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An Analysis of Parent-Teacher Association Membership and Attendance

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AN ANALYSIS OF PARENT-TEACHER ASSOCIATION
MEMBERSHIP AND ATTENDANCE

A Thesis
Presented to
the Graduate Faculty
Central Washington State College

In Partial Fulfillment
of the Requirements for the Degree
Master of Education

by
Michael Slater Cline

June 1964

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THE FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION

REPORT OF INVESTIGATION

MEMORANDUM

TO : SAC, NEW YORK

FROM : SAC, NEW YORK

SUBJECT: [Illegible]

RE: [Illegible]

DATE: [Illegible]

BY: [Illegible]

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NEW YORK

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APPROVED FOR THE GRADUATE FACULTY

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

The Parent Teacher Association, when founded in 1897, received nearly the same attention as did many other organizations in infancy. People were highly critical at the first attempts to organize parents and teachers and to serve the objectives established. The P. T. A. , however, did serve and still does serve a definite need. In nearly every community today there exists a P. T. A. In fact, the P. T. A. is the largest, most active, child welfare group in the world.

Still further growth in the P. T. A. is desired.

If the P. T. A. 's primary objective of serving the family and the community is to be realized, a participation membership is all important at all times. Therefore, the chief responsibility is to interest parents, teachers, and all other citizens in parent-teacher work and invite them into active service (25:184).

However, in the words of Holbeck in 1934,

. . . whether it (the P. T. A.) will in the future rise to the full potency of its possible influence, depends to a great extent on the methods and techniques which the Associations work out for themselves in the next few years (12:iii).

Purpose

In order that the P. T. A. associations work out methods and techniques for improvement for the future, they must first ascertain the

existing conditions. In this respect, it was the purpose of the present investigation to discover certain factors associated with membership in elementary school P. T. A. units and utilize these to devise suggestions for the improvement of the Parent-Teacher units. In order to fulfill this purpose, it was necessary to systematically seek answers to the following questions:

1. What are the main factors that seem to be most influential and are cited for becoming a member of the P. T. A. ?
2. What is the male-female ratio in membership and attendance ?
3. What are the reasons given for success or failure of given P. T. A. units ?
4. What are the stated general opinions of the respondents concerning the worth of the given P. T. A. units ?
5. To what extent do the members seem to be informed and knowledgeable about the objectives of the P. T. A. ?
6. Does the P. T. A. gain members, but sacrifice the goals and objects of the National Congress to do so ?
7. What is the percentage of members actually utilized in carrying on P. T. A. work ?
8. When is the best time to have P. T. A. meetings and how often should they be held ?
9. Does P. T. A. attendance vary with the calendar ?
10. What is the teacher membership and how are teachers used in the organization ?
11. What is the comparison of school enrollment to P. T. A. membership ?

Definition of Terms

When discussing P. T. A. , certain terms, because of their use, need special definitions. The definitions, as listed below, are generally those used consistently in the P. T. A. Manual.

The Local Association, Parent Teacher Association, Local Unit, and P. T. A. have been used synonymously to refer to the community organizations. The use of the term parent-teacher association or its initials refers to the parent-teacher movement both locally and nationally (25:11).

The (State) Congress of Parents and Teachers is the name used to designate the state organization (25:12).

The National Congress of Parents and Teachers refers to the nation-wide organization of parents and teachers; the Congress, the National Congress, or the N. C. P. T. for brevity. This term should convey the idea of the headquarters of the whole body of parent-teachers associations (25:13).

Annual Program is the local unit's plan of activities for a school year. This includes topics for meetings or any other plans to be carried on by a local unit for the year.

Meetings refers to monthly gatherings of the members of a local unit. For purposes of this thesis, this meeting has been considered in two parts:

1. The Business Meeting which will serve to transact the formal business to come before the group.
2. The Program is the presentation of special events scheduled for each meeting (25:105).

Publicity refers to the announcements sent to members and the public concerning a local unit's plans, accomplishments and activities (25:218).

The President is chosen by the local unit to direct affairs of the association in cooperation with the other members of the executive committee for a term of office specified in the local bylaws (25:29).

Method of Investigation

In order to secure adequate knowledge upon which to base conclusions, one must first sample the field to be studied. The field to be studied was determined on the basis of size of the urban area and whether or not that area had elementary schools. After schools were selected at random, contact was made by letter. Pending their acceptance, a survey form in three parts was sent to them. The survey consisted of a history of their unit, a report on the February P. T. A. meeting and an attitude questionnaire given to parents, teachers, P. T. A. president and the principal. When this form was completed, the respondents were instructed to return the survey in the mail for tabulation and evaluation.

Assumptions

It was assumed in this study that membership is one criteria in evaluating the worth of a local unit.

It was further assumed that the units selected at random were typical of any other selection that could have been made of 100 other local units in similar small communities in the State of Washington.

It was assumed that in gathering the data from the local units the persons who helped assemble the material were honest and reasonably accurate.

It was assumed that the local units did not alter their plans to make a more favorable showing for the study.

Limitations

The study was limited to the investigation of 100 P. T. A. local units in the State of Washington. It was further limited to local elementary P. T. A. units in urban areas from 2,500 to 10,000 population.

The investigation dealt in depth with only one actual P. T. A. meeting from 53 units; however, other meetings were surveyed.

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF RESEARCH AND LITERATURE

The majority of published studies made on P. T. A. membership, attendance, opinions, and objectives were made in the 1920's and early 1930's. With the exception of an occasional report or survey, little has been written since that time. The available literature will be analyzed in terms of the eleven subsidiary goals listed.

Previous Studies Made on Membership and Attendance

Butterworth, whose studies of P. T. A. membership were made in 1924-1925, compared median membership in five hundred units. He related:

As might be expected, the median size of units increases proportionally with the size of the school. In median average attendance, the group of schools with eleven or more teachers hold first place while the group composed of schools of from three to five teachers ranks the lowest. It is interesting to note that with one exception this percentage of possible members decreases as the size of the school increases. . . . it is probable that the paucity of other activities in small places accounts for their relatively high membership . . . (3:99, 102).

In surveying the family representation, Butterworth found that as the school size increases, the percentage of family representation in the P. T. A. likewise decreases.

Radcliffe, who completed his study in 1941, conducted A Study of the Activities of the Washington Congress of Parents and Teachers Compared With the Objects of the National Congress of Parents and Teachers. He found, like Butterworth:

. . . in small units (fifty or fewer members) an average of 45 per cent of the families of the community with children in school were represented upon the membership rolls within communities other than the first class an average of 74 per cent of these families were represented. This great difference is easily accounted for from the fact that in many small communities in outlying districts . . . the association serves as a community club as well as a parent-teacher association, as the school is usually the focal point for the social life of the neighborhood (30:40-41).

Radcliffe's studies of attendance showed that:

An average of 67 per cent of the members of small units are in attendance at the meetings while 83 per cent of the members of the pre school circles attend their gatherings . . . The attendance by groups in districts other than those of the first class is high for the same reason that the percentage of membership is above the average (30:43).

Hird, in a later estimate of attendance found that:

Average attendance at most meetings runs between 35 per cent and 50 per cent of the membership . . . an area we need to explore. The 'how' of getting people to meetings and keeping them is a constant problem (11:28).

In Holbeck's study, the National Congress reported that more than 50 per cent of its local units have a membership ranging from 24 to 90 persons. It also reports an average membership of 45 (12:24).

Male Membership

Butterworth, in his study in 1924-1925, found:

Although fathers should, of course, be as concerned about parent-teacher work as mothers, we know that as a rule they have not taken such an active part. In all associations located in places fewer than 2,500, the median percentage of male members is 23.7. In these smaller communities, there is little difference in the percentage among schools of different size; but in the New York communities of 2,500 or more, the percentage of men enrolled in the parent-teacher associations in the larger places is the greater variety of activities dividing their attentions (3:101).

The Overstreets, in their book, Where Children Come First: A Study of the P. T. A. Idea, discuss the changing role of the American father in 1949:

In surprising numbers, young fathers are joining the local P. T. A. 's. The wind of psychological understanding has been blowing through America during recent decades and a new race of fathers is beginning to develop among us. It is no longer casually assumed that the mother alone must be 'wise and good'. At present--in that midstage of his maturing--the American father is beginning to see that he has a relation to his children that is as unique and indispensable as the mother's, and not separate from hers (23:92-93).

In the Overstreet's book also was a statement by a former Washington State P. T. A. President, Mrs. George Crampton. She writes:

Another accomplishment of the Washington Congress has been the gradual inclusion of the men, not only in membership, but in active participation. It has become customary in a number of associations to have men presidents. Often there are an equal number of men and women in office, as a matter of course. They take an increasingly active part

in the program, in discussions, and in committee projects. Because of the men's participation, the P. T. A. 's have, in some instances, taken on some of the pattern of service clubs.

Psychologically, the participation of the men has had a tremendous affect on the attitude of the general public toward the organization. It has come to be considered on a par with other civic and service organizations (23:94-95).

In 1955, Mrs. Willard C. Hird made the following observations:

"Male members are on the increase; (in Washington) they make up one-third to one-half of the total membership reported. This undoubtedly ties in with the fact that almost every unit is having evening meetings (11:28). "

In the September 20, 1963, Seattle Post Intelligencer issue of Parade, an article by Frank Cameron dealt with the father's place in P. T. A. The article entitled "Dad Takes Over the P. T. A. " says essentially:

What the average P. T. A. in this country needs is a solid dose of business efficiency administered by the fathers . . . A P. T. A. like any business should stick to its main job which is to get parents--all the parents--to sit down and talk horse sense about their kid's education and how to improve it (4:4-5).

While this view might be a bit over enthusiastic, it seems to be clear that fathers do have places in the P. T. A. ; and they should participate.

Teacher Membership

It is interesting to note that closely allied with Butterworth's other conclusions about membership he found that:

Our records show that the percentage of associations in which all teachers are members, (teacher membership) decreases as the size of the school increases. For all associations in places of fewer than 2,500, the figure is 77.5 per cent, while in those of 2,500 or more, it is 57.4 per cent. One may expect to find such a relationship between the size of the school and teacher membership since the smaller the teaching force the more likely each teacher is to feel a personal responsibility. Membership in the association does not, of course, indicate that each teacher is exerting a constructive influence (3:103).

Teachers may also aid the P. T. A. by serving as officers or chairmen of committees; but Butterworth feels they should not accept positions--particularly the most responsible ones--too frequently, since the organization may lean too heavily upon them. In areas with less than 2,500 population, teachers held a median of 13.8 per cent of the offices and chairmanships whereas in areas with 2,500 or more population (New York City only) they held 12.0 per cent. On the whole these data compiled in 1924-1925 do not indicate that teachers are dominating the association. Furthermore, teachers generally hold the subordinate offices--the vice-presidency, the secretaryship, or the treasuryship, in particular--giving them an opportunity to serve and aid in directing policies without being chiefly responsible for their administration.

Holbeck, whose dissertation was published in 1934, found that school faculties have been somewhat slow to increase their membership in the association; but at present more and more schools are showing 100 per cent membership.

Radcliffe found in Washington that over 80 per cent of the units have 100 per cent membership of the teaching staff. Practically all of these units agreed that the teacher cooperation is better than that lent by the community (30:104).

James L. Hymes in his book, Effective Home School Relations, says:

A large amount of laissez faire exists in teacher relationships with parents. Schools call it 'democratic' when the parents run the whole P. T. A. For example, teachers are content to sit in the back row and skip out just as soon as the meeting is over. 'Anything the mothers work out is all right . . . but I certainly hope the meeting doesn't last all afternoon.'

Teachers hold membership in the P. T. A. but they are passive. In one school the organization puts on a very elaborate Spring Festival that upsets the curriculum and the children for weeks, but the parents like it. In many schools attendance is taken by grades at each P. T. A. meeting. Teachers see that this puts a very unfortunate pressure on individual children whose mothers cannot possibly attend, but it is the parent's idea. Teachers are aware that these shows are a strain on the children and very artificial, but the parents expect them.

The parents are responsible in each of these instances-- the parents alone, unaided, working in the dark. Full of good will. Wanting to do what is right. Trying to be

helpful. They are thrown on their own limited background with no check on whether their ideas are the best that could be developed. The teachers are in retreat.

It is hard to find a middle ground wherein the teacher is a contributor, a person with a very special background of training and experience, but still only one contributor.

There is a challenge here to find their legitimate place, not automatically in the lead as they are with children, nor resignedly in the rear as they tend to be with parents. Contributing your ideas and experience without throwing your weight around is not easy. You must let others learn by their experience while still making your experience available. The P. T. A. . . . means parent-teacher participation (13:71-72).

P. T. A. Drop Out

In 1924-1925, when Butterworth conducted his survey, he found the following results (see Table I, Page 13).

While these general reasons for dropping out are suggestive, it is obvious that different factors will be responsible in different communities, and the question needs more intensive investigation than we have been able to give it in this study (3:109-110).

Holbeck found that turnover in membership is extremely high. The mortality is partially offset by the addition of new members. In 1932, according to the National Congress of Parents and Teachers, there were 1,151,918 members in grade school associations, while in the junior and senior high school associations, there were 134,769

Table I
Reasons Why Members Drop Out as Reported by
Local Association Officers

Number of Teachers	Less Than 2500 Population					2500 or More Population (New York only)
	1-2	3-5	6-10	11	Total	
Number of associations reporting	106	97	163	128	494	130
Reasons given						
"No trouble along this line"	26.4% ¹	29.9%	30.1%	34.4%	30.4%	21.5%
"Moving away"	38.7	38.1	22.7	18.0	27.9	26.9
"Lack of interest"	14.2	17.5	21.5	21.9	19.2	10.8
"Lack of time, etc."	6.6	10.3	12.9	15.6	11.8	9.2
"Children graduated"	9.4	9.3	10.4	10.1	9.9	42.3
"Personal quarrels, jealousy, etc."	9.4	7.2	6.1	4.7	6.7	3.1
"Other interests"	3.8	3.1	6.7	9.4	6.1	4.6
"Want entertainment, etc."	0.0	1.0	5.5	3.9	3.0	0.8
"No value in program"	0.9	0.0	4.9	2.3	2.4	2.3
"Feel neglected"	0.9	2.1	1.2	0.8	1.2	4.6

¹This figure is the percentage of all associations reporting this answer. Some associations gave only one answer but most gave several; hence the total of per cents is not 100. (Table XIII, 3:134)

members. Using related information, Holbeck concluded that much of the turnover in membership may be charged to lack of interest due to:

1. Inadequate program of activity
2. Objectives of Parent-Teacher Association not understood; parents are not sure of the efficacy of the work of the association
3. Pupil membership in school not constant
4. No personal responsibility for membership
5. No extensive study group plan to provide for individual needs of parents (12:24-25)

Minor reasons given by Association officers are:

1. Lack of time
2. Political interference
3. Friction
4. Change of residence
5. Meetings held at inconvenient times
6. Lack of social intercourse (12:24-25)

Radcliffe also dealt with membership problems, but on a larger scale (see Table II, Page 15).

The P. T. A. also realizes that dropouts are a problem. They advocate:

. . . special assistance to P. T. A. 's in neighborhoods where the mobility of the population results in high turnover of P. T. A. membership . . . to help P. T. A. 's that are being disbanded because of school district reorganization to coordinate their strengths and assets into a consolidated organization, with leadership widely representative of the new school community (18:40).

Table II

The Frequency with Which Difficulties Were Listed by 210
Parent-Teacher Associations and Pre School Circles in
the State of Washington in 1938

Difficulties	Total
1. Membership	32
2. Reaching all levels of community	28
3. Unresponsiveness (in meetings)	27
4. Leadership	24
5. Financial	20
6. Transportation	10
7. Poor attendance	9
8. Home and community responsibilities	8
9. Adverse working conditions	6
10. Lack of time	5
11. No rapport between parents and teachers	4
12. Feud conditions	3
13. Pre-school, P. T. A. leadership friction	2
14. Adverse attitude of school people	2
15. Attendance of children	1

(From 30:77)

Methods Used to Arouse and Maintain Interest

Butterworth's book, The Parent Teacher Association, summarized the judgments of local officers as to the methods they have found helpful in gaining member interest in the P. T. A. "There is probably considerable overlapping among the classifications, but five methods appear to have been particularly useful (3:110)."

These methods are: "get togethers" with refreshments - 14.8% (per cent in cities over 2,500); programs by children - 38.5%; entertainment - 22.1%; attendance contests - 18.9%; outside speakers - 13.9%. Of course, these methods are merely suggestions; each association must choose the ones most suitable for its particular difficulties in arousing and keeping the interest of parents (see Table III, Page 17).

Fifty per cent of these (Programs by children - 38.5% and entertainment - 22.1%) would not necessarily be in keeping with today's P. T. A. goals and objectives. However, this could be due to revision of the objectives.

Holbeck analyzed his findings a bit differently. He compared the important activities as ranked by 100 Association presidents and 100 school administrators (see Table IV, Page 18).

A consideration of Table IV reveals:

. . . a perfect correlation in the judgments of the two sets of jurors on Activities Nos. 1, 3, 4, and 10. Also, both groups give 'Entertainments' and 'Making of Gifts' to the

Table III

Methods Found Helpful in Arousing and Retaining the Interest of Parents. The Figure Given is the Percentage of All Associations Reporting That Have Suggested Each Method

Number of Teachers	Less Than 2500 Population					Total	2500 or More Population (New York Only)
	1-2	3-5	6-10	11			
Number of associations . . .	104	94	165	134	497		122
Methods							
"Get togethers" with refreshments	35.6%	28.7%	25.5%	27.6%	28.8%		14.8%
Programs by children	22.1	31.9	30.3	29.1	28.6		38.5
Entertainment (plays, dancing, "sings," etc.)	26.9	27.7	24.8	14.9	23.1		22.1
Attendance contest	4.8	17.0	16.4	26.1	16.7		18.9
Outside speakers	14.4	21.3	14.5	13.4	15.5		13.9
Announcements (posters, advertising. . .)	5.8	6.4	13.3	11.2	9.9		13.9
Distributing responsibilities among members	9.6	3.2	8.5	9.7	8.0		13.1
Special meetings (father's nights, meetings at homes, etc.)	1.9	12.8	9.7	7.5	8.0		10.7

(Table XIV, 3:135)

Table IV

Important Activities as Ranked by 100 Association Presidents
and 100 School Administrators

Activity	Presidents'		Administrators'	
	Rank	Score	Rank	Score
Study Groups	1	273	1	308
Program of Parent Education	2	341	5	457
Study of Child Psychology	3	346	3	424
Study of School Work and Methods	4	436	4	431
Community Projects	5	561	2	419
Demonstrations or Exhibits of School Problems	6	567	6	472
Publicity	7	603	8	527
Solving Certain School Problems	8	647	11	777
Social Intercourse	9	698	7	500
Entertainments	10	846	10	724
Making Gifts to School	11	859	9	676

Note: A low score or rank indicates an activity of
primary importance (Table 2, 12:52)

School' a low rating, although the school administrators, again apparently zealous to defend their administrative prerogatives, place 'Solving of Certain School Problems' in last place as contrasted with the eighth place given this activity by the Parent Teacher Association presidents (12:52).

Holbeck then dealt with activities as they actually were being carried on by 100 Parent-Teacher Associations (see Table V, Page 20).

In analyzing his findings in light of the proposed functions and purposes of the P. T. A. , Holbeck found:

There is seen to be a great discrepancy between function and activity. It is significant that, although the judges . . . relegated the 'Making of Gifts to the School' to a very low place, it, nevertheless, in the activities actually engaging the attention of the group, occupies one of the highest places. In addition we find listed such extraneous matters as 'Beautify School', 'Relief for Children', 'Community Projects' 'Card Parties'. . . These are all activities which . . . bear little or no relation to the functions and purposes of the Parent-Teacher Association (12:55).

The P. T. A. , realizing that some local units do have difficulty in maintaining interest, suggests certain themes each year for these units to adopt. Most authorities agree that meetings should "be planned around a theme or central idea and should contribute to the fulfillment of the objects of P. T. A. (20:27). "

The program chairman of the Washington Congress of Parents and Teachers in 1954 reported:

Speakers still lead the field in program presentation, but chairmen reported speakers, films, and panels should be

Table V

Activities Carried on by 100 Parent-Teacher Associations
in Order of Frequency

Study Groups	50
Relief for Children	40
Parent Education	35
Child Welfare	28
Purchase Equipment-Gifts	27
Summer Round-Up	23
Know Your School	20
Health	20
Hot Lunches	18
Library	17
Beautify School	9
Community Projects	8
Card Parties	8
Literary Courses	3
Student Aid or Loan Fund	2
Character Education	2
Recreation	2
Lecture Courses	2
Playground	2

(Table 3-A, 12:53)

followed by a question or discussion period. Reports show a need to seek and develop other effective means to encourage audience participation (34:5).

Discussion and problem solving techniques that can be used individually or in combination as part of P. T. A. programs are panels, symposiums, forums, plays and workshops. Many authorities would suggest, however:

The secret of good programs does not lie in a simple off with the old, on with the new formula. Rather it lies in having a wide variety of discussion techniques at hand and in selecting the particular technique best suited to the concern of the meeting (20:21, 46).

Comparison of Selected Programs with the P. T. A. Objects and Policies

Brackett, in showing how to improve attendance at P. T. A. meetings showed how it was done in Minneapolis in 1952:

An exciting and worthwhile program is the outcome of principal-P. T. A. cooperation. This has been our experience at Ramsey Junior High School, Minneapolis, Minnesota, where the principal, capable officers, and a large membership of helpful parents and teachers (1700) willingly work together and eagerly accept other's good ideas (1:33)

Brackett then listed several different types of programs used to gain new members and retain old ones:

1. The use of regular U. S. mail and first class postage to make certain every home receives the initial P. T. A. mailing . . . an invitation to membership.
2. The school staff joins nearly 100 per cent.

3. Open-house meetings are held where a parent follows his child's school program for ten minute class periods. This was not a time for parent-teacher conferences, but a time to hear and discuss the objectives or methods of each course.
4. Student participation meetings are presented in the auditorium . . . an interpretation of the school program to parents by the students.
5. Parent-teacher-student panel meetings.
6. Teacher participation . . . as co-hostesses.
7. Parent-sponsored dinners for teachers are held.
8. The principal spends half an hour interpreting the school program with teachers sometimes assisting (1:33).

The P. T. A. programs at Ramsey Junior High were well planned:

Remembering the function of the school's staff toward its local unit, with the following guides in mind: (A) To interpret the school to parents; and, (B) To help the parents do a more effective job as mothers and fathers (1:34).

Moore suggests that an action program like this should be incorporated with a study program:

In order to carry out such enterprises as it may deem advisable in the local school, an association should adopt a working program. Such a program may extend over a year or perhaps several years. For example, the promotion of a comprehensive school building scheme may involve several years of steady and definite effort. The development of the school yards may take three or four years of strict compliance with a set of original plans in which a certain amount is accomplished each year.

The items of a working program will, of course, be determined by local needs, and for that reason it is impossible to specify just what they may be; but among many others, the following will cover a part of the needs of almost every school in the rural districts and small cities throughout the country:

- a. Supplementing the work of the school board.
- b. Visiting schools and inducing others to visit them.
- c. Assisting the children in carrying on their school enterprises, such as Thanksgiving or Christmas charity projects, field meets, entertainments, and the like.
- d. Assisting in winning school elections for good school board members, for bonds, or for school taxes.
- e. Seeing that teachers are properly located and socially recognized.
- f. Promoting state or national school legislation or child welfare legislation.
- g. Surveying the local community in order to determine what should be incorporated in the local course of study in addition to the general needs (16:77).

Although these suggestions might have been apropos in 1926 when they were proposed, many of them are not now. The National Congress' policy of nonpartisanship would disagree with suggestion (d.):

This association shall be noncommercial, nonsectarian, and nonpartisan. It shall not endorse a commercial enterprise or a candidate. The name of the association or the names of any members in their official capacities shall not be used in any connection with a commercial concern or with any partisan interest or for any other purpose than the regular work of the association (25:18).

Sections (3.), Part one and (g.) could be considered the domain of the administrator. In the words of the P. T. A. Manual: "The association shall seek neither to direct the administrative activities of the school nor to control its policies (25:19)."

While in terms of planning, it would be nice to devise long-range plans for improvement. The financial policy of the P. T. A. is to commit the local unit only for one year at a time.

Anchor Bay, Michigan, reported high P. T. A. attendance in The School Executive. The article entitled, "A P. T. A. That Gets Results," told about some of the many things one P. T. A. did during their meetings: sponsoring a scout troop, preparing food for a hot lunch program, and initiation of teen-age dances. They also helped equip and staff the school library, supported school consolidation, advised the county planning commission, advised school matters, and was responsible for raising \$400,000 for a new school (10:60-62).

This program, while accomplishing a great deal, might be found in conflict with an interpretation of P. T. A. objectives: official agencies are public, tax supported governmental organizations that have been established to serve the people.

Through these public agencies, citizens are entitled to look for information and certain kinds of services. On the other hand, citizens have an obligation to provide tax support that will enable the agency to provide the services and facilities that the people need. For example, if the community needs a new school . . . citizens must see that necessary public funds are provided (25:89)

Butterworth also emphasized other interpretations of P. T. A. policies that could conflict with the Anchor Bay Program.

1. It cannot have direct legal control of the schools.
2. It is not the responsibility of the parent-teacher association to finance the schools.

3. The association should not undertake duties of a technical character for which the members are not prepared.
4. The association has no authority over the various other agencies having educational influence.
5. The association should not except in cases of emergency, undertake duties that are the primary responsibility of other agencies(3:50-55).

The National Council has, therefore, devised a series of standards with which to judge a program plan:

1. Is it in harmony with the P. T. A. objects?
2. Does it conform to the basic policies?
3. Does it deal with a definite need or interest?
4. Has it been discussed with the school principal or his representative?
5. Does it fit the limitations of time, space, and facilities within which the group must work?
6. Are the suggested activities suited to the interests and capacities of the members who must cooperate to carry them out?
7. Is it being correctly timed to make the greatest progress toward the goals?
8. Is the plan reasonable in its demands upon the P. T. A. treasury . . .

The following suggestions were also made:

A good, catchy theme will serve to link all the monthly meetings and activities and to hold the interests of the members. Program should not be forced into themes; themes should be developed from existing needs . . .

To build support for P. T. A. programs and P. T. A. objects, it is essential that the P. T. A. use every publicity means--newspapers, P. T. A. newsletters, radio, T. V. , and so forth--to tell the public what the P. T. A. is trying to do and how it is doing it (25:107-109)

What is the Attendance Pattern

Golden, as quoted in Holbeck, found that the median number of meetings in 100 associations in North Dakota was 8.61 (12:25).

Holbeck in his own study found that the median number of meetings in the 100 associations he surveyed was 8.25. The range was four to twelve for regular meetings, however, many special meetings are held to provide for study groups and the solution of particular problems. The range of special meetings is four to twenty-four yearly. Many of these are not attended by the entire membership, but are meetings of small groups to discuss problems relative to their needs. Holbeck noted that:

The strongest associations have a systematic program carried out at all regular meetings supplemented by group meetings at regular intervals. Such associations usually plan activities which are cumulative, organized under a unit of work, and such a plan requires group meetings in order to reach definite objectives that have been adopted. Any organization which confines itself merely to large regular meetings accomplishes little (12:25).

The author could find no discussion of the following problems:

1. Why members join the P. T. A.
2. Member's knowledge of objectives
3. Per cent of people used in P. T. A. work
4. Best time for meetings

It is, therefore, assumed that research is needed in these areas.

CHAPTER III

PROCEDURES

The purpose of this investigation was to discover certain factors associated with attendance in elementary school P. T. A. units. In order to reveal these factors, it was necessary first to secure a population sample. Therefore, certain limitations were imposed: (1) the elementary school must be located in Washington; and (2) in an urban area with a population from 2,500 to 10,000. The material solicited by the author must be given voluntarily by the participants.

Sample Selection

There were 174 schools in this state that met the above requirements. From this population 100 were selected from a table of random numbers. Letters were sent to these 100 schools explaining the study and asking for their cooperation and participation. A self-addressed post card was included for use if participation was not possible. Whenever negative answers were received, alternates were drawn and similarly contacted.

When the affirmative answers for participation were ascertained, these schools were sent surveys with the necessary instructions. They were to be completed in conjunction with the February meeting.

Response of Schools Sent Introductory Letter

Affirmative Participation	100
Negative Participation	22
Number indicating a desire to participate, but not doing so	47
Returned Responses	53

Each participant was given the opportunity to request a copy of the results of the survey with 15 indicating that they wished this service.

Data Gathering

In order to gather information not readily or physically available, one must devise means of making it available. In this study this was done by a questionnaire mailed to the individuals selected. In order to deal with the subsidiary questions, the survey was divided into three parts: (1) a study of the background of the P. T. A. unit; (2) a description of the February meeting; and (3) a questionnaire eliciting opinions from two parents, two teachers, the P. T. A. president, and the principal. This survey, when completed, was mailed back to the author in a self-addressed, stamped envelope for tabulation and analysis. A reminder was sent on March 2, 1964, to encourage units not returning their surveys to do so.

Treatment of Data

After the data had been gathered according to plan, it became necessary to analyze it. In order to discover answers to the questions, the problems had to be subjected to eleven analyses.

<u>Item to be Analyzed</u>	<u>Analysis Procedure</u>
1. Why do people join the P. T. A. ?	A. Count the number of responses to each of the subsidiaries in Section III, question #2.
2. What is the Male-Female ratio in membership and attendance?	A. Count the number of responses to Section I, Part 3. B. Count the number of responses to Section II, Part 1.
3. What are the reasons given for success or failure of given units?	A. Count the number of responses to Section III, Part 8.
4. What are the stated general opinions of the respondents concerning the worth of the given P. T. A. units?	A. Count the number of responses to Section III, Part 6. B. Record opinions on Section III, Part 7.
5. To what extent do the members seem to be informed and knowledgeable about the objectives of the P. T. A. ?	A. Count the number (and order?) of responses in Section III, Part 3.
6. Does the P. T. A. gain membership yet sacrifice the goals and objects of the National Congress to do so?	A. Count the number of responses to Section I, Parts 3 and 6.

<u>Item to be Analyzed</u>	<u>Analysis Procedures</u>
7. What is the percentage of members actually utilized in carrying on P. T. A. work?	A. Compare the responses to Section I, Part 3 with Part 8 of the same section.
8. When is the best time to have P. T. A. meetings and how often should they be held?	A. Compare the responses to Section I, Question 7 with member opinions Section III, Parts 4 and 5.
9. Does P. T. A. attendance vary with the calendar?	A. Compare the responses to Section I, Part 7.
10. What is the comparison of school enrollment to P. T. A. membership?	A. Compare the responses to Section I, Part 2 with Part 3.
11. What is the percentage of teacher membership and how are teachers used in the organization?	A. Compare the responses to Section I, Parts 2 and 3. B. Count the number of responses to subsidiaries in Section III, Part 2 (addendum).

Some of the data were, for purposes of more graphic analysis, then removed from the tabulation sheets and presented in tables and graphs.

Summary

It has been the purpose of this chapter to present the procedures used in this study. The data collected were subjected to various separate and combined analyses in an attempt to ascertain the prevalent situation with regard to P. T. A. attendance. The findings which follow are based on the analyses described.

CHAPTER IV

THE RESULTS AND FINDINGS OF AN INVESTIGATION OF P. T. A. ATTENDANCE AND MEMBERSHIP

The purpose of this Chapter is to present the analyzed data gathered for this study and to present the findings that grew out of these analyses.

The data gathered for this investigation were taken from questionnaires sent to P. T. A. units in urban areas in Washington with populations from 2,500 to 10,000. One hundred questionnaires were sent out, and fifty-three were returned.

The questions in the survey were designed to obtain information regarding current practices, membership, and attendance in the P. T. A. 's represented in this sample. The survey was divided into three parts: (1) a general background of the unit; (2) a survey of the February meeting; and, (3) a survey of opinions of the members. For purposes of analysis, the responses were tabulated according to the size of the P. T. A. unit.

The organization of the following Sections of this Chapter will be as follows: the question itself will be presented; the intent of the

question will be stated; the tabulated responses to the question will be detailed mostly in terms of per cent;* and the responses will be analyzed.

I. BACKGROUND

When Was Your P. T. A. Established?

The purpose of this question was to determine the age of the P. T. A. units surveyed.

Because the vast majority of units failed to respond to this question, either from lack of knowledge or oversight, inadequate data were obtained for analysis of this question.

What is the Size of Your School?

This question was designed to determine the school size of those P. T. A. units surveyed.

Examination of Table VI on Page 33 reveals great variance in the mean school size. While the smallest P. T. A. units (0-99) have a mean school size of 273, the largest (200 and larger) have 796 members. It will be further noted that the 100-199 group in P. T. A. membership has

*It should be noted that among the questionnaires returned, some items were not checked; therefore, it can be assumed that some of the interviewees failed to mark the items because they did not understand its meaning, preferred not to commit themselves, or had no experience of the type asked for in the items.

730 students while the 200 and larger groups have 796, only 66 more students.

Table VI
Membership Background

Size of P. T. A. Unit	Mean Size of School	Membership						Mean Total of Members
		Men		Women		Teachers		
		#	%	#	%	#	%	
0-99	273	121	24	300	59	87	17	56
100-199	730	573	31	979	52	321	17	144
200- Up	796	881	24	2442	67	315	8.6	277

How Many People Have Official Membership in Your P. T. A. This Year?

This question, which was broken into three parts--men, women, and teachers--inquired as to the number of official members P. T. A. units have.

Analysis of Table VI above shows, as one who is familiar with P. T. A. work knows, that women comprise the largest single group in the P. T. A. Furthermore, it would seem that the larger the P. T. A. unit the larger the per cent of women it would have. The second and third largest groups are comprised of the men members and the

teachers, respectively.

The mean total of members also shows variation; the smallest group (56 mean members) is roughly $1/5$ (56 to 277) the size of the largest group and $1/3$ (56 to 144) the size of the middle group. The mean size of the schools do not align themselves in this order, rather the small units are $1/3$ the size of both of the other units.

How Many Regular Meetings, Including Business Transactions and Programs, Did You Have Last Year?

This question was designed to determine the number of regular meetings held by P. T. A. units surveyed in 1963.

A cursory examination of Table VII on Page 35 reveals that in all cases the mean number of regular meetings held was seven. Normally there are nine P. T. A. meetings held during the school year. The next question inquires as to the intent of the other two meetings.

How Many Special Meetings Did You Have Last Year?

This question, like the one previously discussed, was designed to determine the number of special meetings P. T. A. units held in 1963.

Table VII on Page 35 reveals that all units had on the average of two special meetings per year. Further examination shows the activity to which the special meetings were devoted. Christmas activities, carnivals, and other activities (movies, basketball games, etc.) ranked

Table VII

Types of P. T. A. Meetings Held

Size of P. T. A. Unit	Mean # of Regular Meetings	Mean # of Special Meetings	Sales	Xmas	Carni- val	Card Party	Drama	Dinners	Dances	Other
0- 99	7	2	2	3	4	-	-	2	-	3
100-199	7	2.2	2	8	6	1	2	4	4	3
200- Up	7.5	2	3	6	2	-	-	3	3	6

in that order. It also will be noted that the group having the largest number of special meetings was the 100-199 member group.

What was the Intent or Purpose of the Special Meetings?

This question's intent was to find out the purpose of the special meetings that were held.

The tabulated results, which are found in Table VIII, indicate that the two major purposes of special meetings were: (1) to raise money; and, (2) to entertain the members. That is, 49 per cent and 40 per cent or a total of 89 per cent of the special meetings were devoted to either raising money or entertaining the members.

Table VIII

Purpose of Special Meetings

Size of P. T. A. Units	Membership	Raise Money	Parent Education	Entertainment	Other
0- 99	-	6	-	3	1
100-199	-	10	2	11	2
200- Up	-	11	2	9	-

What was the Attendance at Regular Meetings Last Year?

The purpose of this question was to determine the attendance pattern of the P. T. A. 's surveyed.

Table IX reveals great variance on attendance both within the size of the unit and between units. The highest attendance for the 200 and larger group was at the October meeting whereas the other two groups found their highest attendance at the March meetings.

Table IX
Attendance at Meetings

Size of P. T. A. Unit	Sept.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.	Jan.	Feb.	Mar.	April	May
0- 99	# 308	373	353	361	234	193	488	279	301
	% 11.9	14.4	13.6	13.9	9	7.4	18.9	10.8	11.6
100-199	# 1225	1284	1033	1305	902	870	1450	1115	1038
	% 11.9	12.5	10.1	12.7	8.8	8.5	14.1	10.9	10.1
200- Up	# 1564	1627	939	275	805	1048	952	909	709
	% 17.7	18.4	10.6	3.1	9.1	11.8	10.7	10.2	8

Conversely, the lowest attendance was found to be in three different units: (1) December for the largest group; (2) January for the

medium group; and, (3) February for the smallest group. Quantifying these results we find the highest average attendance in October and the lowest average attendance in January.

The only group to have day or afternoon meetings was the smallest group (0-99). They had 11 per cent of their meetings during the afternoon, but attendance of the afternoon meetings was not as great as attendance in the evenings.

Approximately How Many Different People Were Actively Serving on P. T. A. Committees or Activities This Year?

This question was designed to reveal the number of P. T. A. members directly used in the operation of the organization.

Table X reveals that P. T. A. unit size 100-199 utilizes the highest percentage of its members (51.3) whereas the smallest group, 0-99, uses the smallest per cent (22.8) of its members.

Table X

Mean Per Cent of Those Actively Serving P. T. A.

Size of P. T. A. Unit	Per Cent
0- 99	22.8
100-199	51.3
200- Up	38.7

II. FEBRUARY MEETING

What is the Attendance?

The purpose of this question was to determine the specific attendance in terms of men, women and teachers at the February meeting.

Concurring with evidence previously presented concerning membership, Table XI points out that women were the largest group represented in the February P. T. A. meeting (56.3% to 62%). Male members were second percentagewise, but they were closely followed by teachers.

Table XI

Mean Attendance at February Meeting

Size of P. T. A. Unit	Men		Women		Teachers		Mean Attendance	Mean % of All Members Attending
	#	%	#	%	#	%		
0- 99	55	27.5	169	60	63	22	32	57
100-199	193	19.8	548	56.3	232	23.8	75	52
200- Up	270	21	795	62	213	16.6	98	31

Further scrutiny of Table XI reveals that, as the P. T. A. unit grows smaller, so does the total attendance; but the higher the per cent

of the members that attend. That is, small units have a large per cent of their members in attendance while larger groups do not.

Was There Anything Unusual That Might Have Influenced the Attendance at This Meeting?

The intent of this question was to determine the cause or causes of either good or poor attendance.

The major attendance difficulty encountered during the month of February was a state-wide outbreak of the Asian Flu. This caused many meeting cancellations or postponements and tended to restrict attendance somewhat. Another factor mentioned by those units meeting on Tuesday or Friday nights was high school basketball competition.

Was This Meeting Publicized? How?

This question was used to determine the kind of publicity used by the P. T. A.

On Table XII, Page 41, one can see that the major methods of publicity were school flyers, newspapers, radio, and other. It would seem that the P. T. A. relies on the school for the majority of its publicity.

Table XII
Method of Publicity for February Meeting

Size of P. T. A. Unit	School Fliers	Telephone	Radio	Newspaper	Other
0- 99	7	1	2	7	2
100-199	12	1	3	9	2
200- Up	13	-	3	10	2

Meeting Agenda

Approximately How Much Time Was Spent on (a) the Business

Meeting and (b) the Program? The intent of this question was to find out how time was spent and distributed on the business meeting and the program.

Table XIII on Page 42 presents the mean amount of time spent on both the business meeting and the program for the February meeting. A cursory examination shows that in all cases the mean minutes of the program exceeded the mean number of minutes spent on the business meeting. Furthermore, the greatest difference between the two (32 minutes) was held by the 100-199 group.

Table XIII

The February P. T. A. Meeting

Size of P. T. A. Unit	Mean Time Of:		Part of a Series			
	Business Meeting	Program	#	%	#	%
0- 99	27	40	-	-	9	100
100-199	20	52	1	8	12	92
200- Up	33	49	2	15	11	85

Briefly Describe the Meeting. The purpose of this statement was to discover the type of program presented in P. T. A.

Table XIV on Page 43 presents these responses. The two major purposes of the February programs were to interpret the school program and to provide entertainment. These were closely followed by the Founder's Day Program. The National P. T. A. each year sets aside one day in February to commemorate its founders and historical background. Considerable amounts of literature are sent by the state council to local units to encourage them to participate in this February Founder's Day meeting. The results of this survey showed that Founder's Day ranked third behind "interpreting the school program" and "entertainment."

Table XIV

Purpose of the February P. T. A. Program

Size of P. T. A. Unit	Interpret School Program	Parent Education	Community Improvement	Founder's Day	Entertainment	Raise Money
0- 99	-	-	1	4	4	-
100-199	5	-	3	4	5	-
200- Up	9	2	1	2	4	1

Is This Program Part of a Series? If so, Briefly Describe the Entire Series. The P. T. A. Manual states that a theme should link all programs for the year together. The purpose of this question was to find out how many P. T. A. 's actually follow this suggestion.

Table XIII on Page 42 reveals the vast majority of all groups do not have an organized program series. Fifteen per cent of the largest group (200-Up) had yearly programs, 8 per cent of the 100-199 group had them and the small group (0-99) had no yearly program.

III. MEMBER SURVEY

In this Section each of the six groups of P. T. A. members were treated separately. Their responses were broken down and categorized according to the group they represented.

Do You Think This Meeting Helped Parents and Teachers Cooperate Intelligently on the Behalf of the Children?

The purpose of this question was to determine whether or not members felt that this objective was definitely being achieved. Table XV on Page 45 reveals that positive opinions of this objective ranged from 72 per cent of the male teachers to 89 per cent of the P. T. A. presidents. That is, the vast majority of P. T. A. members felt that this meeting did help parents and teachers to cooperate intelligently.

Why Did You Join This P. T. A. ?

This question was asked to determine the reason or reasons people join the P. T. A.

Apparently different groups of people join the P. T. A. for different reasons. Table XVI on Page 46 indicates that the major reason given by the groups was to help all children. However, the major reason for parents, both male and female, joining was to help their own

Table XV
Member Opinion of the February Meeting

Member	Positive		Negative	
	#	%	#	%
Male Teacher	28	72	11	28
Female Teacher	29	78	8	22
Male Parent	25	83	5	17
Female Parent	26	84	5	16
Principal	37	87	3	13
P. T. A. President	30	89	3	11

children as opposed to helping all the children of all the people. Nearly 30 per cent of the female teachers joined because they considered it an obligation.

Please List What You Consider to be the Main Purposes of a P. T. A. Unit.

The National Council has five major goals for its existence:

1. To promote the welfare of children and youth in home, school, church, and community.
2. To raise the standards of home life.
3. To secure adequate laws for the care and protection of children and youth.

Table XVI

Reasons Given for Joining P. T. A.

Member	Prestige		Help My Child		Community Service		Be With Friends		To Help All Children		Obligated		Other	
	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
Male Teacher	-	-	15	22.7	17	25.7	2	5	18	27.1	10	15.1	4	6
Female Teacher	-	-	5	8.6	14	24.1	2	3.4	18	31	17	29.3	2	3.4
Male Parent	-	-	18	37.5	11	22.9	-	-	15	11.2	-	-	4	8.3
Female Parent	-	-	28	35	18	22.5	3	3.8	21	26.3	-	-	5	6.3
Principal	2	2.5	4	5	19	23.7	2	2.5	34	42.5	15	18.7	4	5
P. T. A. President	-	-	23	26.1	19	21.6	5	5.7	25	28.4	3	3.4	8	9.1

4. To bring into closer relation the home and the school, that parents and teachers may cooperate intelligently in the training of the child.
5. To develop between educators and the general public such united efforts as will secure for every child the highest advantages in physical, mental, social, and spiritual education (25:8).

The intent of this particular statement was to compare the purposes given by the members with the purposes listed by the National P. T. A. Council.

Table XVII on Page 48 reveals that the major purpose listed by all groups was goal four (see above). The second largest category was "helping to solve school problems." Miscellaneous categories ranked third for all groups. Among the miscellaneous purposes listed were: (a) to have fun; (b) to buy things for the school; and (c) to raise money.

When Would it be Most Convenient for You to Attend a P. T. A. Meeting?

The purpose of this question was to find out the member opinion concerning the time P. T. A. meetings should be held.

It would seem that the best time to have a P. T. A. meeting would be in the evening, although a substantial number of school people disagreed.

Thirteen of forty-one male teachers felt that meetings should be held in the afternoon, whereas only eleven of forty-one female teachers felt that way.

Table XVII

Main Purposes Given By Members for P. T. A. Existence
as Compared With P. T. A. Objectives

Member	P. T. A. Goal 1		P. T. A. Goal 2		P. T. A. Goal 3		P. T. A. Goal 4		P. T. A. Goal 5		Other Categories			
	Solve School		Problems		Misc.									
	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
Male Teacher	7	8.9	2	2.5	-	-	33	42.3	8	10.2	16	20.5	12	14
Female Teacher	4	4.8	-	-	3	3.6	35	42.1	11	13.2	14	16.8	16	18.2
Male Parent	4	5.9	-	-	2	2.9	27	40.2	3	4.4	20	29.8	11	16.3
Female Parent	5	6.1	1	1.2	2	2.4	34	41.9	3	3.7	22	27.1	14	16
Principal	5	5.1	1	1	3	3	37	37.7	12	12.2	29	29.5	11	11.1
P. T. A. President	8	10.5	1	1.3	1	1.3	33	43.4	8	10.5	18	23.6	7	9.2

The minority of parents, one of thirty-two males and six of thirty-eight females, felt that meetings should be held in the afternoon.

The building principals indicated their apparent willingness to meet either in the afternoon or evening, probably at the convenience of others.

Thirty of thirty-seven P. T. A. presidents voted to hold meetings in the evening.

How Often Do You Feel P. T. A. Meetings Should Be Held?

The intent of this question was to determine the frequency with which members felt P. T. A. meetings should be held.

The majority of members felt that meetings should be held every month. Details: twenty-one of the forty-one male teachers, twenty-two of the thirty-nine female teachers, twenty-three of the thirty-three male parents, twenty-five of the thirty-nine female parents, twenty-two of the forty-six principals and twenty-five of the thirty-six presidents voted for monthly meetings.

The second largest response was for every two months. The members responded in the following ways: twelve of the forty-one male teachers, fourteen of the thirty-nine female teachers, five of the thirty-three male parents, nine of the thirty-nine female parents, eighteen of the forty-six principals and nine of the thirty-six presidents.

The third largest category was "Meeting only when needed. " Sixteen of the 234 respondents indicated that this was when they felt P. T. A. 's should meet.

What is Your Attitude Toward This P. T. A. Unit?

In a previous Section, member opinion was asked concerning one aspect of the February meeting. This question was designed to ascertain member evaluation of the P. T. A.

Table XVIII on Page 51 reveals that different groups evaluate the P. T. A. differently. The majority of members call their organization "good. " "Excellent" ranks second and "fair" third in total combined rankings. The principals tended to rank the P. T. A. the highest and the teachers ranked it the lowest with the other groups falling in between the extremes.

Please State Briefly Why You Feel This Way?

This statement was designed to further specify the reason for the answer given to the preceding question, "What is Your Attitude Toward This P. T. A. Unit? "

Member interest and participation were the main factors in the ranking indicated in the above by all members. Good programs and the

Table XVIII
Member Attitude Toward P. T. A. Unit

Member	Attitude							
	Excellent		Good		Fair		Poor	
	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
Male Teacher	5	12.8	15	38.4	14	35.9	5	12.8
Female Teacher	7	17	16	39	12	29.2	6	14.6
Male Parent	10	30.3	16	48.4	5	15.1	2	6
Female Parent	6	15.2	23	60.5	7	18.4	2	5.2
Principal	20	45.5	13	29.5	9	20.4	2	4.5
P. T. A. President	16	34	23	48.9	5	10.6	3	6.3

opportunity to gain knowledge of P. T. A. objectives ranked second and third in combined rankings. The lower the ranking, the greater the negative attitude toward the unit became and vice versa.

In Your Opinion, Why do P. T. A. Units . . . :

Succeed? This question's intent was to determine member opinion on reasons important for P. T. A. success.

Table XIX on Page 52 shows that "member interest" is the most important factor listed by all groups. "Good meetings" and "good officers" follow in that respective order in all but one group.

Table XIX

Reasons Given By Members For P. T. A. Success

<u>Members</u>	<u>Good Officers</u>		<u>Good Meetings</u>		<u>Opportunity to Gain Understanding of P. T. A. Objectives</u>		<u>Member Opportunity to Participate</u>		<u>Other</u>	
	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
Male Teacher	11	27.5	3	7.5	6	15	20	50	-	-
Female Teacher	8	15.3	17	32.6	3	5.7	24	46.1	1	1.9
Male Parent	7	17.9	10	25.6	4	10.2	17	43.5	1	2.5
Female Parent	6	13.9	9	20.9	3	6.9	24	55.8	1	2.3
Principal	12	20.6	15	25.8	9	15.5	21	36.2	1	1.7
P. T. A. President	6	13.9	7	16.2	6	13.9	22	51	2	4.6

Fail? As in the preceding question, this question's intent was to determine reasons given by the members for P. T. A. failure.

Table XX on Page 54 reveals the same general placement as in the preceding part of the question. Again, lack of time and interest ranked number one as a reason given by all groups for P. T. A. failure. Poor meetings and poor officers again ranked in their same order.

Teacher Section.

Do You Feel This P. T. A. Helps You Understand and Know the Parents Better? The purpose of this question was to gain teacher opinion of the P. T. A. as a means for developing parent-teacher relationships.

Table XXI on Page 55 reveals that 57.5 per cent of the male teachers answered positively, whereas 69.2 per cent of the female teachers answered positively. This attitude differs somewhat from opinions previously expressed in Table XV on Page 45 where the positive opinions there expressed were 72 per cent and 78 per cent respectively. Thus, it would seem that teachers feel less strongly about the P. T. A. as a means for understanding parents than they do about the general worth of the organization.

Table XX

Reasons Given by Members for P. T. A. Failure

<u>Members</u>	<u>Poor Officers</u>		<u>Poor Meeting</u>		<u>Lack of Opportunity to Gain Understanding of P. T. A. Objectives</u>		<u>Lack of Member Opportunity to Participate</u>		<u>Individual Personalities</u>		<u>Other</u>	
	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
Male Teacher	6	12.2	5	10.2	7	14.2	23	46.9	4	8.1	4	8.1
Female Teacher	4	6.4	20	32.2	4	6.4	27	43.6	5	8	2	3.2
Male Parent	7	19.4	6	16.6	3	8.3	17	47.2	3	8.3	-	-
Female Parent	4	8	7	14	5	10	26	52	5	10	3	6
Principal	10	16.1	14	22.5	10	16.1	25	40.3	2	3.2	1	1.6
P. T. A. President	7	12.9	9	16.6	5	9.2	24	44.4	5	9.2	4	7.4

Table XXI

Teacher Opinion of P. T. A. as a Means of Understanding Parents

Teacher	Positive		Negative	
	#	%	#	%
Male	26	57.7	19	42.3
Female	27	69.2	12	30.8

Are You Serving the P. T. A. Now? How? This question's intent was to determine how teachers are used in the P. T. A. organization.

Of the twenty-two of thirty-nine male teachers responding to this question, seven were serving as members of committees, two were serving as officers, two as consultants, and eleven were paid-up members only.

Nine of the thirty-eight female teachers possible responded to this question in the following manner: four were serving on committees, two were officers, and five were paid-up members only.

It would seem that teachers are not being extensively used in P. T. A. activities.

IV. SUMMARY

It has been the purpose of this Chapter to present information, chiefly in tabular form, taken from the survey of membership and attendance in selected P. T. A. units in the State of Washington.

CHAPTER V

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

It is the purpose of this Chapter to summarize the study, to present warranted conclusions, and to make recommendations that appear appropriate in terms of the conclusions reached in this investigation.

I. SUMMARY

The problem for this study was an investigation of current Parent Teacher Association attendance and membership practices in selected P. T. A. units in the State of Washington. The study was conducted by means of 100 written questionnaires sent to selected local Parent Teacher Association units.

In Chapter I the problem was stated, the need for the study was indicated, and the organization of the study was outlined.

Chapter II consisted of a survey of related literature and research. These two sources were examined in terms of eleven questions subsidiary to the main purpose of the study.

In Chapter III the procedures that were followed in gathering and treating the data for the study were described.

In Chapter IV the results and findings of the study were presented.

II. CONCLUSIONS

In terms of the subsidiary questions and on the basis of data presented in this study, the following conclusions appear to be warranted:

1. What are the main factors that seem most influential and are cited for becoming a member of the P. T. A. ?
 - a. The major reason for teachers, P. T. A. presidents, and principals have for joining the P. T. A. is apparently to help all children.
 - b. The major reason listed by the parents for joining is to help their own child.
 - c. Nearly one-third of female teachers joined the P. T. A. because they felt obligated.

Therefore, the conclusion drawn from these data is that there are several distinct different groups who join the P. T. A. for different reasons--some more worthy than others.

2. What is the male-female ratio in membership and attendance?
 - a. Women outnumbered men in both membership and attendance.
 - b. The larger the size of the P. T. A. unit, the higher the percentage of women that belong to it.
 - c. In all cases men outnumbered teachers in attendance and membership.

From these data, one is forced to conclude that women constitute a larger force than men in the P. T. A. ; whether or not they wield more power is debatable. It is also probably true that women do the majority of work in the P. T. A. , although this was not conclusively shown in this study.

3. What are the reasons given for success or failure of given P. T. A. units?

- a. The opportunity provided for members to participate is apparently the most important factor given by the members in determining the success or the failure of the organization.
- b. The second most important factor listed is a "good meeting." According to available information, a "good" meeting would surely include a short business meeting, a terse program, one that has meaning for members, and adequate time for discussion following the program.
- c. The third most important factor listed was the officers as a group.

The overall conclusion, then, seems to be that in order for a P. T. A. unit to be successful there must be many opportunities for the members to become actively involved in important matters.

4. To what extent do the members seem to be informed and knowledgeable about the objectives of the P. T. A. ?

- a. The most important goal listed by the polled members is goal number four as listed on page eight of the P. T. A. Manual: "To bring into closer relation the home and the school, that parents and teachers may cooperate intelligently in the training of the child. "
- b. The second most important objective listed by the members is "solving school problems." This is not one of the specific goals listed by the National Congress.
- c. The third most important goal listed is the "miscellaneous" category, which might be interpreted to mean all those major and minor goals revealed by the respondents but not necessarily listed by the investigator or the National P. T. A. Congress.

One could justifiably conclude that the P. T. A. members either do not know about or do not care about many or most of the goals of their organization as listed by the National Congress.

5. What are the stated general opinions of the respondents concerning the worth of the given P. T. A. units?
- a. The majority of members have a positive attitude toward their P. T. A. unit.
 - b. Different members feel differently about the individual unit's worth. Teachers tended to rank the P. T. A. lowest whereas principals ranked it highest. Also indicative of this ambivalent attitude was the low (53 per cent) return of thesis questionnaires.

This would seem to indicate that there is a difference of opinion among professional staff members and parents concerning the worth of the given P. T. A. unit.

6. What is the percentage of members actually utilized in carrying on P. T. A. work?
- a. The size of the unit is apparently related to the per cent of members used; however, this was not conclusively shown in this study.
 - b. Of those units surveyed, a mean per cent of 37.9 of the members were actually utilized in P. T. A. work.

The conclusions which seem warranted are: not many members are utilized in the local P. T. A. activities; and, that a few do the work for the many.

7. When is the best time to have P. T. A. meetings and how often should they be held?

It should be concluded that seemingly the best time for holding meetings, both from an attendance viewpoint and from the viewpoint of the members, is at night and every month according to the vast majority of members sampled.

8. What is the teacher ratio and how are teachers used in the organization?

Teachers constitute the smallest group that belongs to the P. T. A. and there is some evidence that would tend to indicate that teachers are being used to fill relatively minor roles in the organization.

9. What is the comparison of school enrollment to P. T. A. membership?

Two main conclusions seem to emerge from the available data relative to this question:

- a. The larger the school, in terms of student enrollment, the larger the P. T. A. in terms of nominal members which represents it.
- b. The smaller the school in terms of student enrollment, the higher the per cent of nominal members who regularly and actively participate in the P. T. A. activities.

These facts would seem to reflect that there is a relationship between size of school, size of P. T. A. unit, and amount of member activity.

10. What is the attendance pattern; that is, does P. T. A. attendance vary with the calendar?

The data relative to this question were inconclusive. The pattern of attendance was irregular. There were months when attendance was high and others when attendance was low. There was some consistency among units as far as these certain months were concerned, but no definite trend or pattern could be established.

11. Does the P. T. A. gain membership, but sacrifice the goals of the National Congress to do so?

It was concluded earlier (see conclusion number four) that the sampled members are not aware of the P. T. A. goals. It can at least be tentatively concluded that because they do not know these goals, they may indeed be sacrificing them in order to gain members. There is no evidence to the contrary.

III. RECOMMENDATIONS

On the basis of the findings and conclusions in this study, the following recommendations appear to be appropriate:

1. Because P. T. A. goals may seemingly not be widely known nor are they being effectively served--if the data of this study are accurate and representative--it is hereby recommended that:
 - a. The National Congress re-examine their goals and methods of publicizing these goals;

- b. The state P. T. A. encourage and help administer an evaluation of the local units. Local units need to be made aware of their potentialities and capabilities as well as their problems; and
- c. That the members, individually and collectively, become knowledgeable about the purposes of the organization to which they belong.

2. Concomitant with the first recommendation is the second:

In order that the very worthwhile goals be served systematically rather than accidentally, haphazardly or not at all, closer liaison between the local, state and national Congresses should be fostered. This would enable more coordination and increase both appreciation and understanding. As matters now stand, the local unit seems to feel responsible only to themselves rather than to higher organizational levels.

3. Each P. T. A. member should think not only of his own child, but of all children. The P. T. A. is a child welfare-oriented organization, and parents need to be made more aware of this fact.

4. Teachers should be included in more P. T. A. activities. This would increase their appreciation and understanding of the P. T. A. and, both directly and indirectly, enable the P. T. A. to function more efficiently.

5. Men should be encouraged, but not forced to join the P. T. A. This desirable outcome might be accomplished by giving them committee

chairmanships or other jobs that would allow them to exercise their unique talents without becoming wholly subservient to or smothered by the organization.

6. More member interest and participation need to be stimulated.

The per cent of members belonging to and actively participating in

P. T. A. should be increased. This might be done by the following:

- a. Selecting and training good officers.
- b. Planning programs that have meaning to the members and the P. T. A. objects.
- c. Giving all the members a chance to participate in more and different ways.

The above stated list is not intended to be all inclusive, rather it is indicative of matters that need to be fostered and furthered.

7. The P. T. A. program should be well planned for the full year, both in terms of short-range and long-range goals. Perhaps yearly themes are not as important as the selection of good programs that serve the immediate needs of the local community and the broad goals of the National Congress.

8. Since night is probably the best time to have a P. T. A. meeting, it is recommended that these meetings be planned to allow many members to participate as actively in them as possible. The business of the P. T. A. should be handled quickly and efficiently, thus enabling more time for well-planned, appropriate programs.

9. It is recommended that P. T. A. units not be allowed to become so large that they are unwieldy and/or impersonal. These two factors would tend to thwart the aims and purposes of the P. T. A.

10. It would seem that the P. T. A. relies heavily on the school for publicity. In some cases this reliance becomes a dependence. It is recommended that broader means of publicizing P. T. A. activities and concerns be explored.

11. It is clear that further research on P. T. A. is needed. Other investigators might address themselves to such questions as the following:

- a. Are the major objectives of P. T. A. outdated?
- b. Is the P. T. A. approach to public relations current?
- c. Are the publicity methods of the P. T. A. antiquated?
- d. Would comparative data in more metropolitan areas correspond with the data accumulated in this study?

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APPENDIX

APPENDIX A

Copy of First Letter Sent to Possible Participants
in the Study

January 2, 1964

In conjunction with my graduate studies here at Central Washington State College, I am preparing a thesis on P.T.A. attendance. More specifically, I will examine the factors associated with membership and attendance in elementary P.T.A. units in urban areas with less than 10,000 population.

Your school has been selected as one of the participants in this study. The survey consists of a questionnaire in three parts: background of the P.T.A. unit; a survey of the February meeting; and a short evaluation. It is estimated that gathering this information should take about one hour, depending upon the availability of information. The information given will be held in confidence and no names will be released without your expressed consent. If you and your P.T.A. are interested, the results of the study will be made available to you.

This letter was sent to you because of your position in the school and because you would be in close contact with the P.T.A.

This study has the approval of the State P.T.A. Executive Committee and the Graduate Office at Central Washington State College.

If you do not have a P.T.A. in your school or for some other reason do not wish to participate in this study, please let me know via the enclosed postcard immediately. If I do not hear from you, I will assume you are interested in participating. You will receive the questionnaire and instructions the last week in January.

Very truly yours,

Michael S. Cline

APPENDIX B

Copy of Letter Sent to the Units Selected
to Participate in the Study

January 29, 1964

I would first like to express my appreciation to you for indicating a desire to participate in this study. As teachers, principal and P.T.A. members, I know how busy you are.

You are one of the one hundred local units throughout the state who are taking part in the survey. If you will follow the instructions listed below, the results will be more reliable.

The study will be divided into three phases: (1) P.T.A. background; (2) the meeting; and (3) the attitude questionnaire. If the Principal, the P.T.A. President and P.T.A. Secretary could get together the night of the meeting, it would be possible to complete the survey quickly.

Section I, P.T.A. Background

A. It is hoped that the majority of this information will be found in the P.T.A. Secretary's notes of the previous year.

B. If you do not have the specific information asked for and cannot make a reasonable estimate, do not fill in the blank. Be sure to look at all categories under each question. You may be able to answer part (Totals, etc.) of the questions.

Section II, The Meeting

A. Try to get an actual head count of the adult people present. Please do not count children.

B. The business meeting, for purposes of this research study, will consist of all that happens from the call to order to the beginning of the program; in other words, the formal business meeting. Try to keep a rather accurate record of these times.

Section III, Questionnaire

A. Because of the nature of the questions, it is very important that the respondent's opinions and knowledge is expressed.

B. Select at random two parents, (one male, one female), two of the teachers, the P.T.A. President and the Principal and have them fill out the information independently. Then have them fold and return the survey. Perhaps it would be wise to have some extra pencils for the respondents to use.

When the survey is completed, please mail it to me in the enclosed envelope as soon as possible. If you would like to find out the results of this study, please indicate so on a separate sheet of paper; and, upon tabulation, I will mail them to you.

Thank you again for your cooperation and assistance.

Very truly yours,

Michael S. Cline

APPENDIX C

Copy of Questionnaire Sent to the Local P. T. A. Units
Participating in the Study

P.T.A. QUESTIONNAIRE

(To be filled out by P.T.A. officers and Principal)

I. Background

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A. When was your P.T.A. established (year)?

B. What is the size of your school?

Students

Teachers

Total

C. How many people have official membership in your P.T.A. this year?

Men (non-teacher)

Women (non-teacher)

Teachers

Total

D. How many regular meetings, where normal business and programs were transacted, did you have last year?

E. How many special meetings did you have last year?

Types of special meetings:

1. Sales (food, candy, rummage)

2. Christmas concerts

3. Carnivals

4. Card Parties

5. Dramatics

6. Dinners

7. Dances

8. Others--Please list

F. What was the intent or purpose of the special meetings:

1. To solicit membership

2. To raise money for P.T.A.

3. Parent education

4. Entertainment

5. Other--Please list

G. What was the attendance at regular meetings last year? (If exact numbers are not available, please estimate.) Please indicate day or night meeting before attendance figure.

D - Day or N - Night.

September

October

November

December

January

February

March

April

May

H. Approximately how many different people were actively serving on P.T.A. committees or activities this year?

II. FEBRUARY MEETING:

(To be filled in by a P.T.A. officer at time of the regularly scheduled meeting.)

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A. What is the attendance?

Men (non-teacher)	_____
Women (non-teacher)	_____
Teachers	_____
Total	_____

B. Was there anything unusual that might have influenced the attendance at this meeting? What?

Weather	_____
Community affairs	_____
Others--please list	_____

C. Was this meeting publicized? How:

School flyers	_____
Telephone	_____
Radio	_____
Newspaper	_____
Other--please list	_____

D. Meeting Agenda

1. Approximately how much time was spent on:

a. The business meeting	_____
b. The program	_____

2. Briefly describe the program.

3. Is this program part of a series? If so, briefly describe the entire series.

QUESTIONNAIRE

(To be filled out by person indicated below--see check)

This questionnaire is part of a study being conducted on P.T.A. It is hoped that you will give your frank and honest opinions in answering the questions.

Person filling out questionnaire:

		(Please Check)	
a.	Teacher	(Male__ Female__)	_____
b.	Parent	(Male__ Female__)	_____
c.	Principal	(Male__ Female__)	_____
d.	P.T.A. President	(Male__ Female__)	_____

1. Do you think this meeting helped parents and teachers cooperate more intelligently on the behalf of the children?

Yes _____

No _____

2. Why did you join this P.T.A.?

a.	Prestige	_____
b.	To help my child	_____
c.	Community Service	_____
d.	To be with my friends	_____
e.	To help all children	_____
f.	Other--please state	_____

3. Please list what you consider to be the main purposes of a P.T.A. Unit.

a. _____

b. _____

c. _____

d. _____

4. When would it be most convenient for you to attend a P.T.A. meeting?

Afternoon _____

Evening _____

5. How often do you feel P.T.A. meetings should be held?

Every month	_____
Every 2 months	_____
Every 3 months	_____
Only when needed	_____
Other--please list	_____

6. What is your general attitude toward this P.T.A. Unit?

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- Excellent
- Good
- Fair
- Poor

7. Please state briefly why you feel this way.

8. a. In your opinion why do P.T.A. Units succeed?

b. Why do they fail?

Additional section for Teachers only:

1. Do you feel this P.T.A. helps you understand and know the parents better?

Yes

No

2. Are you serving the P.T.A. now? How?

On a committee

As an officer

As a consultant

Other--please list
