements selected for the study. Although the intent of the experiment was to focus on subjects' responsiveness to unfavorable personality test feedback, 4 favorable statements were included with the 12 unfavorable statements. This was done to improve the face validity of the test feedback to the subject as well as the external validity of the study in that a test feedback session would typically include both some positive and negative information.

2) Bogus Personality Research Form Profile (see Appendix 3). Accompanying the 16 handwritten personality statements was a PRF profile sheet with a bogus set of T-scores plotted to ostensibly reflect the subject's test scores. The names of the PRF scales were covered since the personality statements did not reflect the PRF traits. Subjects did not actually receive a full viewing of their PRF profile sheet but the assessor continually referred to the profile while presenting the personality interpretive statements. This facet was included for the purpose of making the context more realistic for the subject.

3) Dependent Measures. The primary dependent measures used in this study were included in two questionnaires which subjects completed at
# TABLE I

Pilot Data: Personality Feedback Statement

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Favorable Statements</th>
<th>( \bar{X} )</th>
<th>Accept</th>
<th>Reject</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Although you are basically a serious person</td>
<td>8.1</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>you love to laugh and enjoy the company</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>of others.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>You generally feel mature and capable of</td>
<td>7.5</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>meeting your needs.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>You're the sort of person who will usually make time for a friend who needs it.</td>
<td>7.9</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>You value loyalty very highly in your friendships.</td>
<td>8.6</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Unfavorable Statements</th>
<th>( \bar{X} )</th>
<th>Accept</th>
<th>Reject</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>You tend to feel self-conscious and</td>
<td>4.4</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>insecure when you are with people whom</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>you feel to be superior.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sometimes you avoid events because of your fears of failure.</td>
<td>4.5</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>It's difficult for you to deal with the anger and hostility of others.</td>
<td>3.7</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>You tend to be suspicious sometimes about the motives people have for being with</td>
<td>4.3</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>you.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>You often spend more time than you should worrying about the reactions of others.</td>
<td>4.1</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>You have a tendency to feel sorry for yourself when things don't go your way.</td>
<td>4.5</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>You tend to be more passive and submissive with men than you are with women.</td>
<td>4.8</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>It's difficult for you to express your anger in a direct manner at the time when</td>
<td>4.3</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>you feel it.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>You tend to take the easy way out all too often.</td>
<td>4.2</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Your coping skills are not as flexible as they should be such that you tend to</td>
<td>4.2</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>rely on some that aren't very constructive.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>You tend to ask people for their opinions on what you should do all too often</td>
<td>3.8</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>rather than relying on yourself.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>You have such strong feelings about certain issues, it is difficult for you</td>
<td>4.4</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>to talk about them without becoming upset.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
the end of their feedback session. On the first questionnaire (see Appendix 4) there were five questions assessing the subject's perceptions of the accuracy, importance and usefulness of the test feedback. All questions were answered on a 9-point Likert-type scale.

Feedback accuracy perceptions were measured by the two questions, "To what extent do the personality statements you received accurately describe your personality features?" and "What percentage of the personality statements you received are accurate descriptions of you?"

Feedback importance ratings included the questions, "How important to you were the personality features which the test results included?" and "What percentage of the personality statements you received are important to you?"

Subjects' perceptions of the usefulness of their feedback was measured by the question "How useful to you was the personality feedback you received in providing a source of self-understanding?"

The second questionnaire (see Appendix 5) contained three measures of feedback impact. Recall of feedback was measured by asking the subjects to list as many of their personality statements as they could remember. Desire for additional personality feedback was measured by two questions. The first of these required subjects to leave their phone numbers if they wished to participate in a subsequent study with inkblot testing wherein they would receive personality feedback. Responses were coded either 1, in the case of phone number listing, or 2, when no phone number was provided. The second question asked subjects whether they would still want to participate without receiving experimental credit. This response was measured on a 9-point Likert-type scale with ends anchored at 1 = not at all interested to 9 = extremely interested.
4) **Postexperimental Questionnaire** (see Appendix 6). This consisted of nine items which included two initial filler items, two questions for each manipulation check and three questions reflecting on the credibility of the assessors. The two filler questions (items 1 & 2) concerned subjects' perceptions of their receptivity to receiving personality feedback compared to that of most people. Items 3 & 4 were designed to check the manipulation of the positive cognitive-emotional set. The questions "Do you think most people have a hard time admitting their personality weaknesses?" and "Do you think you have a hard time admitting your personality weaknesses?" were rated on a 9-point Likert-type scale anchored at 1 = extremely easy and 9 = extremely hard. Items 5 & 6 were included to check the collaborative versus unilateral feedback mode conditions. These questions asked subjects, "How much did you participate in the interpretation of your test results?" and "How encouraged did you feel by your test interpreter to participate in the interpretation of your test results?" The 9-point Likert scale was used with ends anchored at 1 = not at all and 9 = actively. The final three questions pertaining to assessor credibility involved subjects' perceptions of the assessor's competence, likability and their interest in the assessee. Ends were anchored at 1 = not at all and 9 = extremely.

**Test Instruments**

In order to investigate potential personality factors which might relate to an individual's responsiveness to unfavorable personality test feedback, the test battery included the following scales:
1) **Rotter's Internal-External Locus of Control Scale** (1966) (see Appendix 7). This scale consists of 19 question pairs constructed in a forced-choice format, six of which are filler questions. The forced choice is between an internal or an external statement which receives a score of 0 or 1, respectively. Rotter conceived the construct to refer to the degree to which an individual perceives contingency relationships between his own actions and subsequent outcomes. Those people who believe they exercise control over their destinies are called "internals" whereas those who believe their destinies are dictated by factors outside of their control are called "externals." The construct has been heavily researched owing to its wide range of generalizability and its social relevance (Robinson & Shaver, 1972). The Rotter scale, while only one of several that measure this construct, has received considerable psychometric attention. Reports of its internal consistency and test-retest reliability indicate acceptable levels (Rotter, 1966). Convergent validity studies suggest it is fairly sensitive to individual differences in one's perception of control over one's destiny (Robinson & Shaver, 1972).

2) **The Marlowe-Crowne Social Desirability Scale** (1964) (see Appendix 8). This is a 33 item true-false scale which was intended to identify people who describe themselves in a favorable, socially desirable manner to gain the approval of others. The test has been commonly employed in experimental studies because of its well established validity and reliability. Illustratively, test-retest correlation over a one-month interval with 57 college students was .88 (Robinson & Shaver, 1972).
3) **The Janis-Field Feelings of Inadequacy Scale** (Eagly, 1967) (see Appendix 9). This instrument was initially developed to assess a person's feelings of inadequacy in studies which focused on persuasibility. The original scale included 23 items but nearly all were keyed in the same direction. Eagly's revised version contains 20 items that are answered on a 5-point Likert scale and balanced for response bias. This author (Eagly, 1967) reported split-half reliabilities of .72 and .88 with samples of college students. Robinson and Shaver (1972) comment that the scale has received much research attention but insufficient psychometric attention. Hamilton (1971) used the test with a sample of college students in a comparative investigation of five methods of assessing self-esteem, dogmatism and dominance. He found the Scale to correlate .67 with the CPI esteem scale and .60 with self-ratings of esteem. The test has received much of its attention in studies concerned with susceptibility to social influence (Eagly, 1969) and attitude change (Greenbaum, 1966). Since it has had some application in predicting persuasibility, it was included in the present investigation. Robinson and Shaver (1972) suggest its application as a measure of social self-esteem.

**Procedure**

The actual feedback experiment required subjects' participation in two sessions, separated usually by 2-4 days. In the first session, subjects met in groups varying in size from 4-12 to complete the three personality scales. At this time they were informed that the purpose of the study would involve an investigation of personality interpretation and feedback approaches. The Consent Form (see Appendix 10) also
explained that doctoral level students with experience in personality assessment would be providing them with their test feedback in the follow-up meeting. Subjects were then scheduled for their second appointment once they finished the test battery.

Once the subject arrived at the Clinical Psychology Center for the individual feedback session, introductions were made and the assessor escorted the subject to the room in which the test interpretations would be shared. Two male and two female graduate students served as the assessors and were randomly assigned to the subjects within the experimental conditions. Although the graduate student assessors were aware of the experimental conditions of their assessees, they were kept blind to the hypotheses of the experiment.

Prior to the subject's hearing her test feedback, all subjects heard the same prepared introductory comments from their assessor:

"Have you had any past experience with personality or psychological tests? ... Well, as clinical psychologists, what we typically do is administer various tests to help us understand our clients better, how they function psychologically. As a part of the therapy process, some psychologists share their test interpretations with the client. So, that's what this meeting is all about, to give you some feedback about your test results, both positive and negative."

Half of the subjects then received a positive cognitive-emotional set immediately prior to receiving their test feedback.

"Just in general, before we get started, one of the more impressive things about your own test results is that you seemed to be able to acknowledge not only your strengths but your personality weaknesses as well. As psychologists, we often refer to this
"ability as 'ego strength' but really what we're talking about here is a very healthy capacity to admit your imperfections, and not everybody can do that."

Otherwise, the assessor began the feedback session by explaining that he/she had compiled a group of statements reflective of the assessee's personality based on the test results. The assessor then read from the handwritten statements with the bogus Personality Research Form profile sheet beside the assessor. Four different orders of the statements were utilized in the study and were randomly selected by the assessors prior to their feedback sessions.

In the "noncollaborative" or unilateral feedback condition, the assessor read each of the statements aloud to the subject without actively eliciting comment from the subject. After each of the statements, the assessor provided an example to clarify the interpretation for the subject (see Appendix II for a transcript of a unilateral feedback session). The pace of this feedback session was quite slow. Assessors were encouraged to make ample use of pauses in order that the time duration of the unilateral and collaborative conditions be similar. In instances when the subject would elaborate on her feedback, the assessors would usually briefly reflect the content and move on to the next statement. In the few instances when this persisted, subjects were asked to save comments or questions for the senior experimenter who would be meeting with the subject at the end of the feedback session.

In the collaborative feedback condition, as the assessor read the statements aloud the subject was asked to elaborate on the interpretation by drawing on concrete examples from her everyday life. There were limits imposed on subjects' commentary to keep the interviews within
manageable time limits and comparable with the duration of the unilateral feedback session (see Appendix 12 for a transcript of a collaborative feedback session). Typically, however, the collaborative interview would take 1-2 minutes longer to complete.

Once the subject completed her feedback session she was asked to respond to a brief questionnaire regarding the personality feedback she received. She was instructed to seal it in an envelope once she finished to insure that her responses would remain confidential. The student assessor then left the room and shortly returned with the second questionnaire and the same instructions were repeated. Once the subject finished this questionnaire she was then escorted to the room wherein the senior experimenter greeted her and then asked to subject to complete a final questionnaire.

Training of the Assessors

The four assessors selected for this study were all first year graduate students in clinical psychology. Prior to the onset of the experiment, the two men and women were trained how to conduct each type of feedback interview. There were three training sessions each lasting approximately two hours. During the first meeting the students received lecture and reading materials regarding existential assessment. Constance Fischer's 1979 article was used to provide them with a general picture of the approach. The collaborative interview questions such as "How does this seem to fit you?", "When is this likely to happen?", "In what situations does this seem to apply to you?" and "How is this descriptive?" were then introduced. Assessors then listened to an audiotaped session
of the senior experimenter with a pilot subject in a collaborative feedback mode. The second training session focused on role-playing with the students pairing off to role-play assessor and assessee in each mode of feedback presentation. They were critiqued by the senior experimenter who would model the appropriate technique. This format was repeated until all four assessors demonstrated sufficient competence. The students also rehearsed their introductory comments and the ego strength manipulation until they grew comfortable with the presentation. In the final session, each assessor played his/her tape of pilot sessions with subjects in both an ego strength-unilateral condition and an ego strength-collaborative condition. Suggestions were then made in those cases where improvement was needed. During the course of the experiment, two additional feedback sessions were randomly selected for taping so that the senior experimenter could be sure that the experimental manipulations were being properly and comparably delivered. Although some stylistic differences among the assessors were evident, no modifications in any one assessor's approach were necessary.

Debriefing

Once subjects completed their postexperimental questionnaire they were debriefed. Initially, subjects were individually debriefed but a group debriefing was utilized during the latter part of running the study. Subjects were then seen in groups of 3-4 and orally queried regarding the presence of experimental demand, subject suspicion and personal hypotheses about the intention of the experiment. A striking absence of suspicion was noted although a common response of surprise was
expressed that the test battery revealed so much accurate information. Subjects were then informed about the purposes of the study and the rationale behind the deception. Subjects were then individually provided with the results of their test scores. Special care was taken in providing them with genuine personality feedback in a way to elicit a positive feeling. Subjects were then encouraged to contact the experimenter should they wish to learn about the results of the experiment. They were thanked for their participation and given experimental credit.
Analysis of Data

The Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) computer program was utilized to perform the analyses of variance and compute the Pearson product moment correlation coefficients. Of the primary outcome measures, seven of the eight were analyzed by a 2 (collaborative vs. unilateral feedback mode) x 2 (ego strength set vs. no set) x 2 (male vs. female assessor) analysis of variance. A chi-square technique was applied to the one dichotomous measure. A post-experimental questionnaire included manipulation checks for the feedback mode and the ego strength set as well as items reflecting assessor credibility. These dependent measures were also analyzed by a 2 x 2 x 2 analysis of variance. A separate 4 x 2 x 2 analysis of variance was also performed to assess the effects of individual differences among the four assessors. A Newman-Keuls multiple comparison procedure was employed on those factors or interactions with more than two levels that were statistically significant.

Scores on the Marlowe-Crowne Social Desirability Scale, the Rotter Internal-External Locus of Control Scale and the Janis-Field Feelings of Inadequacy Scale were correlated with each of the primary outcome measures.
Post-Experimental Questionnaire

The first two items of the questionnaire served as introductory fillers, the content of which referred to subjects' perceptions about their relative openness to receiving personality feedback compared to others. There were no specific effects predicted on these two measures and no significant main effects or interactions were obtained. In general, subjects described themselves as more receptive to personality feedback than most other people ($M_s = 7.56$ and $5.89$, respectively).

Items 3 and 4 tested the efficacy of the manipulation of the positive cognitive-emotional set. Significant main effects were found on both measures. Subjects receiving the positive cognitive-emotional set (designated "Ego Strength") rated themselves as having an easier time admitting their personality weaknesses ($M = 3.9$) than those subjects who were not provided with this positive set (designated "No Ego Strength"), ($M = 4.9$), ($F = 4.31$, $df = 1,56$, $p < .05$). Moreover, Ego Strength subjects also rated others as having greater difficulty acknowledging their personality weaknesses ($M = 5.7$) than did No Ego Strength subjects ($M = 4.9$), ($F = 3.24$, $df = 1,56$, $p < .05$).

The collaborative feedback manipulation was also examined by two questions, items 5 and 6. Both measures supported the effectiveness of the manipulation. Subjects in the collaborative interview condition (designated "Collaboration") reported their participation in the feedback session was significantly more active ($M = 7.0$) than those
subjects who received their feedback in a noncollaborative manner (designated "Unilateral"), \((M = 4.2), (F = 26.78, df = 1,56, p < .001)\). Collaboration subjects also reported feeling more encouraged to participate by their assessors than did subjects in the Unilateral condition \((M_s = 7.1 and 4.8, respectively) (F = 16.35, df = 1,56, p < .001)\).

The final three items on the post-experimental questionnaire relate to dimensions of the assessor's credibility perceived by the subject. The three measures included subjects' ratings of their assessor's level of personal interest in them, of their competence and likability. No specific hypotheses were made about these measures.

When perceived interest in the client was the dependent variable, a significant main effect for Ego Strength was obtained \((F = 8.579, df = 1,56, p < .01)\). Subjects receiving this set reported their assessors to be more interested in them \((M = 6.89)\) than those subjects who were not provided this set \((M = 5.69)\). An interaction of Ego Strength x Collaboration was close to achieving significance \((F = 3.31, df = 1,56, p = .074)\). Examination of the means reveals that the Unilateral-No Ego Strength subjects reported far less perceived interest from their assessors \((M = 5.00)\) contrasted with the conditions of Ego Strength without Collaboration \((M = 6.875)\), of Collaboration without Ego Strength \((M = 6.375)\) and Ego Strength with Collaboration \((M = 6.812)\).

On the variable of assessor's competence, a main effect for Collaboration approached significance \((F = 3.62, df = 1,56, p = .062)\), with subjects rating their assessors as more competent when their feed-
back was presented in a collaborative mode \( (M = 7.75) \) rather than a unilateral feedback mode \( (M = 7.28) \). The main effect for Ego Strength obtained with "perceived interest" did not generalize to the "competence" measure, although a trend in this direction was noted \( (F = 2.72, df = 1,56, p = .105) \).

There were no significant main effects obtained on the measure concerned with subjects' liking of their assessor, although there was a marginally significant Collaboration x Ego Strength interaction \( (F = 3.65, df = 1,56, p = .061) \). Again, it appears that subjects' liking of their assessors was relatively comparable in conditions of Collaboration without Ego Strength \( (M = 7.94) \), of Ego Strength without Collaboration \( (M = 7.87) \), and Collaboration with Ego Strength \( (M = 7.68) \). The larger share of variance of this interaction would appear to involve the case in which subjects received neither the positive set nor the collaborative interview, leading to lower self-reported liking \( (M = 7.00) \).

Although there were no main effects or interactions involving the sex of the assessor on the credibility measures, a 4 x 2 x 2 analysis of variance was also conducted to assess whether subjects might have responded differently to the personal qualities of the individual assessors. However, there were no significant main effects or interactions involving any of the four assessors on these three dependent measures.

**Primary Outcome Measures**

The eight outcome measures essentially measure five dimensions of subjects' responsiveness to their personality feedback. Five self-
report measures comprised the first questionnaire and included two items of feedback accuracy, two items of feedback importance and one item reflecting subjects' ratings of the usefulness of their feedback. On the second questionnaire there was one measure of subjects' recall of their personality feedback and two measures assessing subjects' desire for additional personality feedback.

1) **Accuracy of Feedback.** Neither the general measure of feedback accuracy nor the percentage ratings were found to differ as a function of the mode of feedback, the positive cognitive-emotional set, the sex of the assessor or any interaction of these variables. Tables 2 and 3 display the mean accuracy ratings of subjects by their experimental groups and the Analysis of Variance results. Irrespective of the experimental condition, subjects rated their bogus feedback to be highly descriptive of themselves.

2) **Importance of Feedback.** This dimension was also assessed by a general rating and a percentage rating of importance. Tables 4 and 5 present the means and the three-way analyses of variance on these measures. A significant main effect for Collaboration was obtained on the general rating of importance ($F = 9.04$, $df = 1,56$, $p < .01$). Subjects who received their feedback in a collaborative mode rated it significantly more important than those subjects provided with a unilateral feedback approach ($M_{s} = 7.31$ and 5.97, respectively). No other significant main effects or interactions were observed for this measure.

On the related variable of percentage ratings of feedback importance, a main effect for Collaboration was also significant ($F = 7.76$, $df = 1,56$, $p < .01$). The Collaboration group rated a significantly greater share of their feedback to be important ($M = 79\%$) than did the Unilateral group.
Table 2: 2 X 2 X 2 Analysis of Variance

Variable: Accuracy (general)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Source of Variance</th>
<th>Sum of Squares</th>
<th>DF</th>
<th>Mean Square</th>
<th>F Ratio</th>
<th>Probability</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sex (S)</td>
<td>0.76</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.76</td>
<td>.35</td>
<td>.55</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Collaboration (CLB)</td>
<td>1.89</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1.89</td>
<td>.87</td>
<td>.36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ego Strength (ES)</td>
<td>0.14</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.14</td>
<td>.06</td>
<td>.80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>S X CLB</td>
<td>0.02</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.02</td>
<td>.01</td>
<td>.93</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>S X ES</td>
<td>0.77</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.77</td>
<td>.35</td>
<td>.55</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CLB X ES</td>
<td>0.02</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.02</td>
<td>.01</td>
<td>.93</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>S X CLB X ES</td>
<td>0.14</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.14</td>
<td>.06</td>
<td>.80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Error (within)</td>
<td>121.87</td>
<td>56</td>
<td>2.18</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Mean Feedback Ratings

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Experimental Group</th>
<th>Mean</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Male Assessor</td>
<td>7.47</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female Assessor</td>
<td>7.69</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Collaboration</td>
<td>7.75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unilateral</td>
<td>7.40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ego Strength</td>
<td>7.62</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No Ego Strength</td>
<td>7.53</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Collaboration with Ego Strength</td>
<td>7.81</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Collaboration without Ego Strength</td>
<td>7.69</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unilateral with Ego Strength</td>
<td>7.44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unilateral without Ego Strength</td>
<td>7.37</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 3: 2 X 2 X 2 Analysis of Variance

Variable: Accuracy (percentage)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Source of Variance</th>
<th>Sum of Squares</th>
<th>DF</th>
<th>Mean Square</th>
<th>F Ratio</th>
<th>Probability</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sex (S)</td>
<td>3.52</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3.52</td>
<td>.01</td>
<td>.90</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Collaboration (CLB)</td>
<td>425.39</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>425.39</td>
<td>1.80</td>
<td>.19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ego Strength (ES)</td>
<td>172.26</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>172.26</td>
<td>.73</td>
<td>.40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>S X CLB</td>
<td>3.51</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3.51</td>
<td>.01</td>
<td>.90</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>S X ES</td>
<td>3.51</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3.51</td>
<td>.01</td>
<td>.90</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CLB X ES</td>
<td>31.64</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>31.64</td>
<td>.13</td>
<td>.72</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>S X CLB X ES</td>
<td>87.89</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>87.89</td>
<td>.37</td>
<td>.55</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Error (within)</td>
<td>13245.87</td>
<td>56</td>
<td>236.55</td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Mean Feedback Ratings

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Experimental Group</th>
<th>Mean</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Male Assessor</td>
<td>80%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female Assessor</td>
<td>81%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Collaboration</td>
<td>83%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unilateral</td>
<td>77%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ego Strength</td>
<td>82%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No Ego Strength</td>
<td>78%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Collaboration with Ego Strength</td>
<td>83%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Collaboration without Ego Strength</td>
<td>82%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unilateral with Ego Strength</td>
<td>80%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unilateral without Ego Strength</td>
<td>75%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 4: 2 X 2 X 2 Analysis of Variance

Variable: Importance (general)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Source of Variance</th>
<th>Sum of Squares</th>
<th>DF</th>
<th>Mean Square</th>
<th>F Ratio</th>
<th>Probability</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sex (S)</td>
<td>4.52</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4.52</td>
<td>1.41</td>
<td>.239</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Collaboration (CLB)</td>
<td>28.89</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>28.89</td>
<td>9.04</td>
<td>.004</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ego Strength (ES)</td>
<td>5.64</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>5.64</td>
<td>1.76</td>
<td>.189</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>S X CLB</td>
<td>2.64</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2.64</td>
<td>.82</td>
<td>.367</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>S X ES</td>
<td>.39</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>.39</td>
<td>.12</td>
<td>.728</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CLB X ES</td>
<td>1.89</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1.89</td>
<td>.59</td>
<td>.445</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>S X CLB X ES</td>
<td>1.89</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1.89</td>
<td>.59</td>
<td>.445</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Error (within)</td>
<td>178.87</td>
<td>56</td>
<td>3.19</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
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</table>

Mean Feedback Ratings

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Experimental Group</th>
<th>Mean</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Male Assessor</td>
<td>6.91</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female Assessor</td>
<td>6.38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Collaboration</td>
<td>7.31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unilateral</td>
<td>5.97</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ego Strength</td>
<td>6.94</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No Ego Strength</td>
<td>6.34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Collaboration with Ego Strength</td>
<td>7.44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Collaboration without Ego Strength</td>
<td>7.19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unilateral with Ego Strength</td>
<td>6.44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unilateral without Ego Strength</td>
<td>5.50</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 5: 2 X 2 X 2 Analysis of Variance

Variable: Importance (percentage)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Source of Variance</th>
<th>Sum of Squares</th>
<th>DF</th>
<th>Mean Square</th>
<th>F Ratio</th>
<th>Probability</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sex (S)</td>
<td>1016.01</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1016.01</td>
<td>2.33</td>
<td>.132</td>
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<tr>
<td>Collaboration (CLB)</td>
<td>3378.52</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3378.52</td>
<td>7.76</td>
<td>.008</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ego Strength (ES)</td>
<td>1550.39</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1550.39</td>
<td>3.56</td>
<td>.064</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>S X CLB</td>
<td>3.52</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3.52</td>
<td>.01</td>
<td>.929</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>S X ES</td>
<td>172.26</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>172.26</td>
<td>.40</td>
<td>.532</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CLB X ES</td>
<td>2197.26</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2197.26</td>
<td>5.05</td>
<td>.029</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>S X CLB X ES</td>
<td>31.64</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>31.64</td>
<td>.07</td>
<td>.788</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Error (within)</td>
<td>24384.37</td>
<td>56</td>
<td>435.43</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
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</table>

Mean Feedback Ratings

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Experimental Group</th>
<th>Mean</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Male Assessor</td>
<td>75%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female Assessor</td>
<td>68%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Collaboration</td>
<td>79%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unilateral</td>
<td>64%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ego Strength</td>
<td>76%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No Ego Strength</td>
<td>67%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Collaboration with Ego Strength</td>
<td>78%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Collaboration without Ego Strength</td>
<td>79%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unilateral with Ego Strength</td>
<td>75%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unilateral without Ego Strength</td>
<td>53%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
(M = 64%). A marginally significant main effect was also noted for Ego Strength (F = 3.56, df = 1.56, p = .064) with Ego Strength subjects having higher ratings of importance than subjects who were not provided with this positive set (Ms = 76% and 67%, respectively). Also, the Collaboration X Ego Strength interaction was significant (F = 5.05, df = 1.56, p = .03). The comparison of group means reveals the Unilateral-No Ego Strength condition accounting for a greater share of the variance. Figure 2 depicts the interaction which indicates that the percentage ratings of feedback importance were high for subjects who received the Ego Strength set (M = 75%), the collaborative mode (M = 80%) or both (M = 78%), contrasted with the group of subjects who received neither (M = 53%).

3) Usefulness of Feedback. The means of the experimental groups and the analysis of variance for this measure are displayed in Table 6. A near significant main effect for Collaboration was obtained on this measure (F = 2.93, df = 1.56, p = .092). Subjects in the collaborative mode condition found their feedback to be more useful as a source of self-understanding than did subjects in the unilateral feedback condition (Ms = 7.06 and 6.16, respectively). A Collaboration X Ego Strength interaction also approached significance (F = 2.93, df = 1.56, p = .092). As evident from the graph in Figure 3, the pattern of results on this variable is similar to that obtained on the measure of importance. The lowest ratings of usefulness were reported by subjects in the Unilateral-No Ego Strength group (M = 5.375) compared with the Unilateral-Ego Strength (M = 6.94), the Collaboration-No Ego Strength (M = 7.19) and the Collaboration-Ego Strength subjects (M = 6.94).
Figure 2: Percentage of Personality Feedback Statements Rated as Important as a Function of Feedback Mode (Collaborative vs. Unilateral) and a Positive Cognitive-Emotional Set (Ego Strength vs. No Ego Strength).
Figure 3: Mean Ratings of Usefulness of Personality Feedback as a Function of Feedback Mode (Collaborative vs. Unilateral) and a Positive Cognitive-Emotional Set (Ego Strength vs. No Ego Strength).
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Source of Variance</th>
<th>Sum of Squares</th>
<th>DF</th>
<th>Mean Square</th>
<th>F Ratio</th>
<th>Probability</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sex (S)</td>
<td>8.26</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>8.26</td>
<td>1.84</td>
<td>.180</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Collaboration (CLB)</td>
<td>13.14</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>13.14</td>
<td>2.93</td>
<td>.092</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ego Strength (ES)</td>
<td>6.89</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>6.89</td>
<td>1.54</td>
<td>.220</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>S X CLB</td>
<td>.77</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>.77</td>
<td>.17</td>
<td>.681</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>S X ES</td>
<td>.14</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>.14</td>
<td>.03</td>
<td>.860</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CLB X ES</td>
<td>13.14</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>13.14</td>
<td>2.93</td>
<td>.092</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>S X CLB X ES</td>
<td>.02</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>.02</td>
<td>.00</td>
<td>.953</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Error (within)</td>
<td>250.87</td>
<td>56</td>
<td>4.48</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Mean Feedback Rating

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Experimental Group</th>
<th>Mean</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Male Assessor</td>
<td>6.97</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female Assessor</td>
<td>6.25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Collaboration</td>
<td>7.06</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unilateral</td>
<td>6.16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ego Strength</td>
<td>6.94</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No Ego Strength</td>
<td>6.28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Collaboration with Ego Strength</td>
<td>6.94</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Collaboration without Ego Strength</td>
<td>7.19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unilateral with Ego Strength</td>
<td>6.94</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unilateral without Ego Strength</td>
<td>5.38</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
4) Recall of Feedback. In order to derive a feedback score for each subject, several preliminary steps were required. Initially, subjects' recalled statements were independently rated by two judges who were kept blind from the experimental conditions and hypotheses of the study. The raters were trained to give scores of 0, .5 and 1.0 for each statement recalled by the subject based upon its similarity to the actual feedback statement. A total recall score of 1 to 16 was then theoretically possible and was individually computed for each subject. Interrater reliability was high, $r = .97$, $df = 64$, $p < .01$. In those few cases when the judges' scores differed, an average between the two scores was taken and entered into the analysis.

Results of the three-way analysis of variance and the means are presented in Table 7. Neither the mode of feedback presentation nor the positive cognitive-emotional set had a significant influence on subjects' recall of their personality interpretations. However, a significant main effect was obtained for the sex of the assessor ($F = 7.612$, $df = 1,56$, $p < .01$) such that female subjects recalled significantly more of their feedback when their assessor was male ($M = 6.1$). A $4 \times 2 \times 2$ Analysis of variance also revealed a main effect for individual assessors ($F = 3.88$, $df = 3,48$, $p < .02$) (see Table 8). A Newman-Keuls multiple comparisons test of the pairs of means found assessor 2 (male) to have elicited significantly more recalled statements than assessor 4 (female) ($M_s = 9.24$ and 5.47, respectively). Assessor 3 (male) also obtained higher recall than assessor 1 (female) ($M_s = 7.50$ and 6.75, respectively). The multiple comparisons test yielded no other significant differences other than that obtained between assessor 2 and assessor 4.
Table 7: 2 X 2 X 2 Analysis of Variance

Variable: Recall

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Source of Variance</th>
<th>Sum of Squares</th>
<th>DF</th>
<th>Mean Square</th>
<th>F Ratio</th>
<th>Probability</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sex (S)</td>
<td>81.56</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>81.56</td>
<td>8.37</td>
<td>.005</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Collaboration (CLB)</td>
<td>1.49</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1.49</td>
<td>.15</td>
<td>.698</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ego Strength (ES)</td>
<td>6.41</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>6.41</td>
<td>.66</td>
<td>.421</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>S X CLB</td>
<td>0.71</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.71</td>
<td>.07</td>
<td>.788</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>S X ES</td>
<td>0.28</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.28</td>
<td>.03</td>
<td>.865</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CLB X ES</td>
<td>0.35</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.35</td>
<td>.04</td>
<td>.850</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>S X CLB X ES</td>
<td>0.02</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.024</td>
<td>.01</td>
<td>.960</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Error (within)</td>
<td>545.477</td>
<td>56</td>
<td>9.74</td>
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</table>

Mean Feedback Ratings

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Experimental Group</th>
<th>Mean</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Male Assessor</td>
<td>8.35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female Assessor</td>
<td>6.10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Collaboration</td>
<td>7.36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unilateral</td>
<td>7.06</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ego Strength</td>
<td>7.55</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No Ego Strength</td>
<td>6.92</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Collaboration with Ego Strength</td>
<td>7.78</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Collaboration without Ego Strength</td>
<td>6.98</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unilateral with Ego Strength</td>
<td>7.32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unilateral without Ego Strength</td>
<td>6.84</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
5) Desire for additional feedback. A chi-square analysis was performed on this dichotomous variable. Again, a main effect for sex of the assessor was obtained ($\chi^2 = 7.0, df = 1, p < .01$). Of 31 subjects receiving feedback from male assessors, 27 volunteered their phone numbers to be contacted for the subsequent study involving inkblot testing. This compared with 17 of 30 subjects who responded to their female assessors. Table 9 displays a breakdown among the four assessors from which it can be seen that significant differences were present among the individual assessors ($\chi^2 = 9.07, df = 3, p < .03$). However, as four of the eight experimental cells had an expected frequency of 5.0 or less, there is an increased likelihood of a Type 1 error. Consequently, this effect should be interpreted cautiously.

On the second question reflecting on interest in receiving additional feedback, a significant main effect for sex of the assessor was also obtained ($F = 4.76, df = 1,51, p < .03$). Subjects, all of whom were female, reported having greater interest in participating without receiving credit when their assessor was male ($M = 6.54$) than when female ($M = 5.03$). The three-way analysis of variance results are displayed in Table 10 which also reveals a strong main effect for Collaboration ($F = 7.66, df = 1,51, p < .01$). Subjects who received the collaborative feedback mode were more interested in the follow-up standy than were subjects in the unilateral feedback condition ($Ms = 6.82$ and $4.75$, respectively). A $4 \times 2 \times 2$ analysis of variance was also done which also yielded a main effect for individual assessor that approached significance ($F = 2.479, df = 3,55, p = .071$). The Newman-Keuls test of multiple comparisons indicated significant differences between assessor 2 (male) and assessor 1 (female) ($Ms = 6.93$ and
Table 8: 4 X 2 X 2 Analysis of Variance

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Source of Variance</th>
<th>Sum of Squares</th>
<th>DF</th>
<th>Mean Square</th>
<th>F Ratio</th>
<th>Probability</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Assessor (A)</td>
<td>118.76</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>39.55</td>
<td>3.88</td>
<td>.015</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Collaboration (CLB)</td>
<td>1.48</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1.48</td>
<td>.15</td>
<td>.705</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ego Strength (ES)</td>
<td>6.41</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>6.41</td>
<td>.63</td>
<td>.432</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A X CLB</td>
<td>3.30</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1.10</td>
<td>.11</td>
<td>.955</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A X ES</td>
<td>8.35</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2.78</td>
<td>.27</td>
<td>.845</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CLB X ES</td>
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<td>1</td>
<td>0.35</td>
<td>.04</td>
<td>.853</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A X CLB X ES</td>
<td>7.70</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2.57</td>
<td>.25</td>
<td>.860</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Error (within)</td>
<td>489.95</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>10.21</td>
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</table>
Table 9: Feedback Impact Dependent Variables: Mean Scores for Individual Assessors

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Recall</th>
<th>Mean</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Assessor 1 (female)</td>
<td>6.75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assessor 2 (male)</td>
<td>9.24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assessor 3 (male)</td>
<td>7.50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assessor 4 (female)</td>
<td>5.47</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Interest</th>
<th>Mean</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Assessor 1 (female)</td>
<td>4.09</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assessor 2 (male)</td>
<td>6.93</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assessor 3 (male)</td>
<td>6.12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assessor 4 (female)</td>
<td>5.46</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Interest: Phone Listing</th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>No</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Assessor 1 (female)</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assessor 2 (male)</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assessor 3 (male)</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assessor 4 (female)</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Table 10: 2 X 2 X 2 Analysis of Variance

**Variable:** Degree of Interest

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Source of Variance</th>
<th>Sum of Squares</th>
<th>DF</th>
<th>Mean Square</th>
<th>F Ratio</th>
<th>Probability</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sex (s)</td>
<td>36.92</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>36.92</td>
<td>4.76</td>
<td>.024</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Collaboration (CLB)</td>
<td>59.42</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>59.42</td>
<td>7.66</td>
<td>.008</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ego Strength (ES)</td>
<td>0.73</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.73</td>
<td>1.10</td>
<td>.712</td>
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<tr>
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<td>10.85</td>
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<td>1.06</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1.06</td>
<td>.14</td>
<td>.712</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CLB X ES</td>
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<td>0.05</td>
<td>.01</td>
<td>.934</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>S X CLB X ES</td>
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<td>Error (within)</td>
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<td>51</td>
<td>7.75</td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

#### Mean Feedback Ratings

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Experimental Group</th>
<th>Mean</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Male Assessor</td>
<td>6.54</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female Assessor</td>
<td>5.03</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Collaboration</td>
<td>6.82</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unilateral</td>
<td>4.75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ego Strength</td>
<td>5.88</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No Ego Strength</td>
<td>5.69</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Collaboration with Ego Strength</td>
<td>6.88</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Collaboration without Ego Strength</td>
<td>6.77</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unilateral with Ego Strength</td>
<td>4.83</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unilateral without Ego Strength</td>
<td>4.63</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
4.09, respectively). Assessor 3 (male) also obtained higher ratings of interest than assessor 4 (female) (Ms = 6.12 and 5.46, respectively) but this difference was not significant.

**Personality Measures**

The personality constructs of low social self-esteem, an external locus of control and low need for social approval were predicted to correlate with higher ratings of feedback accuracy, importance and usefulness. Neither of the last two dimensions of feedback responsiveness yielded significant findings. However, feedback accuracy did relate to external locus of control and low social self-esteem. External locus of control correlated significantly with higher ratings of feedback accuracy in general ($r = .2046$, $df = 64$, $p = .052$) although this relationship did not hold with the second measure of feedback accuracy based on percentage ($r = .0756$, $df = 64$, $p = .276$). The strongest relationship between feedback acceptance and a personality construct was obtained with the Janis-Field Scale reflecting social self-esteem. Subjects lowest in self-esteem were found to be more accepting of their feedback overall ($r = -.2424$, $df = 63$, $p = .028$) and rate a higher percentage of their feedback as self-descriptive ($r = -.2138$, $df = 63$, $p = .046$). While significant statistically, the correlations account for only a small proportion of the variance. The three personality constructs did not correlate significantly with any of the other outcome measures of feedback responsiveness. Table 11 presents the correlation coefficients for the three personality constructs with the primary dependent variables.
Table 11  Correlation Coefficients of Personality Constructs with Primary Dependent Measures.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>General Accuracy</th>
<th>Percent Accuracy</th>
<th>General Importance</th>
<th>Percent Importance</th>
<th>Usefulness</th>
<th>Recall</th>
<th>Phone Listing</th>
<th>Degree of Interest</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Social Desirability</td>
<td>-.087</td>
<td>-.041</td>
<td>.118</td>
<td>.091</td>
<td>-.047</td>
<td>-.154</td>
<td>.100</td>
<td>.008</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Internal-External Locus</td>
<td>.205*</td>
<td>.076</td>
<td>.048</td>
<td>.068</td>
<td>.068</td>
<td>-.012</td>
<td>-.011</td>
<td>.164</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>of Control</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Feelings of Inadequacy</td>
<td>-.242**</td>
<td>-.214**</td>
<td>-.134</td>
<td>-.110</td>
<td>-.034</td>
<td>-.007</td>
<td>.129</td>
<td>-.100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*p = .05

**p < .05
CHAPTER V

DISCUSSION

The present research study was designed to investigate three situational factors hypothesized to enhance an individual's responsiveness to unfavorable personality test information. These variables were: (1) the mode in which the test feedback was communicated to the subject, (2) the cognitive-emotional set under which the feedback was received, and (3) whether a person of the same sex or opposite sex provided the test information. The study also examined the relationship between feedback responsiveness and the personality constructs of self-esteem, locus of control and need for social approval.

Five hypotheses were tested in this investigation. Hypothesis I predicted that a collaborative feedback mode would elicit higher ratings of accuracy, importance and usefulness of the feedback and result in greater recall and a higher interest in receiving additional personality test feedback. The pattern of results obtained on this independent variable indicates that the mode of feedback communication strongly affected some but not all of these dependent measures. Subjects' ratings of the accuracy of their feedback, their recall and whether or not they left their phone number to volunteer for a similar feedback study did not significantly differ as a result of how their feedback was communicated to them. However, subjects were significantly more likely to rate their feedback as more important to them when it was provided in a collaborative manner. Moreover, a trend in this direction was also obtained on their ratings of how useful the feedback was in
providing a source of self-understanding. Subjects also revealed a significantly higher interest in participating without experimental credit in a subsequent feedback study when they had received their feedback in a collaborative rather than a unilateral mode.

The second hypothesis predicted that the positive cognitive-emotional set would lead subjects to rate their feedback as more accurate, express greater interest in participating in the follow-up study and recall a greater share of their feedback. This main effect was absent on all predicted dependent measures. It appears that whatever set with which subjects entered the study to receive their feedback, the manipulated positive cognitive-emotional set did not significantly enhance their receptiveness to it.

The third hypothesis predicted that subjects' greatest responsiveness to their test feedback would result when they received both the collaborative feedback approach and a positive cognitive-emotional set whereas they would show least responsiveness when they received neither of these two manipulations. Although the pattern of mean scores tended to be in this direction on the majority of the dependent measures, the interaction was statistically significant only in the case of general ratings of feedback importance. This effect was obtained primarily because of subjects' low ratings of their feedback when they received neither the collaborative feedback mode nor the positive cognitive-emotional set. Subjects' ratings were high when they received either one of the experimental manipulations but receiving both did not result in significantly higher ratings of importance.
The fourth hypothesis predicted a relationship between the personality traits of low self-esteem, external locus of control and a low need for social approval with greater feedback responsiveness. Only the measures of feedback accuracy yielded statistically significant correlations with personality variables. Low need for social approval did not yield any statistically significant correlations which contrasts with previous work in which this construct has been found to relate to acceptance of unfavorable personality test feedback (Mosher, 1965). Consonant with previous findings in personality feedback studies, both external locus of control (Snyder & Larson, 1972; Snyder & Shenkel, 1976) and low self-esteem (Glenn & Janda, 1977) correlated positively with higher ratings of feedback accuracy.

The fifth hypothesis focused on the effects of the gender of the assessor providing the feedback to the subjects. In the present study, it was predicted that female subjects would be more receptive to their feedback when it was communicated by a female rather than a male assessor. In fact, an effect opposite to that predicted was obtained. The female subjects in this study recalled significantly more of their feedback when it was provided by a male and were also significantly more likely to volunteer for the follow-up personality test feedback study and rate their interest in doing so as significantly higher when the assessor was a male. There were no gender differences on the self-report measures of accuracy, importance or usefulness.

It is noteworthy that the accuracy measures were the only primary dependent measures on which a statistically significant effect was not obtained by at least one of the experimental manipulations. A possible
explanation for this may be that the feedback statements selected for the study were not phrased negatively enough to provide an opportunity for the independent variables to make a difference on accuracy ratings. The mean favorability of the 12 "unfavorable" statements was only 4.27 on a 9-point Likert scale. This contrasts with the mean rating of 8.00 for the 4 "unfavorable" statements. Although the 12 unfavorable statements' ratings were below the neutral point of 5 and as a group were collectively more likely to be rejected than accepted, the mean ratings ideally should have been lower. Perhaps, had the mean of the unfavorable statements been between 3.0 and 3.5, subjects' ratings of the accuracy of their interpretations might have varied more as a function of the experimental manipulations. As it was, the range of acceptance scores across all experimental conditions was from 7.37 to 7.76 with accuracy percentage ratings ranging between 75% and 83%.

**Effects of the Feedback Modality**

Prior to this investigation, personality feedback studies had relied predominantly on accuracy and acceptance ratings without attending to the subject's evaluation of feedback. In the present study, the dependent measures of feedback importance and usefulness in contributing to self-understanding were included to address this limitation and to test the impact of the feedback communication modality. In line with the theoretical work of proponents of a collaborative feedback approach (Craddick, 1975; Dana, 1981; Fischer, 1979) and empirical findings of some vocational test feedback studies (Hoffman, Spokane & Magoon, 1981; Rubinstein, 1979), the collaborative feedback approach, as predicted,
yielded significantly higher ratings on these evaluative measures. Thus, in the situation in which subjects were encouraged to draw upon their own life experience to make the Barnum-type interpretations more personally relevant, the subjects judged their feedback to be of greater value. This conclusion received further support by subjects' significantly greater interest in volunteering for the follow-up feedback study when they received their feedback by way of a collaborative approach. On the related dichotomous measure of whether or not the subject listed her phone number to be contacted, the pattern of results was in the same direction but was not statistically significant ($p = .12$).

These measures of desire for additional feedback viewed collectively suggest that the collaborative feedback process may have provided some intrinsic type of reward to subjects. It could be speculated that subjects' greater involvement in the collaborative feedback meetings, as indicated by the manipulation checks, may have fostered an enhanced desire to learn more about themselves from psychological tests. Given their higher evaluations of the feedback they received, this explanation seems plausible. It is apparent that some reinforcing properties inhere in the collaborative feedback modality but future research is required to clarify what these factors might be.

Contrary to prediction, the feedback approach had no impact on how well subjects recalled their interpretations. The rationale for this prediction was that through a subject's drawing on her personal experience to elaborate on her test interpretations, she would better assimilate the feedback than in the case wherein the assessor provided general examples not based on her experience. However, in this study,
as well as several studies involving the communication of vocational testing results, the subjects were able to recall their feedback equally well regardless of how it was communicated to them (Holmes, 1964; Lane, 1952; Rubinstein, 1978).

More interesting results have occurred with the recall measure in personality feedback studies in which the research examined the effects of different situational variables on positive and negative personality feedback (Handelsman & Snyder, 1981; Snyder & Newburg, 1981). However, in the vocational testing literature, studies which have examined different feedback approaches have tended not to find differences in recall. Certainly, this variable is a clinically important one for if an individual incorporates test feedback interpretations into his/her own cognitive framework, the person is more likely to be influenced by it in subsequent behavior. Future research might consider alternative ways of assessing subjects' recall of their feedback. A more sensitive measure of recall might involve extending the time interval between the feedback session and the subject's recall. Yet, alternatively, it must be considered that the personality feedback which subjects were provided in this study may not have been impactful enough in content or complex for recall to vary as a function of the feedback modality.

Effects of the Positive Cognitive-Emotional Set

Snyder et al. (1981) suggested that certain cognitive-emotional states might influence subjects' receptivity to personality test feedback. In the present study, an attempt was made to directly manipulate the set
subjects would have in receiving their bogus test interpretations. The ego strength manipulation was designed to elevate the subject's mood by providing her with an initial complimentary interpretation which would also cognitively orient her toward more openness to the negative test feedback which was to follow. That the magnitude of impact from the positive cognitive-emotional set was so small is understandable in light of the previously mentioned problem regarding the degree of unfavorability of the interpretations. Had the subjects received more strongly worded unfavorable personality interpretations, the ego strength set might have made a greater difference, particularly with respect to the subjects' self-reported accuracy ratings. The manipulation checks revealed that subjects who received the ego strength set did come to see themselves as being more able to admit their personality weaknesses than most people. What was not examined was whether this information significantly elevated their mood. Informally, subjects during the debriefing, reported that the ego strength compliment was appreciated and several stated that it diminished their discomfort in hearing so much critical information about themselves. Follow-up research utilizing cognitive-emotional sets would be improved by including measures to assess subjects' emotional state prior to their receiving the feedback.

Effects of Assessor Gender

Several investigations in the personality feedback literature have examined whether males and females are differentially receptive to favorable and unfavorable test feedback (Snyder & Cowles, 1979; Snyder & Shenkel, 1976). Yet, prior to this study, only Freeman & Stormes
(1977) examined whether the sex of the feedback provider influences subjects' responsiveness. As noted earlier, the present investigation did not replicate these researchers' findings that receptiveness to unfavorable feedback was greater when it was communicated by a person of the same sex. However, the experimental context of the two studies was markedly different. Importantly, subjects in their study did not actually meet their assessor but were told either that the interpretations were made by a male or female psychologist. Furthermore, these investigators employed only self-report measures to assess the outcome changes whereas the impact measures of recall and volunteering for a subsequent study were those which yielded significant differences in the present study.

Whether the strong main effects obtained on these measures were attributable to gender or individual differences among the assessors was also examined. Possibly, a male who elicited stronger impact than all of the other assessors or a female who obtained significantly lower ratings might account for the most significant share of the variance. Analysis of the means, however, did not reveal one female to consistently yield lower ratings from subjects. Although one of the male assessors obtained consistently higher ratings than the others, the differences were only statistically significant when compared with the female assessor who obtained the lowest ratings on each of the three impact measures. The gender effect in this study is also apparent from the pattern of both male assessors having obtained higher ratings than both females on all three of the impact measures.
Moreover, individual differences among the assessors were not present on the assessor credibility measures. Subjects appeared to perceive the four assessors comparably on the variables of likability, competence and personal interest in the subject.

Still, this effect for gender should be partially qualified by the restricted stimulus sampling of the assessors. As Maher (1978) has cautioned, the populations of stimuli must be adequately sampled to reduce the probability of uncontrolled stimulus variables accounting for any differences. Two males and two females, employed in this experimental design, provide the minimum requisite for an investigation of a gender effect. Although no prominent individual differences emerged on the credibility dimensions nor from the results of the primary dependent measures, other personal attributes of the assessors may well have been influential. For instance, one might speculate that the physical attractiveness of the two males in the present study was a potent factor in females' greater responsiveness to their feedback. The pervasive impact of physical attraction in the therapy situation and in interpersonal persuasion contexts has been a consistently replicable finding in the literature (Begley, McCown & Weise, 1975; Kunin & Rodin, 1982). Future research investigating gender effects on subjects' response to assessment findings would benefit from a larger sample of male and female assessors as well as experimental controls exercised over degree of physical attractiveness.

Effects of Personality Traits

One other major interest of this research was an investigation of
the relationship between specific personality attributes and receptivity to unfavorable personality test feedback. The personality traits of low self-esteem, external locus of control and low need for social approval were focused upon because such traits are likely to describe a good share of the clients whom psychologists assess in clinical practice.

Previous research using the Marlowe-Crowne Social Desirability Scale has suggested that those high on their need for social approval are generally more accepting of favorable interpretive feedback (Snyder & Larson, 1972) but less prone to accept unfavorable test interpretations than were subjects with a low need for approval (Mosher, 1965). Although low need for approval did correlate positively with higher ratings of feedback accuracy, the correlation was not statistically significant.

Past research has also shown, as did the present study, that greater external locus of control (Snyder & Larson, 1972; Snyder & Shenkel, 1976) and low self-esteem (Glenn & Janda, 1977) relate positively to higher feedback acceptance. Yet, it is important to note that the two variables only accounted for approximately 4% and 5% of the variance, respectively, such that the actual clinical significance of their influence in this investigation is negligible. Still, personality feedback research in the future would benefit from additional exploration of the contribution of personality traits to situational factors that influence responsiveness to test feedback.

Methodological Issues and Implications for Future Research

A major innovation of this research investigation was its attempt to bridge the empirical work from the vocational assessment literature
and the personality test feedback or "acceptance phenomenon" studies using the false feedback experimental paradigm. In the past, personality feedback studies have relied upon written rather than interpersonal modes of communicating the bogus test interpretations. The present research sought a more meaningful analogue of the clinical assessment context through its investigation of the efficacy of a collaborative feedback approach. Other steps were also taken to design a more realistic analogue from the subject's perspective. The include the following considerations: (1) Subjects met individually with their doctoral students in clinical psychology in the therapy rooms of the Clinical Psychology Center, (2) The doctoral student assessors engaged subjects in discussion of their past experience with psychological tests and explained the rationales for the feedback just as would typically be done for an actual client, (3) A bogus PRF profile with the student's initials was continually referred to in the course of the feedback session. That this "setting of the stage" was successful was evidenced by the absence of suspicion among the 64 female subjects. No subject acknowledged doubts that the feedback they were receiving was not test derived, although several remarked with surprise that the test battery yielded so much accurate information about them.

In any analogue research, certain factors loom large in placing limits on the external validity of the findings. Each of the limitations inherent in the present study highlights avenues for future research.

The false feedback paradigm utilizing Barnum-like interpretive statements permitted greater internal validity with which to investigate the efficacy of a collaborative feedback approach. However, in an
actual clinical test interpretation session, such generalized feedback would constitute at most only a minor share of an assessor's interpretive feedback. Moreover, the information would be more personally relevant and idiographically descriptive of the person's psychological functioning. Greater external validity would result from future studies that provide genuine test feedback to clients. Bradley and Bradley's (1977) use of PRF percentage scores on four personality dimensions suggest a recent advance in this direction. Particular effort toward controlling for the level of favorability would be required in any study using genuine feedback.

Another limitation on the generalizability of findings to the actual clinical setting pertains to the rigid control exercised over the execution of the collaborative feedback approach. In doing so, this restriction provided a conservative test for the impact of this feedback approach. However, in the typical clinical assessment feedback situation, an entire hour session would be utilized for the disclosure of test results wherein the collaborative approach would focus far more heavily on the client's everyday experience and the when-when-not context of the test interpretations. Thus, the level of the assessee's participation and ego-investment would be considerably greater. That significant effects were obtained on both the evaluative feedback dimensions and on impact measures suggests the potential value of this approach. With respect to future research that seeks greater external validity, the major methodological difficulty involves comparability of time for the session since the collaborative feedback approach tends to require more time. Thus, any observed differences
between groups could be attributable to the personal time shared between assessor and assessee.

The subjects who volunteered to participate in the present study were Introductory Psychology students. This poses limitations on the population to which the findings may be applicable. Yet, in this preliminary phase of research, a nonclinical population is an appropriate starting place. This is particularly germane in the case of using false test feedback and inductions of various cognitive-emotional sets. In the case of continued research with the collaborative feedback approach, it might prove fruitful to solicit volunteers who have specific problems with which they would like brief help. Specific areas for assessment and feedback might involve dating or assertiveness skills. By using volunteer subjects for specific problematic concerns, the feedback received would more likely be similarly ego-investing for the participants.

Further consideration must also be given to the selection of outcome measures that extend beyond the self-reports of accuracy and feedback acceptance. The present study could have expanded further on both the evaluative and impact measures which would have enriched our understanding of the feedback process. It is necessary to clarify not only how individuals subjectively respond to their test information when it is provided within a collaborative mode, but also whether actual cognitive and behavioral changes result.

The results of this exploratory investigation suggest that the collaborative feedback approach may be an effective way of sharing
psychological assessment findings. What is particularly indicated at this time is for future research to move toward greater external validity in order to be of more therapeutic interest to the practicing clinician.
CHAPTER VI

SUMMARY

Traditional models of psychological assessment have tended to diminish the importance of open disclosure of test results with the client. However, during recent years various socio-political changes have lead to "right of access" principles mandating greater accountability to clients involved in human services. A growing number of clinicians involved in psychological assessment have responded to the policy changes by emphasizing in their writings the therapeutic value of sharing assessment findings with their clients. There has of yet been little empirical research investigating potentially effective means of communicating test results. The present study was designed to investigate the potential efficacy of three factors for enhancing subjects' responsiveness to unfavorable personality feedback. The study also considered the importance of personality variables that might have implications in the assessment feedback context.

Specifically, it was predicted that greater responsiveness to personality feedback would result from the following conditions: (1) When subjects received their feedback in a collaborative rather than a unilateral mode of presentation, (2) When subjects received a positive cognitive-emotional set prior to hearing their feedback, and (3) When an assessor of the same sex provided the feedback rather than an opposite-sexed assessor. The personality factors of low self-esteem, external locus of control and low need for social approval were also predicted to correlate positively with responsiveness to
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self-esteem, external locus of control and low need for social approval
were also predicted to correlate positively with responsiveness to the
unfavorable personality feedback.

Sixty-four undergraduate females volunteered to take a battery of
personality tests and meet at a later time in the week to receive their
feedback. The Marlowe-Crowne Social Desirability Scale, the Rotter
Internal-External Locus of Control Scale and the Janis-Field Feelings
of Inadequacy Scale comprised the test battery. Following subjects'
completions of their test battery, they were individually scheduled for
a feedback session later in the week. Subjects were lead to believe
that the bogus, generalized interpretations they would receive had been
interpreted on the basis of their test results. Each of the two male
and female graduate student assessors provided feedback to 16 subjects
who were randomly assigned within experimental conditions.

The effects of the experimental conditions were assessed by eight
questionnaire items involving responsiveness to personality feedback. These included self-report measures of the accuracy and importance of the feedback and its usefulness in providing a source of self-understanding. Subjects also responded to a measure of feedback recall and two measures assessing their interest in receiving additional personality feedback.

The results of the study may be summarized as follows:

1) Effects of the Collaborative Feedback Mode. Subjects indicated that they found their feedback to be significantly more important as well as more useful (p < .09) in contributing to their self-understanding when their personality feedback was communicated in a collaborative rather than a unilateral approach. Moreover, they also expressed greater interest in participating in a subsequent personality test feedback study in the case when they received the collaborative feedback manipulation. These findings support both the theoretical tenets of proponents of a collaborative approach to psychological assessment (Craddick, 1976; Dana, 1981; Fischer, 1979) as well as some of the empirical findings in the vocational literature which underscore the importance of the mode in which test information is conveyed (Hoffman, Spokane & Magoon, 1981; Rubinstein, 1978).

2) Effects of the Positive Cognitive-Emotional Set. The manipulation of this set had relatively minor impact on subjects' responsiveness to their bogus test information. None of the predicted effects were obtained. Analysis of the pattern of results revealed the positive cognitive-emotional set to have some additive impact but not of a
significant degree. A positive explanation for the failure of this set to influence responsiveness involved the inadequate degree of unfavorability of the feedback statements employed in the study. It was noted that accuracy ratings were uniformly high across experimental conditions. Thus, the feedback statements may not have provided an adequate test of the potential efficacy of such a set in reducing defensiveness to unfavorable test feedback.

3) Sex of the Assessor. Female subjects in this study indicated greater impact from their feedback when it was provided by a male rather than a female. This effect was opposite to what had been predicted which was based upon the results found in a previous feedback study (Freeman & Stormes, 1977) wherein subjects were more accepting of unfavorable feedback when it was provided by a same-sexed person. However, these authors only utilized self-report ratings and did not meet their interpreters. In the present study, females' greater responsiveness to feedback provided by males was not evident on the self-report measures. Rather, the effect was obtained on subjects' recall of their interpretations and their greater desire to participate in a similar study in which they would receive additional test feedback.

4) Effects of Personality Variables. Correlation coefficients indicated that only the accuracy ratings, which were uninfluenced by the independent variables in the study, related significantly to two of the three personality traits investigated. Supporting the findings of previous research, the personality traits of external locus of control and low self-esteem were found to positively correlate with higher ratings of accuracy of the unfavorable personality feedback. Scores on the Marlowe-
Crowne Social Desirability Scale did not correlate significantly with any of the outcome measures of feedback responsiveness.

A unique feature of this research investigation was its attempt to bridge the literature from the vocational testing area with the studies involving personality feedback which have employed a false feedback experimental paradigm. While the research in the personality feedback area could be criticized for the primacy it has accorded to internally valid research at the expense of asking clinically significant questions, the vocational test feedback studies have tended to be so methodologically flawed that their investigations of meaningful questions are of diminished value. Prior to this study, the manipulation of feedback approach had not been attempted in any personality feedback studies and had obtained equivocal results with respect to its efficacy in a vocational context. Thus, the present investigation employed the false feedback paradigm to insure improved internal control over the manipulation of the collaborative feedback mode. That this approach yielded statistically significant effects on some of the primary dependent measures indicates its potential value in a psychological assessment context. Directions for further research on this variable were emphasized, with particular attention focused on the need for greater external validity to be of more value to the practicing clinician.
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APPENDIX 1

Barnum-type Personality Interpretations
1. Your coping skills aren't as flexible as they could be and as a consequence you tend to rely on some that aren't very constructive. . . . when you're swamped and you really need to be organized sometimes you might just get more flustered.

2. Although you're basically a serious person you love to laugh and enjoy the company of others. . . . really what's meant here is that you've got both an introverted and an extroverted side to you.

3. It's difficult for you to express your anger in a direct manner at the time when you feel it. . . . so if you get mad at somebody, like your mother or your roommate, you might tend to hold off telling them.

4. You often spend more time than you should worrying about the reactions of others. . . . for example, you might become overly concerned with somebody's disapproval of you.

5. You tend to be more passive and submissive with men than you are with women. . . . it seems that it may be easier for you to say or do what you want with members of the same sex.

6. You're the sort of person who will usually make time for a friend who needs it. . . . for example, if you've got a friend who's really feeling down, you'll tend to be there for her.

7. You tend to be suspicious sometimes about the motives people have for being with you. . . . oh, maybe you might distrust the reasons behind some guy's interest in you.

8. It's hard for you to deal with the anger and hostility of others. . . . when somebody is really made at you, you sometimes take it pretty hard.

9. You tend to feel self-conscious and insecure when you're with people whom you believe to be superior. . . . it might be hard for you to talk comfortably with some professor you think is brilliant.

10. You generally feel mature and capable of meeting your needs. . . . basically you can handle most of the problems of everyday life.

11. You tend to ask people for their opinions on what you should do all too often rather than relying on yourself. . . . sometimes your first impulse might be to ask someone even if you have your own opinion.

12. You have a tendency to feel sorry for yourself when things don't go your way. . . . you might have some exciting plans that don't work out, you might tend to sulk a little.

13. Sometimes you avoid events because of your fears of failure. . . . if
you know you can't do something as well as you would like, you might not do it at all.

14. You're likely to take the easy way out all too often. . . . for example, it might be easier sometimes for you to hold back a feeling if you think saying it would be hard for you.

15. You value loyalty very highly in your friendships. . . . you're the sort of person who'll stick by your friends.

16. You have strong feelings about certain issues, it's difficult for you to talk about them without becoming upset. . . . when somebody is really mad at you, sometimes you take it pretty hard.
APPENDIX 2

Pilot Questionnaire
PERSONALITY QUESTIONNAIRE

We are interested in your judgments about the personal desirability of each of a number of descriptive statements. Your personal reaction to each statement is what is desired. Imagine how you would feel if each statement on the following pages were applied to you personally and rate each accordingly.

Please try to read each statement separately and independently of all others and then rate each statement in terms of its desirability by placing the appropriate number in the blank to the left of the item number. Use the following scale to reflect your rating of the desirability of these statements:

1  2  3  4  5  6  7  8  9
very unfavorable  unfavorable neutral favorable very favorable

Again, in making your answers, respond to the statements as if they were applied to you. Please try to rate every one and do not hurry through them. Thank you for your cooperation.

1. You tend to feel self-conscious and insecure when you are with people whom you believe to be superior.

2. Occasionally when things aren't going well for you you escape by daydreaming about the past.

3. You often worry about money matters more than you need to be concerned with them.

4. You tend to be quick at sizing up social situations.

5. Sometimes your strong needs to be liked and admired by others work against you.

6. You often feel shy in situations when you want to meet someone you don't know.

7. You pride yourself as an independent thinker and do not accept others' statements thoughtlessly.

8. You sometimes get depressed when things don't go your way and have difficulty ridding yourself of the feelings.

9. Sometimes you avoid events because of your fears of failure.

10. It's difficult for you to deal with the anger and hostility of others.
11. You enjoy being admired by members of the opposite sex.

12. You tend to be suspicious sometimes about the motives people have for being with you.

13. You find it easier than most people to accept criticism.

14. Every once in awhile you become dismayed over something you said during a day and continue to worry about it.

15. You often procrastinate on tasks which you find boring and this creates conflicts for you.

16. Although you are basically a serious person you love to laugh and enjoy the company of others.

17. Sometimes you get so angry you feel like smashing things.

18. You have such strong feelings about certain issues, it is difficult for you to talk about them without becoming upset.

19. You often spend more time than you should worrying about the reactions of others.

20. Most people would describe you as a cooperative person.

21. You might be considered naive because you're often so unaware of how much impact you have on others.

22. You tend to present yourself in as favorable a light as possible when you meet people.

23. It's hard for you to receive compliments in areas where you doubt yourself.

24. Although you are sympathetic to others' misfortunes, you aren't very active in social causes.

25. In stressful situations, you are able to cope as well as most people.

26. You don't usually show how sensitive you are to others' criticism of you.

27. You have a hard time dealing with people whom you feel are avoiding you.
28. You have a tendency to feel sorry for yourself when things don't go your way.

29. Your temper is generally well within your control.

30. You often wonder why people act as they do to the point where this may bother you.

31. It's difficult for you to express your anger in a direct manner at the time when you feel it.

32. In general, you have a good ability to deal with your problems so that you are not often depressed.

33. You tend to feel resentful of those who keep you from your goals.

34. It's hard for you to make the first move in a social situation with someone of the opposite sex.

35. You sometimes feel you're not as good or capable as you'd like to be and this becomes upsetting for you.

36. You generally feel mature and capable of meeting your needs.

37. You tend to be more passive and submissive with men than you are with women.

38. You usually face your responsibilities in a mature, adultlike manner.

39. Sometimes you doubt whether you will achieve your most important life goals.

40. You seem to be someone who can be trusted with secrets.

41. Your aspirations in life are not always very realistic.

42. Your friends are likely to describe you as sensitive to their feelings.

43. You are often not as prepared for things as you'd like.

44. Although you don't often face up to it, you're sometimes more competitive with your friends than you would like.
45. You tend to take the easy way out all too often.
46. You tend to procrastinate on projects that are very difficult for you.
47. You often wish to change your physical appearance in ways which others would think unnecessary.
48. Sometimes you become disturbed by too much change and uncertainty in your environment.
49. You tend to be constructively critical of your own actions but find it difficult to be helpful to your friends in the same way.
50. A lot of your attitudes have become more flexible during the past few years.
51. It's hard for you to get as close to some people as you would like.
52. You're the sort of person who will usually make time for a friend who needs it.
53. Sometimes you cry without knowing the reason.
54. Your coping skills are not as flexible as they could be such that you tend to rely on some that aren't very constructive.
55. You value loyalty very highly in your friendships.
56. Sometimes your need to be alone is so strong that you just can't give to others what they want.
57. Security is sometimes more important to you than it needs to be so that you tend to be too cautious.
58. Although you listen to others' opinions, you tend to make your own decisions.
59. Sometimes you wonder what people really are thinking about you but you have a very hard time asking them.
60. You sometimes have serious doubts about whether you made the right decision or did the right thing.
61. You have struggled conscientiously to develop a concept of just who and what you want to become.
_____
62. It's difficult for you to hold back your hurt about rejection.
_____
63. Your social behavior is especially prone to change as sometimes you are extroverted and sociable while at other times you become very introverted and reserved.
_____
64. You have some personality weaknesses which you don't share with many people but you do some disclosure of yourself with them.
_____
65. Sometimes you wonder what people really think about you but you have a hard time asking them for feedback.
_____
66. You tend to ask people for their opinions on what you should do all too often rather than relying on yourself.
_____
67. You have a considerable amount of unused capacity which you haven't been able to develop.
_____

Now, at this time I would like you to go back through the items and put true (T) or false (F) at the end of each statement depending on whether the statement is descriptive of you. The questionnaire will be used to develop a personality inventory so try to be honest. As you do not put your name on the form, there's no need to be concerned about confidentiality. Again, thanks for your participation.
APPENDIX 3

Bogus Personality Research Form Profile
PERSONALITY RESEARCH FORM

PROFILE SHEET: FEMALE

Name: S.M.  Age:  Form Administered: 

Date Tested:  Other Information: 

NOTES

FEMALE NORMS

Standard Scores

Raw Score

Profile Sheet for the Personality Research Form by David N. Eysenck. Ph.D. Copyright 1967 by Research Psychologists Press, Inc., Goshen, New York. All rights reserved. Printed in U.S.A. Copyright in Canada.
APPENDIX 4

Personality Feedback Questionnaire #1
PERSONALITY FEEDBACK QUESTIONNAIRE #1

1. To what extent do the personality statements you received accurately describe your personality features?

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2. What percentage of the personality statements you received are accurate descriptions of you?

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<th></th>
<th>15%</th>
<th>30%</th>
<th>45%</th>
<th>60%</th>
<th>75%</th>
<th>90%+</th>
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3. How important to you were the personality features which your test results included?

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4. What percentage of the personality statements you received are important to you?

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<th>15%</th>
<th>30%</th>
<th>45%</th>
<th>60%</th>
<th>75%</th>
<th>90%+</th>
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5. How useful to you was the personality feedback you received in providing a source of self-understanding?

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APPENDIX 5

Personality Questionnaire #2
The feedback you received from your personality tests was comprised of several interpretive statements. Try now to recall as many of these as you can and write them below.
If you would like to volunteer for another experiment in which you will receive personality feedback from your results on an inkblot test, please leave your phone number here_________________________.

We may not be able to provide experimental credit for the participation however. If we cannot give you credit, to what extent would you still want to participate?

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9
not at all slightly moderately extremely
interested interested interested interested
APPENDIX 6

Postexperimental Questionnaire
PERSONAL REACTION QUESTIONNAIRE

1. Do you think you're a person who is open to receiving personality feedback?

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<td>moderately</td>
<td>open</td>
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2. Do you think most people are open to receiving personality feedback?

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</table>

3. Do you think most people have a hard time admitting their personality weaknesses?

   | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 |
   | extremely | easy | extremely | hard |

4. Do you think you have a hard time admitting your personality weaknesses?

   | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 |
   | extremely | easy | extremely | hard |

5. How much did you participate in the interpretation of your test results?

   | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 |
   | not at all | slightly | moderately | actively |

6. How encouraged did you feel by your test interpreter to participate in the interpretation of your test results?

   | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 |
   | not at all | slightly | moderately | actively |

7. Did your test interpreter seem interested in you?

   | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 |
   | not at all | slightly | moderately | extremely |
8. Did your test interpreter seem competent to you?

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9. Did you like your test interpreter?

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APPENDIX 7

Rotter Internal-External Locus of Control Scale
PERSONAL ATTITUDES QUESTIONNAIRE I

Read each of the following statements carefully and select one of the two that best describes your belief. Please try to answer all items.

1. a. Children get into trouble because their parents punish them too much.
   b. The trouble with most children nowadays is that their parents are too easy with them.

2. a. Many of the unhappy things in people's lives are partly due to bad luck.
   b. People's misfortunes result from the mistakes they make.

3. a. One of the major reasons why we have wars is because people don't take enough interest in politics.
   b. There will always be wars, no matter how hard people try to prevent them.

4. a. In the long run people get the respect they deserve in this world.
   b. Unfortunately, an individual's worth often passes unrecognized no matter how hard he tries.

5. a. The idea that teachers are unfair to students is nonsense.
   b. Most students don't realize the extent to which their grades are influenced by accidental happenings.

6. a. Without the right breaks one cannot be an effective leader.
   b. Capable people who fail to become leaders have not taken advantage of their opportunities.

7. a. No matter how hard you try some people just don't like you.
   b. People who can't get others to like them don't understand how to get along with others.

8. a. Heredity plays the major role in determining one's personality.
   b. It is one's experiences in life which determine what they're like.

9. a. I have often found that what is going to happen will happen.
   b. Trusting to fate has never turned out as well for me as making a decision to take a definite course of action.

10. a. In the case of the well prepared student there is rarely if ever such a thing as an unfair test.
    b. Many times exam questions tend to be so unrelated to course work so that studying is really useless.
11. a. Becoming a success is a matter of hard work, luck has little or nothing to do with it.
   b. Getting a good job depends mainly on being in the right place at the right time.

12. a. The average citizen can have an influence in government decisions.
   b. This world is run by the few people in power, and there is not much the little guy can do about it.

13. a. When I make plans, I am almost certain that I can make them work.
   b. It is not always wise to plan too far ahead because many things turn out to be a matter of good or bad fortune anyhow.

14. a. There are certain people who are just no good.
   b. There is some good in everybody.

15. a. In my case getting what I want has little or nothing to do with luck.
   b. Many times we might just as well decide what to do by flipping a coin.

16. a. Who gets to be the boss often depends on who was lucky enough to be in the right place first.
   b. Getting people to do the right thing depends upon ability, luck has little or nothing to do with it.

17. a. As far as world affairs are concerned, most of us are the victims of forces we can neither understand, nor control.
   b. By taking an active part in political and social affairs the people can control world events.

18. a. Most people don't realize the extent to which their lives are controlled by accidental happenings.
   b. There really is no such thing as "luck."

19. a. One should always be willing to admit mistakes.
   b. It is usually best to cover up one's mistakes.

20. a. It is hard to know whether or not a person really likes you.
   b. How many friends you have depends on how nice a person you are.

21. a. In the long run the bad things that happen to us are balanced by the good ones.
   b. Most misfortunes are the result of lack of ability, ignorance, laziness, or all three.

22. a. With enough effort we can wipe out political corruption.
   b. It is difficult for people to have much control over the things politicians do in office.
23. a. Sometimes I can't understand how teachers arrive at the grades they give.
b. There is a direct connection between how hard I study and the grades I get.

24. a. A good leader expects people to decide for themselves what they should do.
b. A good leader makes it clear to everybody what their jobs are.

25. a. Many times I feel that I have little influence over the things that happen to me.
b. It is impossible for me to believe that chance or luck plays an important role in my life.

26. a. People are lonely because they don't try to be friendly.
b. There's not much use in trying too hard to please people, if they like you, they like you.

27. a. There is too much emphasis on athletics in high school.
b. Team sports are an excellent way to build character.

28. a. What happens to me is my own doing.
b. Sometimes I feel that I don't have enough control over the direction my life is taking.

29. a. Most of the time I can't understand why politicians behave the way they do.
b. In the long run the people are responsible for bad government on a national as well as on a local level.
APPENDIX 8

Marlowe-Crowne Social Desirability Scale.
PERSONAL ATTITUDES QUESTIONNAIRE II

Listed below are a number of statements concerning personal attitudes and traits. Read each item and decide whether the statement is true or false as it pertains to you personally.

1. Before voting I thoroughly investigate the qualifications of all the candidates.
2. I never hesitate to go out of my way to help someone in trouble.
3. It is sometimes hard for me to go on with my work if I am not encouraged.
4. I have never intensely disliked anyone.
5. On occasion I have had doubts about my ability to succeed in life.
6. I sometimes feel resentful when I don't get my way.
7. I am always careful about my manner of dress.
8. My table manners at home are as good as when I eat out in a restaurant.
9. If I could get into a movie without paying and be sure I was not seen, I would probably do it.
10. On a few occasions, I have given up doing something because I thought too little of my ability.
11. I like to gossip at times.
12. There have been times when I felt like rebelling against people in authority even though I knew they were right.
13. No matter who I'm talking to, I'm always a good listener.
14. I can remember "playing sick" to get out of something.
15. There have been occasions when I took advantage of someone.
16. I'm always willing to admit it when I make a mistake.
17. I always try to practice what I preach.
18. I don't find it particularly difficult to get along with loud mouthed obnoxious people.
19. I sometimes try to get even, rather than forgive and forget.
20. When I don't know something I don't at all mind admitting it.
21. I am always courteous, even to people who are disagreeable.
22. At times I have really insisted on having things my own way.
23. There have been occasions when I felt like smashing things.
24. I would never think of letting someone else be punished for my wrongdoings.
25. I never resent being asked to return a favor.
26. I have never been irked when people expressed ideas very different from my own.
27. I never make a long trip without checking the safety of my car.
28. There have been times when I was quite jealous of the good fortune of others.
29. I have almost never felt the urge to tell someone off.
30. I am sometimes irritated by people who ask favors of me.
31. I have never felt that I was punished without cause.
32. I sometimes think when people have a misfortune they only got what they deserved.
33. I have never deliberately said something that hurt someone's feelings.
APPENDIX 9

Janis-Field Feelings of Inadequacy Scale
### PERSONAL ATTITUDES QUESTIONNAIRE III

Please read each of the following questions carefully and select one of the five responses that is most descriptive of you.

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<th>Responses:</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Very Often</td>
<td>Fairly Often</td>
<td>Sometimes</td>
<td>Once in a Great While</td>
<td>Practically Never</td>
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1. How often do you have the feeling that there is nothing you can do well?
2. How often do you feel that you have handled yourself well at a social gathering?
3. How often do you have the feeling that you can do everything well?
4. When you have to talk in front of a class or a group of people your own age, how afraid or worried do you usually feel? (e.g., very afraid)
5. How often are you troubled with shyness?
6. Do you ever feel so discouraged with yourself that you wonder whether anything is worthwhile?
7. How often do you worry about whether other people like to be with you?
8. How comfortable are you when starting a conversation with people whom you don't know? (e.g., very comfortable)
9. Do you ever think that you are a worthless individual?
10. When you talk in front of a class or a group of people of your own age, how pleased are you with your performance? (e.g., very pleased)
11. How often do you feel self-conscious?
12. How often do you feel that you are a successful person?
13. How often do you feel inferior to most of the people you know?
14. How confident are you that your success in your future job or career is assured? (e.g., very confident)
APPENDIX 10

Consent Form
15. When you speak in a class discussion, how sure of yourself do you feel? (e.g., very sure)

16. How much do you worry about how well you get along with other people? (e.g., very worried)

17. How sure of yourself do you feel when among strangers?

18. How confident do you feel that some day the people you know will look up to you and respect you?

19. How often do you feel that you dislike yourself?

20. In general, how confident do you feel about your abilities?
INFORMED CONSENT FORM

This research project involves an investigation of personality test interpretation and feedback approaches. You will be asked to complete three questionnaires after which you will be scheduled to meet with a doctoral level student in Clinical Psychology to receive your test interpretation. This is all the study will require of you. A full explanation of all the details of the research will be explained once you complete the study.

Importantly, your test results will remain confidential and will be shared only with you. If at any time during the study you become uncomfortable you may feel free to withdraw your consent to participate.

In the event physical injury results from biomedical or behavioral research, the human subject should individually seek appropriate medical treatment and shall be entitled to reimbursement or compensation consistent with the self insurance program for Comprehensive General Liability established by the Department of Administration under authority or judgment by the means provided by MCA Section 2-9-315. In the event of a claim for such physical injury, further information may be sought from the University Legal Counsel.

I have read the above material and wish to participate in this study. I understand that I can discontinue the experiment at any time and am under no obligation to complete it.

________________________________________
Signature
UNILATERAL FEEDBACK SESSION TRANSCRIPT

Assessor: All right, then. It seems that you tend to be more passive and submissive with men than you are with women . . . like it may be easier for you to say or do what you want with members of the same sex.

Subject: The first one was passive. What was the other?

Assessor: Submissive . . . The next one here is that it's difficult for you to express your anger in a direct manner at the time when you feel it . . . . So if you get mad at somebody like your mother or your roommate you might tend to hold off telling them.

Subject: Hmm.

Assessor: The next one is that you tend to ask people for their opinions on what you should do all too often rather than relying on yourself . . . sometimes your first impulse might be to ask someone even if you have your own opinion.

Assessor: O.K. Let's see. You're likely to take the easy way out all too often . . . for example, it might be easier for you sometimes to hold back a feeling if you think saying it would be hard for you.

Subject: Uh huh. Yeah, that's really true.

Assessor: You generally feel mature and capable of meeting your needs . . . basically, you can handle most of the problems of everyday life.

Assessor: This next one is that you have such strong feelings about certain issues, it's difficult for you to talk about them without becoming upset . . . so that some subjects may touch some personal, sensitive spot.

Subject: (laughs) Yeah, there's a lot of those all right. God, this is really amazing. I'm just taking it all in. Some of this is just really on target.

Assessor: So you're surprised.

Subject: Yeah, just a lot of these are true of me.

Assessor: O.K. Let's go on . . . . You value loyalty very highly in your friendships . . . you're the sort of person who sticks by her friends.
Subject: Yeah, I agree with that one, too.

Assessor: All right . . . you have a tendency to feel sorry for yourself when things don't go your way . . . you might have some exciting plans that don't work out so you might tend to sulk a little.

Assessor: O.K. Sometimes you avoid events because of your fears of failure . . . for example, if you know you can't do something as well as you'd like, you might not do it at all.

Assessor: Although you're basically a serious person, you love to laugh and enjoy the company of others . . . really, what's meant here is that you've got both an introverted and an extroverted side to you.

Assessor: You often spend more time than you should worrying about the reactions of others . . . for example, you might become overly concerned with somebody's disapproval of you.

Subject: Yeah, that's for sure.

Assessor: The next one here is that you tend to be suspicious sometimes about the motives people have for being with you . . . oh, maybe you might distrust the reasons behind some guy's interest in you.

Assessor: You're the sort of person who will usually make time for a friend who needs it . . . like if you have a friend who is really down, you'll tend to try to be there.

Assessor: You tend to feel self-conscious and insecure when you're with people whom you believe to be superior . . . . Maybe it might be hard for you to talk comfortably with some professor you think is brilliant.

Subject: I . . . I don't know if it was so much on that one question from the personality test, um, something about feeling self-conscious around people or something . . . because of my weight, that is, I guess I was feeling. I dunno about a professor or whatever, but I think that maybe a nice looking girl that's nice and slender, you know, but also has a real good personality; she can be attractive but also inside so that's when I feel really conscious of myself. Is that what you mean?

Assessor: Yes, that's fine . . . . All right, this one here is that it is difficult for you to deal with the anger and hostility of others. O.K., like if somebody is really made at you sometimes you take it really hard.
Assessor: O.K. Your coping skills aren't as flexible as they could be and as a consequence you tend to rely on some that aren't very constructive . . . . That's like if you're swamped and really need to be organized, sometimes you'll just get more flustered.

Subject: Yeah, especially around midterms, huh?
COLLABORATIVE FEEDBACK SESSION TRANSCRIPT

Assessor: O.K. The first one here is that your coping skills aren't as flexible as they could be so that you tend to rely on some that aren't very constructive. How does that seem descriptive of you?

Subject: Well, yeah, it's probably true. Drinking, when I have a problem. I know I do that.

Assessor: All right. The next one is that although you're basically a serious person, you love to laugh and enjoy the company of others. How does this seem to fit?

Subject: Yeah, well I like to party but I guess I take myself pretty seriously when it comes down to it. Is that what you mean?

Assessor: Yes, that's fine . . . . It's difficult for you to express anger in a direct manner at the time when you're feeling it.

Subject: That's really true, very true.

Assessor: How is that true of you? Can you give an example?

Subject: Oh, disagreements with friends or something like that. I don't tend to show it.

Assessor: O.K. The next one is that you often spend more time than you should worrying about the reactions of others. How does this fit?

Subject: Well, it does and it doesn't. It probably depends on whose reaction it is. Probably more often the people I respect I might be more concerned about what they think. I can see that I could worry about their reactions. I mean it's human nature (laughs).

Assessor: (laughs) Yeah. O.K. The next one is that you tend to be more passive and submissive with men than you are with women.

Subject: Yeah, that's probably true.

Assessor: Can you give an example of that?

Subject: I think most of us are, just because it's always been that way.

Assessor: O.K. You tend to be suspicious sometimes about the motives people have for being with you. How does this apply to you?

Subject: Probably in relationships I'm not always trusting. Is that what you mean?
Assessor: It's up to you whether or not these seem true of you and . . .

Subject: All right. Yeah, well I think with men I'm more suspicious.

Assessor: You're the sort of person who will usually make time for a friend who needs it.

Subject: Yeah, probably. Like if I think somebody is lonely I'll go spend some time with them. I did that for a girlfriend recently.

Assessor: O.K. The next one here is that it's hard for you to deal with the anger and hostility of others. How does that one fit you?

Subject: (laughs) Yeah, yeah. Somebody's angry at me right now . . . probably because I suppress my anger. I'm more patient than he is, I think.

Assessor: Here's another one. You tend to feel self-conscious and insecure when you're with people whom you feel are superior. In what kinds of situations does that apply?

Subject: Huh, that's funny 'cuz I used to be just the other way. But it is true 'cuz I'm just beginning to realize how much I don't know.

Assessor: O.K. The next one is that you generally feel mature and capable of meeting your needs.

Subject: That's true.

Assessor: Are there aspects of your life where it's particularly true for you?

Subject: Well, I'm putting myself through school now, working and I couldn't have done that a few years ago. I'm sticking with it.

Assessor: O.K. You tend to ask people for their opinions all too often rather than relying on yourself. In what situations is that descriptive for you?

Subject: I don't think that's true of me. I ask opinions but I think I rely on myself.

Assessor: O.K. You have a tendency to feel sorry for yourself when things don't go your way. Are there cases when that fits you?

Subject: Yeah, that's true, but I guess I'd like to think I'm coming out of that. Like at work, I don't brood as much.

Assessor: All right. The next one is that you sometimes avoid events because of your fears of failure. How does that apply to you?
Subject: Well, games like tennis or something I played just once and gave up.

Assessor: All right, the next one is that you're likely to take the easy way out all too often. When does that seem to fit?

Subject: I dunno. I think I really enjoy a challenge sometimes. It's hard to think of situations when I do that anymore.

Assessor: O.K. The next one is that you value loyalty highly in your friendships. How is that descriptive of you?

Subject: Well, I just expect it because I'm loyal. Sincerity's really important to me.

Assessor: O.K. The last one here is that you have such strong feelings about certain issues, it's difficult for you to talk about them without becoming upset. How does that apply to you?

Subject: (laughs) Yeah, I think just about any issue (laughs). Gosh. I can get heated real easily on things I believe in. Yeah.