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EDUCATION, GENERAL

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A GUTTMAN FACET ANALYSIS OF ATTITUDES TOWARD THE WAR-DISABLED IN THE REPUBLIC OF VIET-NAM: CONTENT, STRUCTURE AND DETERMINANTS

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It was expected there would be a great number of war-disabled in Viet-Nam, but that a possible 17 per cent of the population would be war-disabled is almost beyond belief. Before large scale programs can be augmented for these people under proper conditions, the attitudes of the general public, and the individuals of power, must be known. Programs are operational now, in fact have been in operation for years, but the viability of such definitely is dependent upon complete knowledge of all attitudes toward the disabled.

The present study is part of a comprehensive program¹ to research attitudes among various specified groups in selected nations. This cross-cultural series includes nations which are industrialized, developing and traditional. The present study was made in Viet-Nam because it added to the cross-cultural knowledge and added a South-East Asian nation to those of Europe and the Americas. More specifically it was done because the author had lived there, liked it and found a compelling need. Moreover, there is a strong sentiment that the U.S. Government had used this little land as a base to fight a selfish war and the study appeared as an opportunity to negate this in a small way. Too, while one previous study had been made in Japan, there is much to be learned yet of the societal structure of the Orient.

There are, in any society, those who are in positions of power. Four basic power groups were used from previous studies and, in addition, eight more groups were added, all of whom will have a direct bearing on the planning, implementation and final results of any programs that aid the war-injured. Incidental to the study, it was discovered, this study would be one of the first recorded of any nation's attitudes toward its war-disabled.

Instrumentation and Theory

Guttman's facet procedure, which is the basis for the instrumentation of this study, is based upon the premise that any attitude universe can be organized into a number of substructures of varying degrees of personal contact, which are then systematically arranged so identical concepts are involved in the items or questions posed at each of the levels of personal contact. In the Guttman procedure this notion of levels of personal contact were envisioned as being from a weak, or very distant and impersonal form of contact, to a strong, or directly involved contact. Jordan took Guttman's original theory and developed it into six specific 'levels' of contact, which are, from the weakest to the strongest: (a) Stereotypic, (b) Normative, (c) Moral Evaluation, (d) Hypothetical Behavior, (e) Personal Feelings, and (f) Personal Action. Also included in the scale were sections to measure for various basic determinants of attitudes. These were: (a) Values, (b) Contact with the war-disabled, (c) Demographic Factors, (d) Religious importance and adherence, and (e) one's attitude toward his physical world and his confrontation with it, termed **EFFICACY**.

Previous attitude tests and scales have been plagued by imprecision and subjectiveness. The Guttman process has the advantage of being planned a priori, i.e., before the fact, and the points to be made or examined are identified and understood before the tests is given, not after. The concept of levels is extremely important also, for it is the first instance where there is design to elicit not only what a person claims he does in a situation, but what he thinks, as well as what he thinks a number of others think and do in the same situation. It is difficult to 'fake' a scale such as the Attitude Behavior Scale (ABS),

as the person who attempts to make himself look good is unlikely to 'gloss over' the situation for everyone else he is asked about and his reflection of their attitudes is related to his own.

Results

First, the general reliability and validity of the entire AB procedure was enhanced through the logic of the results. There were no aberrations or abnormalities demanding explanation. The theories appear to be verified.

The independent variables of adherence to religion, amount of education, one's age, one's sex, one's desire for government aid to education, and one's wish for centralized educational planning failed to be adequate 'single' predictors of attitudes toward war-disabled persons. One's religion neither failed to predict nor would it predict; being on 'middle ground.' Efficacy, contact with the disabled, and change orientation did become 'weak' predictors of attitude toward the disabled, and it should be noted that being **MALE** (not female as hypothesized) was likewise a weak positive predictor. Only when experience was coupled with ease of avoiding contact, personal gain from the contact, and alternate way of making a living, did contact become a strong positive predictor of attitudes toward the war-disabled.

The concept that group 1 (family and disabled together) would be more positive than group 2 (rehabilitation workers), which would be more positive in attitude than group 3 (regular teachers), which in turn would be more positive than group 4 (employers and administrators), was verified.

A new ABS procedure was especially developed to test for specific attitudes toward the war-disabled which has promise for further use and development. A number of interesting, important and valid appearing observations were found through the methodology, but they must be tempered by the recognition that the procedure is experimental.

Thirdly, a large body of Vietnamese cultural data was assembled into tables but left unexploited. It is hoped that there will be agencies in both the Republic of Viet-Nam and the United States that will be intrigued by this fund of data and will find sources to use it in further research, study and development.

Two general perceptions were unexpectedly revealed that appear to the author to be of prime importance. First, is the lack of homogeneity of the Vietnamese people. Groups varied considerably, and a small sample of Viet-Cong were so singular in their variance that it is postulated that Viet-Cong are not typical Vietnamese and do not represent the general population.

The second unexpected speculation is the concept that war disability in Viet-Nam is so universal that completely differing psychological phenomena toward disability are in operation, and it is hoped that this situation can receive further study.

1. This study is part of a larger cross-cultural attitude research program directed by John E. Jordan, Ph.D., College of Education, Michigan State University, East Lansing, MI 48824
Order No. 74-27,408, 404 page