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## THE MEASUREMENT OF FILIPINO ATTITUDES TOWARD AMERICA BY USE OF THE THURSTONE TECHNIQUE

GERTRUDE HILL NYSTROM

The present study aims to measure the attitudes of Filipino students toward American life by use of the Thurstone technique. Current literature in the field of race relations was searched for suitable brief statements or comments on American life made by Filipino students. Such studies were examined as the Pacific Coast Race Relations Survey, Social Distance Studies, and unpublished reports of Oriental Student Conferences in the United States. These statements in turn were submitted and sorted by fifty Filipino students selected at random from the Directory of Filipino Students in the United States, 1931. The subjects were asked to sort the 113 statements into eleven piles to represent an evenly graduated series of attitudes from those extremely antagonistic to America to those which were much in favor of America. In sorting the statements the subject did not express his own opinion about America, but rather the degree of prejudice which he believed expressed by the various statements. The 113 statements were mimeographed on small slips, one statement on each slip, which were given to each sorter with careful instructions as to the procedure to follow.

The scale values of the statements were determined graphically. The returns were tabulated so as to show for each subject the pile in which he placed every one of the 113 statements. From such a tabulation the data were assembled into a table showing the accumulative proportions of the sorting of the 113 statements by the fifty subjects. The graph is plotted directly from these proportions. The steps of degree of prejudice represent the X-axis and the accumulative proportions the Y-axis. The point at which the curve crosses the fifty percent line is assigned as the scale value of each statement. It is believed that fifty subjects were a sufficient number for the sorting process since the mean discrepancy for the complete list of 113 statements between the scale values which were determined from the first twenty-five subjects and the scale values which were determined from the group of fifty subjects is .048.

Thurstone considers that a mean discrepancy of .074 or less is very small and indicates that the number of subjects used is sufficient to stabilize the scale values for the method of equal appearing intervals that we have used.

The method used of measuring the ambiguity of the statements was to determine the scale distance between the scale value at which the curve of proportions has an ordinate of 0.25 and the scale value at which the same curve has an ordinate of 0.75. This is known as the  $Q$ -value and is merely the distance between the two quartile points of the curve. In selecting the statements for use none was included which had a  $Q$ -value higher than two. Thurstone uses no statements with  $Q$ -values above three.

The reliability of the scale values was measured. The standard deviation of the distribution of scale-values is on the average 1.10 scale units. The scale-value of an opinion is the median of its distribution on the subjective scale. Hence, the standard error of the scale value is 0.08. The probable error of the scale value is consequently 0.05 scale units. This is a very satisfactory reliability for the scale-values which are recorded to one decimal in our table.

An objective measure of irrelevance is based on the consistency of the actual voting of seventy-five Filipino students. This criterion is constructed as follows: Suppose that a statement of low ambiguity is properly scaled at point 9 (favorable to America). If a subject has an attitude which is also scaled properly at the point 9, then we should expect him to check that statement. Another subject who is scaled at point 4 (unfavorable to America) should be less likely to check that statement. Following Thurstone's index of similarity a number of statements were eliminated from the final scale.

We have brought to bear on the selection and allocation of the statements two objective criteria, namely the criterion of ambiguity, the  $Q$ -value, which is based on the degree of uniformity in the sorting of the statements, and the criterion of irrelevance, which is based on the consistency of the actual voting or indorsing. These procedures were carried out on two different groups of Filipino students selected at random.

In selecting the statements to include in the final scale they were so selected as to constitute a more or less uniformly graduated series of scale-values. When the complete scale was divided into two forms an attempt was made to make them equal in scale-value of statements included, and a more or less equal division of state-

ments according to subject content. Thus each form includes an approximately equal number of statements in regard to American morals and ethics, living conditions, race prejudice in the United States, religion in America, United States' government policies, courts of justice, treatment of foreigners in the United States, League of Nations, Monroe Doctrine, tariff policies, immigration problems, student life, and general estimates of America's contribution to the world.

The two forms were sent to over one hundred Filipino students out of a total of approximately 600 Filipinos who are studying in American colleges and universities. Scales were sent to every sixth person listed in the Filipino Student Directory. There was nothing in the form which told them that this was a measure of Filipino attitudes, as we did not wish to arouse a national consciousness. It was simply stated that it is desirable to find out what different people think about various aspects of American life, with the hope that when we determine more accurately the opinions which people hold we will have made progress toward improving conditions and relationships in America. Seventy-five percent of the scales were filled out and returned.

On the basis of the returns the reliability of the two forms is shown in a correlation of .92 with a probable error of  $\pm .012$ . The mean score for the entire group is 6.3 which is in the neutral position since scores with a scale value of one denote strong prejudice against the United States and scores with a scale-value of eleven show strong favorableness toward America. The range of individual scores was from 2.5 to 8.5.

Various degrees of prejudice have been studied in relation to such factors as length of residence in America, geographical distribution, extent of self-support. A correlation of  $.50 \pm .053$  was found between prejudice against the United States and length of residence here. This may be due to the fact that they come to this country with very high expectations and go through a period of disillusionment after they arrive. This is the explanation offered by several fair-minded Filipino students.

In regard to geographical distribution of students, 10 percent are studying in Eastern colleges, 34 percent in Middle-western colleges, and 56 percent in Western colleges. The mean score for those from the east is 7.6, from the central schools 6.7 and from western schools 5.9. Although these differences are small they are significant enough to suggest that students in the West are more prejudiced against America than those from the East and Central

states, perhaps due to stronger prejudice against Orientals in the West.

In regard to self support 63 percent of the students are wholly self-supporting; 25 percent earn about 75 percent of their expenses, and 12 percent earn 50 percent or less. Only five percent of the students were not earning any of their expenses. Roughly speaking, the students who are not employed are most favorable to the United States, but among the self-supporting students those who earn at least 75 percent of their expenses are more favorable to America than those who earn 50 percent or less.

Forty-seven percent of the students have Filipino roommates, 30 percent have no roommates and 23 percent have American roommates. There is no correlation between degree of prejudice and nationality of roommate. In regard to living abode, 82 percent live in private homes, and 18 percent in boarding houses. Not a single Filipino student responding lived in a college dormitory or fraternity. In regard to college classification 39 percent were underclassmen, 47 percent were upperclassmen, and 14 percent graduate students. There is no significant difference in scores according to student classification.

The students were asked to state the nationality of six of their best friends. Filipinos were mentioned 203 times, Americans 90 times, and other nationalities 128 times. Although the chances of forming friendships with persons of American birth are much greater than with other nationalities, due to greater numbers in the general student population, more friendships were reported with other nationalities than with Americans. This seems to suggest that foreigners constitute a somewhat self-contained community, and have more in common though from widely separated countries than do foreigners and Americans. Or perhaps there is an exclusion of foreigners from the social life of American people. The nationalities which ranked highest in this respect were Japanese, Chinese, German, French, Italian, Mexican, Irish and Spanish.

The author does not claim any significance to the latter parts of the treatment of results except the general interest which may be found in an attempt to study various degrees of **prejudice** in relation to general factors.

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