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ABSTRACT

Two matched groups of transfer students from low income families were compared in order to determine effects--if any--of non-academic factors on their academic achievement. Transfer students who applied for financial aid at the University of Missouri-Columbia (UMC) financial aids office made up the initial population from which the group samples were drawn. Two groups were then formed, based on whether or not the student qualified for an Educational Opportunity Grant (EOG). Matching was based on the location of the student's transfer institution, his classification during the initial semester at UMC, and sex. "Transfer shock" effects were minimized by excluding those who did not attend UMC for two semesters. School and College Ability Test (SCAT) scores were used to control for group ability differentials. After all controls were applied, 25 students were selected who could be matched. The comparison itself on the basis of mean GPA indicated that while the FOG students had a slightly higher GPA (though a slightly lower mean SCAT score), the difference was not significant. This result supports similar research reviewed by the author. (J0)

ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT OF TRANSFER STUDENTS QUALIFYING FOR EOG ASSISTANCE
AND NON-QUALIFYING STUDENTS

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Community colleges are growing very rapidly in number and student enrollment and all indications are that this growth will continue in the foreseeable future. These colleges are providing a large number of students that transfer to four-year colleges and universities to complete their education. These students coupled with students transferring between four-year institutions constitute a sizeable body of students. Because of the increasing number of students transferring it is necessary to learn as much about these students as possible.

Currently, much attention has been focused on people having low incomes and the impact this has on their lives. Educators have expressed concern about the education of students from these backgrounds and attention has been focused on how these students fare in institutions of higher education.

Consequently, the question can be raised concerning the academic performance of the transfer student who comes from a low-income background. Schroeder and Sledge (1966), in a review of the literature, found that studies on socioeconomic status, as it affects college achievement, were inconclusive. Rhodes and Caple (1969) indicated that freshmen students who were lower on the socioeconomic continuum performed as well as students occupying a higher position on this continuum. However, several recent studies indicate that students from low-income families have factors affecting them, different than those affecting other students. Barger (1967) indicated that students from low-income families performed better if they had a low opinion of themselves and this factor seemed to be absent from the middle and upper-class students. Another study demonstrated that students from low-income families had a better chance of receiving

a higher Grade Point Average (GPA) even though the results of instruments of academic adjustment indicated the control group would have higher GPA's (Bradfield, 1967).

The purpose of this study is to determine whether non-academic factors exist which affect the academic performance of transfer students from low-income families.

Procedure

Students who transferred to the University of Missouri-Columbia (UMC) and enrolled in either the College of Education or College of Arts and Sciences in the Fall of 1968 were selected as the population to be studied. These transfer students were then checked to see who applied for financial aid through the Student Financial Aid Office. Those who had not applied were discarded.

The remaining students were separated into two groups on the basis of qualifying or not qualifying for an Educational Opportunity Grant (EOG). The Educational Opportunity Grants Program is a federally funded program aimed at helping students from low-income backgrounds realize the benefits of higher education (Grant in Aid, 1966). This program has rather stringent requirements concerning the amount of income a student's family may have in order for him to qualify for this assistance.

Out of these transfer students 58 were found from low-income families, as evidenced by qualifying for an EOG. These students were then matched with the non-EOG qualifiers on criterion which would have some bearing on their academic performance. The matching was done on the basis of the setting in which the school they transferred from was located (metropolitan, non-metropolitan), their classification during the first semester at UMC and sex. Students who did not attend for two full semesters were not used to eliminate any bias which "transfer shock", or difficulty in establishing themselves on a new campus, would have introduced into the results.

Scores on the School and College Ability Test (SCAT) were obtained to control for any ability differentials between the two groups. These scores were available for Missouri students through the Missouri College Testing Program consequently, students who attended colleges out-side of Missouri or private colleges in Missouri, not requiring the SCAT score, were eliminated.

Twenty-five students were finally selected who could be matched. Due to the small number matching was not attempted on the SCAT score. Rather, an analysis of covariance was done, using the SCAT score as the covariate, to see if a difference existed between the mean accumulative GPA of the two groups at the end of the Spring Semester, 1969.

Results

The null hypothesis to be tested was that there would be no difference between the EOG and non-EOG qualifiers on the mean GPA of each group at the end of the Spring Semester, 1969. No significant difference was found between the mean GPA's of these two groups. Table 1 is an analysis of covariance table giving the degrees of freedom (df), the variance estimates (MS) used for calculation, and the F-ratio (F).

Table 1
ANALYSIS OF COVARIANCE

Source	df	MS	F
Between Groups	1	0.75	1.65
Within Groups	47	0.47	
TOTAL	48		

Table 2 presents information concerning the GPA and SCAT scores of the two groups. This table shows that the mean SCAT score was lower for the EOG qualifiers and that group also had a slightly higher mean GPA.

Table 2

Means and Standard Deviations of SCAT scores and GPA's
of EOG and Non-EOG Qualifiers.

	SCAT X's	SCAT-S.D.'s	GPA X's	GPA-S.D.'s
EOG	76.44	17.79	2.58	.688
Non-EOG	81.44	14.85	2.47	.889

Conclusion and Discussion

The Results of this study would tend to support those of Rhodes and Caple (1969) and Schroeder and Sledge (1966) in that it makes no difference where, on the socioeconomic continuum, a student comes from as far as academic performance is concerned. This study shows that one would expect EOG qualifiers and non-qualifiers to do equally well in their academic performance when certain factors are held constant.

Although no significant difference was found, a trend toward a higher GPA among the EOG qualifying group was noted. Since only students who had applied for financial aid were used there is no assurance that the entire socioeconomic continuum was studied. This, coupled with the small N size, would indicate an area for further study to see if this trend towards a higher GPA on the part of EOG qualifiers actually exists.

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