

CORRELATIONS BETWEEN THE 1960 ENTRANCE REQUIREMENTS
AND ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENTS OF THE SOPHOMORE STUDENTS
OF THE U. P. HIGH SCHOOL

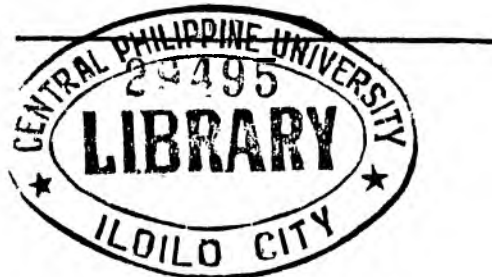
JOSEFINA YAP PORTER

PHOTOCOPYING NOT ALLOWED

SUBMITTED TO THE GRADUATE COLLEGE OF EDUCATION
UNIVERSITY OF THE PHILIPPINES

IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS
FOR THE DEGREE OF

MASTER OF EDUCATION



CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Education, to some extent, depends on the capacity of the learner. So obvious is this observation that even in a democracy, one of whose fundamental principles is the education of all citizens, it is agreed that this equality in opportunity to be educated does not assure equality in the achievement of the goals of education. Individuals differ in abilities and capacities: some lay claim to a wide range of endowments while others possess the minimum amount necessary to the maintenance of life processes. This state of affairs lays a very great responsibility on the administrator in education; his is the task of providing instruction that will meet the democratic principles of equality in opportunity while being applicable to individuals in its significance.

Although recent educational philosophy places emphasis on individual differences and encourages the discovery of individual capacities, abilities, and interests of students, a great number of scholastic failures occur among students from year to year. The most pathetic outcome in these failures among students is the growth of a sense of futility that mars the best years of school youth. What hurts the most in this sorry situation is that, to a large extent, this "tragedy" need not have occurred, had recognition of diversities in

natural endowment been rightly worked into educational policies. Obviously, some students who blindly sought admission under one type of curriculum should not have been taken in. They would have found fulfillment--not futility--somewhere else. To spare their students a like fate, some schools institute a selective admission of students.

Admission is a function of schools. As a function in colleges and universities, Monroe says thus of admission:

Admission as a function of colleges and universities refers to the standards and procedures by means of which the institution selects from the applicants for admission (a) those individuals who are judged qualified to attain a satisfactory level of scholastic success, and (b) when there is a surplus of applicants, those whose qualifications are superior. Although admission is defined as a function of colleges and universities, the cooperation of secondary schools is involved. Certain established as indicative of college success.¹

The purpose of admission as a function of colleges and universities is two-fold. First, it protects the institution. Accepting new students with low standards of preparation means overcrowding colleges with inferior students who will jeopardize the quality of these institutions. Second, it protects the students. If an unpromising student is refused admission, he will be spared from unnecessary expenses, loss of time and effort, and eventual disappointment and frustration attendant to scholastic failures. There certainly is a need for the

¹ Walter S. Monroe, Encyclopedia of Educational Research (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1952), p. 262.

formulation of policies for admission and the designing of a prognostic device intended to measure relative promise even for subjects or areas not attempted before.

The institution of selective admission includes the concept of forecasting. The entrance requirements with which this study is concerned is an exploration of students' potential abilities to acquire, by whatever means, knowledges and skills demanded by specific curricula in high schools. The parallel to this in vocational guidance is the measurement of the individual's potentiality for acquiring vocational skills; that is, his "teachability" or "apprenticeship" promise. It is significant to note that the individual's capacity to learn in relation to occupational adjustment has received greater attention from various business and industrial fields than from education, whose primary concern it should be. Lifton,² a former associate professor of education in the University of Illinois, wrote in the Saturday Evening Post a frank article attacking the dangerous notion that college is the only road to respectability. In this article, he stressed the fact that if all colleges and universities plan a system of admission procedures that can reliably determine which among

² Walter M. Lifton, "Will College Be Wasted on Your Child?" The Saturday Evening Post, June 2, 1962; condensed with permission in the Reader's Digest, September, 1962, pp. 250-252.

these groups can profit from college education, many misfits who are forced by parents to strive for college degrees at the expense of wasting their natural talents for non-academic activity may be saved the heartache, frustration and loss which wrong choice entails. He cites specifically the case of a man who was forced through more years than it usually takes to earn a degree. Fortunately for him, a personnel manager discovered his talent for model-making and started him on a business that not meant only joy but self-realization.

The philosophy behind selective admission seems to some observers a nullification of the principles of democracy. Democratic philosophy as interpreted by some tends to ignore individual differences in capacity. Gardner³ reports that the attitude of belittling differences where they exist, or ignoring them, informs the existence of some institutions which violate one's belief. This erroneous conception of equality or equalitarianism in educational opportunity, which ignores differences in native capacity and achievement, is an enemy to democracy. When this is carried out, it results in "a leveling off of heads to a dead level." This practice encourages a group or committee rule that smothers individual

³ John W. Gardner, Excellence Can We Be Equal and Excellent, Too? (New York: Harper & Bros., 1961), pp. 13-15.

development. In such a state, there will not exist an individual striving for excellence. Mankind will lose such achievements of excellence as Edison's in electricity, Archimedes' in physics, and Galileo's in astronomy and science. These men were not satisfied with thinking and performing along with the group; they chose to strive to achieve excellence, which is mankind's greatest gift.

The basic assumption in the institution of selective admission is that knowledge about the individual provides solid basis for a sound decision as to how to aid this individual. This assumption further implies that the more accurately one knows of a person, the more likely is one to arrive at a sound decision about him or at a wise plan of action for him. In the same manner, the person who has accurate and relevant knowledge of himself will be more likely to make relevant and accurate decisions on his own problems.

The problem of "sorting" in schools, then, is a vital and essential one. McGill poses these questions:

But since the problem of "sorting" is really difficult but essential some vital questions arise. What should be the criteria for sorting? How may it be done so as to insure the ideal of maximum opportunity? How far should it go in eliminating individuals whose class records are not in accord with their intellectual promise? How much consideration should be given to the fact that colleges, especially under private endowment, have limited facilities and must therefore make entrance requirements more exacting? Do the high schools and colleges have a compatible concept of the able student? Isn't this necessary if the sorting process is to be mutually satisfactory? Is guidance in the secondary school to come closer to the

aim of the college in emphasizing a high scholastic standard, or should it pay more attention to the general developmental needs of the students?⁴

In a democracy, emphasis on competitive performance should bring opportunities to the individual. These opportunities should not be the occasion to crush the individual down, as has happened to some, but to provide him the freedom to hope, to dare, and to act in the pursuit of excellence.

As in the larger society, so in the academic world, the admission procedure in the U. P. High School should not be thought of as a means for the stratification of its student population but as a means to discover individual differences in capacity to learn, and to emphasize individual achievements as a healthy gift to society.

I. BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY

The entrance requirements in the U. P. High School have been primarily instituted to screen and select students who wish to gain entrance at the opening of every school year. The application of these requirements must carry a certain degree of prognostication of students' future academic successes if the selective measures are to be useful. The following measures provide the indices of fulfillment

⁴ Frances Dwane McGill, "The Public High School Intervenes," College Admissions, College Entrance Examination Board, Educational Testing Service (Princeton, New Jersey and Los Angeles, California, 1955), p. 17.

of the requirements: (1) personal interview; (2) general average upon graduation from the elementary grades, as given in the report card (Form 138); and (3) entrance examinations in reading, grammar, arithmetic, and Pilipino. The entrance screening must be passed by incoming first year high school students and accepted transferees.

The interview is conducted by teachers who give ratings to students as to personality, health, and command of the English language. The rationale to this approach seems to be that in addition to information from test scores, a student's overt behavior and responses on the spot can, in some degree, reveal the probable quality of his future performance. The interview accounts for 20 per cent of the total rating.

The elementary average reported in the student's Form 138 is given the weight of 20 per cent of the whole entrance requirements.

Entrance examinations in reading, grammar, arithmetic, and Pilipino are each given a rating of 15 per cent or a total of 60 per cent of the entire admission requirements, as shown in Appendix A.⁵

⁵ Infra, p. 83.

The prediction of academic achievement then becomes a continuing problem which involves a student's present achievements as well as his future performances. The question that comes to mind then is, how useful are the indices for admission to the U. P. High School in predicting a student's future achievements? In most life situations achievement means a complicated type of behavior which includes a student's scholastic aptitude, interests, study habits, personality, freedom from anxiety and worry, and other traits working together within him. Are the entrance requirements able to account for many, if not all, of these factors? In fairness to the institutions and to the students, a reliable admission procedure must be used in any and all secondary schools.

II. SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

The value of selective admission is never more fully felt than at the present when the march of progress requires the discovery and eventual utilization of specific abilities and capacities to meet the pressing social and economic problems of the nation. The ultimate value of this study lies in its paving the way for the refinement of the screening measures so that initial knowledge of the potential abilities of students obtained from them may reliably predict their future performance in the U. P. High School. This task the teachers can do with necessary tools such as the entrance examination

that provides information about student's initial ability. Before the U. P. High School can fully rely on the effectiveness of the entrance measures to do what they are supposed to do, the relationship between the personal interview, the elementary average grade, and the entrance test scores to later academic achievements need to be determined. This is the problem that this paper is undertaking.

III. STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

It was the purpose of this study to find out how useful the entrance requirements of the U. P. High School were in the prediction of the academic success of incoming high school students. Specifically, this research design aimed to discover the relationship existing between each of the individual requirements for entrance; that is, the elementary average grade, the interview, and the entrance examinations, and the academic achievements of the students under study in the first two years in the high school, as measured by marks or grades. This study will attempt to answer the following questions:

1. What relationship exists between the teacher's ratings in the interview of incoming high school students and their academic achievements for each of the first two years in high school?

2. What relationship exists between the results of the entrance examinations of incoming high school students

and their academic achievements for each of the first two years in high school?

3. What relationship exists between the ratings for the elementary grades of the incoming high school students and their academic grades for each of the first two years of high school?

4. How do the relationships between the aforementioned measures taken individually compare with the relationship obtaining between the composite ratings and the academic achievements for each of the first two years in high school?