

A Socio-Psychological Theory of Administration in a Philippine School Setting

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The theme of this convention is social theory and development. The goal of this paper is to illustrate one attempt: to apply a social theory to school administration in the Philippines. While the role theory which will be discussed is applied to the study of the school as an institution, it might just as easily be utilized for a study of the Filipino family.

In passing, let it be noted that the writer's review of literature left him with the impression that a great deal more attention has been paid to the study of the dynamics of community development than to the study of the school as a social institution. This is surprising since Filipinos, on the whole, place a great deal of hope for economic and social progress on education. At the same time the Federal Government allocates almost a third of the annual budget for schools.

A second observation concerning the development of school administration as a field of study can be made here. In the States at least, administration has passed through distinct eras. The first of these eras found administration and supervision

chiefly concerned with the bookkeeping of education, with counting chairs, with evaluating the teacher, etc. A more human era followed, building upon the discoveries of Alton Mayo at the Hawthorne plant. This led to the emphasis upon the democratic approach in school administration. In most recent years, students of school administration have considered it in terms of theory and the behavioral sciences. In the Philippines, while there is still considerable emphasis upon the mechanics of running the educational system and upon report making, there is an attempt, more or less successful, to inject the human, democratic element into supervision and administration.¹ However, there is little evidence of consciousness of the utility or need for the study of administration in terms of social theory.²

Any attempt to synthesize and generalize about the social structure and psychology of an entire people requires bold assumptions and a good bit of foolhardiness. For that reason my conclusions are stated only tentatively with the hope of

¹ Bureau of Public Schools, *Democratic Supervision*. Bulletin No. 40, Series 1953.

² Canave, Juan C., "Sociology and Education," *The Education Quarterly*, VII (January, 1960), 26.

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illustrating how a behavioral theory may provide unity and direction to such an enormous undertaking.

This paper is divided into two sections. The first section attempts to outline the salient points of the socio-psychological theory of administration as propounded by Jacob W. Getzels and Egon G. Guba.³ The second section will discuss in a very sketchy manner the attempt that has been made to apply this theory to study the dynamics of administration in a Filipino school.

I. The Socio-Psychological Theory of Administration

According to the original conception of Getzels and Guba, observed behavior

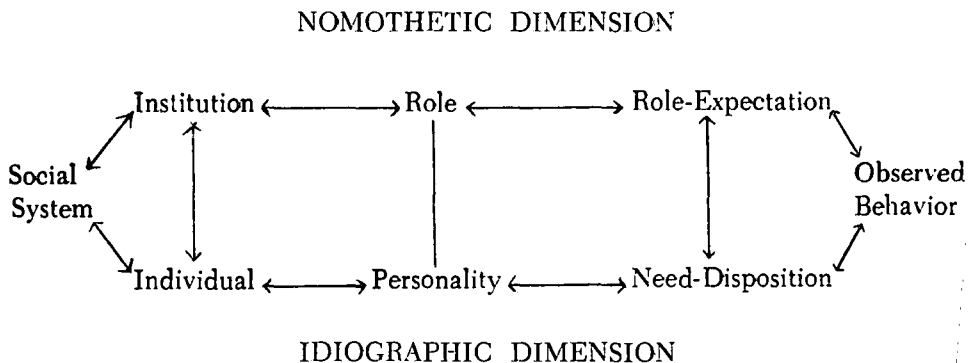
³ Getzels, Jacob W., and Egon G. Guba. "Social Behavior and the Administrative Process." *The School Review*, LXV (Winter, 1957), 423-441.

in a social system is the product of the interaction of two dimensions of reality: one sociological and the other psychological as illustrated in Figure 1.

The first of these dimensions, the nomothetic or normative, consists of the individual social institution composed of various roles which in turn are defined by role-expectations. The second dimension is the idiographic or personal, composed of the individual as the chief analytical unit. Psychologically speaking, the individual is distinguished by his unique personality. The dynamic elements of personality are need-dispositions or the individual's tendency to orient and act with respect to objects in certain manners and to expect certain consequences from these actions.⁴

⁴ Parsons, Talcott, and Edward A. Shils, *Toward A General Theory of Action* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1951), p. 114.

FIGURE 1. General model showing the nomothetic and the idiographic dimensions of social behavior



The Nomothetic Dimension

Several characteristic features of an institution may be mentioned. Institutions arise in society in response to certain imperative functions; society needs protection, it needs to raise offsprings, it needs to educate. In time these needs become

satisfied in routinized patterns which become institutions such as the police, the family, the school. Institutions, thus are purposive.

Institutions are people but as far as the organization is concerned the person is a faceless actor filling a role. Like-

wise, institutions are structured: they possess definite superior and inferior relationships; parents and children, teachers and pupils. Further, institutions are normative. They possess roles with expected behavior patterns which serve as norms for judging the effectivity of incumbents. Finally, institutions are sanction bearing and possess appropriate positive and negative sanctions for insuring compliance.

Roles are positions or offices in the institution. To each role are assigned certain responsibilities and concomitant resources including authority and facilities for implementing the given tasks.

Roles are defined in terms of role-expectations. These expectations are institutionally given and not formulated with the specific person in mind. However, roles generally admit of some flexibility thus making it possible for role incumbents of widely divergent personalities to fulfill the same role. Since roles are positions in a hierarchical structure, they are interdependent and complimentary.

As the arrows in the figure suggest, institutions give rise to roles, but roles modify institutions. Roles stipulate expectations, but over time shifting expectations modify roles.

The Idiographic Dimension

The chief analytical unit of the idiographic or personal dimension is the individual. In turn, the individual is distinguished by that unique configuration of potentialities and especially need-dispositions which constitute his personality.

The figure indicates again the dynamic connection between personality and need-dispositions; while a personality has certain need-dispositions, new needs brought

about by external causes may modify personality.

A final glance at the diagram suggests further that there is constant interplay between the institution and the individual: the institution changes the individual, the individual modifies his personality while the personality of the incumbent inevitably colors and modifies his role. The values of the institution modify individual needs, and the individual need-dispositions alter role-expectations.

With such a picture of the dynamic interaction of the individual and the institution in mind, Getzels and Guba defined the essence of the administrative act:

The unique task of the administrator, at least with respect to staff relations, is to integrate the demands of the institution and the demands of the staff members in a way that is at once organizationally productive and individually fulfilling.⁵

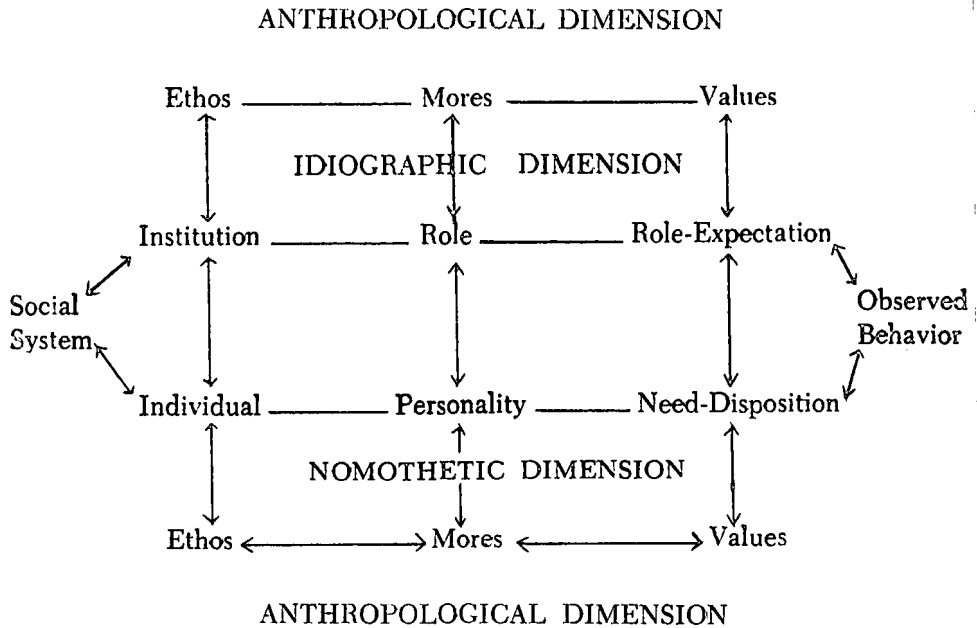
The Anthropological Dimension

As the model stands it would seem to suggest that institutions and individuals are the same everywhere. But it is evident that schools in the Philippines are vastly different from schools in New Guinea, and that personality needs are different in the Filipino from personality needs in a Japanese. Hence, a third or anthropological dimension was suggested by Getzels and Thelen.⁶ The augmented model with its three dimensions is shown in Figure 2.

⁵ Getzels, op. cit., p. 430.

⁶ Getzels, Jacob W., and Herbert A. Thelen, "The Classroom as a Unique Social System," *The Dynamics of Instructional Groups*, Fifty-ninth Yearbook of the National Society for the Study of Education, Part II (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1960), pp. 53-82.

FIGURE 2. General model including the anthropological dimension.



Institutions and individuals exist in a culture made up of the ethos, the unique and distinguishing feature of a particular culture. The ethos is discovered by studying the mores, those established modes of behavior with moral implications. Values are the dynamic elements of mores, the underlying good consciously or unconsciously sought by the individual when he acts.

Again, these elements constantly influence each other: as mores change, so too do the values of a people. As the values of a people shift for one reason or other, they change the patterns of mores and consequently the ethos.

Likewise the anthropological dimension modifies the nomothetic and idiographic dimensions. Mores, for example, modify personality and roles; cultural values modify need-dispositions and role-expectations, and conversely.

Assuming that the institution discussed is the Filipino school, that the individual under consideration is the Filipino school child, and that both these are part of the Filipino culture, what insights into administration can the theoretical model give the school administrator?

II. A Study of the Filipino School and the Filipino Student in Light of the Theory

Introduction

For the administrator to understand his pupil and his school in terms of this unique culture, he must first arrive at some statement of the ethos of the culture, then he must synthesize the mores, and discover a pattern of values. With such a knowledge the administrator can hope to begin to satisfy the need-dispositions of his pupils and carry out the role-expectations of the pupils in his school.

The Anthropological Dimension

After an extensive review of literature, especially of literature on Filipino social organization, a tentative statement of ethos was arrived at. The ethos of the Filipino culture is a highly integrated set of mores and values directed towards obtaining survival of the members of the extended family through group solidarity and a careful manipulation of dealings with friendly outsiders in such a manner as to avoid danger to self and the family.

A review of significant mores revealed that one group of mores, consisting of such practices as marriage customs, authority practices, especially respect for age, certain child rearing practices, *compadrazgo*, *utang na loob*, when directed towards parents and relatives, etc., tended to gravitate about the building up of the extended family and holding it together. A second group of mores regulated behavior with friendly outsiders and included such mores as euphemistic speech and behavior, the use of the go-between, *pakikisama*, *amor propio*, non-interference, *utang na loob*, etc.

Studies of Filipino values identified specific key concepts: social acceptance, economic security and social mobility,⁷ emotional closeness and security in the family, authority and the need for approval of authority, economic and social betterment,⁸ loyalty to family and in-group.⁹

The system produced by the ethos, mores and values is illustrated in Figure 3.

⁷ Lynch, Frank, S.J., "Social Acceptance," *Four Readings on Philippine Values* (Quezon City: Ateneo University Press, 1964), p. 18.

⁸ Bulatao, Jaime, S.J., "The Manileño Main-springs," *Four Readings on Philippine Values*, Frank Lynch, editor (Quezon City: Ateneo University Press, 1964), p. 57.

⁹ Lumbea, Bienvenido, "Literary Notes on the Filipino Personality," Symposium on the Filipino Personality (Manila: Psychological Association of the Philippines, 1965), p. 6.

The Personal Dimension Studied in Light of Anthropological Dimension

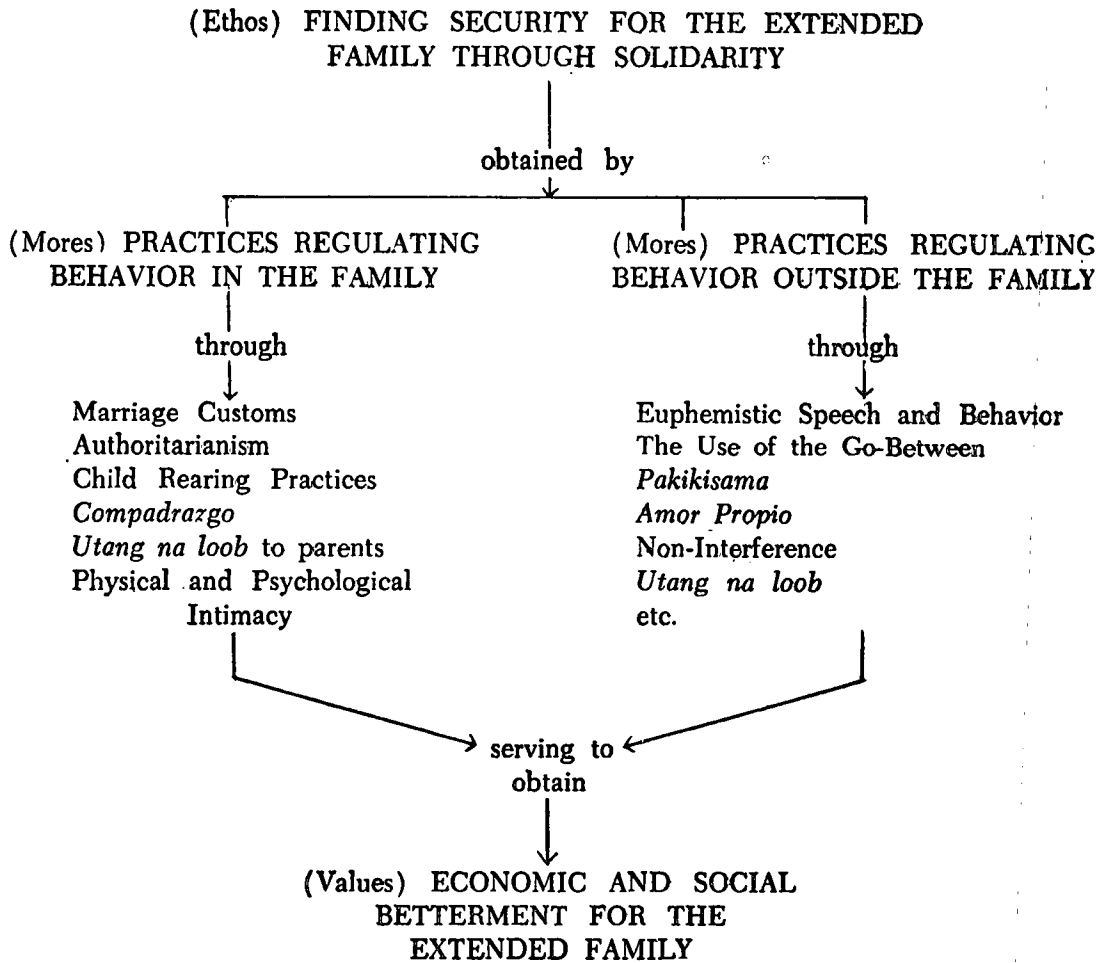
One study of the personality of Filipino college students reported its findings in terms of personality needs.¹⁰ The conclusions reached were that in general the Filipino student has a high personality need-disposition for deference, order, abasement and endurance along with a low personality need for exhibition, autonomy, and public display of heterosexual activity.

Assuming that this picture of a limited sampling of Filipino students gives the general lines of the personality structure of the mass of students, one asks what is the contribution of the mores in producing students with such personality. Admittedly it is doubtful practice to attempt to establish definite causal relations between specific mores and specific personality traits. Still it is not difficult to establish probable links between certain personality traits and certain mores. It is, for example, quite logical to assume that the high personality need for deference discovered by the survey, if not caused by the many mores which teach deference to elders, at least is accentuated by those mores. Similarly the many leveling devices, especially the use of irony and the practice of *pakikisama* over a long period of time, conditions one to a low need for exhibition.

As would be expected, there is a very close parallelism between the values and mores of a culture and the personality traits of a student growing up as part of that culture.

¹⁰ Bulatao, Jaime, "Personal Preferences of Filipino Students," *Philippine Sociological Review*, XI (July-October, 1963), 13-14.

FIGURE 3. A schematic view of the relationship between the actual ethos, mores and values of the Filipino culture



The School Viewed in Light of the Anthropological Dimension

A consideration of the goals stipulated for the schools in the Constitution and in the statements of the Board of National Education shows emphasis on political ends. The implicit values and the effects of the curricular offerings, especially in secondary schools, provide experiences and knowledge and create needs which have an urbanizing effect and which may tend to disrupt the extended family. When

one recalls the ethos, a concern for protecting, nurturing and preserving the extended family, the conflict between values of the people and the expectations of the school becomes evident. The two thirds of a million children who drop out or repeat grades each year¹¹ indicate the gap between the expectations and aims of the school as an institution and the values of a great number of Filipino people.

¹¹ Research, Evaluation and Guidance Division, 1965 *Statistical Bulletin* (Manila: Bureau of Public Schools, 1966), p. 93.

A comparison of mores and values with the role-expectations held for the student revealed a number of tensions with respect to such basic matters as the way one views the world, the way one relates himself

with others, and the way one perceives himself. Some of the contrasts between the school's and the culture's outlook towards these three categories of reality are illustrated in Figure 4.

FIGURE 4. A Comparison of the Anthropological and Nomothetic Dimensions' view of the world, interpersonal expectations and personal behavior patterns.

ANTHROPOLOGICAL DIMENSION	NOMOTHETIC DIMENSION
A. <i>World View of the Mores</i>	<i>World View of Student Role</i>
1. <i>Bahala na</i> explanation of events: Success is undeserved.	vs. Scientific understanding of events: Success is merited by labor.
2. Present time orientation: Less exact concept of the length of time. <i>Mañana</i> .	vs. Future time orientation: More strict concept of length of time.
B. <i>Interpersonal Relations Expectations of the Mores</i>	<i>Interpersonal Relations in the Student Role</i>
1. Rule of person: personalism; ascribed honor and prestige.	vs. Rule of law: legalism: earned honor and prestige.
2. Small group orientation: loyalty to the in-group; family shelters from failure: training to avoid conflict: values local proximity of members.	vs. Large group orientation: loyalty to the nation: exposes child to frequent failure: encourages competition: fosters skills which increase mobility.
3. Personality cult in club formation.	vs. Idealism as motive of club formation.
C. <i>Personal Behavior Expectations of the Mores</i>	<i>Personal Behavior Expectations of the Student Role</i>
1. Family training to conformity: suppression of creativity: <i>pakikisama: pakiusap</i> .	vs. Emphasis on non-conformity: encouragement of creativity: healthy independence: standing on one's own merit.
2. <i>Hiya, amor propio</i> : illustrated by effects on athletics.	vs. Increased self-confidence: minimize sensitivity by making basis of self-esteem objective: illustrated by school expectations for sports.

The more the pressures of urbanization, industrialization, and foreign influences are felt, the greater will be the conflict of values between the home and the school.¹²

In summary it may be said that a study of the individual and the school suggests that while the individual reflects closely the mores and values of the culture, the school in many respects is in a state of the conflict with the culture. Since the pupil must live in both worlds, he inevitably will find himself in the position where he must elect either to follow the values of the culture or the role-expectations of the school. The administrator is wise if he realizes that many of the discipline problems in his school are due not

¹² Bulatao, Jaime, "The Conflict of Values in Home and School," *The Guidance and Personnel Journal*, I (November, 1965), 51.

to bad will but to the fact that a child is in a conflicting situation.

Conclusion

The study of the school and the student in terms of culture has made it necessary to restate the definition of the role of the administrator as originally offered by Getzels and Guba. The unique task of the school administrator, at least with respect to dealing with students and teachers, is to integrate the demands of the school as modified by the unique set of Filipino ethos, mores and values, and to integrate the needs of the individual student or teacher as modified by these same mores and values so that the national goals of education and the personality needs of the individual student or teacher are simultaneously fulfilled.