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RESEARCH NOTES

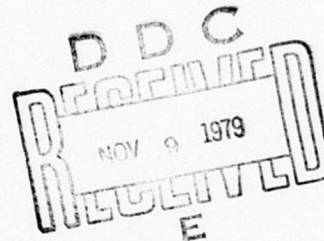
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(14) AGO-PRS-RESEARCH
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(6) RATER-RATEE GRADE RELATIONSHIPS
AND FAVORABILITY OF RATINGS

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RATER-RATEE GRADE RELATIONSHIPS AND FAVORABILITY OF RATINGS

BACKGROUND AND PROBLEM

In the operation of the officer efficiency reporting program of the Army, the immediate duty supervisor of the rated officer is designated as the official rater. Usually the rating officer is of the same grade or one grade higher than the ratee, but occasionally he is two or three grades higher. This raises a question as to whether the differences in grade between rater and ratee are related to the favorableness of the rating given.

Data for a study of this question were furnished by a recent validation of officer efficiency reports(1). In the validation, the criterion was based on ratings on an especially designed scale. Raters and ratees held a variety of Army grades; there were varying degrees of grade disparity between raters and ratees. The purpose of the present study was to use these data in investigating the relationship between rater-ratee grade differences and favorableness of ratings.

DATA

For the validation study(1), a representative population of Regular Army officers in the Zone of the Interior was identified late in 1948. The officers were located in nineteen ZI stations containing large numbers of RA officers. They were chosen to yield a cross section of Army officers in terms of grade and branch. Research psychologists visited these stations in January and February of 1949 and there identified "associate rating" groups of officers likely to be familiar with each other's work and characteristics.

Officers in each group rated the other officers in the group with whom they were familiar on over-all value to the Army, using DA AGO PRT 1629A, Scale 2. This was a 20-point graphic rating scale with five descriptive levels:

<u>Scale Points</u>	<u>Description</u>
1,2	He just doesn't have the calibre one expects of officers of his grade and branch. He is not an asset to the Army.
3-6	Considering his grade and branch, his value to the Army is not better than average. He could be easily replaced.
7-14	Among officers of his present grade and branch he is a better than average officer. The Army needs lots of men like him.

Scale PointsDescription

- | | |
|-------|---|
| 15-18 | Considering his grade and branch, he's a distinct asset to the service. Would be hard to replace. |
| 19-20 | He is one of the very few most outstanding officers in his grade and branch I have ever known. |

The population for the present study consisted of approximately 1,100 of these raters and ratees. The ratings they gave and received on DA AGO PRT 1629A, Scale 2 and their Army grades are the data of this study.

PROCEDURE AND RESULTS

Means and standard deviations were computed for ratings by each grade of rater for each grade of ratee, i.e., for ratings of each rater-ratee grade combination. Rater-ratee grade combinations for which there were less than 20 ratings were eliminated from analysis because of the comparative unreliability of measures based on such small N's; this eliminated ratings given or received by officers above colonel or below 1st lieutenant, and ratings by lieutenants for colonels and by colonels for 1st lieutenants. Means, standard deviations, and N's for ratings of the remaining rater-ratee grade combinations are presented in Table 1.

Table 1. Means, standard deviations, and N's of ratings for different rater and ratee grades.*

Ratee Grade	Rater Grade						
		Col.	Lt.Col.	Major	Captain	1st Lt.	All Grades
Col.	M	15.0	15.1	16.0	14.9		15.2
	SD	3.8	4.0	3.6	4.7		3.9
	N	822	547	190	103		1662
Lt. Col.	M	13.7	13.4	13.9	13.0	13.1	13.6
	SD	4.1	4.1	4.1	4.6	4.5	4.2
	N	456	1482	1019	475	60	3492
Major	M	14.8	13.3	13.2	12.8	12.6	13.2
	SD	3.1	3.7	4.1	4.3	4.3	4.0
	N	137	845	906	420	40	2348
Captain	M	13.3	13.3	13.1	12.9	13.8	13.2
	SD	3.8	3.8	3.9	4.1	4.5	4.0
	N	47	373	399	613	130	1562
1st Lt.	M		13.3	12.6	13.7	13.7	13.6
	SD		3.9	4.5	3.6	3.9	3.8
	N		48	31	137	267	483
All Grades	M	14.6	13.7	13.7	13.1	13.6	13.7
	SD	3.9	4.02	4.1	4.3	4.2	4.1
	N	1462	3295	2545	1748	497	9547

*Ratings were on DA AGO 1629A, Scale 2. The highest possible rating was 20; the lowest possible rating was 1.

With the exception of the clear bias in favor of colonel ratees, it can be seen that the differences between means are very small, in most cases involving less than one scale unit. While some of these differences may attain statistical significance, they do not appear to have much practical significance. Considering the rater grade column means, it can be seen that captains give the lowest mean ratings and colonels give the highest; the mean ratings by captains and by colonels are significantly different from the other rater-grade means.

Figure 1, presents the data from Table 1 in graphic form. From Figure 1 it can be seen that majors, as raters, are unique in the pattern of their ratings: First, they alone give mean ratings that appear to be directly associated with ratee grade. Second, they seem to over-rate the higher grades (colonels, lieutenant colonels), to give the mean rating to the middle grades (majors, captains), and to under-rate the lowest grade represented (first lieutenants).

Figure 2, presents the same data as Table 1 and Figure 1, but arranged on the basis of rater-ratee grade disparity. The data as presented in Figure 2 indicate that when raters and ratees are of the same grade, first lieutenants receive a higher mean rating than any other grade except colonel. Captains are not favorably evaluated by captains, and, in fact, receive their lowest mean rating from raters of their own grade; this is not true of any other grade.

When raters are one grade higher than the ratees, the same hierarchy is present, with the exception that the lieutenant colonels and first lieutenants now have the same mean rating. This consistency is important in view of the fact that so many of the official raters are of the same grade or one grade higher than the ratee.

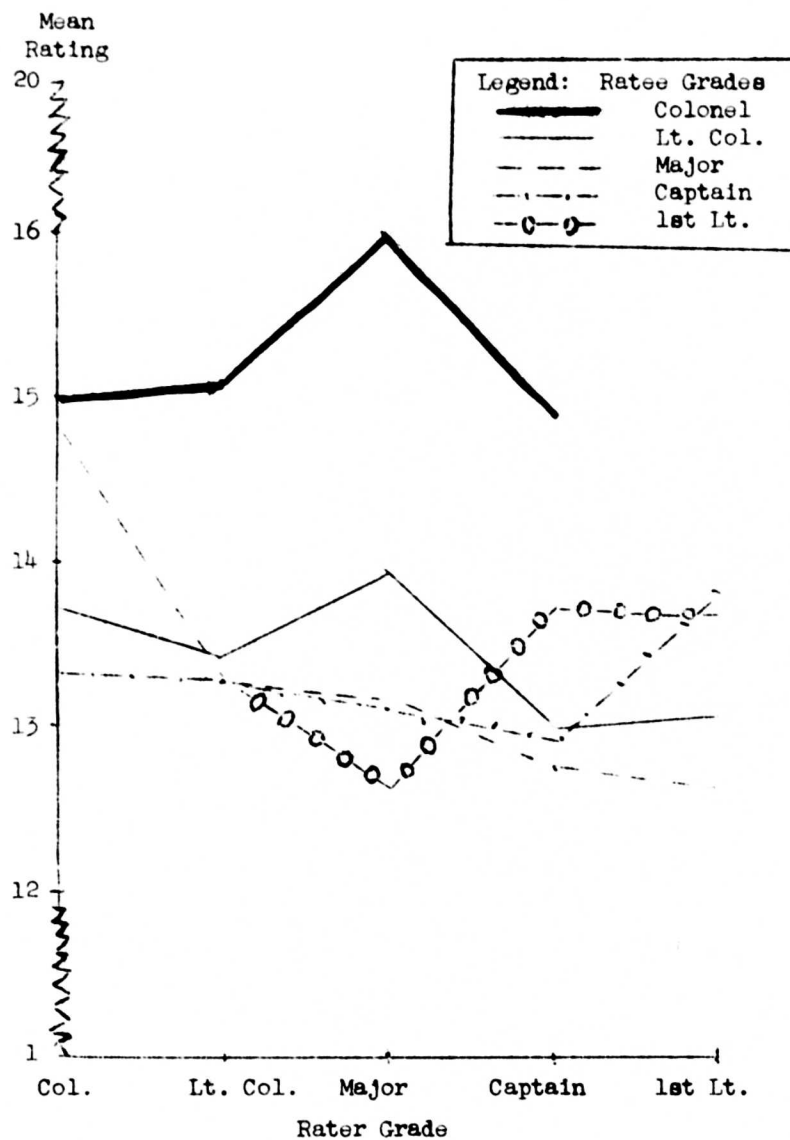


Figure 1. Mean ratings assigned ratees of each grade by raters of each grade.

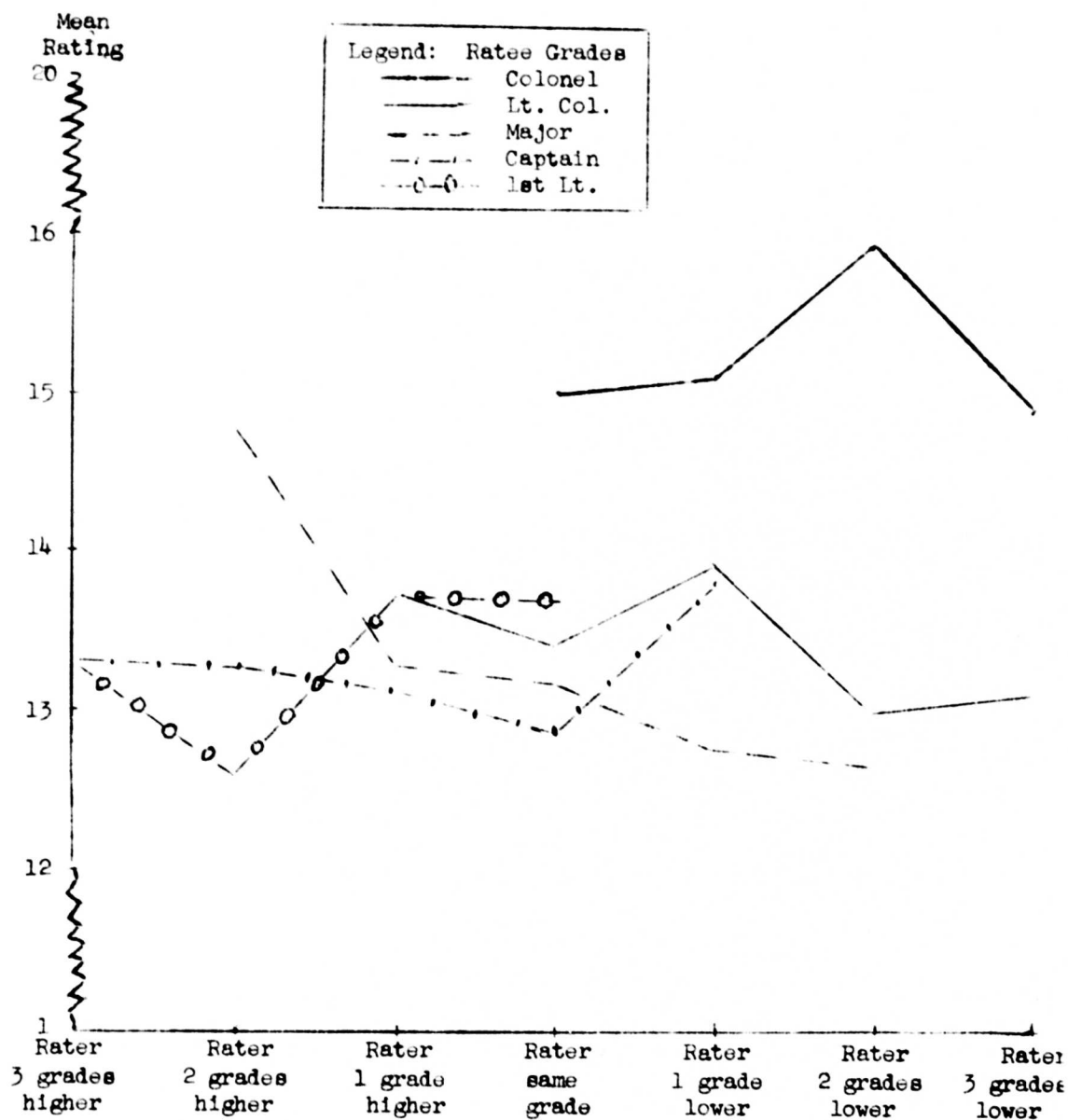


Figure 2. Mean ratings assigned ratees of each grade at various levels of rater-ratee grade disparity.

CONCLUSIONS

1. A clear bias was found on the part of raters of all grades in favor of colonels. Mean ratings on other grades show variations for different rater-grades, but none consistent enough to be identified as grade bias.
2. In general, captains give the lowest ratings; colonels give the highest ratings.
3. Majors, as raters, exhibit a tendency to over-rate the upper grades and to under-rate the lower grades.
4. First lieutenant is the only grade at which the officers rate their own grade higher than they rate other grades.

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REFERENCES

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1. PRS Report 791. Studies of Officer Efficiency Report, WD AGO Form 67-1, in operation. I. Revalidation, January 1949. 10 April 1952.

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