DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 093 438 JC 740 251

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TITLE Experience as a Community College Student as a Criterion for the Selection of Community College Teachers.
PUB DATE Dec 73
NOTE 24p.; A practicum report for the Doctoral Degree in Education, Nova University

EDRS PRICE MF-$0.75 HC-$1.50 PLUS POSTAGE
DESCRIPTORS *Community Colleges; *Teacher Background; *Teacher Evaluation

ABSTRACT

This study investigated the assumption that teachers who have been community college students are more effective as teachers at the community college level than are teachers who have never attended a community college. No significant relationship was found between instructor success as measured by the level of student retention in English composition classes and past instructor experience as a community college student. Limitations of the study were that retention was observed for only 8 weeks, and that older instructors had more experience teaching and therefore might retain more students. (Author/SW)

EXPERIENCE AS A COMMUNITY COLLEGE STUDENT AS A CRITERION FOR THE SELECTION OF COMMUNITY COLLEGE TEACHERS

PRACTICUM ON APPLIED EDUCATIONAL RESEARCH AND EVALUATION

by

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A PRACTICUM PROPOSAL PRESENTED TO NOVA UNIVERSITY
IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE
DEGREE OF DOCTOR OF EDUCATION

NOVA UNIVERSITY

DECEMBER, 1973

I. THE TITLE

EXPERIENCE AS A COMMUNITY COLLEGE STUDENT AS A CRITERION FOR THE SELECTION OF COMMUNITY COLLEGE TEACHERS.

II. THE STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

The researchers are aware of a prevalent belief among community college teachers and administrators that teachers who have themselves been onetime community college students are somewhat more effective as teachers at the community college level than are teachers without such student experience. The underlying assumption appears to be that such a teacher (one with community college student experience) has insights into the nature of both the community college student and the community college as an institution which are denied to those teachers who have not had experience as a student at this level. This assumption, to the knowledge of the researchers, has been neither proved nor studied.

Using student retention in English composition classes as a measure of instructor success, a comparison is made of the performance of 22 English teachers, 6 of whom have been community college students, in English composition classes for the first 8 weeks of the Fall 1973 semester. The retention of students in classes taught by teachers with experience as community college students will be compared with the retention of students in the classes of teachers without such experience.

The comparative level of retention of students is intended to comment upon the worth of such experience as a criterion for predicting the potential for success of candidates for English teaching positions.

It is recognized that teacher experience as a community college student is only one characteristic which bears upon success as measured by retention of students. Accordingly, certain additional characteristics of the teachers are also recorded and statistically correlated to the level of student retention for both groups of teachers. They are:

1. Teacher's chronological age in years
2. Ever teach at a junior or senior high school? (Yes or No)
3. Sex (M/F)
4. Highest degree attained (B.A., M.A., Doctorate)
5. Recency of training (date of most recent degree)

III. THE HYPOTHESIS

English teachers who have had experience as students in a community college will experience the same success, as measured by the level of retention in composition classes, as will English teachers who have not had this experience.

IV. BACKGROUND AND SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

The increasing number of available applicants for junior college classes in English necessitates the employing of screening criteria that will result in the selection of instructors with high potential. The widely held premise that previous experience as a student in a community college will produce an instructor who is able to relate to junior

college students and thereby experience higher retention must be tested for validity.

Lack of research data pertaining to this quality mandates a study to accept or reject this widely held opinion. An intensive search of the literature reveals no previous study or collected data to base an opinion on; therefore, collection and testing of data is imperative to establish the basis for making a decision on the accuracy of this widely held idea.

Israel's research study revealed that the greatest influence on instructor's behavior was their attempt to duplicate or adopt instructional techniques of the well-organized professors from whom they have taken course work and may provide credence for this theory of the impact of the junior college experience.[1]

The importance of student motivation in English classes is recognized also as a pertinent factor. Also, researchers have found other personal qualities to be of concern. This study will determine, however, only the validity of this one factor that is widely adhered to by campus selection committees of English teachers.

An important research study dealing specifically with staffing practices used in employing junior college instructors and covering factors such as age, sex, marital status, number of children, work experience, subject taught, highest degree held, recency of degree, residence, and many others neglect to cover this important factor of junior college background.[2]

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[1]Israel, Jack Welden, Teaching Behavior and Reinforcement Sources of Selected Junior College Instructors, University of California at Los Angeles doctoral study, Page 44.

[2]Poorman, Robert Louis, An Investigation of Selected Staffing Practices Used in Employing Junior College Instructors, University of California at Los Angeles doctoral study, 1964, Pages 45-66.

Researchers Kelley, Wilbur, and Win found problems in teaching English that included:[3]

1. Marking papers (time required)
2. Disagreement on subject matter
3. Difficulty in relating the subject to vocational needs
4. Motivation of students

According to the specialists, common weaknesses of new English teachers are:

1. Treating students as if they were enrolled in University
2. Insufficient experience in relating to students
3. Lack of originality and inventiveness in teaching
4. Lack of broad subject area knowledge
5. Lack of sympathy for and understanding of poorly prepared students at the California junior college level

The common criteria for employment include:

1. Master's degree
2. Previous teaching experience
3. Personal characteristics mentioned are:
    1. Respect for students
    2. Realization of difference between California junior college and other levels of higher education students
    3. A desire to motivate and retain students in course desire

Cohen and Brawer found in their study that 66% of the instructors had a M.A. degree and ten percent had a doctorate.[4]

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[3]Kelley, Win, and Wilbur, Leslie, Teaching in the Community Junior College, Appleton-Century-Crofts, New York; 1970, Page 72.

[4]Cohen, Arthur M. and Brawer, Florence B., Focus on Learning Preparing Teachers for the 2-Year College Junior College Leadership Program, School of Education, University of California at Los Angeles, 1968.

Ten percent had taken junior college courses as students. They noted that high school instructors showed little orientation toward the junior college when hired.

Angers' study of personal characteristics most often identified in teachers who retain students in courses in order of priority are:[5]

1. Enthusiastic about subject matter
2. Material is well organized
3. They communicate well to students
4. They can relate information to students at the proper level for understanding
5. They have exciting and interesting personalities

This was based upon a study by Tead, Ordway, "Character and the College Teacher," Journal of Higher Education, Volume 35 (May, 1964), Pages 269-272.

The following facts are supported by extensive research and are characteristics of community college students.[6] Community college students are characterized by diversity and are more heterogeneous than their university counterparts in such traits as:

1. Age
2. Abilities
3. Philosophies of life
4. Knowledge
5. Wealth and poverty
6. Race
7. Faith and creeds
8. Purposes

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[5]Angers, William, Improving College and University Teaching, (Spring, 1963), Pages 115-117.

[6]Medsker, Leland L., The Junior College: Progress and Prospect, McGraw-Hill, 1960, Pages 29-50.

Their mean scores on aptitude tests are lower than four-year college students.

Transfer students are more able in aptitude tests than vocational-terminal students.

Junior colleges attract superior transfer students and also get superior vocational-terminal students.

Junior colleges have significant numbers of students able to engage in college work as rigorous as any four-year college university offers.

Junior college men and women are about equal in aptitude.

A research report of a study of a teacher's "holding power" (retention) rates of successful teachers in English composition classes as measured by students on a questionnaire showed a percentage of responses (rank order) as follows:[7]

1. Teacher's attitude towards students (21%)
2. Presentation (20.5%)
3. Personal characteristics (18%)
4. Knowledge of subject (12%)
5. Stimulation of thought and interest (11%)

A study on administrative and supervisory views[8] and policies in three areas showed conditions of instruction, evaluation of instruction, and improvement of instruction. A correlation of the institutions with highest retention rates in all community junior colleges in California revealed the only characteristics above the median (50%) level were:

1. All teachers assigned to subjects they liked

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[7]Hoffman, Randall W., Improving College and University Teaching, Volume II, (Winter, 1963), Pages 21-24.

[8]Kelly, Win D., Criteria for Directing Junior College Instruction, Unpublished Doctoral Dissertation, (Los Angeles University of Southern California, etc.)

2. All teachers assigned to less than 25 hrs./wk. load

3. All teachers assigned to a class load satisfying both faculty and administrators

4. Democratic formulation of policies affecting roles of faculty and administrators

For those community junior colleges with lowest retention correlating to all community junior colleges in California median (50%) level and above there was reflected:

1. Inadequate working loads, compensations, and aids

2. Loss of students--limitation of 2-year schools (no graduates, leave before growth)

3. Poor status, prestige, and influence of community junior colleges (lacks university image, etc.)

Concerns stated most frequently by department chairmen and Deans of Instruction were: 1) "Understanding and accepting the philosophy and functions of a junior college"; 2) "Pitching course at proper level of student understanding"; 3) "Determining what could be expected of students." Findings indicated a need for improvement in in-service and pre-service experience. While many teachers are not new to traching, nevertheless, it was evident that these teachers who had experience on other educational levels needed help in making an adjustment to the junior college.[9]

Of the sample studied, 50% had attended a junior college and 65% had earned an A.A. degree. This would indicate that many of the instructors were not entirely new to the junior college; however, the research showed that there was only average understanding and acceptance of junior college philosophy.

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[9]The Problems of the Beginning Junior College Instructor--Doctoral Dissertation by Charles Burton Green, 1960 - University of California at Los Angeles, Pages 170, 200.

Over half of the subjects were 40 years or older which indicates that many teachers may be employed in these colleges with few years of experience but "mature in years."[10]

Many instructors base much of their behavior on emulation of a colleague of former professor.[11]

V. DEFINITION OF TERMS

1. English Composition Teacher - one who teaches one or more sections of English 1, 28, or 21.

2. Initial Student Enrollment - as determined on Friday of the second week of classes, Sept. 21, 1973, as reflected by "load report."

3. Retention of Students - Eighth week census report recording of students still enrolled at end of eighth week.

4. Experience as Community College Student - Personnel records reflecting one or more semesters as a junior college student.

5. Holding Power (Retention) - Co-efficient--ratio of initial enrollment at the second week with the enrollment at the eighth week.

VI. LIMITATIONS OF STUDY

The study only applies to English classes, and not to other disciplines of the College.

Retention in this study doesn't infer success or that a final grade will be given, since the time interval covered is only 8 weeks.

Retention infers motivation and additional factors influencing a student's life extrinsically.

There are possible co-variable relationships of significance.

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[10]Park, Young, The Junior College Staff: Values and Institutional Perceptions, Doctoral University of California at Los Angeles, 1970, Page 78.

[11]Israel, Jack Welden, Doctoral - University of California at Los Angeles, 1969, Teaching Behavior and Reinforcement Sources of Selected California Junior College Instructors, Page 95.

Also, this research covered only a small sample of the population of the college, although it does embrace all day students enrolling in English composition classes.

VII. BASIC ASSUMPTIONS

It is assumed that teaching philosophy determines how teachers relate to students and will be affected by previous experiences.

This study assumes that enrollment in English courses are random in nature and therefore, the sample will be representative of other classes.

The students comprising these classes are assumed to be heterogeneous in their abilities, motivation, and culture.

The instructors are assumed to be stable with personalities acceptable to their students as much as any other instructor who has been carefully screened before selection.

VIII. PROCEDURES FOR COLLECTING DATA

Data sources are records to be furnished by the Office of Instruction and the Office of Student Personnel at East Los Angeles College.

1. Teacher Characteristics

   These will be manually tallied by inspection of personnel records. Data recorded will be:

   a. Does instructor declare attendance at a community college as a student? (Yes/No)
   b. Teacher's chronological age (Years)
   c. Teaching experience at a junior or senior high? (Yes/No)
   d. Sex (M/F)

e. Highest degree attained (B.A., M.A., Doctorate)

f. Recency of training (Date last degree attained)

2. Enrollment Statistics

These will be manually recorded by inspection of "load reports" prepared and submitted by teachers at the end of the second and eighth academic weeks. As only composition classes are to be studied, only the enrollment in these classes (English 1, 21, and 28) will be tallied.

3. Collection Procedures

Data on the characteristics of teachers is immediately available and will be taken from records in the Office of Instruction. Enrollment data for the second academic week (initial figure) will be available during the third academic week. Enrollment data for the eighth (final) academic week will be available during the ninth academic week.

IX. PROCEDURES FOR TREATING DATA

Enrollment data is used to compute a retention coefficient for each member of the study population. This computation consists of the quotient of the second and eighth week enrollment figures less those students who withdrew because they left the college multiplied by one hundred to eliminate the decimal fraction value. These are arranged in an array of rank order and numbered in descending values. (Figure 1) The six selected personal characteristics for each member of the study population is coded into a six digit identification index number. This is done to preserve the anonymity of the instructor and to facilitate statistical procedures. A key to the identification index number codes which are assigned follows:

First Digit	0	Instructor has been a community college student
	1	Instructor lacks this experience
Second Digit	0	Male instructor
	1	Female instructor
Third Digit	0	Instructor has teaching experience at a junior or senior high school
	1	Instructor lacks this experience
Fourth Digit	0	Instructor under age 30
	1	Instructor age 30 through 39
	2	Instructor age 40 through 49
	3	Instructor age over 50
Fifth Digit	0	Instructor has less than B.A.
	1	Highest degree is B.A.
	2	Highest degree is M.A.
	3	Instructor has earned doctorate
Sixth Digit	0	Highest degree earned last 5 years
	1	Highest degree earned 6-9 years ago
	2	Highest degree earned 10-15 years ago
	3	Highest degree earned over 15 years ago

The mean, median, mode, range, standard deviation, and variance of the retention coefficients for the study population has been computed. This computation is also made for each of the six population subgroups. The results are presented as a histogram frequency distribution. (Chart 1)

Again, the principle purpose of this study is to determine the validity of accepting previous community college student experience as a pre-employment screening criterion for prospective instructors at the community college level. A sufficient test of the hypothesis is made if there is a significant increase in retention of students by instructors who have themselves been community college students. It is not our purpose to suggest the acceptance or rejection of applications with characteristics identified in this study if the results show a lower retention rate by such instructors. Accordingly, we have used the one-tailed rather than the two-tailed test of significance to examine only increases of retention.

Since the dependent variable, retention coefficient, values are determined by parametric techniques and the study population and subgroups is small ($N < 30$), the one-tailed distribution statistic with a level of significance (alpha risk) of .05 for a Type I error identification is used.

X. DATA RESULTING FROM THE STUDY

Figure 1 sets forth the enrollment data of the first and fourth weeks and the calculated coefficient of retention. (See page 12). It is also a worksheet of computed values from which there is calculated and presented measures of central tendency.

FIGURE 1

STUDY POPULATION ARRAY (N = 21)

Sample Code Number	2nd Week Enrollment	8th Week Enrollment	Retention Coefficient	Relative Deviation $X_n - \bar{x}$	Quadratic Deviation $\lvert X_n - \bar{x} \rvert^2$
1 - 011222	121	120	99.17	+14.76	217.86
2 - 101230	84	83	98.80	+14.39	207.07
3 - 010323	78	77	98.72	+14.31	204.78
4 - 100223	122	119	97.54	+13.13	172.40
5 - 011322	78	76	97.43	+13.02	169.52
6 - 001323	154	150	97.40	+12.99	168.74
7 - 010121	134	129	96.27	+11.86	140.66
8 - 001121	75	71	94.66	+10.25	105.06
9 - 101232	129	118	91.47	+ 7.06	49.84
10 - 101323	129	117	90.69	+ 6.28	39.44
11 - 011322	101	91	90.09	+ 5.68	32.26
12 - 000323	88	76	86.36	+ 1.95	3.80
13 - 011221	127	108	85.03	+ 0.62	0.38
14 - 001223	49	40	81.63	- 2.78	7.73
15 - 000323	138	111	80.43	- 3.98	15.84
16 - 011333	141	111	78.72	- 5.69	32.38
17 - 011222	72	52	72.22	-12.19	148.60
18 - 001221	109	78	71.55	-12.86	165.38
19 - 001221	167	112	67.06	-17.35	301.02
20 - 110221	90	47	52.22	-32.19	1036.20
21 - 111221	115	52	45.21	-39.20	1536.64
Sums N=21	---	---	1772.67	126.30 - 126.24 = -.06	4755.60

- SKEWNESS
+ BIAS

MEAN $(\mu) = \frac{\Sigma X_n}{n} = \frac{1772.67}{21} = \underline{84.41}$

MEDIAN (Md) IS SAMPLE NUMBER 11 - 011322 = 90.09

THE POPULATION HAS NO MODE (NONMODAL)

STANDARD DEVIATION $(\sigma) = \sqrt{\frac{\Sigma \lvert X_n - \mu \rvert^2}{N}} = \sqrt{\frac{4755.60}{21}} = \underline{15.05}$

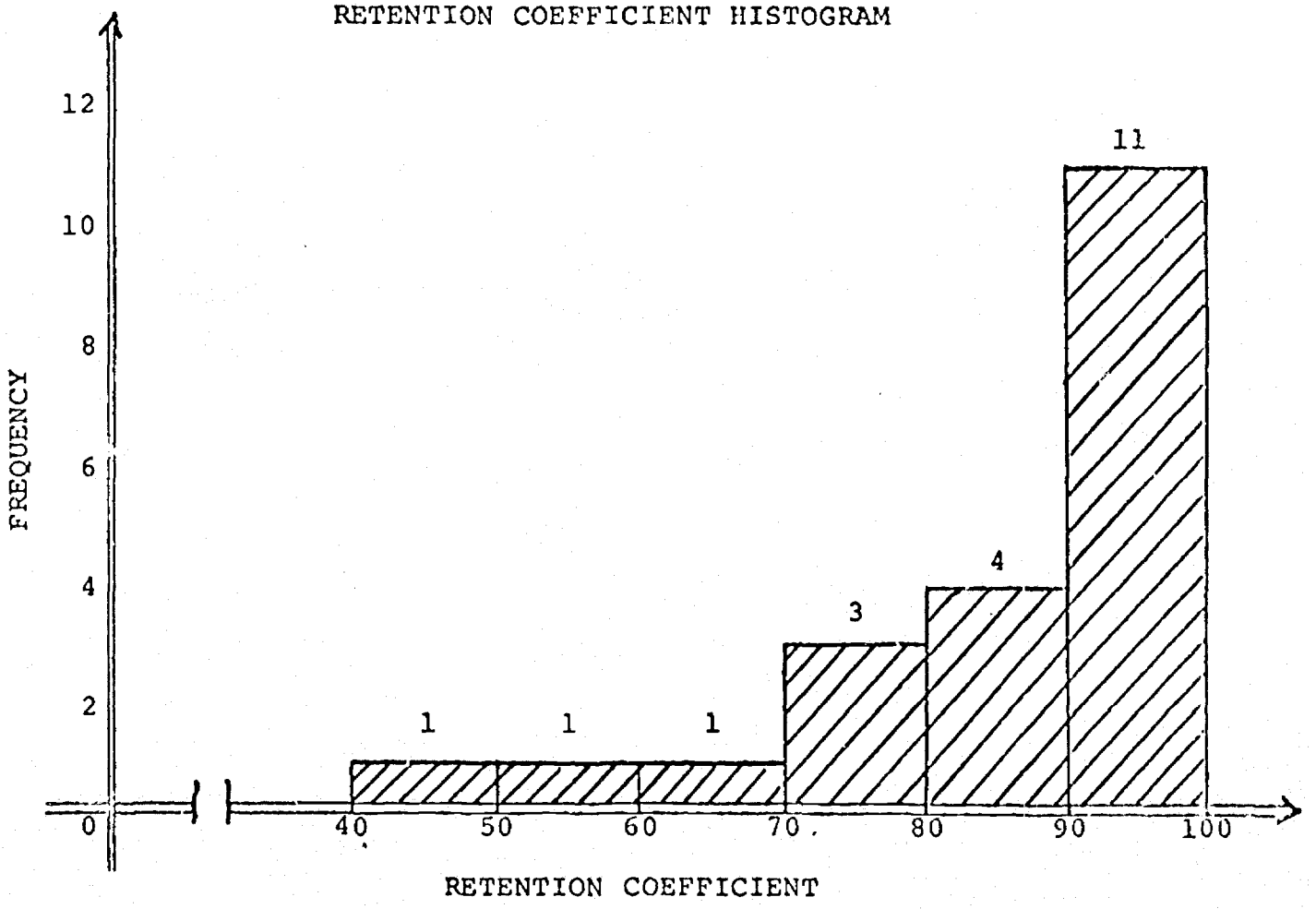
RANGE = 99.17 - 45.21 = 53.96

VARIANCE = $(\sigma)^2 = (15.05)^2 = \underline{226.46}$

The study encompassed enrollment for less than one-half of the Fall 1973 semester. Although heavy attrition had occurred in several classes, almost 75 percent of instructors reported retention coefficients above 80 percent.

CHART 1

RETENTION COEFFICIENT HISTOGRAM



The principle interest of the study is upon the retention characteristics of those instructors who had experience as community college students as compared to those who did not. Figures 2 and 3 below set forth detailed enrollment information for these groups as well as the computed measures of statistical significance.

FIGURE 2

(Group I)

PREVIOUS JUNIOR COLLEGE EXPERIENCE SUBGROUP (N = 6)

Sample Code Number	2nd Week Enrollment	8th Week Enrollment	Retention Coefficient	Relative Deviation $X_n - \bar{X}$	Quadratic Deviation $\lvert X_n - \bar{X} \rvert^2$
2 - 101230	84	83	98.80	+19.48	379.47
4 - 100223	122	119	97.54	+18.22	331.97
9 - 101232	129	118	91.47	+12.15	147.62
10 - 101323	129	117	90.69	+11.37	129.28
20 - 110221	90	47	52.22	-27.10	734.41
21 - 111221	115	52	45.21	-34.11	1163.49
SUMS N = 6	---	---	475.93	61.22 - 61.21 = .01	2886.24

MEAN $\bar{X}_1 = \frac{\Sigma X_n}{n} = \frac{475.93}{6} = \underline{79.32}$

MEDIAN (Md) $= \frac{91.47 - 90.69}{2} + 90.69 = \underline{91.47}$

STANDARD DEVIATION $(S_X) = \sqrt{\frac{\Sigma \lvert X_n - \bar{X} \rvert^2}{N-1}} = \sqrt{\frac{2886.24}{5}} = \underline{24.03}$

RANGE = 98.80 - 45.21 = 53.59

VARIANCE = $(S_X)^2$ = 557.25

DEGREES OF FREEDOM (df) = (21 + 6) - 2 = 25

CRITICAL $t_{.95}$ VALVE (From Table) = -1.71

CALCULATED t VALVE OF SAMPLE = -.497

FIGURE 3

(Group II)

NO PREVIOUS JUNIOR COLLEGE EXPERIENCE SUBGROUP (N = 15)

Sample Code Number	2nd Week Enrollment	8th Week Enrollment	Retention Coefficient	Relative Deviation $X_n - \bar{X}$	Quadratic Deviation $\lvert X_n - \bar{X} \rvert^2$
1 - 011222	121	120	99.17	+12.72	161.80
3 - 010323	78	77	98.72	+12.27	150.55
5 - 011322	78	76	97.43	+10.98	120.56
6 - 001323	154	150	97.40	+10.95	119.90
7 - 010121	134	129	96.27	+ 9.82	96.43
8 - 001121	75	71	94.66	+ 8.21	67.40
11 - 011322	101	91	90.09	+ 3.64	13.25
12 - 000323	88	76	86.36	- 0.09	0.008
13 - 011221	127	108	85.03	- 1.42	2.02
14 - 001223	49	40	81.63	- 4.82	23.23
15 - 000323	138	111	80.43	- 6.02	36.24
16 - 011333	141	111	78.72	- 7.73	59.75
17 - 011222	72	52	72.22	-14.23	202.49
18 - 001221	109	78	71.55	-14.90	222.01
19 - 001221	167	112	67.06	-19.39	375.97
SUMS N = 15	----	---	1296.74	68.59 - 68.60 = -.01	1651.61

MEAN $\bar{X} = \frac{\Sigma X_n}{N} = \frac{1296.74}{15} = \underline{86.45}$

MEDIAN (Md) = 12 - 000323 = 86.36

STANDARD DEVIATION $S_{\bar{x}} = \sqrt{\frac{\Sigma(X_n - \bar{X})^2}{N-1}} = \sqrt{\frac{1651.61}{14}} = \sqrt{117.97} = \underline{10.86}$

RANGE = 99.17 - 67.06 = 32.11

VARIANCE = $(S_X)^2$ = 117.97

DEGREES OF FREEDOM (df) = (21 + 15) - 2 = 34

CRITICAL $t_{.95}$ VALUE (From Table) = 1.68

CALCULATED t VALUE OF SAMPLE = +0.472

Identical enrollment tallies and statistical computations were also made for the additional five selected characteristics. Since these were not related to the principle hypothesis and, thus, were of less importance to the emphasis of this study, the full worksheet of values and computations is not presented here. Figure 4, which follows, repeats the important computed values of Figures 2 and 3 (Groups I and II) and also lists the computed values for the remaining five characteristics of the instructors which have been designated Group III through Group XII.

FIGURE 4

SUMMATION OF COMPUTED VALUES, GROUPS I - XII, INCLUSIVE

GROUP	SAMPLE SIZE	MEAN	MEDIAN	RANGE	STANDARD DEVIATION	VARIANCE	DEGREES OF FREEDOM	CRITICAL $\pm t_{.95}$ VALUE	SAMPLE CALCULATED t VALUE
Total Population	21	84.41	90.09	53.96	15.05	226.46	---	---	---
I	6	79.32	91.47	53.59	24.03	557.25	25	-1.71	-0.497
II	15	86.45	86.36	32.11	10.86	117.97	34	+1.68	+0.472
III	11	86.90	90.69	31.74	10.91	119.07	30	+1.70	+0.536
IV	10	81.51	87.61	53.96	19.54	381.67	29	-1.70	-0.414
V	6	85.26	91.31	46.50	17.72	313.87	25	+1.71	+0.233
VI	15	82.79	90.09	53.96	16.93	286.68	34	-1.69	-0.297
VII	13	80.99	85.03	53.96	18.11	328.04	32	-1.70	-0.570
VIII	8	89.98	90.30	20.00	7.73	57.79	27	+1.70	+1.30
IX	18	83.54	87.31	53.96	16.18	261.90	37	-1.68	-0.195
X	3	89.66	91.47	20.08	10.16	103.25	21	+1.72	+0.588
XI	9	88.53	85.03	53.59	23.02	529.84	28	+1.70	+0.708
XII	12	88.70	90.39	26.95	8.91	79.31	31	+1.70	+0.218

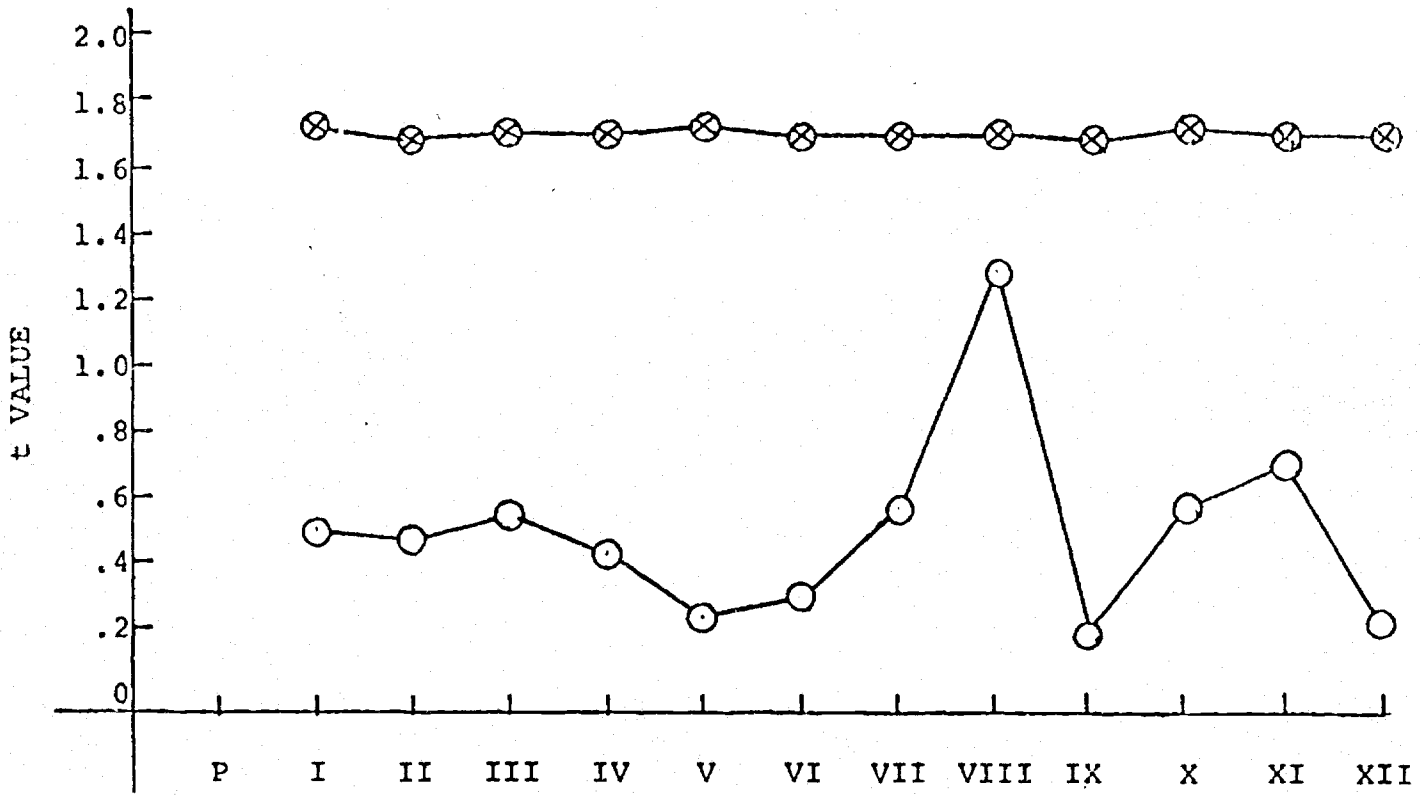
FIGURE 4
(cont'd.)

SUMMATION OF COMPUTED VALUES, GROUPS I - XII, INCLUSIVE

Group	I	With Junior College Student Experience
Group	II	Without Junior College Student Experience
Group	III	Male Instructors
Group	IV	Female Instructors
Group	V	Without Junior or Senior High School Teaching Experience
Group	VI	With Junior or Senior High School Teaching Experience
Group	VII	Age Under 50 Years
Group	VIII	Age Over 50 Years
Group	IX	M.A. as Highest Degree
Group	X	Earned Doctorate, Highest Degree
Group	XI	Attained Highest Degree Within Last Ten Years
Group	XII	Attained Highest Degree More Than Ten Years Ago

CHART 2

COMPARISON OF VALUE OF SAMPLE t TO CRITICAL $t_{.95}$ VALUE

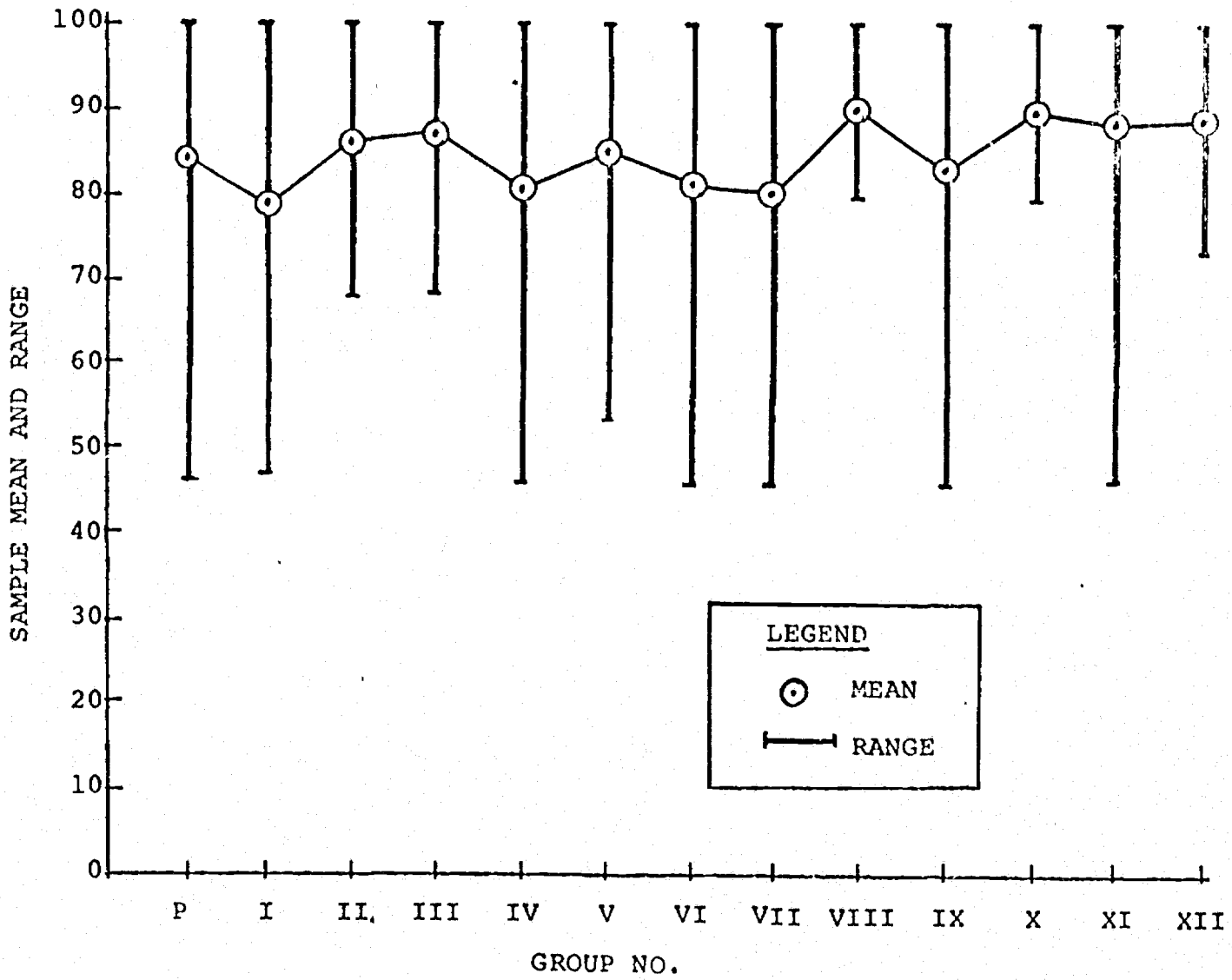


Sample t = ⊙
Critical $t_{.95}$ = ⊗

Group	I	With Junior College Student Experience
Group	II	Without Junior College Student Experience
Group	III	Male Instructors
Group	IV	Female Instructors
Group	V	Without Junior or Senior High School Teaching Experience
Group	VI	With Junior or Senior High School Teaching Experience
Group	VII	Age Under 50 Years
Group	VIII	Age Over 50 Years
Group	IX	M.A. as Highest Degree
Group	X	Earned Doctorate, Highest Degree
Group	XI	Attained Highest Degree Within Last Ten Years
Group	XII	Attained Highest Degree More Than Ten Years Ago

CHART 3

RANGE AND MEAN FOR TOTAL POPULATION AND SUBGROUPS



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Group	IV	Female Instructors
Group	V	Without Junior or Senior High School Teaching Experience
Group	VI	With Junior or Senior High School Teaching Experience
Group	VII	Age Under 50 Years
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Group	IX	M.A. as Highest Degree
Group	X	Earned Doctorate, Highest Degree
Group	XI	Attained Highest Degree Within Last Ten Years
Group	XII	Attained Highest Degree More Than Ten Years Ago

XI. SIGNIFICANCE OF THE DATA

The null hypothesis ($H_o: \bar{x}_1 = \mu_o$) must be rejected inasmuch since the mean retention coefficient of Group I instructors (79.32) was not found to be equal to that for Group II instructors (86.45). The first alternate hypothesis must also be rejected in that the mean coefficient of retention of the Group I instructors was actually less than the mean for either Group II instructors or that of the total instructor population (84.41).

Examination of other instructor characteristics, Groups III through XII, failed to identify any single characteristic which was significant with respect to student retention at the .05 confidence level.

The population histogram (Chart 1) dramatizes the marked negative skewness of the retention coefficients with values clustered toward the high end. Most of the subgroup sample means are also quite high and differ but little from the population mean. Even though the subgroup means fall quite closely together, the range within these groups is large considering the small number of instructors. (Chart 3)

Although none of the twelve characteristics evaluated was significant at the .05 level, Group VIII, instructors over 50 years of age, reflected a calculated t value much closer to the critical t value than did any other subgroup. This characteristic is, in fact, significant at the .10 level.

XII. CONCLUSIONS

The study does not support community college student experience as a predictor of superior performance as an instructor as such is defined by the study. No significant relationship is found between instructor success as measured by the level of student retention in English composition classes and past instructor experience as a community college student.

Certain declared limitations of the study (pages 8 and 9) proved indeed limiting, particularly the time interval of only eight weeks over which retention was observed. This interval is, perhaps, insufficient to allow student persistence to relate to the instructor's (defined) success. The mean level of retention in most classes of most instructors still remained high by the eighth week and provided a poor measure of final retention which, historically, at this college for these classes is in the 50 percent to 60 percent range.

The comparatively high retention rate for those instructors over 50 years of age may merit additional study. These older instructors undoubtedly have more years of experience in education which factor rather than chronological age may be the determinant.