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## A comparison of rural and city students at Indiana State Teachers College

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A COMPARISON OF RURAL AND CITY STUDENTS  
AT INDIANA STATE TEACHERS COLLEGE

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A Thesis  
Presented to  
the Faculty of the Department of Education  
Indiana State Teachers College

---

In Partial Fulfillment  
of the Requirements for the Degree  
Master of Science

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by  
Emory Dixon  
October 1949

The thesis of Emory Dixon  
Contribution of the Graduate School, Indiana State Teachers  
College, Number 672, under the title A COMPARISON OF  
RURAL AND CITY STUDENTS AT INDIANA STATE TEACHERS COLLEGE

is hereby approved as counting toward the completion of the  
Master's degree in the amount of 8 hours' credit.

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## CHAPTER I

### THE PROBLEM AND DEFINITION OF TERMS USED

It is generally accepted that environment is a contributing factor toward the development of individuals and their patterns of behavior. For years this has been the subject of many research activities.

#### I. THE PROBLEM

Statement of the problem. It was the purpose of this study to make a comparison of students having a rural background with those having an urban background in an effort to determine which group was more successful in college. Success in college was determined by a comparison of (1) scholastic achievement, (2) membership in extra-curricular organizations, and (3) membership in honorary organizations.

Importance of the study. Some authorities believe that a rural environment provides a better background for the development of individuals. It is generally accepted that the aim of all education is to provide for the development of individuals so that each may take his place in a democratic society and intelligently assume the responsibilities of a good citizen.



If environment is a fundamental factor in the development of the individual, then it is of the utmost importance that the better environment be provided. It is hoped that this study will aid in determining which environment is the better.

## II. DEFINITIONS OF TERMS USED

Success. Success in college as referred to in this study was determined by (1) scholastic achievement, (2) membership in extra-curricular organizations, and (3) membership in honorary organizations.

Scholarship index. Throughout the report of this investigation, the term "scholarship index" shall be interpreted as a plan at Indiana State Teachers College for the measurement of scholastic standing. Under the plan a number of points are given for each letter grade received. For each "A", four points are given; for each "B", three points; for each "C", two points; and for each "D", one point. The scholarship index is obtained by dividing the total number of points by the total number of quarter hours attempted. The scholarship index is cumulative for the duration of the student's attendance at the institution.

Rural students. Throughout this study the term "rural students" pertains to those people who, prior to their entrance into college, lived in a community of not more than one thousand population. In some instances, it is probable that some students attended city schools.

City students. The term "city students" pertains to those people who, prior to their entrance into college, lived in a community of more than one thousand population.

Organization of remainder of the thesis. The remainder of this thesis is divided into four parts. Chapter II discusses the materials and methods used, Chapter III covers the statistical treatment of scholastic achievement, Chapter IV deals with the statistical treatment of extra-curricular membership, and Chapter V is the summary and conclusions.

Limitations of the study. This study started with the class beginning in the fall of 1946 at Indiana State Teachers College and covered the period from 1946 through 1949. It was not possible to carry the groups through the entire four-year period since students starting in the fall of 1946 would not have been expected to graduate until 1950.

The cases were restricted to resident students in order to measure extra-curricular membership.

Since no attempt was made to compare the size of high school from which the students graduated, it is possible that many of the rural students did attend high schools as large or larger than those attended by some of the city students.

The groups were selected at random. No attempt was made to establish equivalent groups. The size of the groups is assumed to be sufficient for adequacy and to take care of significant differences.

An extensive search was made in an effort to locate pertinent literature regarding related studies. No information of this type was available.

(1) The first group of students was selected at random from the rural high schools in the state. (2) The second group of students was selected at random from the city high schools in the state. (3) The third group of students was selected at random from the rural high schools in the state. (4) The fourth group of students was selected at random from the city high schools in the state. (5) The fifth group of students was selected at random from the rural high schools in the state. (6) The sixth group of students was selected at random from the city high schools in the state. (7) The seventh group of students was selected at random from the rural high schools in the state. (8) The eighth group of students was selected at random from the city high schools in the state. (9) The ninth group of students was selected at random from the rural high schools in the state. (10) The tenth group of students was selected at random from the city high schools in the state.

One hundred students were selected at random from the rural high schools in the state. One hundred students were selected at random from the city high schools in the state. One hundred students were selected at random from the rural high schools in the state. One hundred students were selected at random from the city high schools in the state. One hundred students were selected at random from the rural high schools in the state. One hundred students were selected at random from the city high schools in the state. One hundred students were selected at random from the rural high schools in the state. One hundred students were selected at random from the city high schools in the state. One hundred students were selected at random from the rural high schools in the state. One hundred students were selected at random from the city high schools in the state.

## CHAPTER II

### THE MATERIALS AND METHODS USED

The data used for this study were obtained from the Personnel Office and the Registrar's Office of Indiana State Teachers College.

Since the purpose of this study was to compare the accomplishments of rural and city groups, it was necessary first to select a particular class and then to obtain the necessary data pertaining to this class. The class beginning in the fall of 1946 was selected for the following reasons: (1) to be of any value the study had to be recent, (2) a study of a class of the period 1941 through 1945 would not have given a true picture because of the war, (3) although the class beginning in 1946 could not be studied through the entire four-year period, it, at least, represented the most typical group available.

One hundred resident students of each group were selected at random. The study was restricted to resident students to exclude those students who might commute, and those who were natives of Terre Haute. It is possible that those who commuted would not have the time nor opportunity to participate in extra-curricular activities. It is also possible that the native students of Terre Haute might have

the advantage over others, because of their previous contact with students from their own and other high schools in the city.

No attempt was made to match the groups in any way other than mentioned above. Neither was there any attempt to compare high schools from which the students graduated.

Classification of groups. The classification of groups into rural students with rural backgrounds, and city students with urban backgrounds was determined by the address given on the registration card.

Scholarship index. The scholarship index for each student was obtained for the following periods: (1) end of the first term, (2) end of the first year, (3) end of the second year, (4) end of the third year, and if possible, (5) end of the fourth year.

Extra-curricular membership. Data on extra-curricular membership were obtained from the records available in the Personnel Office. Memberships were divided into six types: (1) social organizations, (2) departmental organizations, (3) honorary organizations, (4) service organizations, (5) other extra-curricular activities, and (6) class officer positions.



## CHAPTER III

### STATISTICAL TREATMENT OF DATA

#### I. SCHOLARSHIP INDEX

First-term index. The first step in the analysis of the data was to obtain the scholarship index of each student for the first term. A comparison of the two groups resulted in the following findings.

The mean index of the rural students derived from group data was 51.2. The standard deviation of the same group was 19.30. See Table I.

As shown in Table II, the mean index of the city students derived from group data was 53.3. The standard deviation of the same group was 17.45.

The results of this analysis of data indicate that the city students were slightly higher in scholastic standing at the end of the first term.

In the above analysis, one hundred cases of each group were used. This was the first term and none of the students had, as yet, dropped out of school.

TABLE I

9

DISTRIBUTION OF SCHOLARSHIP INDICES OF RURAL  
STUDENTS AT THE END OF THE FIRST QUARTER

Interval	freq.	dev.	fd.	fd <sup>2</sup>
96-100	0	0	0	0
91--95	0	0	0	0
86--90	3	8	24	212
81--85	1	7	7	49
76--80	2	6	12	72
71--75	9	5	45	225
66--70	9	4	36	144
61--65	9	3	27	81
56--60	12	2	24	48
51--55	1	1	1	1
46--50	23	0	0	0
41--45	10	-1	-10	10
36--40	8	-2	-16	32
31--35	4	-3	-12	36
26--30	0	-4	-0	0
21--25	0	-5	-0	0
16--20	2	-6	-12	72
11--15	0	-7	-0	0
6--10	1	-8	-8	64
0--5	6	-9	-54	486
	100		64	1532

Mean-----51.2

Stan. Dev. -----19.3



TABLE II

10

## DISTRIBUTION OF SCHOLARSHIP INDICES OF CITY STUDENTS AT THE END OF THE FIRST QUARTER

Interval	freq.	dev.	fd.	fd <sup>2</sup>
96-100	1	9	9	81
91--95	0	8	0	0
86--90	0	7	0	0
81--85	5	6	30	180
76--80	1	5	5	25
71--75	8	4	32	128
66--70	6	3	18	54
61--65	16	2	32	64
56--60	10	1	10	10
51--55	16	0	0	0
46--50	2	-1	-2	2
41--45	16	-2	-32	64
36--40	4	-3	-12	36
31--35	5	-4	-20	80
26--30	0	-5	0	0
21--25	4	-6	-24	144
16--20	1	-7	-7	49
11--15	2	-8	-16	128
6--10	0	-9	0	0
0--5	3	-10	-30	300
	100			1345

Mean-----53.3

Stan. Dev. -----17.45

First year index. The next step in the statistical treatment of the data was to determine the scholastic standing of students in each group after completion of the freshman year.

It was found that the mean index of the rural group after completion of the first year was 55.8. The standard deviation of this group was 14.90. See Table III.

As indicated in Table IV, the mean index of the city group at the end of the freshman year was 53.7. The standard deviation of the city group was 14.10.

The results of this analysis of data indicate that the rural students were slightly higher in scholastic standing after completion of the freshman year.

A comparison of the number of students who completed the first year was made. As shown in Table XII, 82 per cent of the rural students completed the first year, while 88 per cent of the city students completed the first year. The results of this comparison indicate that a higher number of city students completed their freshman year of college. No effort was made to determine the cause or causes of drop-outs among the students.

Second year index. The next step in the statistical treatment of the data was to determine the scholastic stand-

TABLE III

12

DISTRIBUTION OF SCHOLARSHIP INDICES OF RURAL  
STUDENTS AT THE END OF THE FIRST YEAR

Interval	freq.	dev.	fd.	fd <sup>2</sup>
96-100	0	10	0	0
91--95	0	9	0	0
86--90	0	8	0	0
81--85	4	7	28	196
76--80	4	6	24	144
71--75	10	5	50	250
66--70	6	4	24	96
61--65	5	3	15	45
56--60	12	2	24	48
51--55	7	1	7	7
46--50	15	0	0	0
41--45	9	-1	-9	9
36--40	3	-2	-6	12
31--35	2	-3	-6	18
26--30	2	-4	-8	32
21--25	3	-5	-15	75
16--20	0	-6	0	0
11--15	0	-7	0	0
6--10	0	-8	0	0
0--5	0	-9	0	0
	82		128	932

Mean-----55.8  
 Stan. Dev. -----14.90

TABLE IV

13

DISTRIBUTION OF SCHOLARSHIP INDICES OF CITY  
STUDENTS AT THE END OF THE FIRST YEAR

Interval	freq.	dev.	fd.	fd <sup>2</sup>
96-100	0	9	0	0
91--95	1	8	8	64
86--90	0	7	0	0
81--85	3	6	18	108
76--80	2	5	10	50
71--75	4	4	16	64
66--70	10	3	30	90
61--65	4	2	8	16
56--60	14	1	14	14
51--55	14	0	0	0
46--50	14	-1	-14	14
41--45	8	-2	-16	32
36--40	6	-3	-18	54
31--35	3	-4	-12	48
26--30	4	-5	-20	100
21--25	0	-6	0	0
16--20	1	-7	-7	49
11--15	0	-8	0	0
6--10	0	-9	0	0
0--5	0	-10	0	0
	88		14	703

Mean-----53.7

Stan. Dev. -----14.10

ing of students in each group after completion of the second year.

There was very little difference between the two groups regarding scholastic standing. As would normally be expected, both groups showed an improvement over the first year index.

The mean index of the rural group as shown in Table V, was 59.1. The standard deviation for this group was 14.45.

As shown in Table VI, the mean index of the city students was slightly higher. Their index being 60.0. The standard deviation of this group was 13.75.

As can be seen in Table XII, fifty-nine of the original group of one hundred rural students completed the sophomore year. Of the one hundred city students, fifty-seven completed the sophomore year. In this respect, the rural students had a higher percentage than the city students.

The results of these findings are hardly significant since there was very little difference between the two groups.

Third year index. The final step in determining the scholastic achievement of each group was a comparison of both groups at the end of the third year.

As can be seen in Table VII, the mean index of the

TABLE V

15

DISTRIBUTION OF SCHOLARSHIP INDICES OF RURAL  
STUDENTS AT THE END OF THE SECOND YEAR

Interval	freq.	dev.	fd.	fd <sup>2</sup>
96-100	0	9	0	0
91--95	0	8	0	0
86--90	0	7	0	0
81--85	3	6	18	108
76--80	4	5	20	100
71--75	7	4	28	112
66--70	8	3	24	72
61--65	7	2	14	28
56--60	5	1	5	5
51--55	12	0	0	0
46--50	3	-1	-3	3
41--45	4	-2	-8	16
36--40	3	-3	-9	27
31--35	2	-4	-8	32
26--30	0	-5	0	0
21--25	0	-6	0	0
16--20	0	-7	0	0
11--15	0	-8	0	0
6--10	1	-9	-9	81
0--5	0	-10	0	0
	59		72	584

Mean-----59.1  
 Stan. Dev. -----14.45

TABLE VI

16

DISTRIBUTION OF SCHOLARSHIP INDICES OF CITY  
STUDENTS AT THE END OF THE SECOND YEAR

Interval	freq.	dev.	fd.	fd <sup>2</sup>
96-100	0	8	0	0
91--95	0	7	0	0
86--90	3	6	18	108
81--85	3	5	15	75
76--80	2	4	8	32
71--75	4	3	12	36
66--70	6	2	12	24
61--65	9	1	9	9
56--60	8	0	0	0
51--55	9	-1	-9	9
46--50	4	-2	-8	16
41--45	4	-3	-12	36
36--40	3	-4	-12	48
31--35	2	-5	-10	50
26--30	0	-6	0	0
21--25	0	-7	0	0
16--20	0	-8	0	0
11--15	0	-9	0	0
6--10	0	-10	0	0
0--5	0	-10	0	0
	57		23	443

Mean-----60.0  
 Stan. Dev. -----13.75

rural group was 64.7. The standard deviation was 10.90.

As shown in Table VIII, the mean index of the city group was 63.0. The standard deviation was 10.50.

Of the original one hundred rural students, forty completed the junior year. Of the original one hundred city students, thirty-five completed the junior year. See Table XII.

The index of the rural group was slightly higher than that of the city group, but the difference is not significant.

## II. PSYCHOLOGICAL SCORES

Although no attempt was made to match the groups, it is interesting to observe the psychological scores made by each group. Each student did not take a psychological examination. Scores were available for eighty-three of the rural students and eighty-nine of the city students.

As can be seen in Table IX, the mean percentile of the rural group was 46.2. As shown in Table X, the mean percentile of the city group was 46.1. The standard deviation of both groups respectively were rural, 25.95 and city, 27.90.

Using the psychological scores as a basis, it is evident that the groups were fairly equivalent.



TABLE VII

18

DISTRIBUTION OF SCHOLARSHIP INDICES OF RURAL  
STUDENTS AT THE END OF THE THIRD YEAR

Interval	freq.	dev.	fd.	fd <sup>2</sup>
96-100	0	7	0	0
91--95	0	6	0	0
86--90	2	5	10	50
81--85	2	4	8	32
76--80	2	3	6	18
71--75	6	2	12	24
66--70	5	1	5	5
61--65	9	0	0	0
56--60	6	-1	-6	6
51--55	5	-2	-10	20
46--50	1	-3	-3	9
41--45	2	-4	-8	32
36--40	0	-5	0	0
31--35	0	-6	0	0
26--30	0	-7	0	0
21--25	0	-8	0	0
16--20	0	-9	0	0
11--15	0	-10	0	0
6--10	0	-11	0	0
0--5	0	-12	0	0
	40		14	196

Mean-----64.7  
 Stan. Dev. -----10.90

TABLE VIII

DISTRIBUTION OF SCHOLARSHIP INDICES OF CITY  
STUDENTS AT THE END OF THE THIRD YEAR

Interval	freq.	dev.	fd.	fd <sup>2</sup>
96-100	0	7	0	0
91--95	0	6	0	0
86--90	0	5	0	0
81--85	4	4	16	64
76--80	2	3	6	18
71--75	3	2	6	12
66--70	2	1	2	2
61--65	6	0	0	0
56--60	8	-1	-8	8
51--55	8	-2	-16	32
46--50	2	-3	-6	18
41--45	0	-4	0	0
36--40	0	-5	0	0
31--35	0	-6	0	0
26--30	0	-7	0	0
21--25	0	-8	0	0
16--20	0	-9	0	0
11--15	0	-10	0	0
6--10	0	-11	0	0
0--5	0	-12	0	0
	<u>35</u>			<u>154</u>

Mean-----63.0  
 Stan. Dev. -----10.50

TABLE IX

20

DISTRIBUTION OF PSYCHOLOGICAL SCORES OF RURAL  
STUDENTS UPON ENTRANCE INTO COLLEGE

Interval	freq.	dev.	fd.	fd <sup>2</sup>
96-100	3	10	30	300
91--95	1	9	9	81
86--90	1	8	8	64
81--85	4	7	28	196
76--80	4	6	24	144
71--75	3	5	15	75
66--70	6	4	24	96
61--65	8	3	24	72
56--60	3	2	6	12
51--55	5	1	5	5
46--50	4	0	0	0
41--45	5	-1	-5	5
36--40	5	-2	-10	20
31--35	5	-3	-15	45
26--30	4	-4	-16	64
21--25	5	-5	-25	125
16--20	2	-6	-12	72
11--15	6	-7	-42	294
6--10	4	-8	-32	256
0--5	5	-9	-45	405
	<u>83</u>		<u>-31</u>	<u>2331</u>

Mean-----46.2  
 Stan. Dev. -----25.95

TABLE X

21

DISTRIBUTION OF PSYCHOLOGICAL SCORES OF CITY  
STUDENTS UPON ENTRANCE INTO COLLEGE

Interval	freq.	dev.	fd.	fd <sup>2</sup>
96-100	5	9	45	405
91--95	3	8	24	192
86--90	1	7	7	49
81--85	6	6	36	216
76--80	2	5	10	50
71--75	3	4	12	48
66--70	3	3	9	27
61--65	4	2	8	16
56--60	5	1	5	5
51--55	8	0	0	0
46--50	3	-1	-3	3
41--45	3	-2	-6	12
36--40	6	-3	-18	54
31--35	5	-4	-20	80
26--30	9	-5	-45	225
21--25	4	-6	-24	144
16--20	4	-7	-28	196
11--15	5	-8	-40	230
6--10	5	-9	-45	405
0--5	5	-10	-50	500
	89		-123	2947

Mean-----46.1  
 Stan. Dev. -----27.90

TABLE XI

22

SCHOLARSHIP INDICES AND PSYCHOLOGICAL SCORES  
OF RURAL AND CITY STUDENTS

Time Period	Rural	City
	Mean Index	Mean Index
First Term	51.2	53.3
First Year	55.8	53.7
Second Year	59.1	60.0
Third Year	64.7	63.0
Psychological	46.2	46.1

TABLE XII

NUMBER OF STUDENTS SUCCESSFULLY COMPLETING THE  
FRESHMAN, SOPHOMORE, AND JUNIOR YEARS OF COLLEGE

Year	Rural	City
Freshman	82	88
Sophomore	59	57
Junior	40	35

## CHAPTER IV

### MEMBERSHIP IN EXTRA-CURRICULAR ORGANIZATIONS

As a final measure of comparison, information regarding extra-curricular participation was obtained. The records provided data concerning sixty-seven of the rural students and fifty-seven of the city students.

The extra-curricular organizations were classified as follows: (1) social, (2) departmental, (3) honorary, (4) service, (5) other organizations, and (6) class officer positions. Table XIII is a summary of student membership in extra-curricular organizations.

Social organizations. The analysis of the membership of rural students in social organizations revealed that during the three year period, twenty-three students were members of one or more organizations.

The analysis of the membership of city students in social organizations revealed that during the same three year period, twenty-eight students were members of one or more organizations.

The results of this analysis indicate that more city students were members of social organizations than were the rural students.

Departmental organizations. The analysis of the membership of rural students in departmental organizations revealed that for the three year period, twenty-six students were members of one or more organizations.

The analysis of the city students showed that thirty-one were members of one or more organizations during the three year period.

In this type of organization, the city group again had more memberships than the rural group.

Both groups had a higher membership in departmental organizations than in social organizations. The total number of memberships in departmental organizations for the rural group was fifty, compared to fifty-four for the city group.

The rural group had sixteen who were members of more than one departmental organization, while the city group had thirteen students that were members of more than one organization.

Honorary organizations. The number of students that were members of honorary organizations was low for both groups. This was probably due to the fact that most students do not become members of honorary organizations until the senior year.

Over the three year period, two rural students were members of honorary organizations while four city students were members. One student was a member of two honorary societies, that particular student being a member of the city group.

Once again the city group had a higher number of memberships than did the rural group.

Service organizations. The number of memberships of the rural group in service organizations was decidedly below that of the city group. Thirteen students of the rural group were members of service organizations, and eighteen city students were members. One of the rural group was a member of more than one organization, and four students of the city group were members of more than one organization.

As was found in the three previous comparisons, the city group had more memberships than the rural.

Other organizations. There were a few organizations that could not be classified into one particular group. In this miscellaneous group, there were only fifteen rural members compared with twenty-four city members. Six students of the rural group were members of more than one organization. Nine students of the city group were members of more than one organization.



Class officer positions. The final measurement of membership in school activities was a comparison of class officer positions held by members of each group over the three year period. Three rural students held class officer positions at one time or another during the time covered by the study. Over the same period of time, the city students again held the advantage by having nine members in officer positions.

It is evident from the findings of this analysis, that the city students consistently held more memberships in extra-curricular organizations.

TABLE XIII

## STUDENT MEMBERSHIP IN EXTRA-CURRICULAR ACTIVITIES

Type organization	No. Rural	No. City
Social	23	28
Departmental	26	31
Honorary	2	4
Service	13	18
Others	15	24
Class officers	3	9

## CHAPTER V

### SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

#### I. SUMMARY

Scholastic standing. The findings of this study in regard to scholastic standing revealed that the city students had a higher rating at the end of the first term. The findings at the end of the first year indicated that the rural students had the higher standing. The city students showed a slightly higher standing at the end of the second year, and at the end of the third year the advantage changed back again in favor of the rural students. There was no consistency in the pattern either in favor of the city or rural group. The difference between both groups was very slight in every case.

Psychological scores. The psychological rating of each group was extremely close, there being only one-tenth of one percent difference in the mean percentile. As evidenced by these scores, the groups were fairly equivalent.

Extra-curricular membership. The extra-curricular membership was divided into six types. The organizations were social, departmental, honorary, service, class officers, and

other organizations. In each type of organization, the city group showed a greater number of memberships. The consistency in favor of the city students in this respect clearly indicates the superiority of the city group in extra-curricular membership.

Withdrawals. The findings at the end of the first year revealed that more rural students withdrew from school than city students. At the end of the second year, the greater number of withdrawals occurred among members of the city group. The findings at the end of the third year revealed that the city group again had the greater number of withdrawals.

## II. CONCLUSIONS

In conclusion, the only significant difference between the two groups was in extra-curricular participation. City students held more memberships in extra-curricular organizations than rural students.

There was no difference in total scholastic achievement of rural and city students.