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Gordon R. Baumgartner

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AN ANALYSIS OF PARENTAL ATTITUDE IN REGARD TO
PHYSICAL EDUCATION AND ATHLETICS IN THE HARVEY HIGH SCHOOL

by
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Bachelor of Science, Valley City State College 1961

A Thesis
Submitted to the Faculty
of the
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in partial fulfillment of the requirements
for the degree of
Master of Science

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This thesis submitted by Gordon R. Baumgartner in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the Degree of Master of Science from the University of North Dakota is hereby approved by the Faculty Advisory Committee under whom the work has been done.

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Title AN ANALYSIS OF PARENTAL ATTITUDE IN REGARD TO PHYSICAL EDUCATION
AND ATHLETICS IN THE HARVEY HIGH SCHOOL

Department Physical Education

Degree Master of Science

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Gordon Baumgartner

Date

July 30, 1970

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study was to investigate parental attitude in regard to several areas in physical education and athletics in the Harvey High School.

The questionnaire-opinionnaire technique was used for obtaining the data. Copies of the opinionnaire were mailed to 150 parents, and a return of 111 questionnaires, or 74 per cent, was received.

A brief summary of the findings show:

1. Parents believed an adequate job of teaching physical education is being done today.
2. Parents believed their children are receiving a better training in physical education now than when the respondents attended school.
3. Physical education was rated ninth on a list of 17 subjects that the parents considered important for children in high school.
4. Athletics received the highest rating of the extracurricular activities that the parents considered important for children in high school.
5. The parents appeared to be more familiar with the athletic program than the physical-education program.
6. Parents favor having physical education taught in all grades.

The following conclusions and recommendations were made:

1. It appeared the people are convinced that physical education is valuable and necessary, but they lack knowledge of the program.
2. The parents should be informed as to the objectives of the physical-education and athletic programs and the methods being used to achieve the objectives.
3. The physical education program must be administered so the activities offered will provide carry-over value.
4. A good public relations program must exist between the physical education and athletic department and the public.

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Purpose

The purpose of this study was to investigate parental attitude in regard to several areas in physical education and athletics in the Harvey High School. It was anticipated that a study of the attitudes of parents toward the physical education and athletic programs would prove interesting as well as useful. Obviously, attitudes toward physical education and athletics are being formed. If school personnel wish to deal constructively with the problems involved, they must know the point of departure; that is, how parents feel about the physical education and athletic programs in the high school.

Problem

This study was concerned with investigating and interpreting the general attitudes of the parents toward the areas of physical education and athletics in the Harvey High School. An analysis was made regarding the following attitudes:

1. the importance of physical education in comparison to other subjects,
2. the importance of athletics in comparison to other extra-curricular activities,
3. the knowledge parents have about the physical education and

- athletic programs in the Harvey High School,
4. parental evaluation of the current physical education and athletic programs,
 5. the reasons for parental approval or rejection of the physical education and athletic programs.

Delimitations

This study was limited to:

1. a survey of 150 selected parents in the Harvey, North Dakota School District,
2. attitudes of parents in regard to the programs of physical education and athletics,
3. parents with students in grades nine through twelve.

Need

To build and strengthen the image of physical education and athletics in the eyes of the general public, it has become a major objective to educate and inform people on the values inherent in physical education and athletics. Public support is an absolute necessity today in view of burgeoning enrollments, rising costs, shortage of facilities and increasing demands on pupils' time by shifting curricular emphasis.

It is the assumption of this investigator that the parents are uninformed as to the goals and objectives of the physical education and athletic programs. The present study endeavored to determine the attitudes of the parents toward the programs of physical education and athletics.

It is the hope of this researcher to become more conscious of the critical attitude of the parents, to find out what they consider constitutes a good program, and then to better inform the parents of

the basic goals of the programs of physical education and athletics.

The conclusions may be utilized as a guide to coaches and physical-education instructors to better associate themselves with a problem of this nature.

Definitions

High school: For the purpose of this study a high school is an educational institution which gives instruction in grades nine through twelve.

Survey: Davis (1932) defined a survey as "a careful study of the existing conditions and needs of situations or persons, so that these conditions may be justified, or recommendations made for improvements."

Attitudes: An individual's attitude toward something is his predisposition to perform, perceive, think, and feel in relation to it (Newcomb, 1950).

Athletics: Refers to competitive games involving physical activity, accepted rules of play, and a system of scoring for determining winners from among two or more contesting individuals or teams.

Physical education: The sum of man's physical activities selected as to kind, and conducted as to outcomes (Williams and Brownell, 1958).

Harvey High School: A Class A high school with approximately 365 students in grades nine through twelve. Harvey is located in the central region of North Dakota.

Related Literature in Physical Education

The American public will not continue to support a phase of education if it does not believe in it wholeheartedly, does not understand it, or does not value it sufficiently. A realistic look must be

taken at the physical education profession and physical educators must deal successfully with certain problems now before this profession if members are to continue moving toward their goals (Daniels, 1958).

Danford (1949) conducted an informal public opinion poll involving physical education majors at 11 colleges. Participating students, incognito, interviewed 220 adults of their personal selection asking nine questions. Different colleges reported on varying numbers of respondents. There were no claims for inclusiveness or scientific sampling--only what 220 people thought of physical education. He concluded that the attitudes of people were generally favorable toward physical education; that the opinions of people are formulated primarily on the basis of their experience in school; that it is vitally important for teachers to give special attention to unskilled, shy or inept persons for their sake and the public relations involved; that one of four girls does not like physical education.

His major conclusion was that public relations should be centered on pupils rather than adults whose minds were already fixed.

The Life Poll, conducted by Louis Harris and Associates, Inc., (1969) surveyed the United States high school in depth, examining American attitudes on major educational problems. The pollsters conducted 2,500 exhaustive interviews among students, parents, teachers and principals of 100 schools in representative big cities, suburbs, small towns and rural areas. One of the questions asked in the survey concerned what students thought of their courses.

Examination of Table 1, page 5, showed physical education was rated number 11 on the list of most useful subjects. This indicated that physical education did not receive much support from the students

involved in the study.

TABLE 1
WHAT STUDENTS THINK OF THEIR COURSES

	Most Useful	Least Useful
1. English (grammar, composition)	33 per cent.	14 per cent
2. Mathematics	28	17
3. Science	20	16
4. Business and Secretarial	18	5
5. History (including black)	15	18
6. Current affairs, politics	9	7
7. Foreign languages	8	13
8. Shop, technical	8	3
9. Home economics	6	2
10. Art	5	3
11. Physical education	3	10
12. Music	2	4
13. Drama, public speaking	2	*
14. Agriculture	1	1
15. Driver education	1	*
16. Personal hygiene	1	2
17. Humanities, ethics	1	2
18. Psychology	*	1
19. Literature.	*	2
20. Geography	*	2
21. Family planning	*	*

*Less than 0.5 per cent

Borcher (1964) interviewed 202 parents with students in grades seven through twelve in Eugene, Oregon, and reported these findings concerning the support of the physical education program:

<u>Total</u>	<u>Male</u>	<u>Female</u>	
121	56.2 per cent	63.9 per cent	satisfied
33	17.1	15.5	not satisfied
48	26.7	20.6	don't know

According to Borcher most people closely associated, well educated and who have had good experiences in physical education and athletics, feel the need for better and stronger physical education

programs. Those parents who are very strongly in support of the physical education and athletic programs are those who have children that excel in physical education and athletics. Another group who are avid supporters of the programs are the downtown quarterbacks and the alumni groups.

Borcher also pointed out in his study that those parents who did not approve of the physical education and athletic programs were the ones who did not want to pay more taxes, build new facilities or hire physical education instructors. The parents did not see why the school should buy new school buses in which the students would ride and then turn around and spend money to build new gyms in which the same students would have physical education classes. Those parents who had children who were overweight or who had "two left feet" and could not participate usually did not support the program.

In Athletics

According to Daniels (1958), there is no question of the acceptance of sports by the American people. This interest is manifest in many ways--reading, discussing, watching at home or in the arena and stadium, and participating. The strong following enjoyed by high school and college sports, baseball programs for youth and professional sports means that American people have accepted sports as one of the elements of the culture.

Cosby (1963) summed up the weak points and the strong points of the athletic programs. The weak points of the athletic program were:

1. Stress on winning at all costs.
2. The game belongs to the adult spectator, rather than the student spectator or players.
3. The game is no longer fun, it is a dirty foul work.
4. The student body is sold out for a price.
5. The players are sold out for a price.

6. Health is impaired.
7. Citizenship is impaired, and bad citizens are produced rather than good citizens.
8. The program isn't for everyone, the player who has the greatest physical condition gets to participate.

The good points an athletic program should possess, in reality, rather than merely on paper were:

1. Good clean healthy fun for all who participate.
2. The teaching of good citizenship.
3. Sportsmanship despite the odds.
4. Cooperation and team work on the field as well as off.
5. Hard losers, who will take defeat with a grain of salt, take inventory of their mistakes, then set about correcting them.
6. Conditioning of the mental being as well as the physical.
7. Safety of the players should come first. They should not be allowed to play, no matter how slight the injury.
8. No boy or girl should be prevented from playing because they [sic] are not as large as their peers.
9. The program should be developed to serve all students who desire to participate, regardless of their ability.

Bucher (1962) stated that some parents feel that varsity sports, which serve about three per cent of the students, dominate the facilities, teachers and money in many schools. Some parents feel that physical fitness is not stressed enough. This appears to be true, because in a comparison study it was found that even British girls, in certain strength tests, outscored American boys. Some parents feel that there should be less time spent on competitive athletics, that the two hours of practice after school each night should be spent for some other program.

Present Situation

At the present time in the United States there is increasing pressure from informed national officials to upgrade the fitness of people. Primarily, these efforts are directed at the children of the nation through parents, schools, and recreation authorities. The deterioration of youth has been dramatically illustrated by Selective

Service figures during the Korean War when over half of the American young men were rejected as mentally, morally, or physically unfit (Kennedy, 1960).

President Kennedy (1961) said:

"It is of great importance, then, that we take immediate steps to insure that every American child be given the opportunity to make and keep himself physically fit."

Bucher (1962) pointed out that only half of the nation's high-school students are enrolled in physical education classes. Only one state, California, required a daily physical education class. Twenty-eight per cent of California elementary grades one to six have a daily class of at least thirty minutes.

It is generally agreed that public support is necessary to improve the nation's fitness. President Kennedy (1961), in his message to the schools, said:

To members of school boards, school administrators, teachers, and pupils themselves, I am directing this urgent call to strengthen all programs which contribute to the physical fitness of our youth . . . I urge that in all communities there be more co-ordination between the schools and the community, parents, educators, and civic-minded citizens in carrying forward a resourceful, vigorous program for physical fitness.

A program to improve physical fitness could be co-ordinated through the physical education and athletic program and conducted in the community.

A Summary of the Review of the Literature

1. The parents will not support a phase of education if they are not well informed as to the value of the program.
2. In a survey conducted among students, physical education

ranked number 11 among a list of 21 useful subjects. Three per cent listed physical education as the most useful subject and ten per cent listed physical education as the least useful subject.

3. Most well-educated people, closely associated with physical education and athletics, who have had favorable experiences in the program, feel the need for better and stronger physical education and athletic programs.
4. Sports have been accepted by parents as one of the elements of the culture.
5. Despite all of the corrupt practices, many beneficial values come from athletics. These should be protected and expanded. Better programs should be sought in the future.
6. The American public exhibits poor physical fitness levels. It is important that immediate steps be taken to improve the physical fitness levels of the people in this country.

CHAPTER II

METHODOLOGY

Procedures

The procedure used by this writer was one of analysis and reflective thought. The analysis included literature related to the subject and a survey of people involved in the problem. The matter for reflection concerned the results of the survey as compared with concepts expressed in the literature.

In the tabulation of the results, various selected items on the questionnaire were given a judgment rating by the parents. The items rated number one by the parents received a five-point total, number two a four-point total, number three a three-point total, number four a two-point total and number five a one-point total. The totals were then tabulated and the items with the greatest number of points were considered to be the most important by the parents surveyed. Most of the responses not involving judgment were tabulated and percentages were computed.

Selection of Method

After having selected a topic of interest and of value to the profession of physical education, the writer decided that the questionnaire survey method would be the most suitable for collecting the necessary data.

Far more people can be reached by questionnaire. There is less opportunity for respondent bias because of either an effort to impress the interviewer and augment facts, or lack of rapport causing a reluctance to furnish information. More thoughtful answers can be obtained since the questionnaire can be handled at a convenient time (Wilson, 1950).

The Questionnaire

After a review of related literature on the subject of attitudes in regard to physical education and athletics in the school, a questionnaire was constructed. The process of constructing and preparing a questionnaire must follow definite principles if the returns secured are to be of any value. Bookwalter (1959), Davis (1959), and Smith (1959) suggested that the check list should ask primarily for items of fact. These items should ask only for information that respondents can easily give. The form of these questions should be such that responses can be given by checks or in a few words. This saves time for the respondent and makes for greater reliability in the results. Furthermore, the results thus obtained would lend themselves more readily to later tabulation. After the preliminary form of the questionnaire has been developed, it should be submitted to an authority for further criticism.

Hillway (1964) stated that questionnaires should be as brief as possible; instructions should be clear; they should take a minimum of the respondent's time. Questionnaires can be classified under either of two general categories: the open form and the closed form. Because of the relative ease of answering the items in a closed questionnaire, the preference was for the closed form.

After constructing the questionnaire, a tentative form was

brought to Mr. Walter C. Koenig, Committee Chairman, for appraisal. The questionnaire was then rewritten and constructed in a manner which permitted the respondents to answer in a limited time. The questionnaire was also designed to permit numerical and statistical treatment of the data obtained.

Selection of the Population

Parents of students in grades nine through twelve in the Harvey School System were selected for this study. The names of parents chosen for this study were obtained from the class cards that students used when enrolling for school in the fall of 1969. The cards used came from the superintendent's office of the Harvey Public School. One hundred and fifty parents constituted the sample population surveyed for this study. This should have been an adequate number for the data sought.

Collection of Data

On June 18, 1970, the finalized form of the questionnaire was mailed to 150 parents. A period of ten days was allowed for returns. On June 27, 1970, a follow-up letter was mailed to the parents to encourage those parents who had not yet completed the questionnaire to do so. Of the 150 parents surveyed 111 completed the questionnaire.

As the replies were received, the data were tabulated for each question on a five-by-eight card and filed for final tabulation.

CHAPTER III

TREATMENT OF DATA

General Information

An attempt was made by the writer to sample the opinions and attitudes of parents concerning physical education and athletics in the Harvey High School. The purpose of the study was to supply a valid source of data that could have implications for improved public relations between coaches and physical education instructors and the community.

The Survey

Bookwalter (1959), Davis (1959), and Smith (1959) commented that adequate responses varied with the nature of the study. Generalizations resulting from surveys have been made for populations represented in samplings selected.

Table 2, page 14, presented information concerning the responses of parents. The first column presented the category of parents who answered the survey. The second column showed the number of parents selected. The third and fourth columns gave number and per cent, respectively, of parents responding. The fifth and sixth columns showed the number and per cent of parents who did not respond.

Examination of Table 2 showed that of the 150 parents selected, 111, or 74 per cent, responded. Of the 111 parents that responded, 68, or 61.2 per cent, were males and 43, or 38.8 per cent, were females.

There were 25, or 22.4 per cent, more males replying than females.

TABLE 2
PARTICIPANTS CATEGORIZED ACCORDING TO SEX

Respondents	Number of Parents Selected	Number of Parents Responding	Per cent* of Parents Responding	Number of Parents Not Responding	Per cent of Parents Not Responding
Parents surveyed	150	111	74	39	26
Males		68	61.2		
Females		43	38.8		

*In this table and others to follow, per cents are rounded to the nearest tenth; and as a result, the total may be more or less than 100 per cent.

Table 3, page 14, recorded the number and per cent of respondents according to various age levels. The first column listed the age of the respondents. The second and third columns gave numbers and per cent, respectively, of parents responding according to various age levels.

TABLE 3
PARTICIPANTS CATEGORIZED ACCORDING TO AGE

Age of Parents	Number of Parents Responding	Per cent of Parents Responding
20-----29	1	.9
30-----39	28	25.2
40-----49	61	55
50-----59	17	15.3
60-----69	4	3.6
Over 70

Table 3 revealed that 61 parents, or 55 per cent, in the age group of 40--49 answered the questionnaire. There were 50 parents, or 45 per cent, that answered the questionnaire from all other age groups combined.

Table 4, page 15, indicated the amount of education of those parents who completed the questionnaire. The first column listed the various educational levels. The second and third columns gave numbers and percentages, respectively, of parents responding according to various educational levels.

TABLE 4
PARTICIPANTS CATEGORIZED ACCORDING TO
EDUCATIONAL ACHIEVEMENT

Educational Level Completed by Parents	Number of Parents Responding	Per cent of Parents Responding
Grade school	25	22.5
2 years high school	10	9
4 years high school	47	42.3
2 years college	17	15.3
4 years college	8	7.2
6 years college or more	3	2.7
No reply	1	.9

Table 4 revealed that 47 parents, or 42.3 per cent, attended four years of high school. The next largest number was 25 parents, or 22.5 per cent, who completed grade school. There were 28 parents, or 25.2 per cent, that attended college for two or more years.

Table 5, page 16, indicated the grade level of the children in

school of those parents who answered the questionnaire. Column one listed the various grade levels. Column two indicated the number of children in each grade level. Column three indicated the per cent of children in each grade level.

TABLE 5
GRADE LEVELS OF PARTICIPANTS' CHILDREN

Grade Level	Number of Children	Per cent of Children in Each Grade Level
Grade nine	35	24.1
Grade ten	32	22.1
Grade eleven	36	24.8
Grade twelve	42	29
No reply	3	2.7

Examination of Table 5 showed that the 111 parents who replied to the questionnaire had 145 children in grades nine through twelve. Three parents, or 2.7 per cent, did not indicate the grade level of their children.

Of the 111 parents that replied on the questionnaire, there were 29 farmers, 26 housewives, 12 business managers, 8 railroad employees, 5 teachers and 31 others employed in various occupations.

The parents were asked if they thought their children were receiving a better training in physical education now than might have been possible when the parents, themselves, were in school. Of the 111 that responded, 100 parents, or 90.1 per cent, indicated their children were receiving a better training in physical education. There were

11 parents, or 9.9 per cent, who felt their children were not receiving a better training in physical education now than the parents did when they attended school.

The parents indicated whether or not they thought the schools today were neglecting the basic fundamentals often described as the 3 R's. There were 71 parents, or 64 per cent, who indicated the schools were not neglecting the 3 R's. Thirty-six parents, or 32.4 per cent, did indicate the schools were neglecting the 3 R's. Four parents, or 3.6 per cent, did not reply to the question.

On Table 6, page 18, the parents rated in order, from one to five, the subjects they considered most important for children at the high-school level. Column one contains a list of the subjects and column two shows the total number of points assessed each subject.

Examination of Table 6 showed the parents selected mathematics as the most important subject and physical education was rated ninth in importance. Art was not selected by any parents as one of the five most important subjects.

Table 7, page 18, indicated the attitude of the parents toward the grading in physical education classes. Column one listed the types of grading systems. The second and third columns gave number and per cent, respectively, of parents responding according to acceptance of the grading system.

Examination of Table 7 showed that parents favored a grading system of satisfactory or unsatisfactory over one using letter grades.

Examination of Table 8, page 19, showed that 67 parents, or 60.4 per cent, indicated that the physical-education programs they participated in while attending school were worthwhile.

TABLE 6

SUBJECTS SELECTED BY THE PARENTS AS MOST
IMPORTANT FOR STUDENTS IN HIGH SCHOOL

Subject	Total Points
Mathematics	363
Language	205
Science	201
Business	159
Government	113
Speech	100
History	89
Writing	63
Physical Education	61
Industrial Arts	44
Health	30
Homemaking	30
Geography	24
Biology	21
Foreign Language	21
Music	19
Art	0

TABLE 7

THE TYPE OF GRADING SYSTEM PREFERRED
BY THE RESPONDENTS

Types of Grading Systems	Number of Parents in Favor	Per cent of Parents in Favor
A, B, C, D, F	45	41.4
Satisfactory or Unsatisfactory	64	57.7
No reply	2	1.8

The parents indicated what they thought the students gained from the physical education program. Of the 111 parents responding, 94 indicated the students improved in coordination. The parents also thought the students developed sportsmanship, learned cooperation, developed

strength and competitive spirit. The parents did not feel the physical education program helped develop better varsity athletes. The parents also indicated that physical education did not improve organic function, did not help students learn games and did not help students to relax.

TABLE 8

PARENT'S EVALUATION OF THEIR
PHYSICAL EDUCATION PROGRAMS

Classification	Number of Parents	Per cent of Parents
Worthwhile	67	60.4
Not worthwhile	13	11.7
Had none	30	27
No reply	1	.9

The parents indicated the activities with which they were familiar in the physical education program. The parents indicated they were the most familiar with basketball, baseball, calisthenics, football and softball. The parents were the least familiar with rhythmic, apparatus work, soccer, touch football, games of low organization and relays.

The parents replied as to whether or not they still take part in regular physical activities. There were 77 parents, or 69.4 per cent, of the 111 who replied that they no longer participated in regular physical activities. Thirty-three, or 29.7 per cent, of the parents still participate in physical activities.

The activities most often participated in by those parents still active were: golf, basketball, swimming, softball and hiking. Activities mentioned the least number of times were: baseball, football, horseshoe, volleyball and badminton.

The facilities most often used by the parents were the golf course, bowling alley, armory, swimming pool and the home.

The parents replied in regard to their physical condition as compared to others their own age. Of the 111 parents responding, 82, or 73.9 per cent, stated their physical condition was about the same as others their own age. Twenty parents, or 18 per cent, indicated they were in better physical condition than others their own age, and three parents, or 2.7 per cent, thought they were in worse physical condition than others in their age group.

The parents indicated their physical condition at the present time. Fifty-eight parents, or 52.3 per cent, indicated they were in good physical condition. Thirty-nine parents, or 35.1 per cent, felt they rated fair in physical condition, seven parents, or 6.3 per cent, thought they were in poor physical condition and four parents, or 3.6 per cent, indicated they were in excellent physical condition.

The parents were asked in which grades they felt physical education should be a requirement. Seventy-seven parents, or 69.4 per cent, thought physical education should be included in all grades. One parent indicated physical education should not be required in any grade.

Ninety parents, or 81.1 per cent, felt the people of the nation were in unsatisfactory physical condition.

The parents felt that the youth of this country were in better physical condition than other age groups of the nation, but that American youth were also lacking in physical condition. Fifty-eight parents, or 52.3 per cent, indicated the physical condition of the youth of America was unsatisfactory.

Table 9, page 21, indicated the attitudes of parents toward the

teaching of physical education. The parents were asked if the schools with which they were familiar were doing a satisfactory job of teaching physical education and whether or not the present day physical education programs could be improved. Column one listed the statement to which the parents replied. Columns two and three listed the replies given by the parents.

TABLE 9
PARENTAL ATTITUDE TOWARD PRESENT DAY INSTRUCTION
OF PHYSICAL EDUCATION IN SCHOOL

Statement	Parents Responding Yes	Parents Responding No	No Reply
Schools are doing an adequate job of teaching physical education	91	18	2
Physical-education programs could be improved	68	27	16

Examination of Table 9 showed that of the 111 parents responding, 91, or 82 per cent, indicated the schools were doing a satisfactory job of teaching physical education. Sixty-eight parents, or 61.3 per cent, indicated the school physical-education program could be improved. Of the 68 parents mentioned above, 23 parents did not know how to improve the program. Other parents thought the program could be improved by more individual instruction, less emphasis on competitive sports, having physical education more than twice a week and having a wider variety of activities.

Ninety-six parents, or 86.5 per cent, were in favor of an improved physical education program where there were evident deficiencies. Sixty-one parents, or 55 per cent, were in favor of improving the program if

it involved the rearranging of academic subjects within the school. Seventy-six parents, or 68.5 per cent, were willing to have personnel changes if it meant program improvement. Fifty-three parents, or 47.7 per cent, were in favor of increasing taxes for an improved program.

Table 10, page 22, dealt with beginning competition in athletic events at various grade levels. Column one listed the grade levels. The second and third columns indicated the number and per cent of parents in favor of starting competitive athletics at the various grade levels.

TABLE 10

ATTITUDE OF PARENTS TOWARD BEGINNING COMPETITIVE
ATHLETICS AT VARIOUS GRADE LEVELS

Grade	Number of Parents in Favor of Beginning Competitive Athletics at this Grade Level	Per cent
One	12	10.8
Two	1	.9
Three	7	6.3
Four	5	4.5
Five	14	12.6
Six	17	15.3
Seven	33	29.7
Eight	3	2.7
Nine	12	10.8
Ten	1	.9
Eleven
Twelve
No reply	6	5.4

Examination of Table 10 showed that grade seven was supported the most number of times for beginning competitive athletics. Thirteen parents, or 11.7 per cent, indicated competitive athletics should begin at the high-school level.

On Table 11, page 23, the parents rated in order from one to six what they considered to be the main objectives of athletic competition. The objective with the greatest number of points was considered to be the most important by the parents surveyed. Column one is a list of the objectives and column two is the total number of points assessed each objective.

TABLE 11
OBJECTIVES SELECTED BY THE PARENTS AS
MOST IMPORTANT FOR ATHLETIC COMPETITION

Objectives	Total Points
Sportsmanship and character	578
Physical growth	371
Coordination	367
Agility	234
Social aspect	183
Winning	175

Examination of Table 11 showed that the parents considered sportsmanship and character to be the main objectives of athletic competition. Winning was the least important of the objectives listed.

Seventy-six parents, or 68.5 per cent, felt the need for more athletic activities for girls. Twenty-nine parents, or 26.1 per cent, indicated the girls did not require more athletic activities.

Eighty-three parents, or 74.8 per cent, indicated there should not be more emphasis placed on athletics in today's schools than there

is at the present time. There were 28 parents, or 25.2 per cent, who thought there should be more emphasis placed on athletics.

Eighty-eight parents, or 79.3 per cent, indicated there should not be more emphasis placed upon winning.

In Table 12, below, the parents indicated their favorite sports. Column one lists the sport and column two lists the total number of replies by the parents.

TABLE 12
THE PARENTS' FAVORITE SPORTS IN THE
SCHOOL ATHLETIC PROGRAM

Sport	Total Number of Parents
Basketball	57
Football	23
Baseball	13
Wrestling	7
Track	2
No reply	9

As evidenced in Table 12, basketball proved to be the sport most favored by the parents, and track was the least favored.

Sixty-six parents, or 59.5 per cent, favored having the students who participate in athletic events excused from physical education classes during the season of that sport.

The parents favored having all athletes participate an equal amount of time regardless of ability.

The parents indicated the extracurricular activities they participated in while attending school. Basketball had been played by 58 parents, 54 had participated in drama and plays, 48 in chorus and 38 in track. Fewest parents had participated in wrestling and tumbling.

Fifty parents, or 45 per cent, thought more emphasis should be placed on an intramural program and 50 parents, or 45 per cent, did not feel less emphasis should be placed on the athletic program. The parents felt that an equal amount of support should be given to both the intramural and interscholastic athletic programs. Eleven parents, or 10 per cent, did not reply to the question.

On Table 13, below, the parents listed in order of importance those extracurricular activities they felt would most benefit the students. The activity with the greatest number of points was considered to be the most important by the parents surveyed. Column one is a list of the activities and column two is the total number of points assessed each activity.

TABLE 13
EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITIES SELECTED BY THE
PARENTS AS MOST BENEFICIAL FOR HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS

Activities	Total Points
Athletics	348
Music	315
Student council	259
Drama and plays	236
Journalism	208

Examination of Table 13 indicated that parents selected athletics and music as the extracurricular activities most beneficial for high-school students. Journalism was the activity least favored by the parents.

Summary of Findings

The parents indicated that a satisfactory job of teaching physical education is done today and the students are receiving better training

now than when the parents attended school.

The parents were in favor of improving the physical-education program but most of them did not know how the program could be improved.

The parents showed more support for the athletic program than for the physical-education program. The majority of the parents favored having the students who participate in athletic events excused from physical-education classes during the season of that sport.

CHAPTER IV

DISCUSSION

Physical educators need information on the attitude of the general public toward physical education and athletics. Sincere administrators, coaches and physical-education instructors have constantly endeavored to build and strengthen the image of their profession in the eyes of the general public. It has become a major objective to educate and inform people on the values inherent in physical education and athletics.

It was the prime purpose of this study to determine if the parents were familiar with the physical education and athletic program, and if they were familiar, what were their feelings toward these programs.

The writer believed the parents were not familiar with the values of physical education and athletics, and those parents opposed to the programs were parents who have had previous unsatisfactory experiences within the physical education or athletic programs. The related literature verified these beliefs. In the present study, one parent indicated this quite clearly when he stated, "The only gains students obtained from participating in the physical education program were injuries."

It was the belief of this writer that the parents would be more in favor of winning as one of the main objectives of athletic participation than they indicated in the study. The majority of the parents even went

of these innovations, physical educators must work harder than ever to improve the program so people will become more involved with it and in it. Cooperation will be needed from more than just people in the field of physical education. Support and cooperation will be needed from everyone.

One of the areas in need of immediate improvement is public relations. The public needs to be informed as to how physical education can help them now as well as in the future.

Because of more leisure time now, it will be necessary to educate the people to use this time in a constructive manner rather than in a destructive manner. Today, there are more delinquents than ever before. These individuals have too much time on their hands and do not know what to do. Opportunities in the home and community offer one important approach. The writer feels opportunities in recreation can be made available by offering a wider variety of activities in physical-education classes. The curriculum should be designed so everyone will find at least one activity of interest and continue to pursue this activity later in life.

Participation in these activities will help the participant to enjoy his leisure time and also help him to maintain a better level of physical fitness. Really two objectives are accomplished: worthy use of leisure time and maintenance of a satisfactory level of physical fitness.

This study revealed that 69.4 per cent of the parents surveyed do not take part in regular physical activities. Physical educators must work with community leaders in organizing adult programs as well as youth programs. When the people become interested and involved in

the physical-education program, progress toward achieving objectives of physical education may be evident.

CHAPTER V

SUMMARY, FINDINGS, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Summary

This study was designed to determine the attitudes of parents in regard to physical education and athletics in the Harvey High School. The writer chose to investigate parental attitude by the use of a questionnaire.

Selected were 150 parents of students enrolled in grades nine through twelve in the Harvey School. A return of 111 questionnaires, or 74 per cent, were received. The information was then arranged for analysis and interpretation.

To establish a frame of reference in this area, the writer reviewed books, pamphlets, magazine articles, theses and doctoral dissertations.

Findings

The survey revealed the following findings concerning the attitudes of the parents:

1. The parents indicated that a satisfactory job of teaching physical education is done today and the students are receiving better training now than when the parents, interviewed, attended school. Even though the parents did indicate this, 68 parents, or 61.3 per cent, expressed the opinion

that the present day physical education program could be improved.

2. A considerable number of parents who indicated the physical-education program could be improved were not able to indicate how this could be accomplished. Some suggested ways in which the program could be improved were: offering physical education more than twice a week, providing more extensive instruction, putting less emphasis on competitive sports, offering more activities with carry-over value and providing more instructors with smaller classes.
3. Generally speaking, a large percentage of parents were willing to improve the physical education program if this involved the rearranging of academic subjects or required personnel changes. Only 48 parents, or 43.2 per cent, were willing to improve the program if it required an increase in taxes.
4. The majority of parents indicated that the physical education they had while attending school was worthwhile, but only 33 parents, or 29.7 per cent, continued to participate in regular physical activities.
5. On a list of 17 subjects considered to be important for children at the high-school level, physical education was rated ninth by the parents.
6. Athletics received the highest rating among extracurricular activities considered to be most important by the parents for children in high school.
7. The parents appeared to be more familiar with those activities in the physical-education program that are also

offered in the athletic program.

8. The sports in which the parents participated and the sports they are most familiar with are the ones most favored in the school athletic program.
9. The parents indicated that the students should not be required to participate in physical education during the season they are out for a sport.
10. Seventy-six respondents, or 68.5 per cent, indicated there should be more activities for girls.
11. The parents indicated the belief that the physical condition of the people in America was not satisfactory.
12. Seventy-seven respondents, or 69.4 per cent, thought physical education should be required in all grades.
13. Sixty-four respondents, or 57.7 per cent, indicated that competition in athletic events should begin somewhere between the fifth and seventh grades.
14. The parents favored grading physical education with a pass-fail rather than a letter grade.

Conclusions

From information tabulated from the survey the writer has concluded that:

1. Parents are convinced that physical education and athletics are important.
2. Parents are more familiar with the athletic program than with the physical-education program.
3. Favorable past experience was a strong factor among people

- who were interested and do support physical education.
4. Parents generally feel that physical education should be accorded increased time and be required in more grades.
 5. Parents were not familiar with any real differences between physical-education and athletic programs.
 6. While the lack of fitness was generally recognized, the parents valued physical fitness and saw the need for being fit. The parents felt the physical-education program could improve the fitness of the students.
 7. Those parents consistently in favor of increased emphasis and improvement of physical-education programs were those generally better informed. Those with favorable past experiences in physical education, those who continue to take part in regular physical activities and those who classed their physical condition as good were most supportive.
 8. The athletic program is considered more important by parents in this community than is music.

In conclusion, the writer believes that competent, imaginative and responsible leadership in physical education is needed. The field of physical education must be promoted among the population at large. Through an extensive public-relations program between the physical education and athletic departments and the community, a favorable image of the profession may be promoted.

Recommendations

Based on the findings in this study, the writer recommends that:

1. parents be educated on the objectives of physical education

and athletics and the methods being used to achieve these objectives to provide support for the programs,

2. the quality of teaching be improved, emphasizing enthusiasm and improvement of personal qualifications,
3. activities with carry-over values be emphasized in the physical-education program. This should be accomplished so the people can make worthy use of their leisure time,
4. the public be informed as to what activities are being offered in the program. This can be accomplished by articles published in local and state news media, discussion panels at parent-teacher conferences and by presenting materials on radio and television,
5. the students now in school be taught the values of physical education and athletics. If they can be sold on the present-day programs and they see the values being offered, when they become adults, it is hoped, they will enthusiastically support the programs.

Please circle the response you feel to be true in the following statements or answer questions as indicated.

1. What is your sex? 1. male 2. female
2. What is your age? 1. 20-29 2. 30-39 3. 40-49 4. 50-59
5. 60-69 6. over 70
3. How much education have you completed? 1. grade school
2. 2 yrs. high 3. 4 yrs. high 4. 2 yrs. college
5. 4 yrs. college 6. over 6 yrs. college
4. Indicate grade level of your children in school. 1. grade 9
2. grade 10 3. grade 11 4. grade 12
5. What is your occupation? _____
6. Are your children receiving a better training in physical education now than when you were in school? 1. yes 2. no
7. Do you believe schools today are neglecting the basic fundamentals often described as the 3 R's? 1. yes 2. no
8. On the following list of subjects, rate in order, from one to five, those you consider most important for children at the high school level.

_____ art	_____ government
_____ biology	_____ writing
_____ foreign language	_____ industrial arts
_____ speech	(wood, metal, etc.)
_____ mathematics	_____ health
_____ homemaking	_____ history
_____ physical education	_____ music
_____ science	_____ business
_____ geography	_____ language
9. Should physical education be graded like the other subjects, that is, A, B, C, D, F? 1. yes 2. no
10. Or should physical education be graded satisfactory or unsatisfactory? 1. yes 2. no
11. In physical education what should instructors take into account when they grade pupils? (Circle as many answers as you feel necessary).
 1. attendance
 2. behavior
 3. effort
 4. improvement
 5. knowledge of rules and games
 6. physical fitness test scores
 7. skill compared to a set standard
 8. skill compared to others in class
 9. skill considering ability

12. How would you rate the physical education you had in school?
1. worthwhile 2. not worthwhile 3. had none
13. What do you think students gain from participating in the physical education program? (Please circle those statements with which you agree).
1. aid in growth
 2. develop strength
 3. improve coordination
 4. improve organic function
 5. relaxation
 6. learn games
 7. develop competitive spirit
 8. develop sportsmanship
 9. learn cooperation
 10. get along with others
 11. develop mental alertness
 12. realize personal ability
 13. develop better varsity athletes
 14. develop standard of fitness
 15. discipline
 16. personal cleanliness
 17. other
14. What activities are included in the physical education program with which you are familiar?
1. apparatus work
 2. baseball
 3. basketball
 4. calisthenics
 5. football
 6. games of low organization and relays
 7. hiking
 8. running
 9. rhythmic
 10. soccer
 11. softball
 12. swimming
 13. tennis
 14. touch football
 15. track and field
 16. tumbling
 17. volleyball
 18. weight training
 19. badminton
 20. other
15. Do you still take part in regular physical activities?
1. yes 2. no
16. If yes, what are your activities? _____
17. Where do you participate in these activities? _____

18. Compared to others your age, would you say your physical condition is--- 1. better 2. about the same 3. worse
19. Would you rate your physical condition at the present time as---
1. excellent 2. good 3. fair 4. poor
20. In what grades do you feel physical education should be required?
1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 all none
21. Do you feel the physical condition of the people of our nation is satisfactory? 1. yes 2. no
22. Do you feel the physical condition of our youth is satisfactory?
1. yes 2. no
23. Do you feel schools, with which you are familiar, are doing a satisfactory job of teaching physical education? 1. yes 2. no
24. Do you feel these programs can be improved? 1. yes 2. no
If so, how? _____
25. Would you personally be in favor of an improved program in physical education wherever there are evident deficiencies? 1. yes 2. no
26. If the above involved the rearranging of academic subjects within the school? 1. yes 2. no
27. If it requires personnel changes? 1. yes 2. no
28. If it requires an increase in taxes? 1. yes 2. no
29. At what grade level should competition in athletic events begin?
1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12
30. What should be the main objectives of athletic contests? (List in order of importance).

_____ sportsmanship and character	_____ physical growth
_____ winning	_____ coordination
_____ social aspect	_____ agility
31. Should there be more athletic activities for girls? 1. yes
2. no
32. Do you feel more emphasis should be placed on athletics in our schools than what there is at the present time? 1. yes 2. no
33. Do you feel more emphasis should be placed upon winning? 1. yes
2. no
34. Should winning athletic contests be stressed more than they are at the present time? 1. yes 2. no

35. What is your favorite sport in the school athletic program?
- | | |
|---------------|-------------|
| 1. football | 4. baseball |
| 2. wrestling | 5. track |
| 3. basketball | |
36. Should students who participate in athletic events be excused from physical education during the season of that sport, that is, should those who participate in football be excused from physical education during the football season? 1. yes 2. no
37. Should all athletes be allowed to participate an equal amount of time regardless of ability? 1. yes 2. no
38. Circle the extracurricular activities that you participated in while you attended school.
- | | |
|--------------------|-----------|
| 1. basketball | 5. band |
| 2. football | 6. chorus |
| 3. wrestling | 7. track |
| 4. drama and plays | 8. other |
39. Should less emphasis be placed on athletic activities and more emphasis on an intramural program? 1. yes 2. no
40. List in order of importance those extracurricular activities that you feel most benefit a student.
- | | |
|-----------------------|-----------------------|
| _____ drama and plays | _____ athletic events |
| _____ journalism | _____ student council |
| _____ music | _____ other |

Harvey, North Dakota
June 17, 1970

Dear Parent:

Enclosed you will find a questionnaire in regards to your interest in physical education and athletics in the Harvey High School. I would appreciate it if you would complete this questionnaire and return it to me as soon as possible.

I am completing my Master's degree at the University of North Dakota and need this information to complete my thesis.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely yours,

Gordon Baumgartner

Enclosure

Harvey, North Dakota
June 27, 1970

Dear Parent:

On June 17, 1970, a questionnaire regarding your interest in physical education and athletics in the Harvey High School was mailed to you. At the time of this mailing I have received a reply from only sixty-five parents. In order to have a valid study, it is necessary to have a high percentage of returns. I would certainly appreciate having you complete and return the questionnaire so that the processing of the data may begin by July 3, 1970. If you have already mailed your questionnaire, please ignore this letter and accept my thanks for your interest and cooperation.

The purpose of this questionnaire is to determine the attitudes of the parents in regard to the physical education and athletic programs in the Harvey High School; to make recommendations on the basis of the findings and to make such information available to the Department of Physical Education at the University of North Dakota.

Thank you again for your time and interest.

Sincerely,

Gordon Baumgartner

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