

1950

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Recommended Citation

Fritz, Martin F. (1950) "Relation of the Fritz-Neidt Practical Policy Test to Freshman: Entrance Tests," *Proceedings of the Iowa Academy of Science*, 57(1), 379-380.

Available at: <https://scholarworks.uni.edu/pias/vol57/iss1/50>

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Relation of the Fritz-Neidt Practical Policy Test to Freshman Entrance Tests *

By MARTIN F. FRITZ

Previous investigations, reported to the Psychology Section of the Iowa Academy of Science, have been concerned with the development of a test designed to measure cynicism and idealism. Since the nature of the items used, the theory of the construction, the manner of administration, and the method of scoring have already been described (see references), no attempt will be made to consider these details in this paper.

Scores for a considerable number of college students, mostly Sophomores and Juniors, were available on the short form of the Practical Policy Test (so called to avoid use of the terms cynicism and idealism during administration of the test) which makes use of 65 items (3). The usual weighted scores of two points for strong acceptance and one point for mild acceptance of items were used. Data were also available giving the centile ranks on the Quantitative section (Q), the Linguistic section (L), and the total score of the American Council on Education Psychological Examination (A. C. E.). Centile ranks for 189 students who had taken a so-called "Mathematics Placement" test were available for this study. This test is actually an objective examination over advanced high school algebra, devised by the Mathematics Department of Iowa State College, and taken by all engineering, science, and certain students of agriculture. Finally, high school grade averages could be obtained for 234 students, calculated by the Registrar's Office. High school grades are transmuted to a scale of A, 4 points; B, 3 points; C, 2 points; and D, 1 point. Investigation has shown that these grade averages have a fair correlation with college performance, and are of some use in predicting scholastic excellence.

The table shows the number of cases used in the study (N), the mean cynical scores for the Q, L, Total, Mathematics Placement Test, and the high school grade point average. The last column shows the correlation between the weighted cynical scores and the centile ranks on the Q, L, Total, and Mathematics Placement Test, and the correlation with the high school grade point average.

The correlations are low, being close to zero. The probable errors are huge and in spite of large N's, none of the correlations comes

* This report is part of a study for which a grant-in-aid was received from the Iowa Academy of Science.

	N	Mean Centile	Mean Cynical Score	Correlation, Cynical Score With Variable
Q (A.C.E.)	291	61.97	25.22	-.064 ± .039
L (A.C.E.)	291	59.67	25.22	-.058 ± .039
T (A.C.E.)	291	61.43	25.22	-.062 ± .039
Math. Pl.	189	59.09	26.49	-.052 ± .048
H. S. Av.	234	2.88*	25.13	-.065 ± .044

* Grade point average, not centile.

even close to reaching the 5% level of significance. Even allowing for the fact that the correlations are spurious to a certain degree because of the use of centile ranks (involving rectangular rather than normal distributions), it seems extremely unlikely that the true relationships are high enough to be taken seriously.

One might theorize that "bright" students would be more capable of becoming aware of the inconsistencies in human nature, as well as sham, hypocrisy, and egoistic drives. Whether or not this should lead to greater cynicism, it can be said that the hypothesis receives no support so far as this study is concerned.

SUMMARY

Scores for a number of college students on the Fritz-Neidt Practical Policy Test (a test of cynicism) were available for correlation with the Q, L, and Total score on the A. C. E., as well as a mathematics placement test (advanced high school algebra) and high school grade point average. Very low correlations, in spite of reasonably large statistical populations, and their failure to even approach significance, give very little reason for believing that a relationship exists between cynicism (as measured by this test) and the variables in question.

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