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# A Cross-Cultural Study of the Perceived Seriousness of Crimes

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A CROSS-CULTURAL STUDY OF THE  
PERCEIVED SERIOUSNESS OF CRIMES

by

Mira B. Aghi

A Dissertation Submitted to the Faculty of the  
Graduate School of Loyola University in  
Partial Fulfillment of the Require-  
ments for the Degree of  
Doctor of Philosophy

June

1969

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### Vita

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## CHAPTER I

### INTRODUCTION

Many cross-cultural studies have been done in the field of psychology, sociology, and anthropology to throw light on the differences between cultures. These differences refer to many aspects of life, such as differences in tastes, in ways of living, in attitudes and religious life, etc. In a similar way, the cross-cultural technique could be used to assess the disposition of a certain culture toward crime. If certain cultural features foster the development of certain criminal behavior, those features should be found preponderantly in a society with a high frequency of these crimes. Also, Factors which inhibit certain crimes should be found largely in societies which are low in those crimes. As Brasol (1931) puts it, "crime being a social phenomenon, is certainly not exempt from the general laws governing the life of society. Hence the elements which go to make up the sociologic background of delinquency must either have a direct or indirect bearing upon the aetiology of the individual criminal propension, be it in the way of facilitating and accelerating its growth or by conveying to it a specific form of expression."

In summary therefore, the primary purpose of this study is to relate the perceived seriousness of crimes in American and Indian cultures. It is possible that this perceived seriousness of crimes may also throw light on the determinants of crimes. The cross-cultural method for exploring the



possible determinants of crimes has its own value. All sociologists and criminologists accept the idea that culture in its wider ramifications and cultural conflict in particular provide the matrix out of which much of the modern crime problem emerges. Thus, for example we recognize that race, class, national origins and the varying cultural patterns of social behavior provide important sources of cultural conflict and resultant antisocial behavior.

Traditionally, many factors have been identified leading to the etiology of crime, such as mal-economics, poor heredity, lack of inhibitions or too much of them, bad education, a faulty industrial set up, etc. Delinquents more often than non-delinquents came from homes broken by death, divorce or desertion, or homes lacking in understanding, self-respect, stability, affection and moral standards. Frequently their homes are economically as well as emotionally deprived. However here we are not interested in the investigation of the causes leading to crimes; but granted that these causes exist, they should be reflected in the values of a society, which are reflected in the estimates of the seriousness of crimes by the people of that society.

The present study is prompted by an interest in the frequency of crimes in the United States and India. Purely from observation, it appears that the United States had a relatively higher rate of violent crimes as compared to India, which has a relatively higher frequency of crimes connected with theft. This can be substantiated by the available statistics compiled by the Ministry of Home Affairs, government of India, "If the totality of crime is treated as 100, the percentage of twelve major heads of crime would be: murder 1.6,

kidnapping and abduction 1.0, dacoity 0.6, robbery 1.1, housebreaking 18.9, cattle theft 3.3, ordinary thefts 34.4, riots 4.4, criminal breach of trust 2.8, cheating 1.5, counterfeiting 0.1 and miscellaneous 30.3 percent." Also in the words of Coleman (1964), "The incidence of crimes in the United States is high in comparison with that in many other countries and is still on the increase. Statistics compiled by the Federal Bureau of Investigation reveal that there were 2,048,370 serious crimes reported in 1962. This represents a new high in robbery, forcible rape, aggravated assault and other felonies; a major crime was committed every 15 seconds...During the past five years the crime rate has increased four times as fast as the general population."

The present study will investigate the differences between India and the United States in their respective estimates of seriousness of crimes. The differences in these estimations will also be examined intraculturally by comparing males with females. The males and females will not only be compared within a culture but comparisons will also be made between Indian males and American males and between Indian females and American females.

## CHAPTER II

### REVIEW OF LITERATURE

There does not seem to be much literature relevant to the present research. Research, no doubt has been done on crimes but without particular reference to cultures of different countries, their value system, and how this value system affects the perceived seriousness of crimes. Literature in this area of crimes usually pertains to the sociological factors leading to the committing of crimes; factors like broken homes, sex identification problems, poverty, a slum neighborhood, etc.

A great number of theories of crimes have been proposed since antiquity. The present research does not require going into these theories. However one thing that can be said without any reservation is that most of the theories, including the current ones, show a great weakness which lies in their inability to grasp the significance of the deeper meaning of why the condemned behavior develops and why it occurs with a particular frequency. These theories often give explanations in terms of the criminal being a deprived person, a sick individual or a social psychopath. But the fact remains that many in fact break the law simply because they are normal. The explanation might be simpler than it is ever presented with the result that all the elaborate attempts at reducing the incidence of crime may in the main sense be of little avail.

The investigation of crimes goes back to the beginning of organized

society. If any meaning is to be gained from a view of culture and crime, it would indicate that the type, the character and the frequency of crimes within a given society reflects its historic conditions, its psychological and cultural characteristics, its aspirations and its objectives. Crimes in different parts of the world and in different types of societies mirror the most basic values of a people and the means which society has developed for the fulfillment and realization of such values.

Cross-cultural research allows psychological analysis of the similarities and differences among several cultures and the validation of psychological concepts and instruments in various cultures. Bauer (1964) feels that, "Such studies illustrate research possibilities for generating and testing hypotheses of delinquency causation."

Criminal behavior and the nature of social conditions are intimately related. Certain kinds of societies produce certain kinds of crimes which appear to be characteristic. However this should in no way give the impression that heredity has no role to play in the committing of crimes. The born criminal has not to be overlooked. Beccaria (1738) and Bentham (1748) recognized the importance of circumstances, environmental as well as inherited, and therefore based the severity of punishment taking into account both of these factors. Lombroso (1836) concluded from his intensive studies that the criminal was a distinct anthropological type possessing definite physical stigmata.

Bloch (1958) contends that societies differ in the priorities they accord to different values and in the values they esteem. "Violence in Britain is

played in a very minor key when compared with the horrific activities of the America's so-called 'kill-for'thrill kids', who do not stop at torture of people who have not harmed them nor even at murder, apparently in order to gratify their lust for excitement." Crimes are invariably reflective of and responsive to a given social order and cultural organization at a given period in their historic development. Crimes of a certain type are only possible in terms of a given sociocultural matrix. In this sense the sociocultural organization plays a basic determining role in indicating the nature and distribution of the offenses which will take place. "The complex of different values held in high regard by vast segments of the people of the subcontinent of India might be found to differ sharply in many respects from the values held in veneration by subjects of Great Britain, inhabitants of the Soviet Union, French citizens and the citizens of the United States." These values are closely tied to the types of behavior outlawed by a society and to the types and amount of crime committed within it. The character of the sociological organization will tend to elicit certain forms of responses from certain vulnerable segments of the social order. Those who respond may be regarded as predisposed toward a certain type of criminal behavior on the basis of social psychological factors determining the character of role performance within a given class structure.

Wallace (1965) while describing the patterns of violence in San Juan, Puerto Rico, expressed that violent behavior reflects the social and cultural environment of a society. Who commits the assault, who gets taken to the hospital, who witnessed the event and the reaction of the community reflects in part how a society is socially structured and what that society considers

important. Like other types of behavior, violence does not take place in a vacuum but owes its birth as well as its expression to a number of social and cultural influences.

Sykes (1956) used the concept of cultural variations in the toleration of violence to explain the marked regional differences in the rates of crimes against the person. The criminal may indeed be different from the man who obeys the law. But Sykes suggests that instead of looking for devils in the mind and stigmas of the body, the search for differences which are causally linked to the criminal behavior should be in the direction of ever-changing relationships between the individual and to the social group to which he belongs. According to Pine (1965), there is no significant relationship between social class status and delinquent behavior. His major conclusion is that delinquency is less a function of the class an individual is in than of the class to which he aspires or to which he is moving.

The Scandinavian studies of criminology are rich with crime statistics. These studies are full of facts. However, they have little, if any, relevance to the present study. They are interested in things like which acts should be designated as crimes or how the official system of control actually operates at the stage of implementing the sanctions and with what sorts of consequences, etc. Studies of social control are a topic of paramount importance in the above mentioned studies.

Jones (1965) observes that in Britain, at any rate, adult crimes against property tend to rise and fall in sympathy with the rate of unemployment -- the more the unemployment, the more the crimes against property and vice versa.

According to studies carried out during the same period, there is also reason to believe that among offenders in penal institutions, the rate of unemployment at the time they committed the offenses for which they were sentenced was higher than that in the community at large. However one is amazed at the paradoxical report given recently by the United Nations to the effect that juvenile delinquency has tended to increase most in those countries of Europe in which the standard of living is highest. However, in the poorer countries of Southern Europe, it has increased hardly at all. Hartung (1965) contends that crime and delinquency are explained as being the result of the breakdown of society as a whole or of specific institutions in particular. Also, delinquents more often than non-delinquents come from homes broken by death, divorce or desertion, or home lacking in understanding, self-respect, stability, affection and moral standards. Frequently their homes are economically as well as emotionally deprived.

Most of the modern sociologists and criminologists accept the idea that culture in its wider ramifications and cultural conflict in particular, provide the matrix out of which much of the modern crime problem emerges. We recognize that race, class, national origins and the varying cultural patterns of social behavior provide important sources of cultural conflict and resultant anti-social behavior. The cultural differences of national groups are evidenced in many ways, but none is more striking than the patterns of criminal behavior in the various countries. Everyone who has travelled in the Orient or the Soviet Union, can testify to the peculiar character of stealing there. The average American railroad passenger gives little thought to the safety of his luggage and virtually none at all if he travels by pullman. Luggage in Russia, India,

as well as in many other Asian countries, on the other hand, is never considered safe unless one more or less literally sits on it. In America the culture complex is equally evident in our peculiar crime patterns. An automobile has become the varitable index to the American standard of living. The urge to own a car and other evidences of a high standard of living have unquestionably been a spur to economic crimes of serious nature. In short, whatever the given culture, moral concepts of honesty, decency, suitable relationships between the sexes, and being a good neighbor, are factors which determine the limits of human conduct. Out of his background of training and experience, man builds up his pattern of living, his life organization, the things he will and will not do. Because of its customs, ideas, and practices, the community may be said to generate crime, tolerate crime, and in turn be organized by crime. So based on the fact that there are certain relations between crime and culture, we may therefore summarize; 1) Cultural norms of group behavior are conducive to peculiar aspects of crime in a particular community. 2) Crime is related to the particular type of social organization in a given society. 3) A differential pattern of crime tends to exist within the various cultural groups in a community. 4) Social disorganization and confusion with reference to basic social values are accompanied by a high crime rate.

Bloch and Geis (1962) show a peculiar insight into the whole matter of crime. They approach the problem of crime in a given culture from the point of view of population structure. According to them, the relationship between the population structure and overall rate of crime in a particular culture constitutes one of the most fruitful areas for the study of criminal trends. Such an analysis should be properly concerned not only with the changing size of the



population, but with the changing age and sex composition of the population as well.

Bacon (1966) points to the fact that crime occurs mostly in men, and "We have no reason to doubt that this sex difference characterizes most societies." Ferdinand (1964) observes that "Male and female delinquents tend to differ principally in the frequency with which they elect offenses against property."

Crimes by women as they appear in official statistics are, comparatively speaking, small in number. There can be little doubt concerning the overwhelming disproportion of men annually involved in reported crime as compared to women. Bloch (1958) observed that with the exception of prostitution and commercialized vice, there is no category in which women commit more crimes than men. Because of the nature of familial and social controls over women, and the cultural definitions of permissive role behavior, a large number of criminal activities, beginning with early delinquent episodes, are not so likely to be found among women.

The striking fact which criminal statistics reveal is that crime is predominantly a masculine activity. There are many more men criminals than women criminals and there are more boy delinquents than girl delinquents. Barron Mays' (1963) observation is that this remarkable differentiation between crime rates of sexes is constant over the years and quite unaffected by any changes in the social structure. The phenomenon is world wide. As Sutherland (1937) says, "The male sex has a great excess of crimes in all nations, all communities within a nation, all age groups, all periods of history, for which organized statistics are available, and all types of crimes except those which

are somewhat intimately related to the female sex, such as abortion and infanticide." This is because there are important cultural distinctions in nearly all known societies which define the male and female roles in markedly different terms. Also the fact remains that they are made different. Thus it would seem that the difference in the frequency of crimes between men and women in almost all societies would be related to a difference between the sexes in their value system; their whole make up as well as in their whole outlook on life in its different aspects.

There is also some literature available to the contrary. Elliott (1952) mentions Pollak's (1950) contention to the effect that it is not the whole truth to say that men are more criminal than women. Pollak purports to shatter this accepted notion and he concludes that women, because they are deceitful, merely conceal their crimes more frequently than do men. Women being more deceitful because of their passivity, makes it easy for a wife to deceive her husband and this biological fact conditions a woman's ability to mask her offenses. Pollak also believes women commit a much larger number of secret, presumably undiscovered, murders, since they could poison people without being suspected. However there must be some reason for the apparent discrepancy in criminality. He goes on to explain this disparity of crime rates between men and women by saying that it is due to special characteristics of their respective cultures. Men and women live in different worlds. Some of the crimes women commit grow out of this fact. The average woman is more gullible and naive than the average man, perhaps because she lives in a private world in which the virtues of honesty, faith and trust form the web, woof and pattern of responsible family life. Crime, Sutherland (1937) continually insisted, is the

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result of a person and a situation. Situations in which women find themselves are apparently not as conducive to crimes as are situations men face. Despite the so-called emancipation of women, the average woman spends her life and fulfills her purposes in the home. A further reason for there being fewer criminals among women is that the average woman experiences less conflict between her ethical values and the achievement of her goals than does the average man. On the other hand, home represents only a segment of a man's interest. When the average man leaves the house in the morning, he leaves a private culture dominated by personal ethics for a public culture dominated by struggle for economic success and financial reward. Competition in the market place, in the office or at his profession is frequently a battle of wits, a matter of outwitting one's contemporaries, without any desire for the welfare of all.

Thus in summary it could be said that in view of the interest of the present study, the cited literature is relevant. The experts in the area consider values or value systems dependent on various causes of crimes which which are sociological and psychological in nature and hence the values will be reflected in the estimation of the seriousness of crimes. Or it could be speculated that the estimation of the seriousness of crimes is a part of the value system itself. At any rate if cultural determinants of crime affect value systems, different cultures should show different estimations of the seriousness of various crimes and hence the pertinence of the present study. Also, literature shows it necessary to consider men separately from women.

## CHAPTER III

### PROCEDURE

#### Sample of Subjects

Two groups of 100 subjects each were used for this study. One group consisted of Indian college students and the other of the American college students. The average age of the subjects was about 21 years. The Indian group consisted of 50 students from Wilson College in Bombay and 50 students from K.M. College in Delhi. The Indian students were predominantly Hindus, coming from the middle class. The American group was composed of 100 students from Loyola University, Chicago. The majority of them were Catholics. For the sake of brevity, the groups will be designated as Indians and Americans throughout the text. In each sample there were 56 males and 44 females.

#### Description of Stimuli

Thirty criminal offenses were used for this study (see appendix). The majority were borrowed from Sellin's (1964) study "Measurement of Delinquency", in which he used Philadelphia crime code offenses. The remainder of the offenses in the present study were selected specifically so that they would be more meaningful to the Indian sample. Also an attempt was made to eliminate any reference to the offender. The main focus was on the criminal act.

#### Design and Testing Procedure

One examiner tested all the subjects in groups of 20. The testing material was presented in English to both the samples. Since the Indian

college students have their training in English, they experienced no difficulties in understanding the subject matter. The order of presentation of the stimuli was identical for all the subjects: first the instruction card and then 30 cards, with one offense listed on each card. The subject was instructed to read all the cards carefully in the order in which they appeared in the deck of 30 cards and then shuffle them. After this the subject was presented with a booklet. The booklet had two parts, A and B, referring to the two ways in which the subject was to rate the 30 offenses. Both parts A and B contained specific instructions telling the subjects exactly how to rate the offenses. For part A, the category scaling, the subjects were given the following instructions: "Each of the cards in this deck refers to a violation of the law; each violation is different. Your task is to show how serious you think each violation is, not what the law says or how the courts or judges might act.

"For each violation you will be asked to check a number from 1 to 11, depending on how serious you consider the violation to be. If the violation is not very serious you will check a low number, if it is very serious you will check a high number. For instance, 1 is the least serious and 11 is the most serious. In this scale of seriousness of violations, 6 is more serious than 5 or 4 or any number lower than 6. Also, 9 is more serious than 8 but less serious than 10 or 11. Use number 1 only if you consider the violation to be very mild and number 11 if it is very serious.

"Now take cards as they appear in the deck one by one and check the category in which you feel the statement should be placed. If the first card

in the deck happens to be card 9, go to the corresponding number 9 on the following page and check the number (1, 2, 3...11) you think best fits this violation. When you are finished placing all the statements in the categories, reshuffle the cards.

"Do not spend too much time on any one violation but be sure to check them all. Do not turn back to what you have already done. Remember this is not a test. The important thing is how you feel about each violation."

The instructions also included two examples. Part A was scaled using Thurstone's method of successive intervals. This method was developed originally by Saffir (1939) and later modified and generalized by Rimoldi and Hormaeche (1955) to eliminate the rather questionable assumption that the variability of the items is uniform over the entire scale. The determination of the interval limits was done using Rimoldi's technique (1960).

In part B, the magnitude scaling, the subjects were given the following instructions:

"Each of the cards in this deck refers to a violation of the law; each violation is different. Your task is to show how serious you think each violation is, not what the law says or how the courts or judges might act.

"For each violation, you will be asked to give a score. You would arrive at this score by comparing this particular violation on the card to the standard violation which has already been given a certain score. The score you give will reflect how serious each violation seems to you in relation to the standard violation which has been selected as a standard and has been

assigned a score of 10."

"The offender steals \$100 from a bank."

"Now using this violation as a standard, every other violation on each card should be scored. For example if any violation seems 10 times as serious as the standard violation, assign a score of 100. If the violation seems 4 times as serious as the standard, assign a score of 40. If the violation seems half as serious as the standard, assign a score of 5. You may use any whole or fractional number that is greater than 0, no matter how large or small it is, as long as it represents how serious the violation is compared to the standard violation.

"Now take cards from the deck one by one and score them. If the first card happens to be card number 7, go to number 7 on the appropriate answer sheet and assign the score you think best compares it with the standard at this place. After you have finished comparing all the cards and assigning the scores, please reshuffle the cards.

"Take your time. Every violation should have a score assigned to it. Do not turn back to what you have already finished. Remember this is not a test. The important thing is how you feel about each violation." The instructions included two examples.

Magnitude scale values were obtained by getting the geometric mean of all the responses for a particular stimulus.

Parts A and B were randomly assigned as first and second so that the same

number of subjects would get each part first. After finishing the first part of the task, the subject reshuffled the deck.

The results were analyzed to see if the concave downward trend between magnitude and category scale that has been found in some other psychological scaling is also present in this type of data. Sellin (1964) has already demonstrated that the concave downward relationship holds for an American sample. However it has not been shown whether this relationship also holds for the Indian group.

Besides the above-mentioned theoretical issue, the study investigated whether the offenses considered most serious by the American sample are also considered most serious by the Indian sample. Similar analysis was done for the offenses considered least serious by both the samples. The data was also examined to see if there were differences between sexes -- i.e., if the offenses considered most serious by the males are the ones considered most serious by the females too. All these differences were examined using the category scale values as well as the magnitude scale values.

Appropriate statistical techniques were employed to explore cross-cultural and sex differences in terms of a tendency toward overall high and low ratings and the range of responses chosen. This was done in terms of the means, standard deviations, skewness and kurtosis of the category means.

Discriminal dispersions for the 30 stimuli were computed for the purpose of making several comparisons: 1) agreement or disagreement among Indians, among Americans and between the two groups; 2) agreement among and between males and females in the two cultures.



These same comparisons between cultures and between sexes were also made using the coefficient of correlation.

## CHAPTER IV

### RESULTS

Since the rationale and the computations used in arriving at the category scales have already been described at length by Rimoldi and Hormaeche (1955), this will not be discussed here. The category means as distinguished from the category scale values refer to an average over all the responses given to a single stimulus. In tables 1 and 2 the category scale values and the category means are presented. Figures 1 and 2 show the category scale values when plotted against the category means. The linear correlation between the two sets of values is .99 for both the Indian and the American groups. This indicates that in all likelihood the unscaled judgements were approximately normally distributed (Rimoldi, 1960).

Sellin (1964) in his study "The Measurement of Delinquency", demonstrated that when the magnitude scales are plotted against the category scales, a concave downward trend is witnessed. That is, the two scales are logarithmically related. A part of his sample consisted of American college students. Figures 3 and 4 demonstrate the same relationship for the Indian college students as well as for the American college students. Table 3 presents the magnitude scale values for both the samples.

Tables 4 and 5 list the most serious and the least serious crimes along with their respective category scale values. Table 4 refers to the American group and Table 5 to the Indian group. In these tables, the samples are also

divided into males and females. The most serious crimes were defined as those falling above the 80th percentile and the least serious were defined as those falling below the 20th percentile. Similarly Tables 6 and 7 list the most serious and least serious crimes with their respective magnitude scale values. Table 6 refers to the American group and Table 7 to the Indian group.

Tables 8, 9, 10 and 11 present the means, standard deviations, skewness and Kurtosis of the distributions of the category means for all the groups. Figure 5 presents graphically the distributions of the category means over each of the 11 intervals for all the groups. The sign test was employed to see if there was any significant difference between the category ratings among the different groups. Table 12 shows the results of the sign test. None of the comparisons were significant.

The results were further analyzed in terms of discriminial dispersions which were used as an index of group agreement on the seriousness of various crimes. However it should be noted that this refers primarily to the consensus on scale values and not on actual seriousness perceived. Table 13 shows the discriminial dispersions of all the groups. Figures 6, 7, 8, 9 and 10 present graphically the results when the American group was plotted against the Indian group (Figure 6), the American males against the Indian males (Figure 7), the American females against the Indian females (Figure 8), the American males against the American females (Figure 9), and the Indian males against the Indian females (Figure 10). Note that a line bisects the graphs. This line indicates that there is no difference between the two groups either in terms of agreement among themselves or disagreement among themselves as to

the seriousness of crimes. The numbers below the line refer to those crimes for which the group on the x-axis disagrees and the group on the y-axis agrees. The numbers above the line refer to those crimes for which the group on the x-axis agrees and the group on the y-axis disagrees.

Finally group comparisons in terms of cultures and sexes were made using the coefficient of correlation as an index. The results of these comparisons are presented in Table 14.

TABLE 1  
 CATEGORY SCALE VALUES AND CATEGORY MEANS  
 FOR THE AMERICAN GROUP

|    | Sj     | Mean  |    | Sj     | Mean  |
|----|--------|-------|----|--------|-------|
| 1  | 2.513  | 9.840 | 16 | -.508  | 4.310 |
| 2  | 1.394  | 8.640 | 17 | .249   | 6.040 |
| 3  | .925   | 7.520 | 18 | 1.695  | 9.270 |
| 4  | -.750  | 3.540 | 19 | -.231  | 4.870 |
| 5  | -1.202 | 2.710 | 20 | .758   | 7.330 |
| 6  | -1.262 | 2.720 | 21 | .825   | 7.460 |
| 7  | 1.223  | 8.360 | 22 | -1.723 | 2.060 |
| 8  | -.790  | 3.440 | 23 | .206   | 5.880 |
| 9  | -.807  | 3.920 | 24 | .468   | 6.580 |
| 10 | -.505  | 4.080 | 25 | -.284  | 4.700 |
| 11 | .117   | 5.700 | 26 | .212   | 6.040 |
| 12 | -.519  | 4.110 | 27 | .065   | 5.430 |
| 13 | -1.215 | 2.660 | 28 | .455   | 6.730 |
| 14 | 1.029  | 7.880 | 29 | .544   | 6.720 |
| 15 | -1.650 | 2.230 | 30 | -1.234 | 2.730 |

Mx      0000  
 $\sigma_x$     1.0193  
 N        30

My      5.4500  
 $\sigma_y$     2.1882  
 N        30

$r_{x.y}$     .9925  
 $b_{y.x}$     2.1307  
 C        5.4501  
 $\sigma_{y.x}$    .2679

TABLE 2  
 CATEGORY SCALE VALUES AND CATEGORY MEANS  
 FOR THE INDIAN GROUP

|            | Sj     | Mean       |        | Sj            | Mean   |
|------------|--------|------------|--------|---------------|--------|
| 1          | 1.296  | 9.010      | 16     | -.756         | 3.800  |
| 2          | 1.127  | 8.480      | 17     | .038          | 5.850  |
| 3          | .457   | 6.920      | 18     | .532          | 7.190  |
| 4          | -.576  | 4.180      | 19     | -.542         | 4.180  |
| 5          | -.166  | 5.280      | 20     | .577          | 7.270  |
| 6          | -.432  | 4.570      | 21     | .902          | 8.060  |
| 7          | .551   | 7.330      | 22     | -1.688        | 2.410  |
| 8          | -.483  | 4.420      | 23     | .302          | 6.450  |
| 9          | -.031  | 5.690      | 24     | .126          | 6.090  |
| 10         | -.446  | 4.490      | 25     | -.384         | 4.540  |
| 11         | -.391  | 4.560      | 26     | .306          | 6.530  |
| 12         | -.535  | 4.260      | 27     | .173          | 6.140  |
| 13         | -.608  | 4.150      | 28     | .254          | 6.360  |
| 14         | 1.513  | 9.000      | 29     | .442          | 6.910  |
| 15         | -1.053 | 3.350      | 30     | -.504         | 4.560  |
| Mx         | 0000   | My         | 5.7343 | rxy           | .9926  |
| $\sigma_x$ | .6996  | $\sigma_y$ | 1.6833 | byx           | 2.3881 |
| N          | 30     | N          | 30     | C             | 5.7343 |
|            |        |            |        | $\sigma_{yx}$ | .2046  |

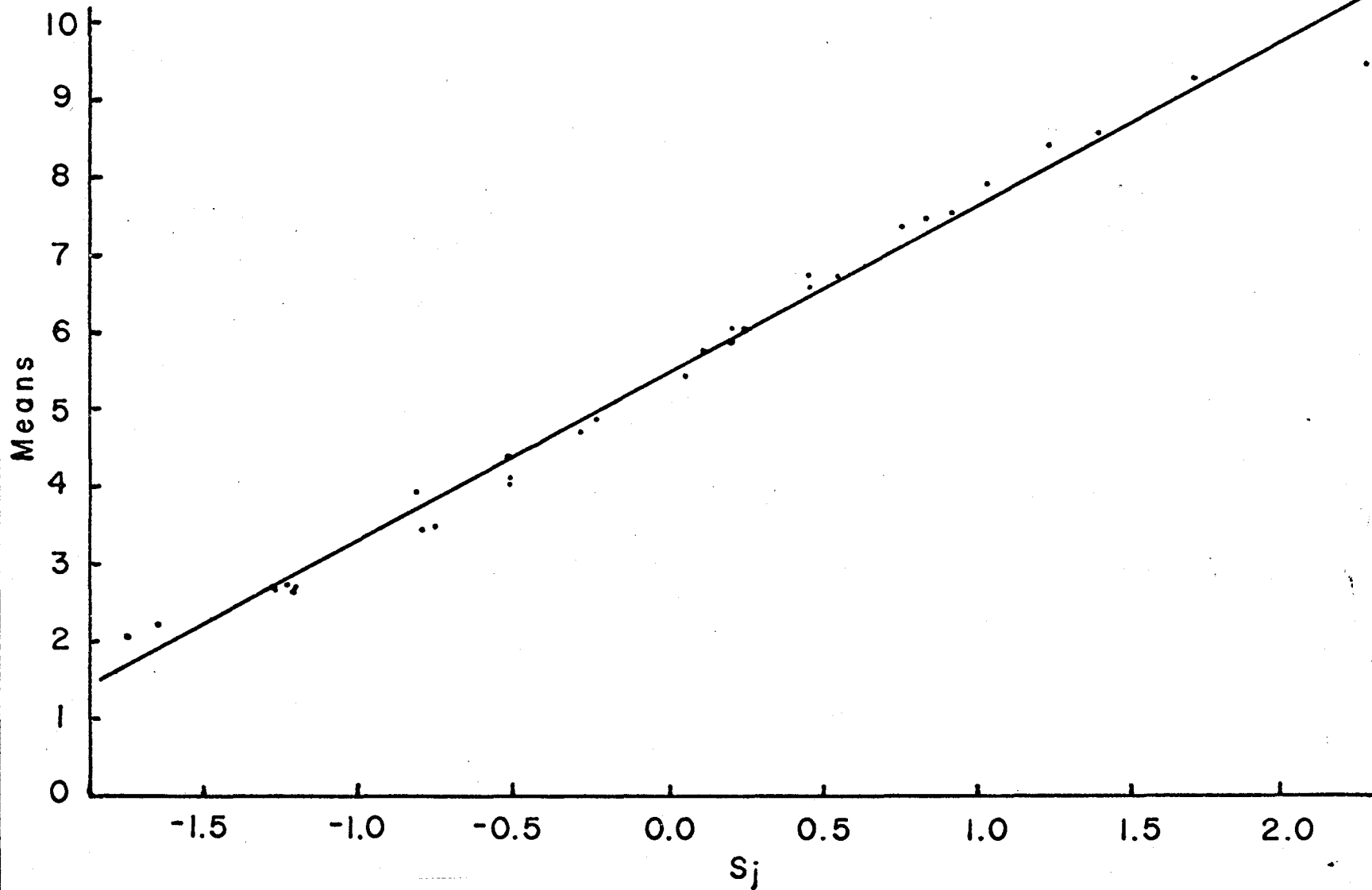


FIGURE 1. American group -- successive intervals scale values ( $s_j$ ) against category means.

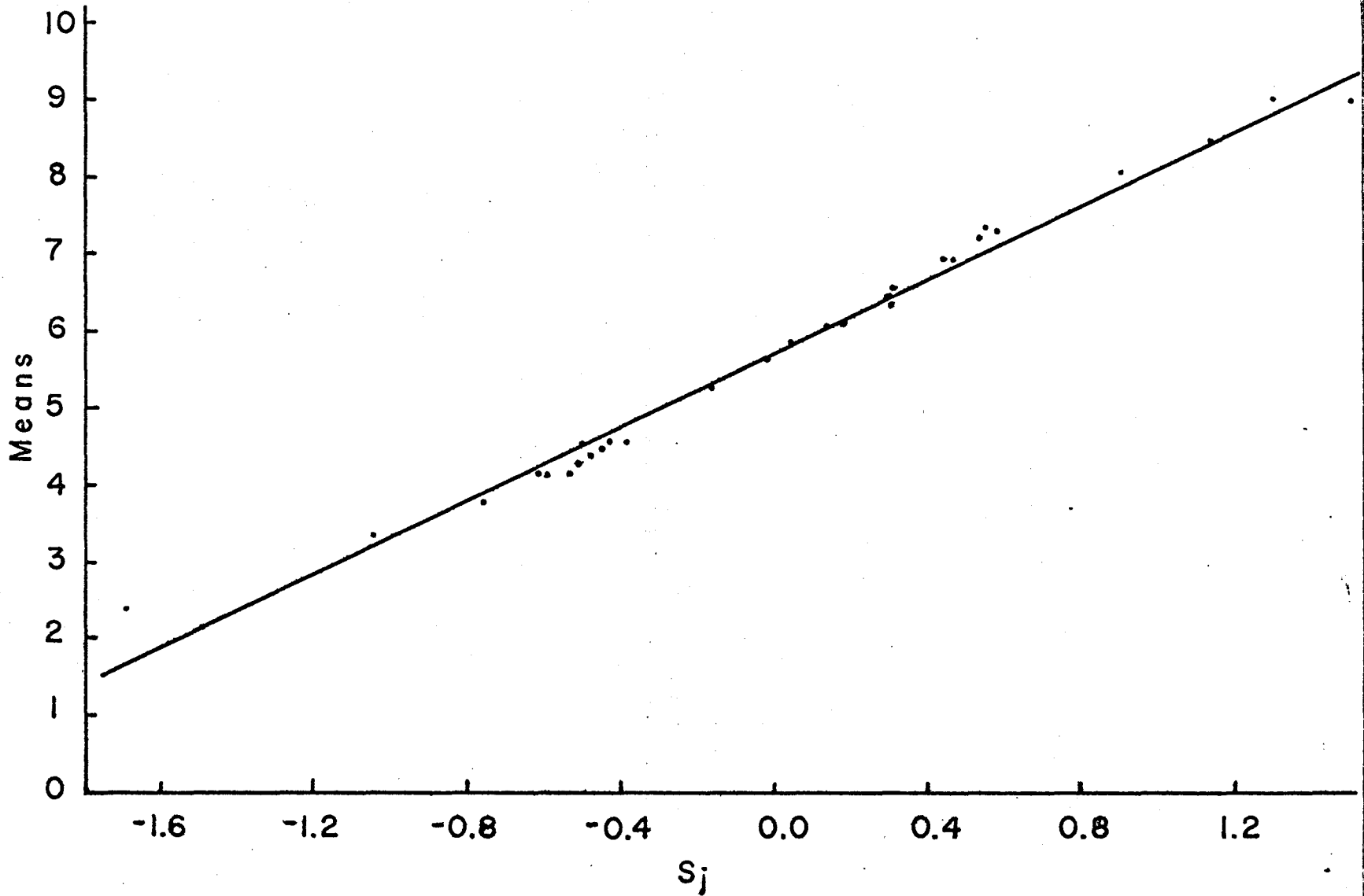


FIGURE 2. Indian groups -- successive intervals scale values ( $s_j$ ) against category means.



TABLE 3  
MAGNITUDE SCALE VALUES  
FOR AMERICAN AND INDIAN GROUPS

|    | Am.  | Ind.  |    | Am.  | Ind.  |
|----|------|-------|----|------|-------|
| 1  | 167  | 84.3  | 16 | 6.28 | 7.83  |
| 2  | 95.5 | 71.9  | 17 | 28.9 | 21.4  |
| 3  | 51.7 | 42.6  | 18 | 127  | 37.9  |
| 4  | 4.31 | 8.86  | 19 | 12.6 | 9.76  |
| 5  | 3.41 | 17.33 | 20 | 44.0 | 46.7  |
| 6  | 2.78 | 12.9  | 21 | 47.1 | 58.1  |
| 7  | 88.1 | 40.93 | 22 | 1.28 | 4.59  |
| 8  | 4.18 | 8.68  | 23 | 15.7 | 31.6  |
| 9  | 5.32 | 19.7  | 24 | 37.7 | 30.65 |
| 10 | 5.37 | 9.68  | 25 | 8.78 | 12.23 |
| 11 | 21.8 | 12.05 | 26 | 21.5 | 39.3  |
| 12 | 6.44 | 10.1  | 27 | 17.2 | 29.9  |
| 13 | 3.08 | 9.89  | 28 | 28.7 | 29.43 |
| 14 | 64.7 | 69.3  | 29 | 33.3 | 36.8  |
| 15 | 1.75 | 6.94  | 30 | 2.75 | 11.5  |

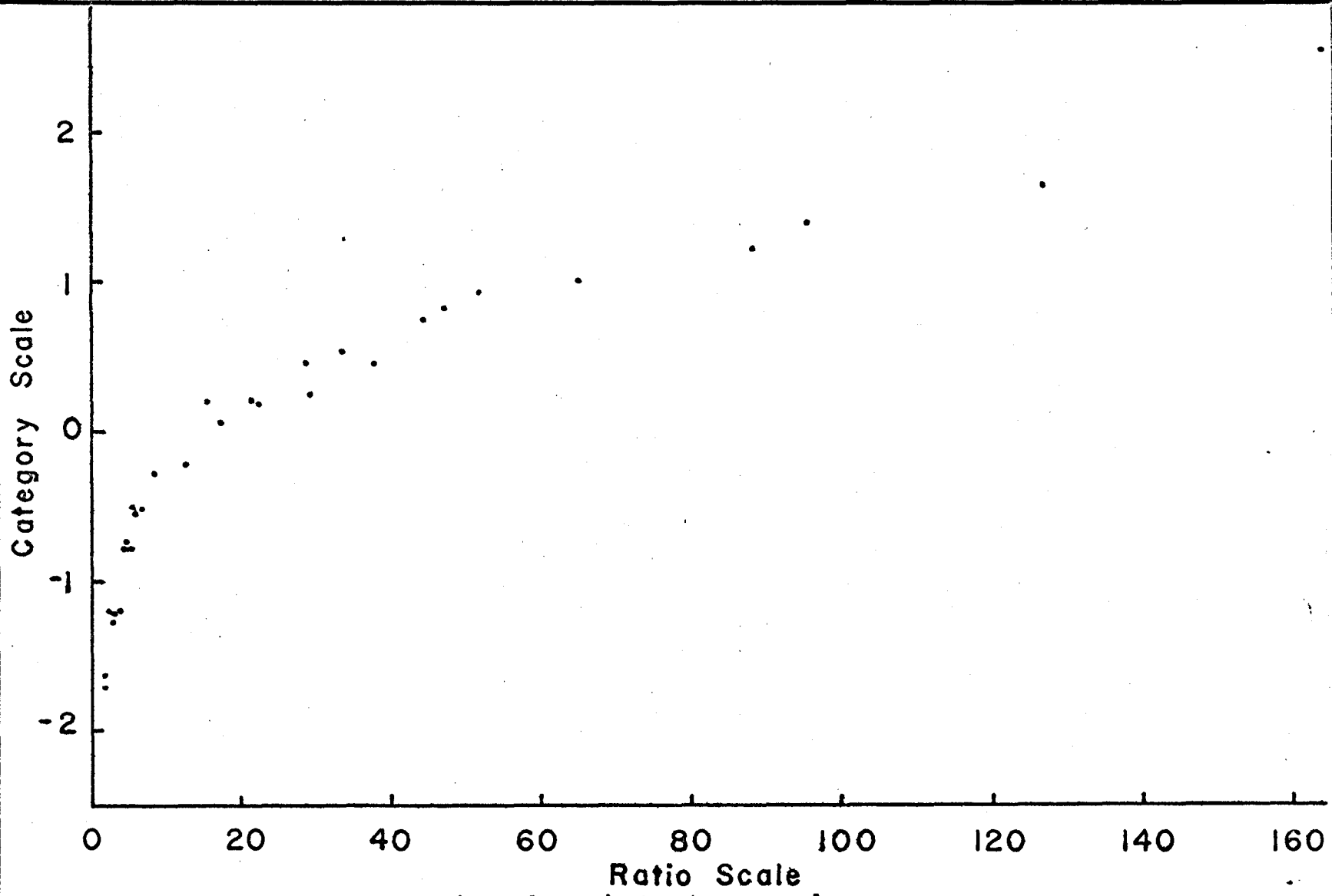


FIGURE 3. American group -- ratio scale against category scale.

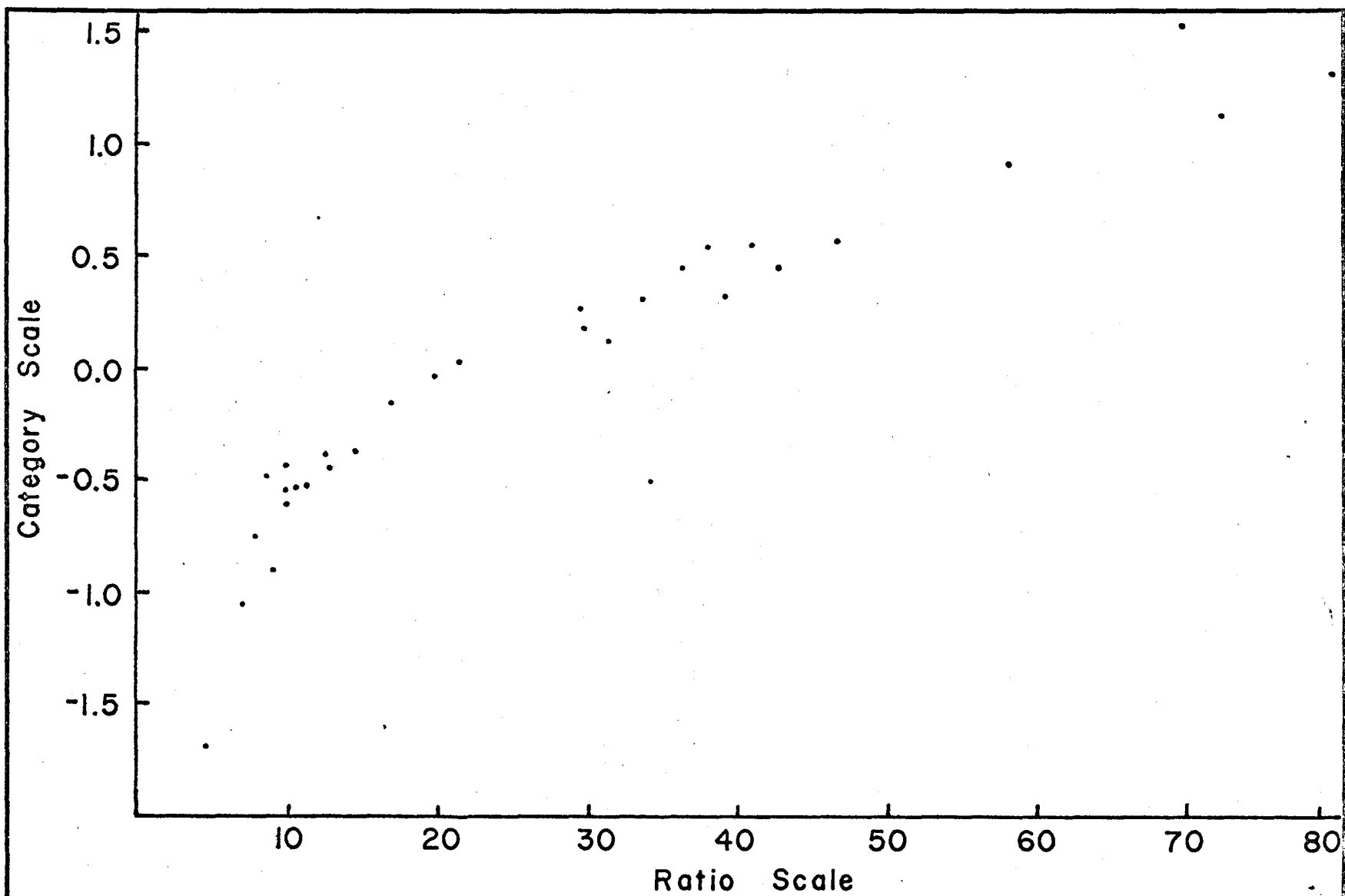


FIGURE 4. Indian group -- ratio scale against category scale.

TABLE 4\*

THE CATEGORY SCALES OF THE MOST AND THE LEAST  
SERIOUS CRIMES AMONG THE AMERICAN COLLEGE STUDENTS

| Most Serious  |             |        |        |        |        |        |
|---------------|-------------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|
| Whole Group   | Crime       | 1      | 2      | 7      | 14     | 18     |
|               | Scale Value | 2.513  | 1.394  | 1.229  | 1.029  | 1.695  |
| Male          | Crime       | 1      | 2      | 7      | 18     | 21     |
|               | Scale Value | 3.087  | 1.420  | 1.269  | 1.800  | 1.029  |
| Female        | Crime       | 1      | 2      | 3      | 7      | 18     |
|               | Scale Value | 1.947  | 1.327  | 1.122  | 1.148  | 1.894  |
| Least Serious |             |        |        |        |        |        |
| Whole Group   | Crime       | 6      | 13     | 15     | 22     | 30     |
|               | Scale Value | -1.262 | -1.215 | -1.650 | 1.723  | -1.239 |
| Male          | Crime       | 5      | 6      | 15     | 22     | 30     |
|               | Scale Value | -1.374 | -1.232 | -1.806 | -1.536 | -1.236 |
| Female        | Crime       | 6      | 13     | 15     | 22     | 30     |
|               | Scale Value | -1.313 | -1.234 | -1.538 | -2.049 | -1.195 |

\*The list of all the 30 crimes with their numbers is given in the Appendix

TABLE 5\*

THE CATEGORY SCALES OF THE MOST AND THE LEAST SERIOUS  
CRIMES AMONG THE INDIAN COLLEGE STUDENTS

|             |             | Most Serious  |       |        |       |        |
|-------------|-------------|---------------|-------|--------|-------|--------|
| Whole Group | Crime       | 1             | 2     | 14     | 20    | 21     |
|             | Scale Value | 1.296         | 1.127 | 1.513  | .577  | .902   |
| Male        | Crime       | 1             | 2     | 14     | 18    | 21     |
|             | Scale Value | 1.352         | .753  | 1.342  | .606  | .833   |
| Female      | Crime       | 1             | 2     | 14     | 21    | 29     |
|             | Scale       | 1.186         | 1.569 | 1.696  | .972  | .845   |
|             |             | Least Serious |       |        |       |        |
| Whole Group | Crime       | 4             | 13    | 15     | 16    | 22     |
|             | Scale Value | -.576         | -.608 | -1.053 | -.756 | -1.688 |
| Male        | Crime       | 12            | 13    | 15     | 16    | 22     |
|             | Scale Value | -.602         | -.643 | -1.089 | -.766 | -1.667 |
| Female      | Crime       | 4             | 8     | 15     | 16    | 22     |
|             | Scale Value | -.726         | -.771 | -1.059 | .805  | -1.679 |

\*The list of all the 30 crimes with their numbers is given in the Appendix.

TABLE 6\*

THE MAGNITUDE SCALES OF THE MOST AND THE LEAST  
SERIOUS CRIMES AMONG THE AMERICAN COLLEGE STUDENTS

| Most Serious  |             |       |      |      |      |       |
|---------------|-------------|-------|------|------|------|-------|
| Whole Group   | Crime       | 1     | 2    | 7    | 14   | 18    |
|               | Scale Value | 167   | 95.5 | 88.1 | 64.7 | 127   |
| Males         | Crime       | 1     | 2    | 7    | 14   | 18    |
|               | Scale Value | 177   | 92.9 | 96.2 | 64.7 | 131   |
| Females       | Crime       | 1     | 2    | 7    | 14   | 18    |
|               | Scale Value | 152.5 | 94.2 | 78.7 | 68.0 | 122.0 |
| Least Serious |             |       |      |      |      |       |
| Whole Group   | Crime       | 6     | 13   | 15   | 22   | 30    |
|               | Scale Value | 2.78  | 3.08 | 1.75 | 1.28 | 2.75  |
| Males         | Crime       | 5     | 6    | 15   | 22   | 30    |
|               | Scale Value | 2.49  | 2.42 | 1.58 | 1.4  | 3.01  |
| Females       | Crime       | 6     | 13   | 15   | 22   | 30    |
|               | Scale Value | 3.14  | 3.12 | 2.11 | 1.14 | 2.45  |

\*The list of all the 30 crimes with their numbers is given in the Appendix.

TABLE 7\*

THE MAGNITUDE SCALES OF THE MOST AND THE LEAST  
SERIOUS CRIMES AMONG THE INDIAN COLLEGE STUDENTS

|             |             | Most Serious  |       |      |       |      |
|-------------|-------------|---------------|-------|------|-------|------|
| Whole Group | Crime       | 1             | 2     | 14   | 20    | 21   |
|             | Scale Value | 84.3          | 71.9  | 69.3 | 46.7  | 58.1 |
| Males       | Crime       | 1             | 2     | 14   | 18    | 21   |
|             | Scale Value | 73.95         | 51.2  | 68.3 | 37.0  | 44.5 |
| Females     | Crime       | 1             | 2     | 20   | 21    | 29   |
|             | Scale Value | 99.50         | 86.95 | 70.8 | 74.35 | 66.4 |
|             |             | Least Serious |       |      |       |      |
| Whole Group | Crime       | 4             | 8     | 15   | 16    | 22   |
|             | Scale Value | 8.86          | 8.63  | 6.94 | 7.83  | 4.59 |
| Males       | Crime       | 12            | 13    | 15   | 16    | 22   |
|             | Scale Value | 7.84          | 8.58  | 5.52 | 6.75  | 4.12 |
| Females     | Crime       | 8             | 10    | 15   | 16    | 22   |
|             | Scale Value | 7.66          | 6.93  | 8.74 | 8.87  | 5.45 |

\*The list of all the 30 crimes with their numbers is given in the Appendix.

TABLE 8  
THE MEANS, STANDARD DEVIATIONS, SKEWNESS  
AND KURTOSIS FOR AMERICANS AND INDIANS

|                     | Americans | Indians |
|---------------------|-----------|---------|
| Means               | 5.45      | 5.75    |
| Standard Deviations | 2.19**    | 1.68**  |
| Skewness            | .19       | .25     |
| Kurtosis            | -1.02*    | -.76    |

\*\* F Ratio: 1.70

TABLE 9  
THE MEANS, STANDARD DEVIATIONS, SKEWNESS  
AND KURTOSIS FOR THE MALES AND FEMALES

|                     | Males  | Females  |
|---------------------|--------|----------|
| Means               | 5.54   | 5.65     |
| Standard Deviations | 1.85   | 1.96     |
| Skewness            | .25    | .23      |
| Kurtosis            | -.8415 | -1.1887* |

\* p < .05

\*\* p < .001



TABLE 10  
 THE MEANS, STANDARD DEVIATIONS, SKEWNESS  
 AND KURTOSIS FOR THE AMERICAN AND INDIAN MALES

|                     | American Males | Indian Males |
|---------------------|----------------|--------------|
| Means               | 5.47           | 5.61         |
| Standard Deviations | 2.24**         | 1.56**       |
| Skewness            | .15            | .26          |
| Kurtosis            | -1.02          | -.33         |

\*\* F Ratio: 2.06

TABLE 11  
 THE MEANS, STANDARD DEVIATIONS, SKEWNESS  
 AND KURTOSIS FOR THE AMERICAN AND INDIAN FEMALES

|                     | American Females | Indian Females |
|---------------------|------------------|----------------|
| Means               | 5.42             | 5.89           |
| Standard Deviations | 2.14             | 1.91           |
| Skewness            | .25              | .25            |
| Kurtosis            | -1.04            | -1.19          |

\*\* p < .001

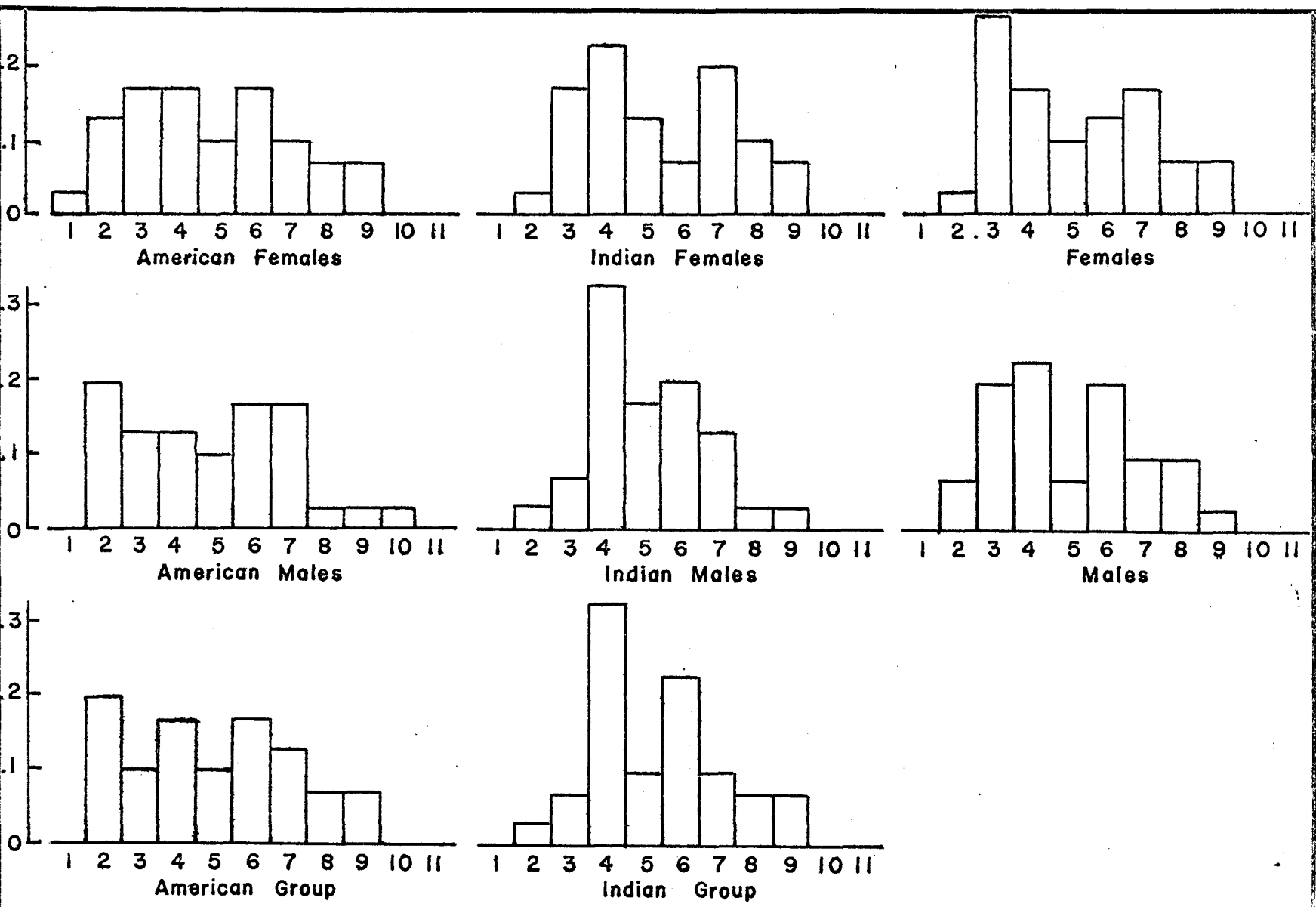


FIGURE 5. The frequency distribution of the category means for the different groups.

TABLE 13

## THE DISCRIMINAL DISPERSIONS FOR THE DIFFERENT GROUPS

|    | Americans | Indians | American Males |
|----|-----------|---------|----------------|
| 1  | 1.489     | .886    | 1.747          |
| 2  | 1.021     | 1.11    | 1.233          |
| 3  | 1.352     | 1.11    | 1.270          |
| 4  | .744      | .915    | .730           |
| 5  | .929      | 1.064   | .820           |
| 6  | 1.005     | .729    | .948           |
| 7  | .857      | .839    | .910           |
| 8  | .816      | .882    | .757           |
| 9  | 1.464     | 1.263   | 1.478          |
| 10 | .753      | .953    | .731           |
| 11 | .924      | .845    | .850           |
| 12 | .929      | .862    | .860           |
| 13 | .839      | 1.038   | .665           |
| 14 | 1.071     | 1.303   | 1.054          |
| 15 | 1.070     | 1.158   | 1.010          |

TABLE 13 (CONTINUED)

## THE DISCRIMINAL DISPERSIONS FOR THE DIFFERENT GROUPS

|    | Americans | Indians | American Males |
|----|-----------|---------|----------------|
| 16 | 1.176     | .924    | 1.241          |
| 17 | .709      | .955    | .797           |
| 18 | .837      | .884    | .961           |
| 19 | .807      | .800    | .732           |
| 20 | 1.000     | .862    | 1.095          |
| 21 | 1.137     | .960    | 1.193          |
| 22 | 1.026     | 1.240   | .824           |
| 23 | 1.042     | 1.108   | 1.057          |
| 24 | 1.057     | .885    | 1.000          |
| 25 | .826      | .908    | .865           |
| 26 | 1.257     | 1.225   | 1.228          |
| 27 | .959      | 1.010   | 1.054          |
| 28 | .860      | 1.091   | .991           |
| 29 | 1.051     | 1.020   | 1.075          |
| 30 | .994      | 1.181   | .921           |

TABLE 13 (CONTINUED)

## THE DISCRIMINAL DISPERSIONS FOR THE DIFFERENT GROUPS

|    | Indian Males | American Females | Indian Females |
|----|--------------|------------------|----------------|
| 1  | .953         | 1.197            | .841           |
| 2  | .964         | .861             | 1.086          |
| 3  | .915         | 1.370            | 1.065          |
| 4  | 1.054        | .688             | .930           |
| 5  | 1.095        | .870             | .941           |
| 6  | .791         | 1.237            | .955           |
| 7  | .882         | .878             | .818           |
| 8  | .896         | .870             | .861           |
| 9  | 1.204        | 1.396            | 1.367          |
| 10 | .898         | .821             | 1.006          |
| 11 | .770         | .897             | 1.014          |
| 12 | .838         | .972             | .954           |
| 13 | 1.028        | 1.056            | .965           |
| 14 | 1.210        | 1.001            | 1.524          |
| 15 | 1.212        | 1.291            | 1.265          |

TABLE 13 (CONTINUED)

## THE DISCRIMINAL DISPERSIONS FOR THE DIFFERENT GROUPS

|    | Indian Males | American Females | Indian Females |
|----|--------------|------------------|----------------|
| 16 | .986         | .939             | .949           |
| 17 | .916         | .598             | .965           |
| 18 | 1.115        | 1.353            | .713           |
| 19 | .917         | .842             | .808           |
| 20 | .782         | .867             | .867           |
| 21 | .946         | 1.023            | .865           |
| 22 | 1.089        | 1.314            | 1.220          |
| 23 | .998         | .979             | 1.186          |
| 24 | 1.039        | 1.000            | .746           |
| 25 | .912         | .859             | .833           |
| 26 | 1.439        | 1.219            | 1.074          |
| 27 | .975         | .788             | 1.100          |
| 28 | .941         | .669             | 1.104          |
| 29 | 1.035        | 1.017            | .790           |
| 30 | 1.196        | 1.073            | 1.239          |

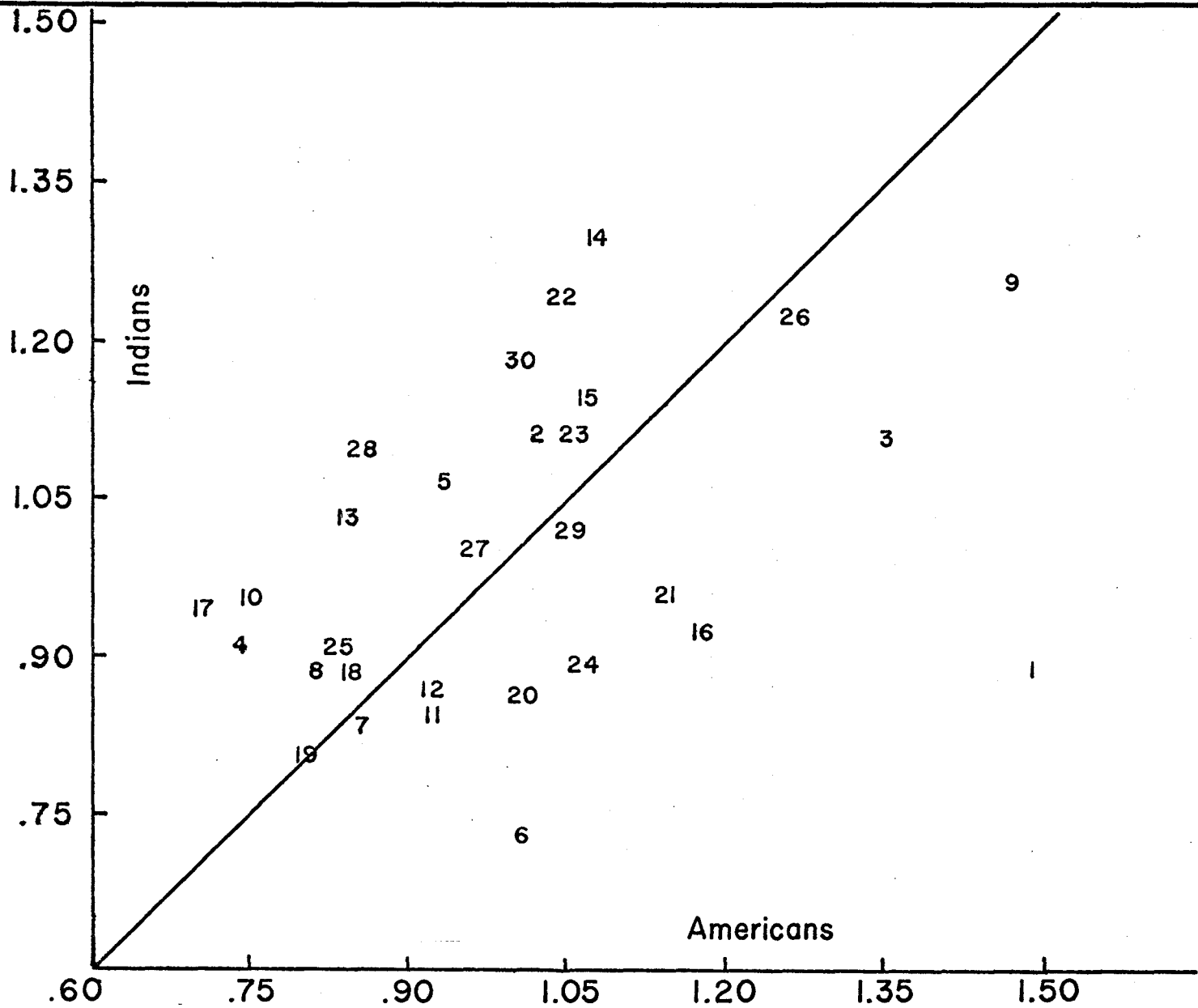


FIGURE 6. The discriminial dispersions of Americans and Indians.

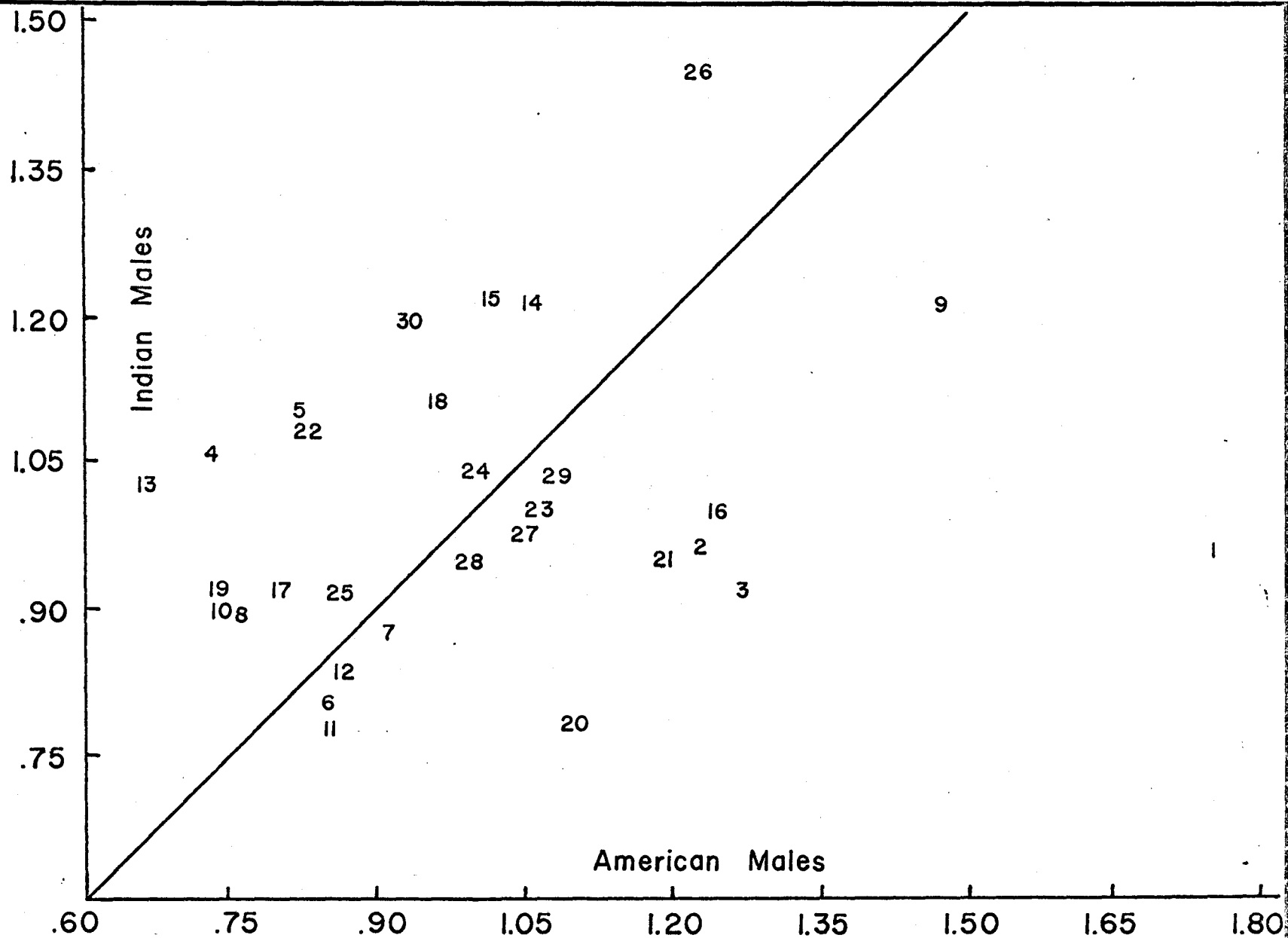


FIGURE 7. The discriminational dispersions of the American male and the Indian male.



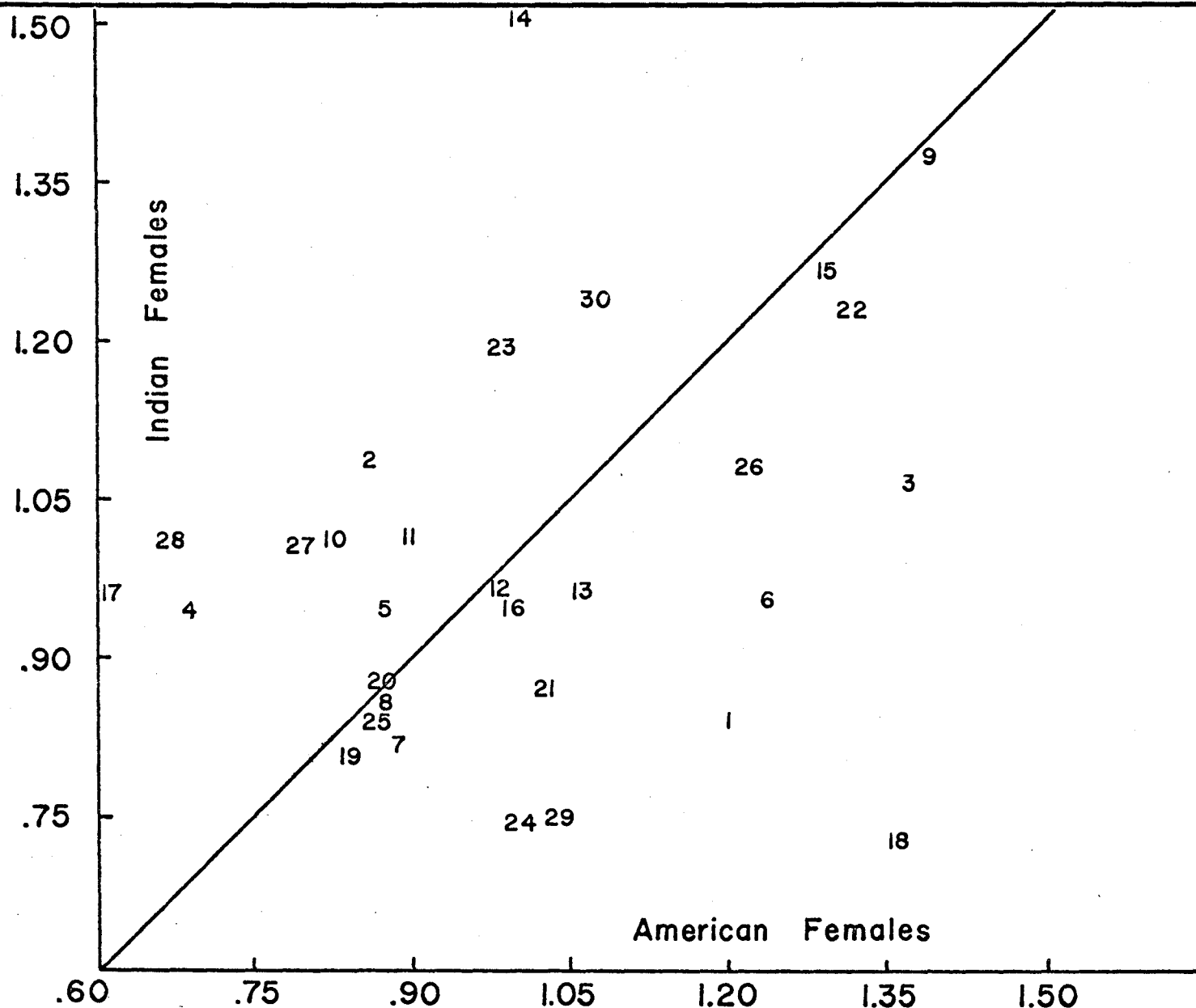


FIGURE 8. The discriminial dispersions of the American female and the Indian female.

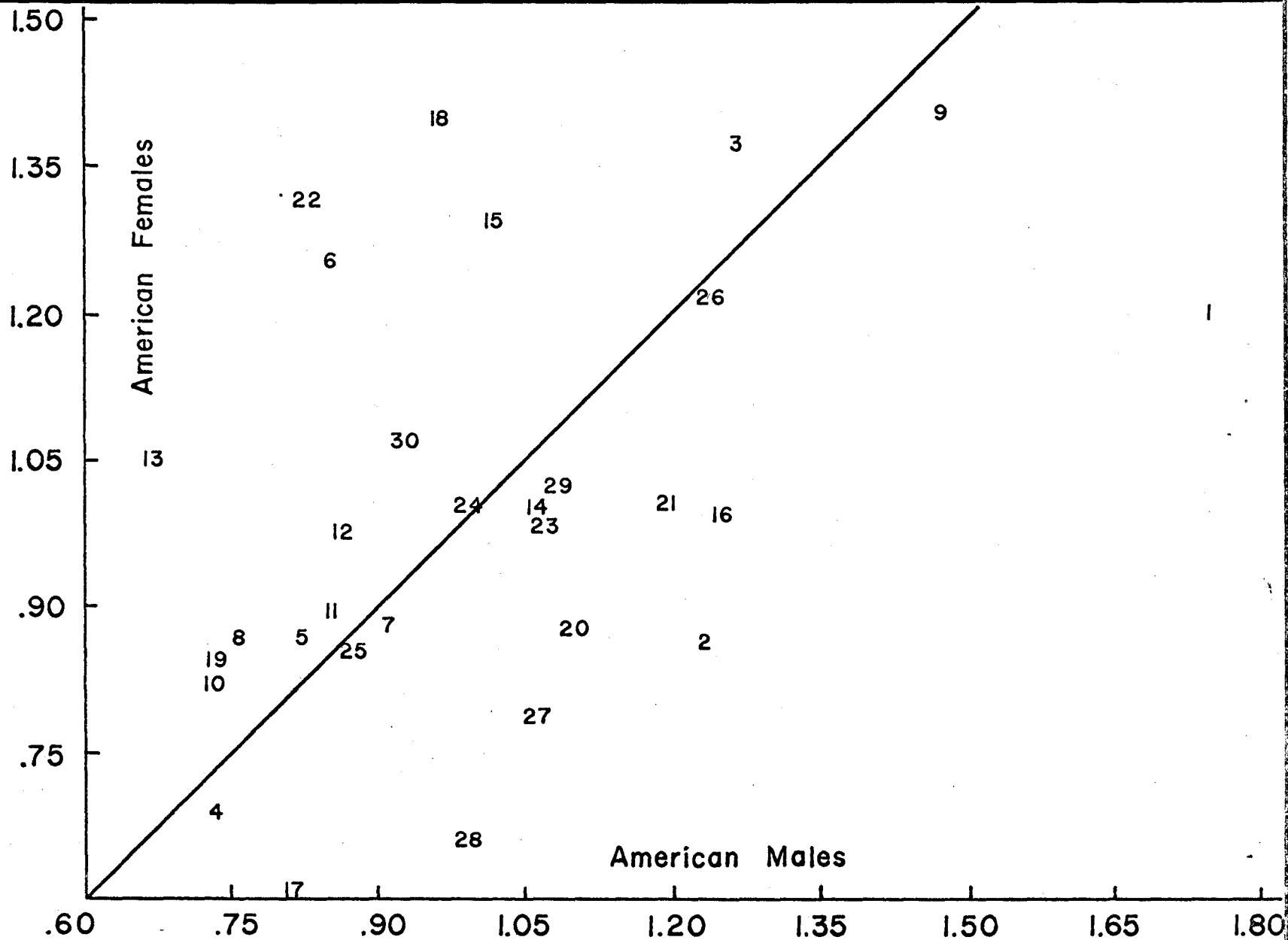


FIGURE 9. The discriminal dispersions of the American male and the American female.

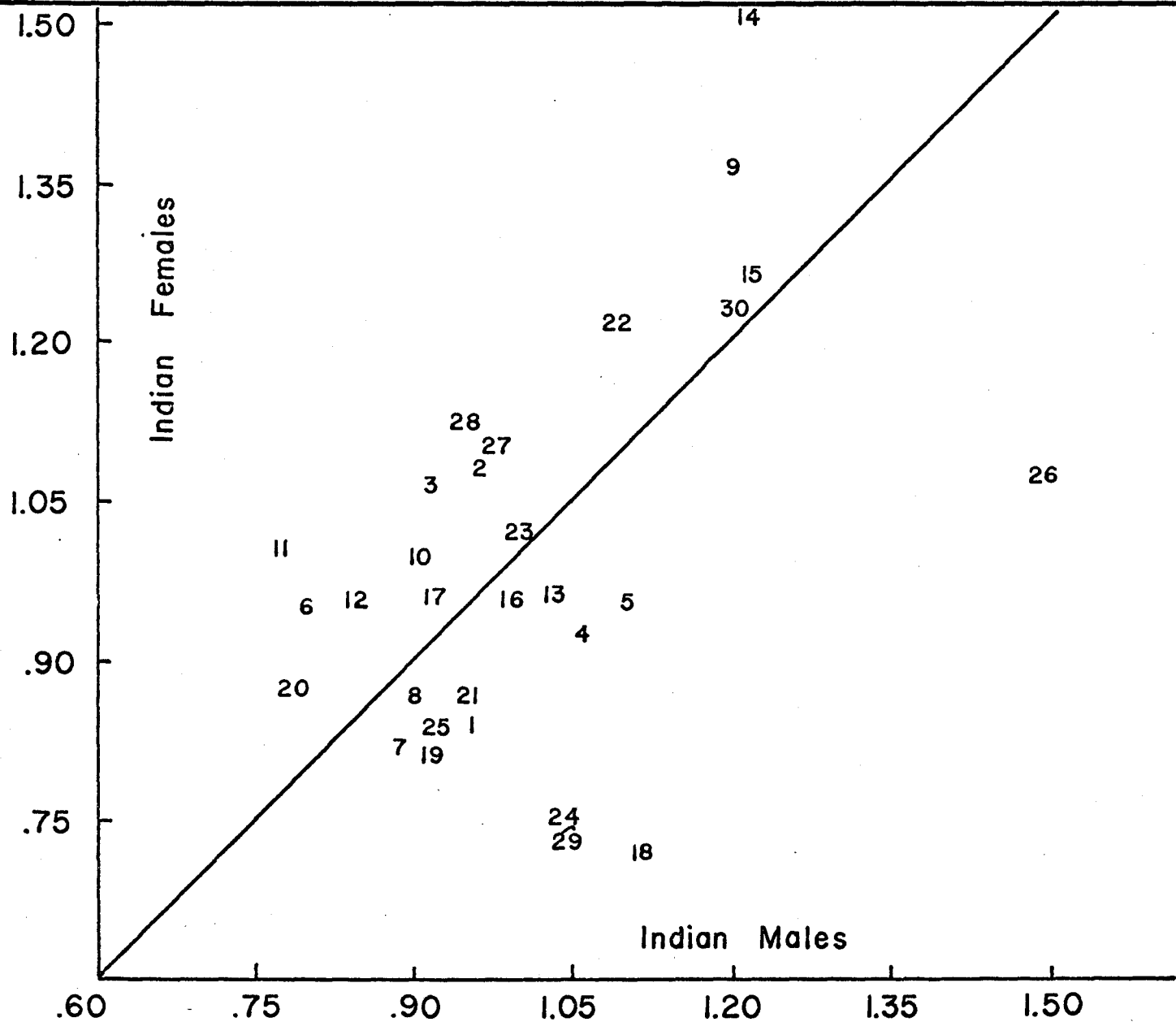


FIGURE 10. The discriminial dispersions of the Indian male and the Indian female.

TABLE 14  
THE COEFFICIENTS OF CORRELATION FOR DIFFERENT GROUPS

|             | Am.<br>Male | Am.<br>Female | Am.<br>All | Ind.<br>Male | Ind.<br>Female | Ind.<br>All | Male<br>All | Female<br>All |
|-------------|-------------|---------------|------------|--------------|----------------|-------------|-------------|---------------|
| Am. Male    |             |               |            |              |                |             |             |               |
| Am. Female  | .98         |               |            |              |                |             |             |               |
| Am. All     |             |               |            |              |                |             |             |               |
| Ind. Male   | .88         | .87           | .88        |              |                |             |             |               |
| Ind. Female | .86         | .87           | .86        | .89          |                |             |             |               |
| Ind. All    | .89         | .89           | .89        |              |                |             |             |               |
| Male All    |             | .96           |            |              | .89            |             |             |               |
| Female All  | .95         |               |            | .91          |                |             | .96         |               |

## CHAPTER V

### DISCUSSION

In reviewing the results of this study, several important findings are noted. Let us first look at the crimes perceived as most serious and least serious in terms of the category scale values. Observe that when the subjects rate under category instructions, they are told to use the first category for the least serious offense and the last category for the most serious. The subjects are therefore limited to the range of values they can assign. The only way in which they can vary their assignment of category values to the different offenses is by varying the relative spacing of the categories they use.

The crimes which are perceived most serious by the American sample (1, 2, 7, 14 and 18) refer to two sex offenses (2, 14) and three offenses connected with killing (1, 7, 18). It is curious that the sex crimes labeled most serious (see Appendix) should not include bigamy and adultery, but things like rape (2) or intercourse with stepdaughter (14) which could be considered identical with adultery. The only legitimate conclusion seems to be that for the Americans those sex crimes (Table 4) are most serious in which there is a lack of mutual consent. Offenses like rape and intercourse with stepdaughter imply lack of consent. Americans rate killing under any circumstances as a very serious crime (Table 4) although suicide is not a very serious crime for them. It seems paradoxical that in a society where the frequency of killing (Introduction) is relatively high, people should consider such a crime

so serious or is it that the frequency of crimes is not related to how people perceive crimes? However it could be that frequency alone is not a function of perceived seriousness. It should be remembered that the subjects of this study are not criminals; perhaps criminals would rate the seriousness of these crimes differently.

For American males the most serious crimes included adultery by the wife (21) and excluded intercourse with a stepdaughter (14). The inclusion of 21 is understandable for the males, however adultery by the husband (20) is not a serious crime for them, and neither is intercourse with a stepdaughter (14). Apparently there is a double standard involved. For the American females, 14 and 21 are not among the most serious, being replaced by illegal abortion (3). It is hard to say whether the American female considered abortion a serious crime because it is illegal or because abortion involves her emotionally. The exclusion of 21 (adultery by the wife) is consistent with the exclusion of 20 (adultery by the husband) that is, there is apparently no double standard for the women, who consider themselves equal to men in this respect.

For the Indians (Table 5), four of the five most serious crimes refer to sex offenses (2, 14, 20, 21), and one to killing (1). As mentioned earlier, the Americans' list of most serious crimes included two sex offenses and three connected with killing (Table 4). Also, as opposed to the Americans, the Indians consider adultery either by male or female among the most serious crimes. All four of these sex crimes (2, 14, 20, 21) refer to extramarital sex relations. This is understandable in terms of the Indian philosophy and ideology. As a whole, then, Indians are apparently more concerned with social and family life, whereas Americans seem to be more preoccupied with life and

death.

The Indian males, in place of adultery by the males (20), considered killing (18) more serious. It is indeed very interesting that the Indian females should rate adultery by women (21) and prostitution (29) among the most serious crimes. Prostitution has always been and is at most places still legal in India. In spite of this it is still considered a serious crime, which makes one wonder whether the perceived seriousness of crimes does not have several dimensions, such as legal, moral, religious, and emotional.

In summary, there are cultural as well as sex differences in rating seriousness of crimes, with the Indians considering more sex crimes as serious and Americans considering more crimes connected with killing as serious.

For the Americans (Table 4) the majority of the least serious crimes (6, 13, 15, 22, 30) imply some sort of inappropriate behavior. It refers to some breaking of a social rule, the type which is supposed to be more implicit than explicit. This is true of the American group as a whole and also of the males and females separately.

In general terms, the same thing could also be said about the Indians as far as the least serious crimes are considered (4, 13, 15, 16, 22). However for the Indians there seems to be a preponderance of offenses connected with stealing. The Indian and American males generally agree on the type of crimes which are least serious (Tables 4 and 5). The Indian females mostly perceive crimes connected with stealing as least serious. What is strange is that torturing a cat (16) is perceived as a least serious crime by the Indians as a

least serious crime by the Indians as a whole, the Indian males and the Indian females (Table 5). This is not readily explained; in fact it is rather curious. The majority of the Indian sample consisted of Hindus. The Hindu religion has inherently the element of nonviolence in it. Besides this, torturing a cat is specifically considered a wrong thing. In view of this, it is surprising that this statement was rated so low. Perhaps it could be seen as a reaction against strict religious pronouncements.

In summary, concerning the crimes perceived as least serious, there are no sex differences in the American group but there are differences in the Indian group. Few cultural differences are observed between the two groups of males. There are differences for the females only. The Indian females perceived stealing as least serious and the American females considered lack of proper behavior as least serious.

On the whole, in terms of category scale values, it is the most serious crimes which differentiate the two cultures better, and it is the least serious crimes which differentiate the sexes better.

Now let us review the results when crimes are perceived as most serious and least serious in terms of magnitude scale values (Tables 6 and 7). Note that in this type of scaling, the subject is free to use any positive numbers that he chooses, therefore the relative seriousness of the offenses can range over an indefinite domain of numbers. So the subject is not restricted as he was when he was rating crimes in terms of equally spaced categories.

Curiously, the American group as a whole, the American males and the American females have a perfect homogeneity in what they perceive as the most serious



crimes (1, 2, 7, 14 and 18). It seems a bit strange that the sex differences should emerge only when the subjects are experimentally restricted in what they are allowed to do (Table 4). Or is it that there are no profound sex differences but they emerge only as an artifact of the restriction. Of course one has to remember that in the ratio type of scaling, much more is demanded of the subject than in the interval type of scaling. The process in the former case is much more complex than in the latter.

As opposed to the American sample, the Indian samples seem quite consistent in their ratings in terms of the magnitude and category scale values. The Indian group as a whole and the Indian males rated exactly the same crimes as most serious in terms of the magnitude and the category scales. The only difference is in the case of the Indian females who excluded 14 and included 20 (Table 8) as serious crimes, both of which are sex offenses. It would appear that for the Indians, the type of scaling made no difference in their perceived seriousness of crimes.

Let us now examine those crimes which are perceived least serious by the American sample (Table 7). Surprisingly, the least serious crimes in terms of magnitude scale values are identical with the least serious crimes in terms of the category scale values. This is true of the American group as a whole, the American males and the American females. All these crimes refer to some breach of social behavior. From this it could be said that the American group can do better with the least serious crimes in a situation when they have no experimental restriction.

In case of the Indian group as a whole, the majority of the least serious

crimes are the same as in the previous case of category scale values (Tables 5 and 7). The only change is that instead of 8, the group included 13 as one of the least serious crimes which means a majority of offenses were connected with stealing. Stealing seems to be such a minor offense in India. Again the ratings of the Indian males were very similar to those of the American males. They both consider the breach of social customs as least serious crimes. It seems to be a male characteristic not to give too much value to social customs and rules. Evidently things like disturbing other people or making obscene remarks are not exactly what they consider serious. The Indian females are different. Stealing is considered as the least serious crime by them. Of course all these offenses connected with stealing do not involve any assault or physical attack. Usually these are stealing little things (Appendix) like \$5.00 or stealing little supplies or food, etc. Perhaps due to the fact that it is the woman who faces more material deprivation at home, it seems to her that stealing is nothing compared to what her family suffers and so she justifies herself. Of course this explanation is only speculation and may not prove to be a legitimate reason why the Indian females consider stealing as a minor crime. Again, 16 is perceived as one of the least serious crimes. Why torturing a cat should be perceived as such a minor offense is strange. It could be that though it might be sinful, it is not considered criminal.

In short, it can be said that the cultural differences emerge much more clearly for the most serious crimes, and the sex differences are evident in terms of the least serious crimes. There are little sex differences for the American sample in terms of the category scales and none in terms of magnitude

scales. However the sex differences are always present for the Indian sample whether the crimes are rated in terms of magnitude scales or in terms of category scales.

When the results are examined in terms of the category means, it is noticed that the means for the Indian sample are higher than means for the American sample (Tables 8, 10, 11). This is true not only when the groups are compared as a whole but even when they are divided into males and females. Larger means indicate a tendency to rate the crimes higher or more serious. Therefore it can be said that the Indians as compared with the Americans tend to rate the crimes as more serious. Further when the two samples (Americans and Indians) are split into total males and total females, it is observed that the mean for the females is higher than for the males (Table 9). Therefore, the females show a tendency to rate crimes as more serious. However there is no statistically significant difference between any of the groups, as the results of the sign test indicate (Table 12).

The magnitude of the standard deviations imply homogeneity of the groups in their use of the continuum on which they rate crimes. A larger standard deviation indicates using more of the range. The standard deviations for the Indian group as a whole, for the Indian males and for the Indian females are smaller than the standard deviations for the American group as a whole, for the American males and for the American females (Tables 8, 10, 11). Therefore the Indians are more restricted in their judgements. This implies that the Indians are more homogeneous than the Americans. Whereas Indians tend to rate crimes as higher, the Americans tend to use more of the continuum.

Further when the two samples are split into males and females, the females are less homogeneous than the males, though they tend to rate the crimes higher, actually they use less of the continuum (1 to 11) than the males. However the F ratios for testing the homogeneity of variance are significant only when the American group is compared with the Indian group and the American males are compared with the Indian males. In summary then, the American group as a whole and the American males are less homogeneous than the Indians as a whole and the Indian males.

The distributions of the category means for all the groups were symmetrical, and in none of the cases the skewness differed significantly from zero (Tables 8, 9, 10, 11). In terms of the Kurtosis, some significant departures from zero were observed. This was true in case of the total American sample and the total female sample (Tables 8 and 9). The negative kurtosis points to the fact that these distributions are flat at their peak.

The results based on discriminial dispersions will be examined by taking two groups at a time.

#### American Versus Indians (Figure 6):

Suicide (26) and prostitution (29) are the only crimes on which the Americans and the Indians show disagreement among themselves. In other words both groups have high discriminial dispersions for these two crimes. Both the groups agree on the seriousness of killing by automobile accident (7), administering drugs (11), making obscene phone calls (12), killing in anger (18) and refusing to pay the rent (19). However, killing by stabbing (1), illegal abortion (3), being drunk in public (6), premarital sex (9), torturing an animal (16), adultery (20, 21), and bigamy (24) are the crimes for which

the Americans show lack of agreement while the Indians show agreement. On the other hand stealing (4, 10, 17), disturbing the peace (13), having sexual relationship with the stepdaughter (14) and destroying a library book (30) are the crimes on which the Americans agree and the Indians disagree among themselves.

It is quite evident that the majority of the crimes (3, 9, 20, 21, 24) on which the Americans disagree among themselves and the Indians agree among themselves pertain to sex. On the other hand, the majority of the crimes (4, 10, 17) on which Indians disagree and Americans agree are connected with stealing. Suicide and prostitution seem to be debatable issues in both the cultures.

American Males Versus Indian Males (Figure 7):

Exhibitionism (23), bigamy (24), stealing from a house of worship (27), assaulting the teacher in class (28) and prostitution (29) seem to be the crimes which are controversial among the Indian males as well as among the American males. They all agree on the seriousness of getting drunk in public (6), killing by automobile accident (7), administering drugs (11) and making obscene phone calls (12). The American males show disagreement of opinion on killing by stabbing (1), rape (2), abortion (3), premarital sex (9), torturing an animal (16) and adultery (20, 21) on which Indian males have consensus of opinion. However the Indian males show lack of agreement on the seriousness of stealing (4, 10, 22), firing a rifle without a permit (5), disturbing the peace (13), having sexual intercourse with stepdaughter (14), playing hookey from school (15), killing in anger (18), refusing to pay the rent (19), suicide (26) and destroying a library book (30), and these are the offenses

for which the American males show relatively more agreement. From this one can safely say that there are more sex crimes on which the American males disagree than the Indian males (2, 3, 9, 20, 21). Indian males disagree primarily on stealing (4, 10, 20) and they also disagree on offenses against appropriate behavior or etiquette (5, 13, 15, 19, 30). Etiquette in India is to a great extent determined by the social class to which a person belongs, and therefore there is likely to be little agreement on it. For some people in India, stealing is no crime, especially if the person who steals is a deprived one and if stealing involves no physical harm. These considerations may explain the fact that there is so little agreement on the seriousness of stealing.

American Females Versus Indian Females (Figure 8):

Premarital sex relations (9), playing hookey (15), stealing food for the starving family (22) are the offenses on which American females as well as Indian females show lack of agreement among themselves. However they both agree on the perceived seriousness of stealing supplies (8), stealing tires from an automobile (25), killing by automobile accident (7), making obscene phone calls (12), torturing an animal (16), refusing to pay the rent (19), and husband committing adultery (20). American females show disagreement on the seriousness of crimes connected with sex (3, 21, 24, 29), stabbing to death (1) and being drunk in public (6), and Indian females show agreement on these. On the other hand Indian females disagree on stealing offenses (4, 10, 17, 27), rape (2) and assaulting a teacher in class (28), while the American females agree on these. It therefore seems that the American females disagree mostly on sex crimes (3, 21, 24, 29) and the Indian females disagree on offenses connected with stealing (4, 10, 17, 27). They both agree on stealing

little supplies from school (8) and stealing the tires of an automobile (25). However the Indian females are not in agreement on stealing from a private home, store, museum or a holy place (4, 10, 17, 27). This is understandable because there seem to be more issues involved in these types of stealing (4, 10, 17, 27) than in the former ones (8, 25). There is fear of greater punishment or perhaps fear of God involved in the latter offenses more than in the former ones even though all of them involve stealing.

American Males Versus American Females (Figure 9):

American males and females show great disagreement among themselves on abortion (3), premarital sex (9), bigamy (24), suicide (26), intercourse with stepdaughter (14), exhibitionism (23) and prostitution (29). But they both agree among themselves on the perceived seriousness of stealing from a store (4), firing a rifle without a license (5), killing by reckless driving (7), administering drugs (11) and stealing tires from an automobile (25). The males disagree among themselves whereas the females agree among themselves as to the seriousness of stabbing to death (1), rape (2), stealing from a museum (17), adultery (20, 21), stealing from a holy place (27) and assaulting a teacher in class (28). On the other hand females disagree and males agree on the seriousness of getting drunk in public (6), stealing supplies from a school (8), stealing from a private residence (10), making an obscene phone call (12), disturbing the peace (13), playing hookey from school (15), killing in anger (18), refusing to pay the rent for the apartment (19) and stealing to survive (22). There seem to be more offenses of sex on which the females agree and more offenses against proper behavior on which the males agree.

Indian Males Versus Indian Females (Figure 10):

Playing hookey from school (15), exhibitionism (23) and destroying a library book (30) seem to be controversial among the Indian males as well as females. They both agree on the seriousness of killing by reckless driving (7), stealing school supplies (8), torturing a cat (16), stealing from a museum (17), and wife committing adultery (21). The Indian males show lack of agreement on killing in anger (18), bigamy (24), suicide (26) and prostitution (29) and Indian females agree on these. On the other hand, the Indian females disagree among themselves as to how serious are rape (2), abortion (3), getting drunk in public (6), premarital sex (9), administering drugs (11), sexual intercourse with stepdaughter (14), stealing for survival (22), stealing from a holy place (27) and assaulting a teacher in class (28). These are the Indian males agree. There seems to be no crimes typical of female or male agreement as far as the Indian sample is concerned.

In summary it can be said that there are very clear differences across cultures when crimes are examined on the basis of agreement and disagreement. The Americans for the most part seem to disagree among themselves on the perceived seriousness of sex crimes and the Indians seem to disagree among themselves on the seriousness of stealing as appropriate behavior. Among the Americans the disagreement about sex crimes might be due to the fact that this culture is composed of two extreme groups of people -- those of the strict Judaeo-Christian tradition and those of the so-called new reformed liberal outlook. This controversy could also be an expression of the high individuality that this culture believes in.



The disagreement about stealing in India has already been discussed in this section and in the previous one. In short it is probably due to the existent dilemma of poverty and deprivation in India on the one hand and the ethical issues involved in stealing on the other hand. It arises from the fact that no doubt some, but not all stealing can be justified.

The coefficient of correlation can also be used to assess group agreements and disagreements. Therefore let me now examine the intercorrelation of the various groups.

The correlation between the category means for the Americans and Indians is .89; between the American males and the Indian males, .88; and between the American females and the Indian females, .87. This shows that there are differences among males and females as well as across cultures. However the correlation between American males and American females is almost perfect (.98). This indicates a very high agreement between American males and females. The Indian males do not correlate that highly (.89) with Indian females, indicating that the agreement between them does not reach perfection. This pattern of correlations is understandable in the light of other results because there are more sex differences in the Indian culture than in the American.

## CHAPTER VI

### SUMMARY

The present research was designed to study crimes with reference to cultures of India and America and their respective value systems. The underlying assumption was that perceived seriousness of crimes in different parts of the world and in different types of societies mirror the most basic values of a people and the means which society has developed for the fulfillment and realization of these values. A further assumption was that the frequency of crimes in a given society can be related to the dispositions of the people toward crime in that society. That is, the possibility was examined that the people in a society with a higher frequency of particular crimes do not consider those crimes so serious as do people in a society where there are fewer crimes. The study also intended to investigate sex differences in the dispositions toward different crimes. For the purpose of such investigation 30 criminal offenses of varying degrees of seriousness were selected. These 30 offenses were administered to 100 American college students and 100 Indian college students. The subjects were asked to rate the crimes on (1) an interval type of scale and (2) a ratio scale. The instructions explicitly asked the subjects to rate the crimes according to how serious they thought them to be, rather than what the law said or how the courts or judges might act on these crimes. The results were analyzed in several ways.

It was observed that the Indians consider crimes connected with sex as most serious and the Americans rated crimes connected with killing as most

serious. There were not many sex differences in the American sample in terms of either the most serious and the least serious offenses, but the Indian sample demonstrated definite sex differences.

Further, the Indians tended to rate crimes higher overall and the range of their ratings was more restricted. The Americans were less homogenous than the Indians. Also there were more sex crimes on which the Americans disagreed among themselves, and there were more crimes of stealing on which the Indians disagreed among themselves. On the whole, it can be said that Indians tend to agree more on serious crimes and Americans tend to agree more on mild crimes. Finally, there is more agreement between sexes in the American group than in the Indian group.

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## Appendix

Instruction statement: Please read over these 30 statements carefully. You would be asked to make certain judgements about these statements later on. After reading over all these cards, reshuffle them.

1. The offender stabs a person to death.
2. The offender forces a female to submit to sexual intercourse.
3. The offender performs an illegal abortion.
4. The offender breaks into a department store and steals merchandise worth \$5.00.
5. The offender is found firing a rifle for which he has no permit.
6. The offender is intoxicated in public.
7. The offender kills a person by reckless driving of an automobile.
8. The offender breaks into a school and steals \$5.00 worth of supplies.
9. An unmarried couple willingly have sexual intercourse.
10. The offender breaks into a residence, forces open a cash box and steals \$5.00.
11. The offender administers heroin to himself.
12. The offender makes an obscene phone call.
13. The offender disturbs the neighborhood with loud noisy behavior.
14. The offender has sexual intercourse with his step daughter.
15. Juvenile plays hockey from school.
16. The offender tortures a cat.
17. The offender steals a famous work of art from a museum.
18. The offender having been greatly cheated by the store owner, kills him.

19. The offender refuses to pay the rent for his apartment.
20. The husband commits adultery.
21. The wife commits adultery.
22. A starving man steals food for his family.
23. The offender exposes his genitals in public.
24. The offender commits bigamy.
25. The offender steals tires from an automobile.
26. The offender makes an attempt at suicide.
27. The offender steals a religious object from a house of worship.
28. The offender assaults his teacher in class.
29. The offender practices prostitution.
30. The offender destroys a library book.

APPROVAL SHEET

The dissertation submitted by Mira Brij Aghi, has been read and approved by members of the Department of Psychology.

The final copies have been examined by the director of the dissertation and the signature which appears below verifies the fact that any necessary changes have been incorporated and that the dissertation is now given final approval with reference to content and form.

The dissertation is therefore accepted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy.

April 21/69

Date



Signature of Advisor