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A comparative study of attendance problem students and students of regular attendance at Arvin High School, 1952-1953

Earlene Patricia Waters
University of the Pacific

A COMPARATIVE STUDY OF ATTENDANCE PROBLEM STUDENTS AND STUDENTS OF REGULAR ATTENDANCE AT ARVIN HIGH SCHOOL, 1952-1953

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Earlene Patricia Waters

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Since the Massachusetts Compulsory Education Law of 1642, the nature of the public secondary school student body has undergone widespread changes. Public education has broadened its base to include all educable students of school age.

Attendance problems seemed to have increased with compulsory education. In the past, assumptions based upon limited observation have been drawn by educators concerning the individual students who constitute this attendance problem group. Since no specific study of attendance conditions existed for the Kern County Union High School District, this investigation was undertaken to meet that need.

I. THE PROBLEM

Statement of the problem. Do attendance problem students differ in socio-economic level, academic ability and achievement, and social adjustment from the other students at Arvin High School?

Delimitation. This study encompassed the one thousand students enrolled in a four year high school for the school year 1952-1953.

Justification. The reasons for selecting Arvin High School as the site for this study were twofold. First, the investigator had been employed as Head Girls' Counselor at that institution during its four years of operation, which offered unusual opportunities for procuring exact data from attendance, counseling, and registrar's files. Secondly, the peculiar constituency of the school population was thought to be unique and of interest to other San Joaquin Valley educators.

Beginning operation in 1949-1950, Arvin High School was the first high school in the Kern County Union High School District to combine attendance counseling with educational, social, vocational, and personal guidance services. Reports from Arvin High School counselors and administrators lauded the inclusion of attendance counseling to such an extent that two years later Bakersfield High School reorganized its guidance program to parallel the Arvin system.

In the past individual counselors and administrators had been aware of attendance problems, but no specific study of local conditions existed. In an attempt to meet this need for further information concerning the habitually absent student as opposed to the regularly attending student, this study was undertaken.

II. DEFINITIONS OF TERMS USED

Attendance problem students. For the purpose of this study, "attendance problem students" were those Arvin High School students who had been absent seventeen or more days during the 1952-1953 school year. This delineation evolved from the division of the one thousand students enrolled into quartile groupings on the basis of official attendance records.

The first quartile group ranged from perfect attendance to 3.75 days absence; the second quartile constituted students absent from 4 to 8.75 days; the third quartile included students absent from 9 to 16.75 days; and the fourth quartile "problem" group was composed of students absent from 17 to 63.5 days. The arithmetic means for the distribution of students in each quartile by number of days absent were: first quartile, 1.57; second quartile, 6.08; third quartile, 12.38; and fourth quartile, 25.62.

Social adjustment. The term "social adjustment" as used in Chapter V of this study refers to the awareness students had shown of their own problems by answers to the Science Research Associates Youth Inventory, coupled with participation in the Arvin High School student activity program.

III. SOURCE OF DATA

This study employed data secured from Arvin High School record files for each of the three general areas of this study. Occupations of parents were gleaned from individual student registration cards for the socio-economic level placement.

Intelligence quotient ratings, available for 852 of the total students, were results of the Group Pintner General Ability Test. Grade placement of the reading ability of 733 students were taken from Stanford Language Arts Achievement Test scores. Results of the Stanford Arithmetic Achievement Test were available for 723 students. Fall and spring teacher semester grades were obtained from the registrar's records for the one thousand students.

For purposes of this study, the absences included excused, unexcused, and truancy. Of the 101 students who had "cut" school, (been absent for no acceptable reason without the knowledge of their parents), seventy-nine were in the fourth quartile, eighteen in the third quartile, four in the second quartile, and none in the first quartile.

The data for interpreting social adjustment were results of the Science Research Associates Youth Inventory for 649 freshmen and sophomore students, as well as the activity records for participation in school affairs of all

the students.

While library materials were of assistance, their emphases were mainly local.

IV. PROCEDURE

Following the statistical division of the one thousand students into quartiles, tables and graphs were prepared showing the distribution among the four quartile groups in relation to the following information: occupation of parents, intelligence quotient ratings, arithmetic and reading achievement levels, teacher semester grades earned, percentile ratings of the Science Research Associates Youth Inventory, and participation in student activities. The mean for each table or graph was computed.

Each table or graph was analyzed and interpreted in light of its relationship to this study.

CHAPTER II

RELATED STUDIES

A considerable amount of library materials relating to attendance investigations was utilized for this study. Theses reviewed were of definite service, despite the fact that their value was largely local with emphasis placed upon respective individual school situations.

Lillian K. Groeber[1] determined to find out the causes of irregular attendance, the effects on the students' school life, and the group implications in her study of Thomas Jefferson High School in Los Angeles. From the total school population of eighteen hundred, she chose a random sampling of four hundred students, composed of one hundred students each from the Negro, Mexican, Oriental, and white groupings. General conclusions drawn by this study were:

1. The intelligence as classified by the I. Q. rating in school had no direct relationship to the attendance of the student.

2. Attendance did affect the school marks in almost an exact indirect ratio.

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[1] Lillian K. Groeber, "A Study of Attendance at Thomas Jefferson High School," (unpublished Master's thesis, the University of Southern California, Los Angeles, 1938), pp. 99-101.

3. The grade or year in school made little or no difference in the students' attendance record.

4. Boys maintained a better attendance record than girls.

Through the investigation of nonattendance conditions in Central Junior High School of Los Angeles, Carrie Margaret Deitrich, in 1933-1934, stated that,

> Illness and mental characteristics of adolescence, such as 'adventure, wanderlust, and truancy,' were found to be related to school absence. Mexican pupils stood highest in nonattendance, health, diet, and economic status among the various nationalities.[2]

She found no relation between I. Q. and attendance.

In 1924 Earl Edwin Rosenberry[3] found that little association existed between nationality and habitual absence. He discovered a relationship between intelligence and attendance. His study of fourteen hundred junior high school students in the Los Angeles area showed a correlation of .38 between habitual absence and marks of three, four, five, and of .33 between superior intelligence, and marks of one in a school where there were five marks given.

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2 Carrie Margaret Deitrich, "A Study of Non-Attendance in a Junior High School," (unpublished Master's thesis, The University of Southern California, Los Angeles, 1935), p. 83.

3 Earl Edwin Rosenberry, "A Critical Study of Absence and Tardiness in the Secondary Schools of Los Angeles, California," (unpublished Master's thesis, The University of Southern California, Los Angeles, 1924).

For these schools there was a greater relation between habitual absence and poor marks than between superior intelligence and high marks.[4]

John L. Compton's analysis[5] of the Bakersfield city elementary schools found that white children ranked first in truancy and severe disciplinary cases.

According to Lafayette Hyde's "A Study of Absence and Tardiness of Boys in High School,"[6] the grade level of the boy made no apparent difference in his attendance. There was no apparent relationship between the intelligence of the boy and his absence. The coefficient of correlation between absence and tardiness was shown to be low, but not as low as the relationship that existed between intelligence and absence or intelligence and tardiness.

In an effort to discover what connection existed between regular attendance and school marks, Charles W.

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[4] Ibid., p. 18.

[5] John L. Compton, "A Study of Non-Attendance in the Elementary Schools of Bakersfield, California," (unpublished Master's thesis, The University of Southern California, Los Angeles, 1930), p. 98.

[6] Lafayette Hyde, "A Study of Absence and Tardiness of Boys in High School," (unpublished Master's thesis, The University of Southern California, Los Angeles, 1935), pp. 101-104.

Odell[7] found that the per cent of time the pupil attended school had a definite effect upon his powers of achievement at the end of a given period under consideration. He also stated that on the whole attendance appeared to be a factor conditioning achievement, but not so weighty a factor as many had believed and that there was almost no relationship between attendance and intelligence.

Carl W. Ziegler claimed,

> . . . girls attend school better because they are more conscientious and their superiority in school marks is due not so much to their better attendance as to the fact that they are also more conscientious in their application to their studies.[8]

However, Deitrich found boys' attendance to exceed girls' in every respect,[9] while Compton suggested the greater effect of physical and psychological adolescent problems on girls might cause their lower attendance.[10]

Ziegler also concluded that the relation between school attendance of pupils and the distance at which they

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[7] Charles W. Odell, The Effect of Attendance Upon School Achievement (Educational Research Circular, No. 16. Urbana, Illinois: University of Illinois, 1923), p. 7.

[8] Carl W. Ziegler, School Attendance as a Factor in School Progress (Teachers' College Contributions to Education, No. 297. New York: Teachers' College, Columbia University, 1928), p. 42.

[9] Deitrich, op. cit., p. 54.

[10] Compton, op. cit., pp. 21-31.

live from school is negative.[11]

Charles Espy[12] in his study of junior high school students in Ogden, Utah, found the coefficient of correlation between objective test marks and nonattendance to be .292, considered low, with no significant relationship among the four schools or together as a whole. Espy listed the main causes of absence as: (1) ill health, 75 per cent; (2) ill health or death in the family; (3) work at home or in illegal employment, and (4) out of town and truancy.[13] He noted a tendency of nonattendance to increase from the eighth to the tenth grades and stated that girls led boys in per cent of attendance. His recommendations included an improved health service program in the school, an in-service, attendance training plan for the faculty, and a re-evaluated extra-curricular program. For Espy stated that, "whatever offers the child a greater interest in school offers him greater incentive to attend."[14]

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11 Ziegler, op. cit., p. 61.

12 Charles Espy, "An Analysis of Attendance and Marks," (unpublished Master's thesis, The University of Southern California, Los Angeles, 1939).

13 Ibid., p. 82.

14 Ibid., p. 88.

Using the case study technique, M. L. Turner[15] investigated attendance problems in the rural high schools of Imperial Valley. He recommended that community agencies be utilized to prevent nonattendance laws, and child labor laws be explained to parents and guardians through an extensive adult education and public relations program.

In his study to determine the influence of participation in extra-curricular activities upon scholastic achievement and pupil adjustment, A. Ewing Knold[16] found that extra-curricular participation did not improve school marks appreciably in one semester. Continuance in extra-curricular participation over longer periods of time than one semester was associated with higher grades for the participating group when compared with nonparticipants.

> The I. Q. was not found in itself to be a factor related to a high or low adjustment score. However, there is a definite relationship between superior school marks and superior adjustment.[17]

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[15] M. L. Turner, "Attendance in the High Schools of Rural Communities," (unpublished Master's thesis, The University of Southern California, Los Angeles, 1932).

[16] A. Ewing Knold, "The Influence of Participation in Extra-curricular Activities on School Marks and Pupil Adjustment in a Senior High School," (unpublished Doctor's dissertation, The University of California at Los Angeles, 1949), p. 126.

[17] Ibid., p. 133a.

Roy B. Bursch found, "There is a substantial positive relationship between the number of activities in which a student engages and his scholastic achievement."[18] He further stated that unless students are specifically guided into activities, the large majority do not participate in more than three throughout the entire school year. Girls tend to be more active than boys.[19]

Ira Richard Woodworth's,[20] "The Educational Significance of Migration Into California," was based upon a study of 126 farm labor home families located in Arvin, Shafter, and Marysville labor camps during the late 1930's. This study presented excellent background material concerning educational needs of migrant children. He proposed two approaches to this problem of educating migrant students: (1) Through an analysis of their cultural background, and (2) an analysis of their present environment and the type of environment they may be expected to have in the future.[21]

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18 Roy B. Bursch, "Extra-class Activities and Scholastic Achievement," (unpublished Master's thesis, Leland Stanford Junior University, 1952), p. 30.

19 Loc. cit.

20 Ira Richard Woodworth, "The Educational Significance of Migration into California," (unpublished Master's thesis, Leland Stanford Junior University, 1940).

21 Ibid., p. 104.

I. LIMITATIONS OF PREVIOUS STUDIES

Previous studies cited have considered attendance problem students in the light of their intelligence quotients, ratings on standardized tests, achievement grades, participation in school activities, and social adjustment. The investigator was unable to discover any study in which all of these variables were compared among the same control group of students, or where the parents' socio-economic level was included. It should be noted that all the studies did not agree concerning the relationship between attendance and I. Q. or attendance and achievement. The conclusion might be drawn that until other studies have shown more definitely what bearing other factors have upon teacher marks received, it will be difficult for writers on this subject to arrive at generalizations. Instead specific studies of individual local situations will have to suffice.

II. SUMMARY

No other study was found comparing the socio-economic level of the student with his attendance record.

Results of previous studies varied in the relationship of academic ability and attendance from no direct,[22]

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[22] Groeber, op. cit., p. 100.

almost no,[23] very low,[24] and low correlation,[25] to a slight relationship[26] between I. Q. and attendance.

Attendance was established as a factor conditioning achievement and teacher semester marks by Groeber[27] and Odell.[28]

Participation in extra-curricular activities was associated with higher grades and superior adjustment for the participating group,[29] with a positive relationship noted between the number of activities engaged in and scholastic achievement.[30]

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[23] Odell, op. cit., p. 7.

[24] Hyde, op. cit., p. 102.

[25] Espy, op. cit., p. 88.

[26] Rosenberry, op. cit., p. 18.

[27] Groeber, op. cit., p. 101.

[28] Odell, loc. cit.

[29] Knold, op. cit., p. 126.

[30] Bursch, op. cit., p. 30.

CHAPTER III

THE ARVIN COMMUNITY AND THE SCHOOL

I. GEOGRAPHIC LIMITS AND POPULATION

Located in the southeast corner of Kern County, Arvin and its environs are bounded on the east by the Tehachapi Mountains. The area is relatively flat with sandy soil which water has transformed from desert country to rich farming land. The climate is mild in the winter and very warm in the summer.

Climate and topographical location are extremely important to this area for they reflect the main means of livelihood--agriculture, cotton, potatoes, and grapes are grown extensively. Oil is of secondary importance to farming, with several oil fields and one refinery located nearby.

One of the eight secondary schools in the Kern County Union High School District, Arvin High School draws its students from the adjacent towns of Arvin, Lamont, and Weedpatch. In addition, the large privately owned Di Giorgio Corporation, which provides three camps and living quarters for its employees, is four miles from the school. Approximately twenty-five thousand people constitute the total population of the Arvin High School community.

II. AGENCIES AFFECTING EDUCATION IN THE AREA

According to the report of a study conducted by the Arvin High School faculty in 1951,[31] the agencies affecting education in this area include thirteen churches plus some church tents in the summer. There are two libraries, one in Lamont and one in Arvin. The organized service groups include Arvin Lions' Club, Arvin Women's Club, Arvin Businessmen's Club, Booster's Club, Business and Professional Women's Club, Arvin Chamber of Commerce, Lamont Lions' Club, and Lamont Women's Club.

There is one county-sponsored health clinic in Arvin. During 1952-1953 a branch of the County Welfare Department was opened there.

The recreational agencies number Di Giorgio Park and two swimming pools. The Lamont Teen-Canteen and the Arvin Teen-Agers' Club meet in respective community halls. There are two motion picture theaters in Arvin and two in Lamont. There are three pool halls and four gambling establishments in Arvin, with the same number in Lamont.[32]

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31 Report of Evaluative Criteria on file with Principal Clyde Dawald at Arvin High School.

32 Ibid., p. 38.

III. DESCRIPTION OF THE STUDENT BODY

In an attempt to meet the needs of the students at Arvin High School a varied educational program has been provided with emphasis upon vocational majors. There were fifty-one teachers employed during 1952-1953.

Table I shows the distribution of boys and girls by grade level and quartile placement for this attendance study. It should be noted that the boys outnumbered the girls in each quartile group except the fourth "problem" quartile. In this quartile there were one and one half times as many girls as boys. Considering grade level, sixty-two, or 30.8 per cent of the freshmen girls, and twenty-six, or 45.5 per cent of the senior girls were in the fourth quartile.

Included in the student body were two Chinese, five Indian, eighty-one Mexican, eight Negro, and five Filipino students. These 101 students, or 10 per cent of the total enrollment, constituted the minority racial group as opposed to the 899 white students. The racial distribution by quartiles was insignificant in differences with one exception. One third of the total number of Mexican students fell within the fourth quartile.

Varied backgrounds of the one thousand students became evident when the results of the principal's report of

TABLE I

GRADE LEVEL DISTRIBUTION OF BOYS AND GIRLS
AT ARVIN HIGH SCHOOL 1952-1953

	Q 1			Q 2			Q 3			Q 4			
	No. boys	No. girls	Total	No. boys	No. girls	Total	No. boys	No. girls	Total	No. boys	No. girls	Total	Total
9	48	34	82	53	51	104	49	54	103	33	62	95	384
10	33	39	72	32	33	65	42	33	75	36	35	71	283
11	32	28	60	21	23	44	28	23	51	16	27	43	198
12	24	12	36	24	12	37	15	7	22	15	26	40	135
Totals	137	113	250	131	119	250	133	117	250	100	150	250	1000

1952-1953 were analyzed. Thirty-two states and four foreign countries were listed by the students as places of birth. Over one half of the students (541) were from Oklahoma. California was second with 364. Arkansas (111), Texas (102), Missouri (50), Arizona (36), and New Mexico (22) followed in that order.

IV. OCCUPATION OF PARENTS

School records were analyzed to determine the occupational status of the parents and guardians. Results of this analysis were tabulated using the Socio-Economic Occupational Classification Scale (Table II).

Although this classification reflects the social standing of the individual, it should be noted that the economic placement is probably inaccurate, since unskilled and semi-skilled labor sometimes bring higher monetary return than clerical or professional occupations.

Table II seemed to portray the Arvin-Lamont-Weedpatch agricultural area with 50 per cent of the total included in the unskilled or farm labor group. In the fourth quartile 59.6 per cent fell in this unskilled classification. The professional group diminished by quartile. Included in the proprietors, managers, and owners group were farm owners and managers and retail store owners. It should be noted that

TABLE II

OCCUPATIONAL CLASSIFICATION OF ARVIN HIGH SCHOOL PARENTS
1952-1953

	Q 1	Q 2	Q 3	Q 4	Total
	No. of parents	No. of parents	No. of parents	No. of parents	No. of parents
Professional	9	6	4	2	21
Proprietors, managers, and owners	52	29	16	21	118
Clerical	3	4	4	3	14
Skilled	32	39	41	17	129
Semi-skilled	36	51	44	32	163
Unskilled	114	116	124	149	503
Unemployed	4	5	17	26	52
Totals	250	250	250	250	1000

among the twenty-one in the fourth quartile of this classification group were five cafe and ten bar owners or proprietors. There was no difference by quartile in the clerical classification, which included only fourteen people.

Skilled occupations reflected the secondary industry in the area--oil. The semi-skilled group contained mainly truck drivers, labor contractors, construction, and cotton-gin workers, as well as oil roustabouts. Of the fifty-two people in the unemployed group, fifty received county or state aid, while two were on a blind pension.

The high incidence of unskilled labor and the low number of professional workers in the fourth quartile seemed to place this group lower than the other three quartiles in the social scale.

V. LOCATION OF STUDENT RESIDENCES

In an attempt to ascertain whether or not the attendance problem students lived mainly in certain areas, the site of residence of each student was plotted on a spot map of the total area. Table III locates the student residences by area and by quartile.

For the purposes of this presentation, Arvin was divided into three main areas: the northeast, the southeast, and the southwest sections. The northeast section included

TABLE III

AREA LOCATION OF ARVIN HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT RESIDENCES
1952-1953

	Q 1		Q 2		Q 3		Q 4		Totals	
	No.	Per cent	No.	Per cent	No.	Per cent	No.	Per cent	No.	Per cent
Hilltop	4	11.5	4	11.5	14	40	13	37	35	100
Hoyt's Corner	6	6	19	18.5	31	30	47	45.5	103	100
Lamont	32	20.5	47	30	46	30	32	20.5	157	100
Wood's Addition	7	25	9	32	8	29	4	14	28	100
Weedpatch	12	13	20	22	31	34	28	31	91	100
Sunset Labor Camp	13	37	6	17	5	14	11	32	35	100
Di Giorgio	11	31	9	25	8	22	8	22	36	100
Arvin:										
Northeast	9	16	14	24.5	16	28	18	31.5	57	100
Southeast	48	44.5	31	28	20	19	9	8.5	108	100
Southwest	27	18	34	23	42	29	44	30	147	100
Filipino Camp							4	100	4	100
Government Housing	2	22.22			1	11.11	6	66.67	9	100
Barlow Camp			1	33.33	2	66.67			3	100
Indian Camp							4	100	4	100
Others (outlying farms)	79	43	56	31	26	14	22	12	183	100
Totals									1000	

most of the Mexican population of the town in small temporary shacks and wooden buildings. The southeast section contained more permanent homes, improvements, curbings, and trees. The southwest section had all types of dwellings from tents, shacks, and no plumbing facilities on Durham Street, to neat small rentals two streets down in the same area.

In the northeast or Mexican section of Arvin, 31.57 per cent of the students were of the fourth quartile group. This figure considered by itself was not too significant, but when added to the 28 per cent of the students living there who comprise the third quartile group, it showed that 59.5 per cent of the students residing in this northeast section of Arvin were in the lower half of the total school according to their attendance rating.

The southeast section of town seemed to reflect its stability with 44.4 per cent of the students residing there included in the first attendance quartile, and 72.1 per cent combined in the first and second quartiles. Only 8 per cent of these southeast section students were in the fourth quartile.

The greater Lamont area was broken down into four main sections: Hilltop, Hoyt's Corner, Wood's Addition, and the town of Lamont. Of Hilltop's thirty-five students 77 per cent were in the third and fourth quartiles. Hilltop was

made up of two trailer camps and substandard shacks which rented mainly to seasonal farm workers.

Hoyt's Corner was a section which had developed during the past five years. It included tents, trailers, home-made wooden partition houses, and several more permanent homes. Of the 103 students who resided in this area, 45.6 per cent were in the fourth quartile and 75.6 per cent fell in the third and fourth quartile attendance groupings. Only 5.8 per cent of these Hoyt's Corner students were in the first quartile.

The town of Lamont was composed of more permanent type homes, ranging from large brick structures complete with television antennae to smaller modest bungalows. Its 157 students were distributed almost evenly throughout the four quartiles. However, 59 per cent fell in the second and third quartile groupings.

Located just east of Lamont across the railroad tracks which separated it from the main town was Wood's Addition. This residential section included small frame houses with few external improvements. Of the twenty-eight students living here 25 per cent were from the first quartile, 57 per cent from the first two quartiles, and only 14 per cent from the fourth quartile.

Weedpatch, the locale for John Steinbeck's Grapes of Wrath, was three miles south of Lamont. Although several

families still lived in tents and trailers, there were evidences of building here on a minor scale. Most of the homes were owner constructed, with no yards, few trees, and many outhouses. Thirty per cent of the ninety-one students from Weedpatch were in the fourth quartile. Sixty-four per cent were in the third and fourth quartiles with only 13 per cent in the first quartile.

Thirty-five of the students lived at the Sunset Labor Camp, located two miles outside of Weedpatch. Stemming from the needs of the Dust-Bowl 1930's, this camp was originally constructed and maintained by the government. Its tin buildings have since been taken over by private means. It was interesting to note that in this same camp there were more students (37 per cent) in the first quartile than in the fourth quartile (31 per cent).

Di Giorgio Farms Corporation maintained three camps, one for Mexicans, one for its foremen, and another general camp. Of the thirty-six students who lived in the homes provided by this corporation, 30.5 per cent were in the first quartile, while the others were divided almost evenly among the other three groupings.

Only four students lived in the Filipino camp outside Arvin, and all were in the fourth quartile. Another four students resided twenty-five miles up in the hills on a

small Indian settlement on the Tejon Ranch, and all of them were in the fourth quartile. Of the three students who lived in the Negro Barlow Camp, one was in the second quartile and two were in the third quartile.

The 183 remaining students' residences were scattered from Wheeler Ridge on Highway 99 in the south to all the outlying farming areas. Most of these students either resided on their parents' farms, or lived on farms where their parents were permanently employed. Forty-three per cent of this scattered group were in the first quartile, while 74 per cent comprised the first and second quartile. Only 12 per cent were in the fourth quartile.

Transportation might seem to be a problem to some of these students living in the outlying areas. Sixty-two per cent of the total number of students were transported at school expense each day. Seven buses made daily trips with four double runs, amassing a total of 441 miles per day.

VI. SUMMARY

The Arvin-Lamont-Weedpatch area had as its main sustenance agriculture followed by the oil industry.

The Arvin High School student body was composed of 501 boys and 499 girls, 10 per cent of which were minority nationality groups. Racial distribution by attendance

quartiles was insignificant except that one third of total number of Mexican students (eighty-one) fell in the fourth quartile. There were one and one half times as many girls as boys in the fourth quartile. A majority of the students were born in the southwest area of Oklahoma, Arkansas, Texas, Missouri, Arizona, and New Mexico, in addition to California.

Parents' occupations as shown by the Socio-Economic Classification Scale reflected the agricultural industry with 50 per cent included in the unskilled farm labor grouping. The fourth quartile problem attendance students came mainly from the lower socio-economic level when compared to the other three quartiles.

The area of residence seemed to reflect the stability of the family. That is, according to percentages, there were more fourth quartile attendance problem students living in the unsettled areas of Hilltop, Hoyt's Corner, and Weedpatch than in the older, longer established residential districts of Arvin and Lamont. Students living in outlying farms had better attendance records than those in the aforementioned unsettled areas.

CHAPTER IV

THE ACADEMIC DIFFERENCES BETWEEN THE PROBLEM AND NON-PROBLEM ATTENDANCE GROUPS

Chapter II emphasized the point that previous investigators have not agreed upon the role that attendance plays in academic ability and achievement. Results of the comparison of intelligence quotient ratings with attendance varied from no direct,[33] almost no,[34] very low,[35] and low correlation,[36] to a slight relationship[37] between I. Q. and attendance.

I. ANALYSIS OF I. Q. RATINGS

In an attempt to answer the question what is the difference, if any, between the attendance problem and non-problem groups in academic ability at Arvin High School, an analysis of group Intermediate Pintner General Ability test

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[33] Groeber, op. cit., p. 100.

[34] Odell, op. cit., p. 7.

[35] Hyde, op. cit., p. 102.

[36] Espy, op. cit., p. 88.

[37] Rosenberry, op. cit., p. 18.

scores was made. These tests were administered at the eighth grade level by Arvin High School counselors. One general weakness of the results might be caused by the test itself. The Pintner was standardized on cultural factors of the middle class and may be measuring these factors in place of actual scholastic aptitude.

Using numbers and percentages Table IV shows the distribution of the intelligence scores for 852 of the total enrollment of Arvin High School. While there were no scores above 119 in the fourth quartile, 7.5 per cent of the first, 2.37 per cent of the second, and 3.8 per cent of the third quartiles fell in this top 119-149 I. Q. rating group. The mean I. Q. score of the fourth quartile was 88.89, below the total Arvin High School students' average I. Q. of 92.25, and far below the national standard mean of 100. It should be noted that the mean score for each group diminished progressively from the first through the fourth quartile.

Fifty-one per cent of the fourth quartile group had an intelligent quotient of 89 or below, with 23.74 per cent of this quartile in the 79 or below classification. The same 89 or below I. Q. grouping comprised only 20.83 per cent of the first quartile, 33.65 per cent of the second quartile, and 33.64 per cent of the third quartile.

TABLE IV

DISTRIBUTION OF I. Q. SCORES OF ARVIN HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS
1952-1953

Intelligent Quotient	Q 1		Q 2		Q 3		Q 4	
	No. students	Per cent	No. students	Per cent	No. students	Per cent	No. students	Per cent
140-149					1	.47		
130-139	3	1.43	2	.94	1	.47		
120-129	13	6.15	3	1.43	6	2.86		
110-119	32	15.2	36	17.06	20	9.48	10	4.57
100-109	63	29.85	44	20.85	51	24.18	34	15.52
90-99	56	26.54	55	26.07	61	28.90	63	28.77
80-89	25	11.84	39	18.49	40	18.95	60	27.40
70-79	16	7.58	29	13.75	23	10.90	37	16.89
60-69	2	.94	2	.94	8	3.79	13	5.94
50-59	1	.47	1	.47			2	.91
Totals	211	100.	211	100.	211	100.	219	100.
Mean Score	100.24		95.85		90.81		88.89	

Line graph Figure 1 shows the relationship among the four quartiles in another manner. Each of the quartiles followed the curve of normal distribution.

II. ANALYSIS OF ACHIEVEMENT TEST SCORES

Figure 2 illustrates the grade placement of the reading ability of 733 Arvin High School students according to results available from Form EM of the Stanford Language Arts Achievement Test. The test was administered at the eighth grade level when the "on grade" placement was 8.6. As the graph, page 33, indicates, scores in all four quartiles ranged from the third grade level to the eleventh grade. The mean grade level for each quartile was as follows: first quartile, 7.19; second quartile, 7.49; third quartile, 6.9; fourth quartile, 6.76. This graph shows the normal curve of distribution without marked differences among the four groups. However, the fourth "problem" quartile ranked considerably lower than the other three quartiles in the top four grade placements and higher than the others in grade placements 6, 5, 4.5, 4, and 3. The lowest score made on this verbal test was by a student in the first quartile. Although the reading level of the fourth quartile was below the "on grade" level, it was not significantly below the grade placement level of all Arvin High School students.

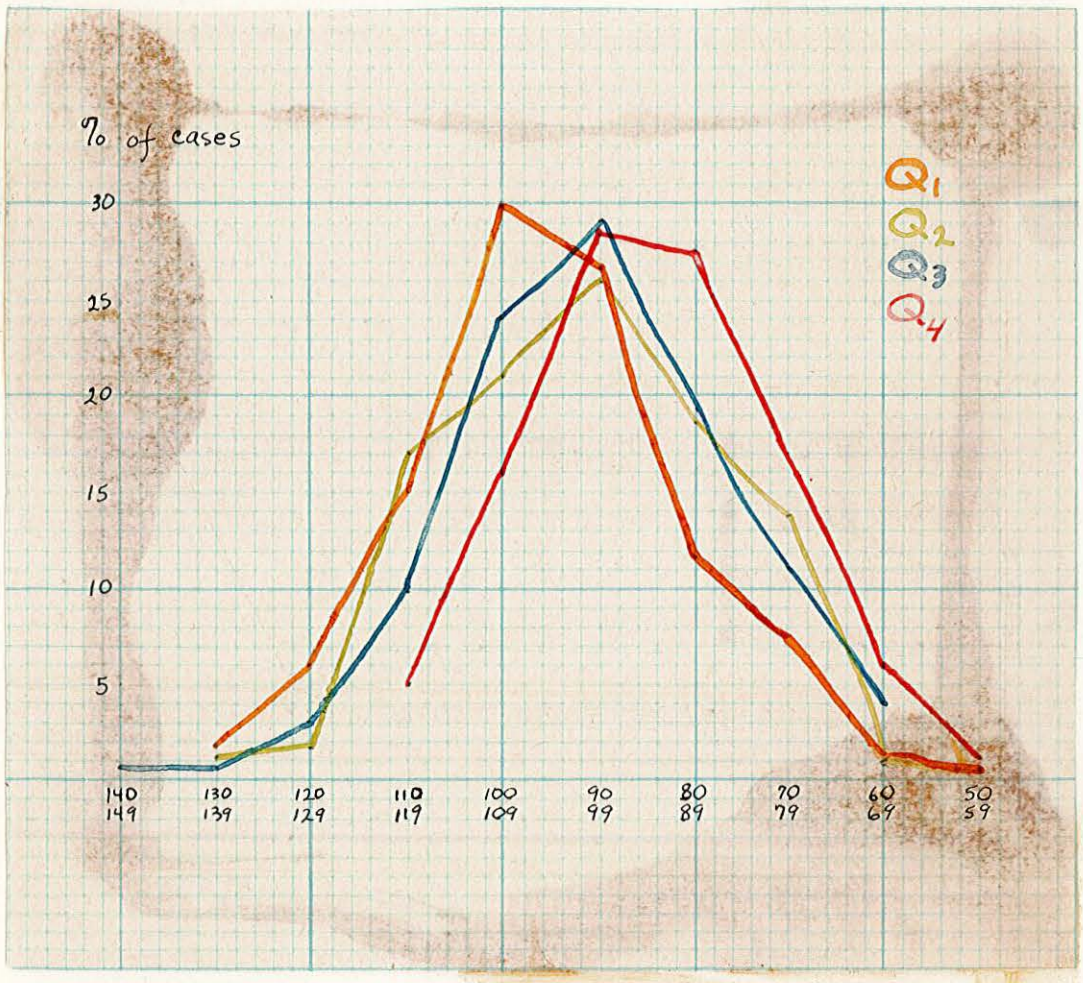

FIGURE 1

DISTRIBUTION OF INTELLIGENCE QUOTIENTS
OF ARVIN HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS, 1952-1953

FIGURE 2

DISTRIBUTION OF READING ACHIEVEMENT TEST SCORES OF ARVIN HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS, 1952-1953

Figure 3 shows the grade placement of the arithmetic ability of 723 students according to the results of the Stanford Arithmetic Achievement Test given at the eighth grade level with the same "on grade" placement of 8.6. This graph states that fourth quartile students ranked below the other three quartiles in the top placement ratings of grades 11, 10.5, 10, 9.5, 9, 8, and 7.5, being slightly higher than the third quartile at grade placement 8.5. Also, the fourth quartile ranked higher than any other group at the lower end of the scale on grades 6, 5.5, 5, 4, 3.5, and 3. Figure 3 notes that there was not the regularity in the third and fourth quartiles as was found in the curves of the first and second quartiles.

The arithmetic mean grade level placement for each quartile included: first quartile, 7.84; second quartile, 6.71; third quartile, 7.03; and fourth quartile, 6.68. The arithmetic achievement test scores indicate that Arvin High School on the whole was below the national norm in arithmetic rating. While there were some differences among the four quartiles, these variations were not significant enough to conclude that attendance problem students are lower than other students in general in arithmetic. This study agreed with Espy[38] who discovered a very low

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38 Espy, op. cit., p. 132.

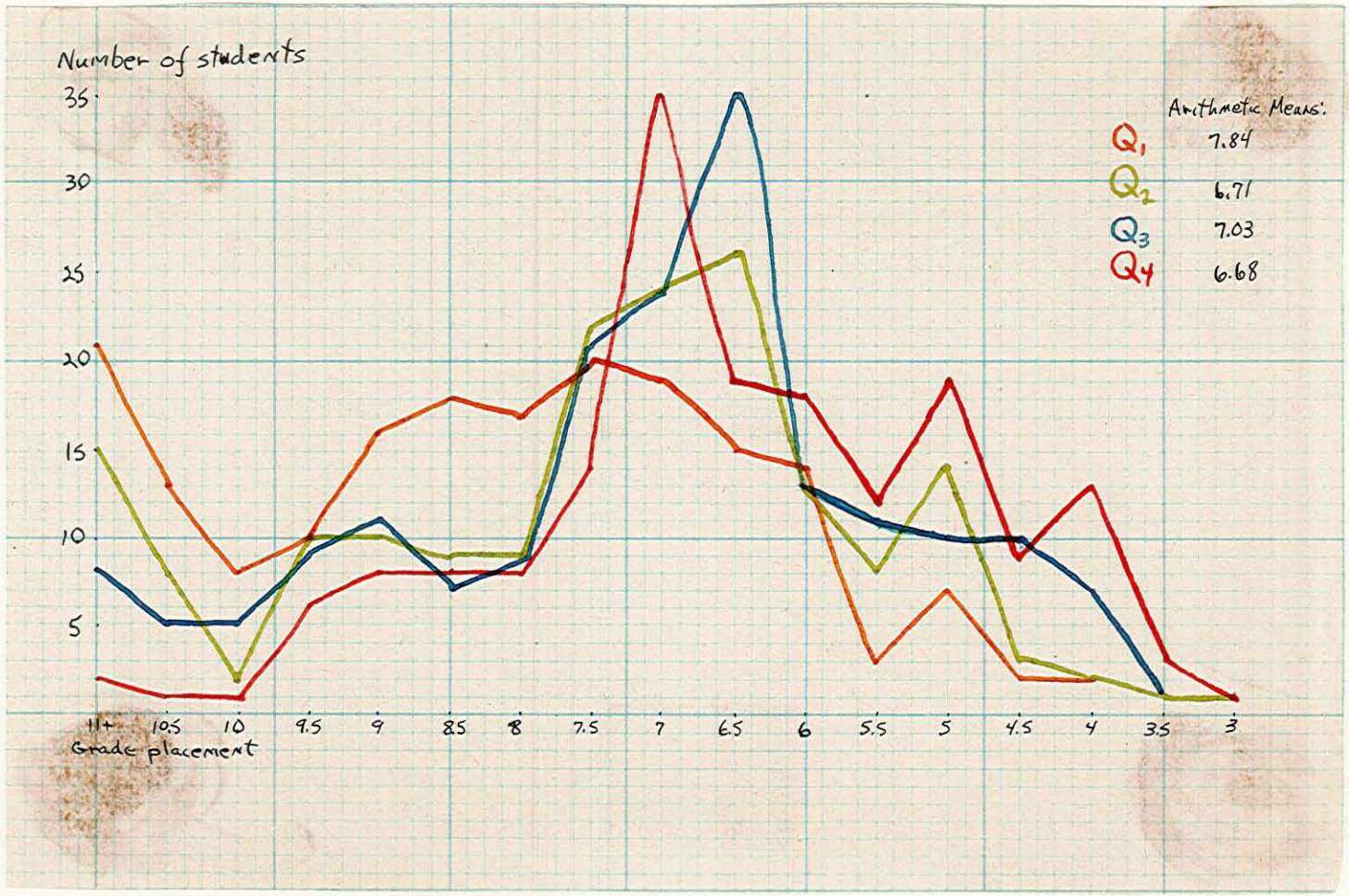

FIGURE 3

DISTRIBUTION OF ARITHMETIC ACHIEVEMENT TEST SCORES OF ARVIN HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS, 1952-1953

correlation between objective test marks and nonattendance.

III. ANALYSIS OF SEMESTER TEACHER GRADES

While I. Q. test results have been viewed as measures of the speed with which a student learns or may be expected to learn typical school material and achievement test results attempt to measure how much information each student has achieved, the actual symbol which represents achievement in the learning situation is the mark awarded each student by his teacher.

For this study the 10,300 1952-1953 fall and spring semester teacher grades for the one thousand students were tabulated according to quartile placement. Results of this tabulation were plotted in Figure 4. This graph shows obviously that those students who were frequently absent from school received poorer grades than regular attenders.

While 58 per cent of the marks earned by the first quartile students were better than C, the other quartiles earned the following percentages of A's and B's: second quartile, 43.7 per cent; third quartile, 35 per cent; and fourth quartile, 21.59 per cent. In the fourth quartile 34.4 per cent of the marks earned were D's and F's, while the first quartile included only 10.47 per cent of D's and F's.

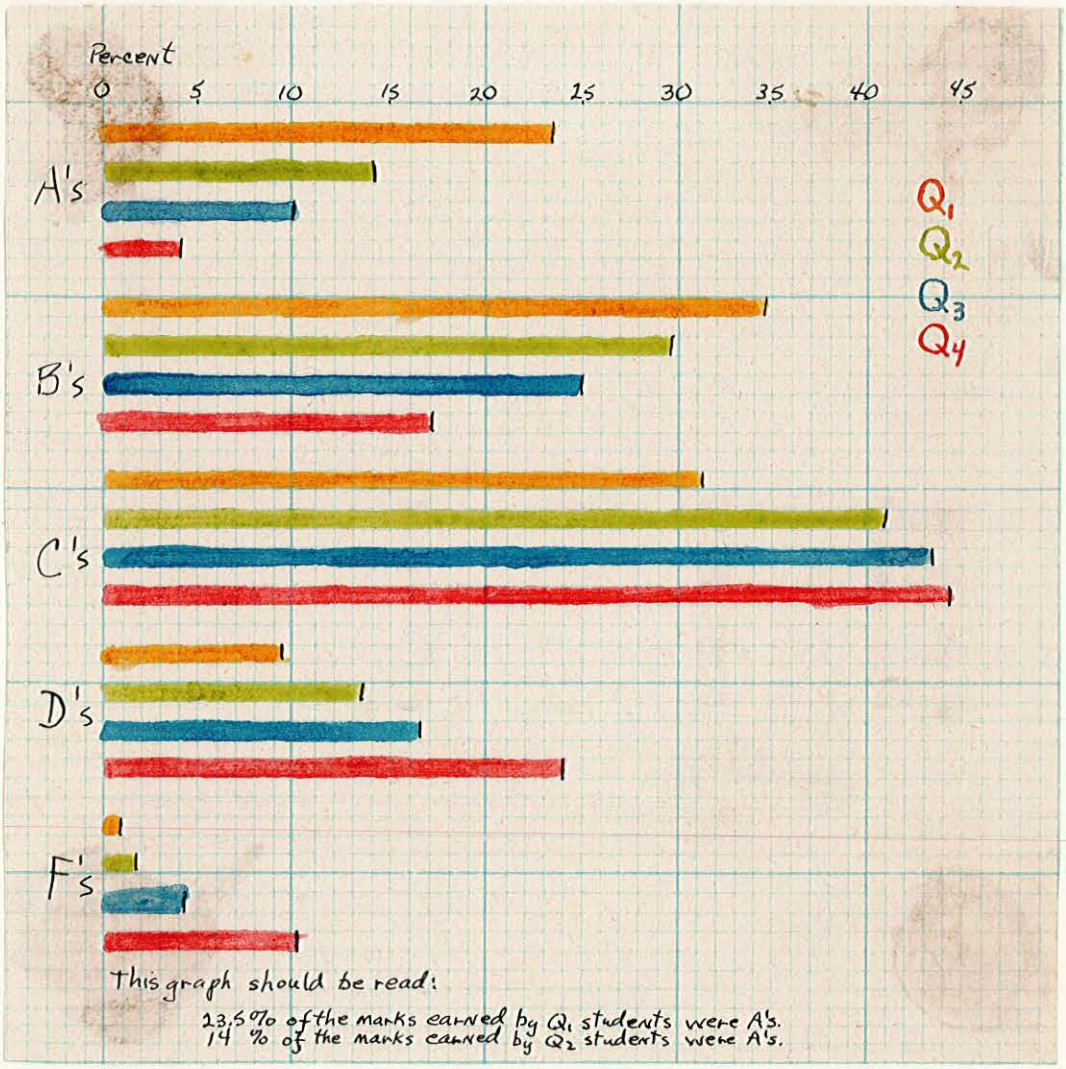

FIGURE 4

FALL AND SPRING SEMESTER TEACHER GRADES OF ARVIN HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS, 1952-1953

This study verified the findings of previous investigators that school marks and attendance vary in almost an exact indirect ratio.[39]

IV. SUMMARY

A relationship between I. Q. and attendance was found, with 51 per cent of the fourth quartile students ranking 89 and below in I. Q. No students in the fourth quartile were above 119 I. Q.

Reading and arithmetic achievement test scores showed that while the fourth quartile ranked lower than the other students at the upper end and higher than the other students at the lower end of the scale, these differences were only in the extremes.

Students who were frequently absent received poorer grades than regular attenders in almost an exact indirect ratio, to prove that attendance is a factor in scholarship and achievement.

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[39] Groeber, op. cit., p. 92.

CHAPTER V

THE DIFFERENCE IN SOCIAL ADJUSTMENTS AMONG THE FOUR GROUPS

Perhaps the most difficult factor to measure in this comparative study was social adjustment. Two criteria were selected for this purpose: student awareness of their own problems and student participation in school activities.

I. SCIENCE RESEARCH ASSOCIATES YOUTH INVENTORY RESULTS

Using the results of the Science Research Associates Youth Inventory, the average weighted scores of the 649 students tested were placed according to their respective quartiles upon Science Research Associates percentile graphs. Although it was impossible to include all Arvin High School students in this phase of the study, this freshman and sophomore group represented 64.9 per cent of the total.

Graphs 1 through 8 in Figure 5 report the results of this Science Research Associates Youth Inventory. According to Graph 1, girls in the fourth quartile were more concerned with problems about "My School" than any of the other groups. However, even that difference at the sixty-fifth percentile was not too great. Girls were more troubled by problems of "Looking Ahead" than were boys, with the first and fourth quartiles ranking at the sixty-fifth percentile. Boys in the first and third quartiles expressed

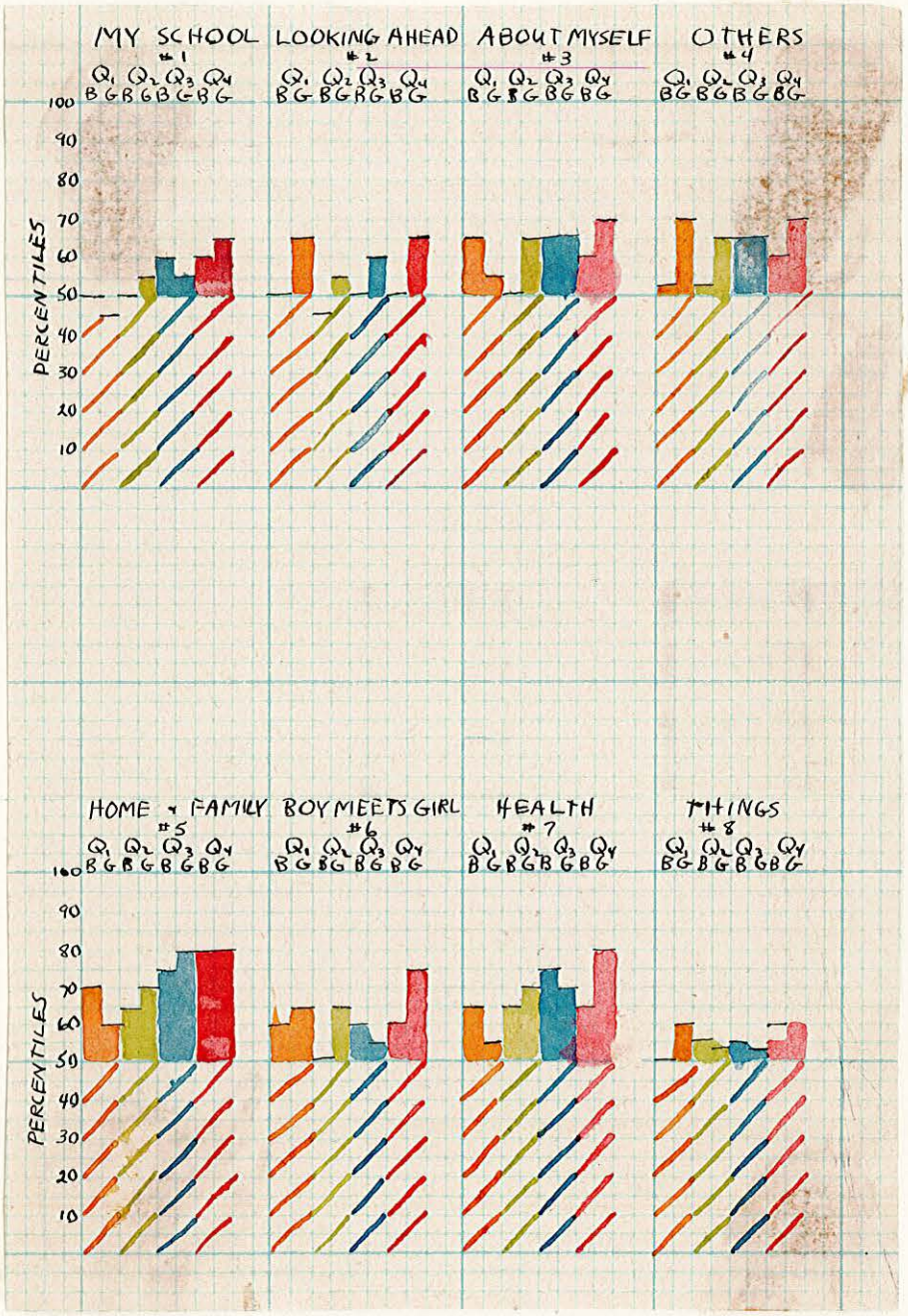

FIGURE 5

SCIENCE RESEARCH ASSOCIATES YOUTH INVENTORY PERCENTILES OF ARVIN HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS, 1952-1953

concern "About Myself," Graph 3. It should be noted that the fourth quartile girls were highest in this group, falling at the seventieth percentile.

"Getting Along With Others" seemed more of a problem to the girls than boys with the first and fourth groups at the seventieth percentile. "My Home and Family" was the area of most concern to all quartiles, registering at the eightieth percentile in the third and fourth groups. "Boy Meets Girl" again found the girls more interested than the boys, perhaps due to the age of adolescent development. Problems of health disturbed the fourth quartile girls at the eightieth percentile and the third quartile boys at the seventieth percentile. "Things in General," which included religious and world problems, did not trouble these students.

Considered as a whole, the areas of "Home and Family" and "Health" were of most concern for both boys and girls, and girls indicated that they had more problems than the boys. It may be that the problems were common to all groups and accepted by them without feelings of disturbance, that the students were not aware of their own problems, or that they realized an awareness of the problems but were reluctant to admit them.

The Science Research Associates Youth Inventory was used at Arvin High School as a motivating factor to further

discussion during individual counseling interviews. When the results of this Inventory are grouped together and averaged they do not show any great recognizable variations among the four quartiles. Perhaps this combining of the weighted scores defeats the purpose of the Inventory.

II. PARTICIPATION IN STUDENT ACTIVITIES

The second criterion to determine the difference, if any, among the four quartiles in student social adjustment was participation in student activities. For A. Ewing Knold states that,

> Participation in extra-curricular activities appears to be positively associated with superior social adjustment, as evidenced by the fact that all statistically significant differences favor the participating group.[40]

During the 1952-1953 school year the investigator devised the Arvin High School Student Activity Record Form.[41] Compilation of data from individual record forms as found in Table V showed that 588 students actively participated in the co-curricular program during 1952-1953. Students of the first quartile exceeded the others by almost one fourth, with 75.2 per cent participation. The second quartile had

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[40] Knold, op. cit., p. 133.

[41] See Appendices, p. 58.

TABLE V

ACTIVITY PARTICIPATION OF ARVIN HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS
1952-1953

Number of Activities	Q 1			Q 2			Q 3			Q 4		
	No. of Boys	No. of Girls	Total	No. of Boys	No. of Girls	Total	No. of Boys	No. of Girls	Total	No. of Boys	No. of Girls	Total
1	45	32	77	33	35	68	30	30	60	29	61	90
2	30	11	41	20	22	42	19	18	37	13	14	27
3	13	20	33	9	8	17	12	7	19	3	4	7
4	4	7	11	7	6	13	3	2	5	4	1	5
5	2	6	8	2	1	3	1		1			
More than 5	7	11	18	2	3	5	1		1			
Total	101	87	188	73	75	148	66	57	123	49	80	129

59.2 per cent participation; third quartile, 49.2 per cent; and fourth quartile, 51.7 per cent.

While more students in the fourth quartile, as compared to the other quartiles, participated in only one activity, it should be noted that no fourth quartile students participated in more than four activities. Twenty-six students in the first quartile were active in five or more clubs.

Considering that there were one and one half times as many girls as boys in the total fourth quartile, the eighty participating girls in that group as opposed to the forty-nine fourth quartile boys were insignificant.

III. SUMMARY

According to results of the Science Research Associates Youth Inventory the main problem areas for all students were "My Home and Family" and "Health." Girls expressed a greater awareness of problems than boys. There were no recognizable variations among the four quartiles.

Weaknesses of this Inventory included the possibilities that students realized other problems but were reluctant to admit them or that they were unaware of their own problems.

Seventy-five per cent of the first quartile participated in student activities, compared to 58.8 per cent

participation of the total school enrollment.

From the data it would appear that attendance is one factor to be considered in the total social adjustment of students.

CHAPTER VI

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Evolving from a felt need in a particular school situation, this study attempted to discover the differences among regular attending students and attendance problem students of Arvin High School in three main areas: socio-economic level, academic ability and achievement, and social adjustment.

Previous studies have focused upon the intelligence quotients, achievement grades, participation in school activities, and the social adjustments of attendance problem students. Results of these previous studies varied according to the individual school situations.

The 501 boys and 499 girls enrolled at Arvin High School during 1952-1953 were divided into four equal groups of two hundred fifty students each on the basis of their attendance records. Quartile I included students with perfect attendance to 3.75 days absence; quartile II was composed of students absent from 4 to 8.75 days; quartile III, 9 to 16.75 days; and quartile IV (the "problem" group) 17 to 63 days.

The data for this problem were arrived at following the analysis of Arvin High School records, from which

occupations of parents, locations of student residences, I. Q., arithmetic achievement and reading achievement ratings, Science Research Associates Youth Inventory Scores, and participation in student activities were compiled and tabulated.

I. SUMMARY

In summation, the following information was obtained:

1. There were one and one half times as many girls as boys in the attendance problem quartile, with 30.8 per cent of all the freshmen girls and 45.5 per cent of all the senior girls included in this fourth grouping.

2. Racial distribution by quartiles of the 10 per cent minority nationality group, was insignificant with one exception--one third of the total number of Mexican students fell in the fourth quartile.

3. Over one half of the one thousand students were born in Oklahoma, with other southwest area states of Arkansas, Texas, Missouri, Arizona, and New Mexico being well represented.

4. As shown by the Socio-Economic Classification Scale, parents' occupations stemmed from the agricultural and oil industries with 50 per cent included in the unskilled farm labor grouping. The fourth quartile students came

mainly from the lower socio-economic level when compared to the other three quartiles.

5. The area of residence seemed to reflect the stability of the family. According to percentages, there were more fourth quartile attendance problem students living in Hilltop, Hoyt's Corner, and Weedpatch than in the older, longer established residential districts of Arvin and Lamont. Students residing on outlying farms had better attendance records than those in the aforementioned unsettled areas.

6. A relationship between I. Q. and attendance was found, with 51 per cent of the fourth quartile students ranking 89 and below in I. Q. No students in the fourth quartile were above 119 I. Q.

7. Reading and arithmetic achievement test scores showed that while the fourth quartile ranked lower than the other students at the upper end of the rating scale and higher than the other students at the lower end of the scale, these differences were only in the extremes and not enough to draw general conclusions.

8. Students who were frequently absent received poorer teacher grades than regular attenders in almost an exact indirect ratio to indicate that attendance is a factor in scholarship and achievement.

9. According to results of the Science Research Associates Youth Inventory, the main problem areas for all students were "My Home and Family" and "Health." Girls expressed a greater awareness of problems than boys. There were no significant variations among the four quartiles.

10. Seventy-five per cent of the first quartile students participated in student activities, compared to 58.8 per cent participation of the total school enrollment.

II. CONCLUSIONS

What were the differences among the problem attendance students and regularly attending students in socio-economic level? According to parents' occupations, the problem attendance students came mainly from lower socio-economic homes, located in more unstable areas of the community.

What were the differences between these two groups in academic ability and achievement? The fourth quartile students ranked somewhat lower in I. Q. than the other students. There were no outstanding difference in ratings on arithmetic and reading achievement tests. However, achievement symbolized by semester teacher marks was considerably lower in the fourth quartile than in the other groups.

What were the differences in social adjustment? The Science Research Associates Youth Inventory did not establish any outstanding variations in student awareness of problems among the four quartiles. Participation in student activities did point out that the first quartile students were almost 25 per cent more active in school affairs than the attendance problem students.

III. RECOMMENDATIONS

From results of this study it would appear that the fourth quartile attendance problem students at Arvin High School differed slightly from the other regularly attending students. How can this difference be of assistance to school authorities? What implications for the guidance program are found here?

Unfortunately little can be done to revolutionize the location of student residences or the selection of parent occupations. In a community whose sustenance is mainly agriculture, laborers are required to plant, tend, harvest, and process the crops. This employment brings high wages for certain limited seasonal labor. In the past, workers have followed the crops up and down the State of California and even across state boundaries to other areas. This migration has been a major cause of the poor attendance

on the part of some students. However, there seems to be a trend in the Arvin-Weedpatch-Lamont area for former migrants to establish homes and become more permanent community members.

If an extensive program of adult education could be provided for and explained to these parents, through good public relations campaigns, it would eventually improve and strengthen the conditions of the school as well as the community. Civic minded groups might be encouraged to spearhead such a program.

The Director of Testing could attempt to select another group intelligence test other than the Pintner, which might more adequately test intelligence rather than cultural level.

Results of the arithmetic and reading achievement tests revealed that Arvin High School students upon entrance to the ninth grade are inferior in these two fields of achievement. At present there is a remedial mathematics and reading program included in the curriculum. However, this remedial work could be enlarged and amplified to more realistically meet student needs.

Since semester teacher marks fluctuate with incidence of absence, an effort should be made to determine why students are absent. The combined attendance, academic, and

personal counseling provided by the guidance system of the school might intensify its emphasis upon attendance counseling through individual and group interviews.

During 1952-1953 an Arvin High School faculty committee has been studying the co-curricular program as it exists at the school. Their recommendations plus the results of this study should be put into effect in an enriched activity program which would provide adequate time during the school day for club meetings. Bus students could then have equal opportunity to participate.

Results of this study should be analyzed by the entire Arvin High School faculty, as a means of emphasizing the guidance program, with suggestions offered whereby classroom teachers could better understand the community as well as the attendance problem students.

IV. FURTHER RESEARCH NEEDED

During the investigation required for this study various questions evolved which time and circumstances did not permit answering. Further studies might ascertain the relationship between broken homes and student attendance. Also, the query should be made--why are students absent? What can be done to improve student attendance? Do other communities experience the same differences between

attendance problem groups and students of regular attendance? Does religion have a direct bearing upon attendance in school?

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APPENDIX

ARVIN HIGH SCHOOL
STUDENT ACTIVITY RECORD

E _____
(Last) (First)

R: 19___ 19___ 19___ 19___

SCHOLARSHIP	9	10	11	12
1. C. S. F.				
2. Honor Soc.				

IVITY	9	10	11	12
Band				
Bear Facts				
Block A				
Boys' Fed.				
Brush and Palette				
Cadets				
Cheer Leader				
Forensics				
F. B. L.				
F. F. A.				
F. H. A.				
G. A. A.				
Girls' League				
Glee Club				
Hi-Y				
Horizon				
Junior Red Cross				

ACTIVITY	9	10	11	12
20. Los Amigos				
21. Major or Majorette				
22. Masquers				
23. Masters & Marms				
24. Photo Club				
25. Praeterita				
26. Service				
27. Science				
28. Shop Club				
29. Tri-Hi-Y				
30.				
31. WORK EXPERIENCE:				
a. Cafeteria				
b. Library				
c. Messenger				
d. Office Practice				
e. Student Store				
f.				

RTS	9	10	11	12
Football				
Basketball				
Baseball				
Track				
Tennis				

SPORTS KEY: L Earned Letter
C Captain
M Manager
P Participated but not lettered

OFFICES	9	10	11	12
37. Class				
38. Student Body				

SPECIAL AWARDS	9	10	11	12