

4-1-1989

A Study of the Reasons Students Do Not Participate in Extracurricular Activities

Douglas F. Kyles

University of Nebraska at Omaha

Follow this and additional works at: <https://digitalcommons.unomaha.edu/studentwork>

Recommended Citation

Kyles, Douglas F, "A Study of the Reasons Students Do Not Participate in Extracurricular Activities" (1989). *Student Work*. 2668.
<https://digitalcommons.unomaha.edu/studentwork/2668>

This Thesis is brought to you for free and open access by DigitalCommons@UNO. It has been accepted for inclusion in Student Work by an authorized administrator of DigitalCommons@UNO. For more information, please contact unodigitalcommons@unomaha.edu.



A STUDY OF THE REASONS
WHY STUDENTS DO NOT PARTICIPATE
IN EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITIES

A Field Project
Presented to the
Department of Educational Administration
and the
Faculty of the Graduate College
University of Nebraska at Omaha

In Partial Fulfillment
of the Requirements for the Degree
Specialist in Educational Administration
University of Nebraska at Omaha

by
Douglas F. Kyles

April 1989

UMI Number: EP74212

All rights reserved

INFORMATION TO ALL USERS

The quality of this reproduction is dependent upon the quality of the copy submitted.

In the unlikely event that the author did not send a complete manuscript and there are missing pages, these will be noted. Also, if material had to be removed, a note will indicate the deletion.



UMI EP74212

Published by ProQuest LLC (2015). Copyright in the Dissertation held by the Author.

Microform Edition © ProQuest LLC.

All rights reserved. This work is protected against unauthorized copying under Title 17, United States Code



ProQuest LLC.
789 East Eisenhower Parkway
P.O. Box 1346
Ann Arbor, MI 48106 - 1346

FIELD PROJECT ACCEPTANCE

Acceptance for the faculty of the Graduate College,
University of Nebraska, in partial fulfillment of the
requirements for the degree Specialist in Education,
University of Nebraska at Omaha.

Committee

Name	Department
<i>Anna P. [unclear]</i>	<i>Ed/Ad</i>
<i>Robert Butler</i>	<i>Counseling</i>

Blaine E. Ward
Chairman

April 11, 1989
Date

Table of Contents

List of Tables	2
CHAPTER ONE - INTRODUCTION	3
CHAPTER TWO - REVIEW OF RELATED RESEARCH	9
Historical Development of Student	9
Positive Impact of Participation	12
Factors Which Effect Participation	23
Why Students Do Not Participate	37
CHAPTER THREE - DESIGN OF THE STUDY	42
CHAPTER FOUR - PRESENTATION AND ANYALYSIS OF DATA	50
CHAPTER FIVE - SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS	58
References	71
Appendices	81

List of Tables

<u>Table</u>		<u>Page</u>
1	Male Rankings of Reasons for Non- Participation	51
2	Female Rankings of Reasons for Non- Participation	55

CHAPTER ONE

Introduction

The extracurricular activity programs offered in our nation's schools have long been recognized to be significant contributors to the total education of all involved students. Evidence of public support for the inclusion of activity programs in schools was reported in the 1978 Annual Gallup Poll (Gallup, 1978). Gallup (1978) reported that 45% of the parents with school-age children felt that extracurricular activities were very important, while another 40% stated that activities were fairly important. The poll went on to report that when adults were asked which subjects they had studied or experiences they had in high school which were found to be the most useful in later life, they placed extracurricular activities fourth among ten subjects and experiences.

Students and adults have traditionally viewed the significance of activity participation in much the same light. Long, Buser, and Jackson (1977) reported that when students were asked to select the characteristic which was most likely to

establish status acceptance among students, 56% indicated "active participation in extracurricular activities;" 19% selected "academic success by earning high grades;" and 13% cited "active involvement in student government" (p.7).

The National Federation (1985) conducted a student survey in which a majority of students stated that participation in school activities played an important part in their high school education. Additionally, 63% of the students felt that activities contributed greatly toward making school more enjoyable.

School administrators have actively involved themselves in the process of encouraging activity participation by students. A survey of high school principals from across the United States was conducted in 1985 by the National Federation of State High School Associations. The following results emerged from the study:

1. Student participation in activities taught valuable lessons that cannot be learned in the regular class routine according to 95% of the principals.
2. Participation in activities promoted

citizenship according to 95% of the principals.

3. Activities programs contributed to the development of school spirit among the student body according to 95% of the principals.
4. The extra demands placed on students' time as a result of activity participation was not excessive in the opinion of 76% of the principals.
5. Strong support by parents and the community existed in the schools of 72% of the principals.

Researchers have identified numerous benefits derived from activity participation by secondary students. Activities support the academic mission of schools. They are not a diversion, but rather an extension of quality educational programs. Students who participate in activities programs tend to have higher grade-point averages, better attendance records, lower drop-out rates, and fewer discipline problems than non-participants (Phillips & Schafer, 1971).

Activities are, also, inherently educational. Activities programs provide valuable lessons on

many practical situations--teamwork, sportsmanship, winning and losing, and hard work. Through participation in activities programs, students learn self-discipline, build self-confidence, and develop skills to handle competitive situations. These are qualities the public expects schools to produce in students so that students may become responsible and productive adults.

Student participation in activities during the high school years is often a predictor of later success-- in college, in a career, and in becoming a contributing member of society.

Despite the extensive and unimpeachable evidence supporting the positive role of student activities, significant numbers of students do not participate in any activities during their high school years. The Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching reported in 1983 that nationwide, 53% of all students did not participate in any non-varsity or athletic activity; 85% did not belong to pep clubs or take part in cheerleading, debating, or drama; more than 80% did not participate in either student government or the school newspaper; and over 78% were not members of

chorus, band, dance, or orchestra activities (Boyer, 1983).

Vornberg (1981) studied student activity programs in Arkansas, Kansas, Missouri, Oklahoma, and Texas. Participation by students in those states' schools varied widely from 10% to 75% with less than half of the total student population taking advantage of participation opportunities.

The significant number of youngsters who have not chosen to participate in activities in the Plattsmouth Community Schools has drawn the attention of both the Board of Education and the administration. The impetus for this study is the desire to identify those factors which are common to students who are non-participants. While the primary focus of the school district is upon the intellectual development of students, the staff would like to encourage increased student involvement in extracurricular activities in order to expose more students to the valuable experiences gained through active participation in activities.

Statement of the Problem

Are there reasons for non-participation among students who do not participate in available activity programs at Plattsmouth High School?

Purposes of the Study

The purpose of this study was to determine the reasons why some students at Plattsmouth High School did not choose to participate in extracurricular activities.

Limitations

Conclusions of this study are only applicable to Plattsmouth High School and the students in attendance during the 1988-1989 school term.

Definition of Terms

Extracurricular activities are those activities which are available to student participants either before or after normal school hours. These activities are listed in the Activities Handbook available to all students at Plattsmouth High School.

Non-participating students are those students who are not involved in any extracurricular activities.

Participating students are those students involved in one or more extracurricular activities.

CHAPTER TWO

Review of Related Research

Historical Development of Student Activities

Student activities have become an integral part of the total educational program offered in nearly all secondary schools throughout the United States. Activities are available to meet the individual interests and talents of the majority of students attending schools of all sizes, configurations, and locations within our country.

The modern period of development in student activities has experienced three distinct eras. The first era began in approximately 1870, and continued through the end of the 19th Century. This initial period may accurately be labeled a period of rejection. Educational leaders and researchers concluded that, few, if any, benefits could be derived by expanding human or material resources in the activity portion of the school program which they labeled extracurricular. Phase two, which occurred from approximately 1900-1920, and has been referred to as an era of passive acceptance. Education leaders of the early Twentieth Century, concluded that student clubs and

organizations were capable of providing learning experiences of a significant nature for high school-age students. Two important developments contributed to the growth and acceptance of student activity programs during this era. First, the Commission to Study the Reorganization of Secondary Schools issued its report identifying the Seven Cardinal Principles of Education. One of the seven principles suggested that schools should prepare students for the "wise use of leisure time" (Gholson, 1985, p.18). In response, many school systems appointed a "Director of Leisure Studies" (Gholson, 1985, p.19). This position seems to be the forerunner of the Director of Student Activities position which uniformly exists today in a majority of the nation's secondary schools.

A second major development involved the work of Elbert Fretwell of Columbia University. In 1918, Fretwell offered the first college-level course in the area of student activities. He also wrote about activities and earned the title "Father of Student Activities" (Gholson, 1985, p.19).

Phase three began in 1920 and ended in 1956. This era is accurately characterized as a period of

active acceptance of, and encouragement for, activity participation. The debate about the educational benefits derived from student participation was resolved in favor of student involvement. The term "extracurricular" was dropped in favor of "student activities" in most literature (Gholson, 1985, p. 19).

Phase three saw the development of state and national parent organizations which provided direction to the local school club or chapter. Student participation was strongly encouraged. In fact, local school districts routinely used point systems and other measures to encourage students to participate in the activity programs offered students during the school day.

During the past thirty years, the distinction between what would be considered school programs and community school programs has, to a large degree, been fused. Today, students earn academic credit for involvement in activities which were once considered extracurricular, in nature. The subject-area classroom has been expanded into the community.

In the present era, students may earn academic credit by serving as officers of clubs or through

projects which may take place outside the traditional school setting. The students, teaching staff, parents, and school community appear to be more interwoven into school-related programs. This fusion would appear to represent a period in which the school and non-school lives of students tend to blend into one another.

Today's era represents an unparalleled time in which the school represents the primary center for social life and socialization among young people. The degree to which the school offers a variety of learning experiences remains a critical issue. Extracurricular activity programs represent a significant and critical component of the contemporary comprehensive high school (Gholson, 1985).

Positive Impact of Participation

Prior to 1960, few sociological studies were undertaken to determine the impact of student participation in extracurricular activities upon the attainment of student educational goals (Phillips & Schafer, 1971). Subsequent to 1960, numerous studies have identified a positive correlation between student activity participation

and student academic, social, and emotional growth. Convincing evidence has been gathered to support the hypothesis that participants achieve educational goals at a higher rate than do comparative non-participants (Phillips & Schafer, 1971).

Our society has become increasingly more grade conscious during recent decades. Compelling evidence has been gathered to support the belief that activity participants earn higher grades than do comparable non-participants. Schafer and Armer (1968) found that high school athletes earned slightly higher grades than non-athletes in the matched-sample studied. Athletes from "blue-collar homes" and boys who were not in a college-preparatory program earned even better grades than their non-athletic counterparts. Bend (1968) found substantially the same pattern. Athletes received slightly better grades with the advantage most pronounced among "low-endowment" (low I.Q., low socio-economic status) boys.

Higher grades were evident in students who participated in activities, according to a study completed by the Minnesota State High School League (National Federation of State High School

Associations, 1985). The survey, involving more than 300 schools, showed that the average student had a grade-point average of 2.68 on a 4.0 scale. The grade-point average of student-athletes was 2.84, while fine arts students averaged 2.98. Active involvement in sports can result in higher grades, according to a study by the Iowa High School Athletic Association. Results indicated that on a 4.0 scale, students who do not participate in sports averaged 2.39. Those students who are active in one sport averaged 2.61, and those active in two sports averaged 2.82 (National Federation of State High School Associations, 1985). This study also indicated that participation in multiple activities tended to increase achievement rather than negatively impacting student performance. Studies conducted in Kansas and North Dakota yielded very similar results.

Additional surveys compiled by the National Federation revealed data which indicated that students tended to achieve at a higher level during those seasons in which they were actively involved in school activities. The academic performance of

students fell during periods of the year when students were inactive (Durbin, 1986).

Soltz (1986) examined grades earned by over 24,000 students in Colorado. The study summarized the relationship between grade-point average and participation in interscholastic athletics. Student-athletes' grades were consistently higher than students who were not active. Additionally, students competing in activities earned significantly less failing grades during those semesters in which they were actively involved in an activity. Failure rates increased during periods of non-involvement.

Studies by Rehberg and Schafer (1967), Spreitzer and Pugh (1973), Hanks and Eckland (1976), and Otto and Alwin (1977) reported that athletes not only attained higher grade-point averages than other students, but that participants' educational aspirations, self-concepts, and other affective characteristics were enhanced through participation in a variety of activities.

According to Fritch and Clark (1984), Ballantine (1981), Hedgepeth (1981), Shaw (1981), and McBride (1980), there was an overall positive

relationship between grade-point average and participation in extracurricular activities. Hedgpeth (1981) also identified a positive relationship between participation in extracurricular activities and increased school attendance, heightened self-confidence, better feelings toward school, and more commitment toward pursuing a college education.

Loy, McPherson, and Kenyan (1978) found that athletes demonstrated a higher level of academic performance than non-athletes. Possible reasons cited for higher academic achievement included "an association with high achievement-oriented peers; transfer of achievement value from sport to classroom environment; an increased self-esteem which creates a higher level of aspirations in other domains; and internal pressures applied to present a consistent image in all areas" (Rehberg, 1969, p.72).

A significant sociological impact of participation in activities has been identified through several studies. Coleman's study (1961) of the adolescent society indicates that the "leading crowd" tended to be of middle-class origins, and,

that it is "college-oriented" (Otto & Alwin, 1977). Additionally, Coleman noted that "of the things a boy can do, athletic success seemed to be the clearest and most direct way to gain membership in the leading crowd" (Coleman, 1961, p. 123).

Spurred by Coleman, Schafer and Armer (1968) and Rehberg and Schafer (1968) provided evidence that "athletics attracts boys from all classes in about equal proportion" (Rehberg & Schafer, 1968, p. 738).

School attendance is universally recognized as an important variable in student achievement. Student activity participants missed an average of 4.9 days of school while the average member of the student body missed 10.8 days per year in a North Dakota High School Activities Association Study (National Federation of State High School Associations, 1985). The same study reported that no respondent school had reported a dropout among students who had participated in activities programs during the 1984-1985 school year.

Minnesota high school students active in activities are absent an average of 7.44 days per year while the overall average for student absences was 8.76 days per year. Fine arts participants

were absent only 6.94 days a year. A Kansas State High School Activities Association study revealed that of 1098 students who dropped out of high school during a one-year period, only six percent were involved actively in extracurricular programs. Similar results were obtained in an independent study by the National Federation of 14 school districts in seven regions of the nation (National Federation of State High School Associations, 1985). The survey found that 96% of the dropouts in those high schools studied were not participating in activities programs at the time they dropped out of school. Twenty-nine percent of the schools surveyed reported that none of their dropouts were active participants in any extracurricular programs.

One of the significant roles allocated to our school systems across the country is the preparation of students for adult social and vocational roles. A number of studies suggest that negative school experiences may lead to youthful misbehavior and delinquency. These studies have noted the frustration caused by school failure often leads to avoidance of school activities,

misbehavior, or dropping out.

Lawrence (1985) undertook a study in which he examined characteristics of delinquent students. His research yielded two significant results. First, when students misbehave, those students involved in activities were much less likely to be treated punitively and restrictively by school personnel. Secondly, 43% of the students judged delinquent reported participating in activities only once or twice since the beginning of the school year; 17% three to four times; 10% five or more times; and 30% had never participated in activities at school. Lawrence's findings suggest that strategies taken to reduce school failure-delinquency problems among students should include increased opportunities for active involvement in the classroom and extracurricular activities. Related research by McBride (1980) and Reiter (1982) reported that delinquent behavior appears to occur more often among those students who do not frequently become involved in voluntary school programs.

Activity involvement by students facilitates the upward social mobility of those students. Activity participants from blue-collar backgrounds

are more likely to be upwardly mobile than non-participants. Several factors were identified as being contributory to this phenomenon.

Schafer and Stehr (1968) suggest that blue-collar and white-collar athletes are more likely than are non-athletes to associate with the white-collar, college-bound high school leadership group, and, as a result, their opportunity for later success is enhanced. Schafer and Rehberg (1970) found that athletes, when compared with non-athletes, are more likely to report having been encouraged by teachers and counselors to attend college. Phillips (1965) suggested another cause of upward mobility. He found that athletes tended to interact with one another more than non-athletes. This association with a circle of middle-class friends caused blue-collar athletes to develop the manners, mannerisms, attitudes, and social contacts that enhanced social mobility within student groups. Schafer and Rehberg (1965) determined that athletes tended to have close friends who possessed more positive attitudes toward education, higher aspirations, and more positive behavior patterns than the close friends of non-athletes. Otto and Alwin (1977)

determined that participation in high school activities also had a positive effect upon student incomes fifteen years after high school graduation.

Otto (1975) focused on the relationship between extracurricular activities and the educational attainment process. Otto's research provided evidence supportive of the hypothesis that student participation in extracurricular activities plays a significant role in the educational attainment process, independent of the influence of background socio-economic status, academic ability, and academic performance.

Another significant result of student participation is the positive relationship between active involvement and life-long success as an adult. The American College Testing Service studied the value of four factors in predicting success after high school. "Success" was defined as self-satisfaction and participation in a variety of community activities two years after college. The most significant factor in adult success was activity participation during high school. Not useful as predictors were: high grades in high school, high grades in college, or high ACT scores. The College Entrance Examination Board's Scholastic

Aptitude Test was similarly examined in regard to career success. It was determined that the attainment of a high SAT score did not correlate with success in a chosen career. "The best predictor of later success was a person's independent, self-sustained ventures. Teens who were active in school activities, pursued hobbies, or held jobs were found to be more likely to succeed at their chosen professions as adults" (National Federation of State High School Associations, 1985, p 2). A four year study was undertaken by the Educational Testing Service and the College Board beginning in 1979. Over 4,800 college students were studied in their first year of school, and those remaining in school, four years later. The study determined that participation in activities was a much more precise indicator of overall college performance than other evaluative criteria (National Federation of State High School Associations, 1985).

Rehberg and Schafer (1973) hypothesized that school activities may provide socialization experiences that lead to related levels of achievement in the attainment of educational goals.

They concluded that student activities involvement was contributory to the career achievement of involved students. Such findings underscored the positive relationship between active participation and success beyond the years of formal education on into adulthood.

Spady (1970, 1971) and Otto (1975, 1976) determined that extracurricular activities provided a forum for developing attitudes and skills from which status goals evolve, and upon which success is grounded.

Factors Which Affect Participation

A significant amount of research has been devoted to the identification of factors affecting the likelihood of student involvement in extracurricular activities. In many cases, individual school districts have few options at their disposal for promoting student involvement, but the development of a working-knowledge of the impact these factors exert on student participation may be very helpful in attempting to increase the percentage of students who do actively participate in the available programs.

Numerous researchers have investigated the importance of school size upon the participation

patterns of adolescents. Baird (1969), Barker and Gump (1964), and Grabe (1976), established that students attending smaller schools are more likely to participate in more sponsored activities, take part in a greater diversity of activities, and experience a greater sense of obligation to participate. Barker (1964), linked student participation to both the number of students in the institution and the number of activities available. In 1981, Grabe investigated how school size influenced the relationship between successful student participation, feelings of personal worth, and regard for the school. Grabe's findings supported earlier research of his peers.

Additionally, Grabe (1981) determined that small-school students seem to have a much easier time becoming involved, but feel greater pressure not to fail in those activities in which they do participate. Those who fail seem to evaluate themselves more negatively than comparable large-school students. Grabe did not attempt to determine the optimum school size in which all positive influence-factors are present for students.

Divoky and Schrag (1972) determined that high school sports continue to flourish and go relatively unquestioned in rural America, where activities have little competition from outside diversions for the commitment of students. In rural areas, then, the number of students who participate in activities is significantly larger percentage-wise than in larger schools, where more activity choices exist.

Eitzen (1975) studied nine high schools in which he determined that the percentage of male participation in interscholastic athletics was inversely proportional to school size. The smaller the school, the larger the percentage participation in athletics; and, conversely, the larger the school, the lower the percentage of student participation.

Participation in student activities was, also, inversely proportional to school size according to Gholson and Buser (1981). "Although the number of activities offering in the class-related category exceeded all others, the greatest portion of the students were participating in athletic/sports-related activities" (Gholson & Buser, 1981, p.45). Other significant findings of this study

included:

1. The proportion of students who actively participated in activities decreased significantly as the size of the school increased in most categories.
2. Over 90% of the students in very small schools (under 200) participated in athletic/sport-related activities, only 50% participated in schools of 500 to 999 students, and slightly over 33% of students in schools having over 1000 students.
3. The portion of students participating in drama, honors, service, publication, social, and hobby/ leisure areas was relatively constant regardless of school size (Gholson & Buser, 1981, p.46).

Rogers (1987) concluded that students in smaller high schools participate in more extracurricular activities than students from larger high schools, and, subsequently, experience a dropout rate of 2.4% compared to 4.9% in all schools which participated in his study. This finding underscores the commonly-held opinion that

activity participation not only occurs more often in small schools, but, also, that the result of that involvement is the heightened expectation that students will remain in school.

Participation in school activities has been identified as a significant factor in shaping the self-concept of involved students. Adolescent self-concept is primarily formulated by the individual's ability to live up to standards established by significant others (Mead, 1934). Coleman (1961) hypothesized that such standards are established by teen-aged peers. Coleman's research demonstrated that participation in school activities was related to greater peer approval and satisfaction with one's role. Athletic prowess and success seemed to be the clearest and most direct route to gain membership in the leading crowd.

Eitzen (1975) attempted to both replicate and extend Coleman's landmark study. Two questions guided Eitzen's research: first, does sports participation remain as the primary determinant of adolescent male status; secondly, under what conditions is sports participation the most important criterion for status among high school males? Clearly, the results of Eitzen's study

indicated that adolescents were as enthusiastic about sports as they were in the late 1950's. The popularity of sports participation was attributable to the boys' desire to do whatever they presumed would be highly rewarded by their peers. Eitzen's status attainment study is especially interesting when one examines the personal characteristics of the respondents who identified their desire to be sports stars. Factors of the individuals included:

1. Generally, the sons of under-educated fathers, sophomores, and those in the upper portion of the status hierarchy of the school were more inclined toward sports than their counterparts.
2. Students from schools with winning traditions had more positive attitudes toward athletics than students from schools which had average or poor success in athletics.
3. Students in schools with a restrictive authority structure were more likely to participate in athletics than students from more permissive schools (Eitzen, 1975, p.272-273).

Eitzen's research also yielded certain community-related factors which positively affect student participation. Small rural communities generally become more enthusiastic about their local high school activities. The activities provide much of the entertainment within the community, and success by the participants generates community pride and cohesiveness. The result of this community support is increased student desire to be recognized as an athletic star. Communities having a high proportion of non-professionals and high poverty are, also, more likely to have students who are motivated to be athletic stars than those communities with a higher concentration of professionals with higher income levels.

Student participation in activities as a function of the personality type of potential student participants was the subject of a study by Barrett and Connot (1986). "Personality type was found to have a direct relationship to student participation in school activities and student achievement" (Barrett & Connot, 1986, p.44). Those students who frequently participated in activities also had the highest academic achievement. The

converse was true for those students who infrequently participated. Intuitive students were involved in the most clubs while introverted students were the least involved group, whether it be in athletic or non-athletic activities (Barrett & Connot, 1986, p.44)

A study of Appalachian students identified a significant relationship between a father's education and the participation in clubs, activities, and sports by his offspring (Reck, Reck, & Keefe, 1983). "In all three types of formal participation, students whose fathers have less than a high school education are much less likely to participate than those whose fathers have either a high school degree or some form of post-secondary education" (p.6). The lack of a completed formal education by the fathers also tended to place them in a lower socio-economic group than those fathers who had completed more formal educational programs.

Contemporary high school students have joined the work force in larger numbers than any earlier generation. Bachman (1983) found that nearly 80% of 1982 high school senior males reported working,

and, D'Amico (1986) reported that 42% and 46% of tenth grade females and males, respectively, were working. Gottfredson (1985) found similar rates, but found the rates varied widely, dependent upon the grade, gender, and race of the students.

The significant number of students working during the school year and the resultant impact upon participation in school activities was the subject of Gottfredson's study. He examined the impact of work upon the educational life of 2,000 students from across the country. Gottfredson found that "spending time in the workplace reduces school enjoyment, time spent on homework, and peer closeness" (Gottfredson, 1985, p.71). However, he reported in his summary results that "workers of both genders report significantly greater involvement in extracurricular activities than do non-workers" (Gottfredson, 1985, p 69). Additionally, Gottfredson stated, "Working has no effect on the commitment to education, attachment to school or attachment to parents" (Gottfredson, 1985, p.70).

Contradictory findings emerged from D'Amico's (1986) study. He found that "more work involvement during high school is associated with decreased

study time and decreased involvement in extracurricular activities in school " (D'Amico, 1985, p. 65). The High School and Beyond Research (1981) determined that there was no significant difference in participation between those sophomore and senior students who did or did not work for pay, nor did the number of hours worked per week affect participation.

Dawis and Sung (1984) conducted a study to "investigate the belief that student abilities and interests result from their differential participation in school-related activities" (Dawis & Sung, 1984, p. 167). The results of the study indicated that student participation is related more to interests than to abilities for both male and female students.

Participation patterns as a variable of gender has been scrutinized by several researchers and has yielded interesting data. Coleman (1961) and Eitzen (1975) conducted significant research as to how males wanted to be remembered: athletic star, brilliant student, or most popular student. The overwhelming male response in both studies was "athletic star". Coleman also examined female

students' responses as to how they would like to be remembered but substituted "leader in activities," rather than "athletic star". Feltz (1978) duplicated Coleman's study while presenting females the identical choices Coleman and Eitzen had presented males, plus the choice of being "a leader in activities." Feltz's female respondents ranked an athletic star last in priority. The significant difference in responses was attributed to the fact that males and females were socialized to different role expectations for sport participation.

The implementation of Title IX and its resultant impact upon female participation patterns and status beliefs prompted Williams and White to initiate their study in 1983. The results of the study supported the hypothesis that "athletic star would remain the primary determinant for high school status among the male population, and, that males would choose athletic star more often than would female subjects" (Williams & White, 1983, p. 384). The results suggest that the socialization process in our culture places greater emphasis and prestige on athletic competition for boys than it does for girls. The similarity of responses by

both males and females, in part, reflects the increased number of participation opportunities available to females since the adoption of Title IX guidelines.

Gholson and Buser (1981) determined that female involvement in activities exceeded that of males in all categories except athletic and hobby/leisure-related activities. Female participation was nearly 35%, with females participating more extensively than males by a ratio of three-to-two in non-athletic-related activities.

The Wilson Report (1987) studied the transformation in parental attitudes toward female sports participation. Eighty-seven percent of today's parents expressed their belief that sports participation is as important for their daughters as it is for their sons. Additionally, most parents actively encourage their daughters to play sports. Other significant discoveries of the study included: the discovery that 82% of girls are currently involved in some form of sports or fitness; that the primary motivating factor for participation was "fun"; and that girls tend to

drop out of activities as they get older. Over 85% of seven to ten year old girls are involved, but only 75% of 15-18 year olds remain active. "Other interests" were cited by 88% of the girls as the reason they discontinued participation. The primary "other interest" was an "interest in boys," according to 47% of older girls and 39% of girls, overall (Wilson Sporting Goods Co., 1988).

The Wilson Report also indicated that mothers are the primary encouragers of their daughters' sports involvement. Fathers become significant motivators only as girls grow older. Girls who play sports are, also, more likely than non-participants to come from families where their parents played sports as students and the parents have continued to be active sports participants as adults.

The state of Illinois undertook a study in 1980 as part of the High School and Beyond Study, a national longitudinal study of high school sophomores and seniors. The extensive data collected yielded interesting insights into the participation patterns of 3,393 Illinois students. A summary of significant findings from the Illinois report included:

1. Students enrolled in academic programs had significantly larger proportions of participation than did students in vocational or general programs.
2. The higher the groups' grade-point average, the greater the degree of participation and number of activities in which students were involved.
3. Groups of students who spent more time on homework had a larger proportion of participation.
4. More students who rated school discipline as excellent were highly active than those who rated discipline as poor.
5. Significantly larger proportions of students who had not experienced suspension from school were highly active.
6. Both sophomores and seniors who were satisfied with the education offered by their school had significantly higher proportions of active participation.
7. One in four students who reported that they were not interested in school were

inactive.

8. No consistent pattern of participation was reported on the basis of family income.
9. No consistent pattern of participation was reported on the basis of frequency of church attendance.
10. Seniors were more likely to participate in three or more activities than were sophomores.

Why Students Do Not Participate in Activities

Research into the specific causes of non-participation among students is both sketchy and incomplete. Researchers have tended to study factors descriptive of non-participants and have not directly studied reasons for students choosing to remain uninvolved. However, some possible reasons for restricted student participation have been identified. These include: student fees, transportation difficulties, inadequate grade-point averages, age, sex, scheduling conflicts, enrollment in academic courses, lack of relevancy, poor sponsor leadership, marital status, state activity association requirements, and domination of activities by social cliques (Jackson, 1974).

Gholson (1976) indicated that student

employment outside the school day was the reason most often-stated by students when they were questioned about why they do not become involved in activities. Other reasons cited were: activities scheduled after school, irrelevant activities, not chosen for activity, activities controlled by cliques, and low grades.

Additional researchers have concluded that costs, dress and grooming codes, and student guidelines for student participation have emerged as contributing reasons for student non-participation (Bailey, 1970). Jackson (1974) expressed his concern that some restriction prohibited or reduced student participation unfairly.

Buser and Long (1975) concluded that faculty members lack total commitment to the student activity program which results in decreased student participation.

Evans and Wagner (1971) suggest that student participation is limited by the inability of some students to afford activities stating "many high school students are barred from taking part in some student activities simply because they can not

afford to participate" (Buser & Long, 1975, p. 24).

"The rules or methods for selection of membership in student activities have been the cause of student alienation in some high schools," according to Richard Negri (Allen & Gansneder, 1977, p.11).

Principals and students, alike, were surveyed to determine the most significant problem areas in their respective schools. The most significant problem identified by the principals was the lack of participation by some students. The most often mentioned reason for non-participation was irrelevance of the offered activities to the needs of the students (Vornberg, Zukowski, Southern, & Gipson, 1983).

Barret and Connot (1986) examined student activity participation as a function of student personality-type. Students had tendencies, preferences, and characteristics inherent within their personalities which played a significant role in the students' desire to participate, and, upon achievement in school. Personality-type had a direct relationship to student participation in activities and student achievement. Those students who had high participation in activities also

exhibited high achievement academically. Students who participated at a low percentage, also, had the lowest academic achievement. The significant data of the research was the determination that participation in activities by students could be positively or negatively affected by the degree of congruence between the activity and the students' personality-type.

The decade of the 1980's has brought with it a proliferation of activities for students of all ages. Commensurate with the increased number of students participating in more activities at an earlier age is the increase in the number of dropouts. At about age eleven many youngsters abruptly drop out of sports competition. (Brown, 1988). The percentage of youths who participate in organized sports throughout the country drops off drastically at age eleven and continues through age eighteen. The most often-stated reason for discontinuing participation was the lack of continued interest.

A limited amount of research information is available concerning the reasons for student non-participation. In those studies completed the

primary means used to determine the reasons for non-participation have been traditional questionnaires and surveys. Consequently, the results may have questionable validity since many of the underlying reasons have not been possible to discover. In an attempt to more accurately determine the reasons for student disinterest in activities, this study will employ an alternative method to gather data. The specific methodology utilized in this study was a combination of a modified Delphi-approach and a Q-Sort technique. The use of these methods allowed for thorough involvement of the non-participants in group discussions and in the rank-ordering of those factors identified as having a significant impact upon the participation patterns of Plattsmouth High School students.

CHAPTER THREE

Design of the Study

The purpose of this study was to determine the reasons why some students at Plattsmouth High School did not choose to participate in any extracurricular activities.

Population

The subjects of this study were those students enrolled at Plattsmouth High School in the 1988-1989 school year who did not participate in any school-sponsored extracurricular activities.

With the assistance of the Activity Director and Attendance Secretary at Plattsmouth High School, the identities of the non-participating members of the student body were determined. This was accomplished by compiling a student membership list which included the names of all 498 students enrolled in school. The names of all students who completed an athletic season and/or held membership in a school-sponsored activity or club were eliminated from the student membership list. The students whose names were not eliminated using the

described process became the non-participant subjects of this study. The subject list included 191 students and included: 64 ninth graders (37 males, 27 females); 37 tenth graders (18 males, 19 females); 43 eleventh graders (22 males, 21 females); and 47 twelfth graders (25 males, 22 females).

In addition to the 191 non-participants, 42 participant students (21 males, 21 females) were selected to take part in this study. Three male and three female participating students enrolled in each of the seven study halls were randomly selected to join the non-participant students in group sessions. These participant students were included in the groups in order to conceal from the non-participants the fact that they were the true subjects of the study. Throughout the study the responses of the participants were not tabulated.

Procedure

The 191 non-participant students and 42 participant students were divided into 14 groups. This was achieved by dividing the students into seven groups according to the student's period of assignment to study hall. Each of these seven groups were further divided according to student

gender resulting in the establishment of 14 total groups. The groups varied in size from 15 to 20 students.

The fourteen groups of students were utilized by assigning each of the groups to one of three rounds of group activity. The three rounds consisted of the following groupings: Round One- two groups of males and two groups of females. Round Two- two groups of males and two groups of females. Round Three- three groups of males and three groups of females. Each of the groups was randomly assigned by lot to a round and met only once.

In order to maximize student participation in the process of discovering the underlying reasons for student non-participation, a modified Delphi approach was utilized in Rounds One and Two. The Delphi approach was deemed appropriate for use in this study since its principal characteristics include: an opportunity for respondents to personally respond to posed questions rather than simply responding to a questionnaire; successive interactions to questions is feasible; the opportunity for all subjects to initiate opinions;

and, the ability to delve into specific student responses exists.

The four groups consisting of 20 males and 16 females assigned to Round One met independently. Each of the involved groups was given a brief explanation of the nature of the study and was apprised of the guidelines to be followed in the group brainstorming sessions in which they would participate. The students in each of the Round One groups were asked to respond to the question: Why do you believe other students do not choose to participate in extracurricular activities at Plattsburgh High School? (Appendix A)

Student responses were written on the overhead projector and each of the sessions was audio-recorded for later reference. When all student responses were obtained, the students were asked to expand upon and discuss each of the reasons listed by the individual group members. A separate listing of responses for each of the groups was maintained. Following the individual meetings of all the groups assigned to Round One, a composite list of all female and male responses was independently compiled. The various reasons for non-participation identified by Round One groups

provided the basis for Round Two group sessions.

Round Two was composed of 24 males divided into two groups and 14 females divided into two groups. Again using a modified Delphi approach, the groups were given a summation of the responses given by the Round One group members. Each group was asked to discuss the reasons for non-participation cited by earlier groups and the students in each group were allowed the opportunity to add additional reasons for non-participation to the existing list. Additionally, each group was asked to further delineate the reasons for non-participation by listing the specific reasons underlying the general reasons cited by students in the Round One groups. At the conclusion of Round Two, the additional responses and underlying reasons for participation were added to the reasons which had been identified through Round One discussions. A separate list of male and female responses was maintained. The reasons for non-participation cited on each list were edited to include only the 35 most often-mentioned reasons from Round One and Round Two student groups. The remaining three groups of females and three groups

of males not included in Rounds One and Two were assigned to Round Three and participated in a Q-Sort exercise in order to determine the relative significance of each of the reasons for non-participation cited by the groups in Rounds One and Two. Round Three groups included 58 males and 59 females.

The objective of the Q-Sort was to determine the importance each of the Round Three students attached to each of the identified reasons for student non-participation. Each of the members of the Round Three groups was given a set of 35 index cards. Each card contained one of the reasons cited for non-participation. The individual students were instructed to shuffle the cards prior to engaging in the sort process in order to guarantee that the cards were placed in random order. Students were then instructed to place the cards along a seven point continuum according to the importance he/she felt the reason listed on the card had upon the patterns of non-participation by students at Plattsmouth High School. The seven point continuum ranged from least important reason for non-participation to most important reason for non-participation. Students sorting the cards were

instructed to place the cards along the continuum in any order they felt appropriate, but, only five cards could be placed in each of the seven piles. This requirement was used in order to provide for a normal distribution of responses. A handout describing the process for the sorting of cards was distributed to each of the students and its contents explained carefully before the sorting process took place. (Appendix B, C, and E)

Upon completion of the sorting process, each of the students was asked to place the seven piles of cards in the appropriately numbered envelopes provided. The envelopes were then collected and the cards tabulated by the researcher. (Appendix A and F)

The individual statements were scored using the numbers assigned to the successive categories that related to a degree of favorableness expressed by the students. The piles were scored ranging from one for the least important reasons for non-participation to seven for the most important reasons for non-participation. Point totals were tabulated for each of the 35 statements by multiplying the number of cards placed in each of

the seven categories by the students by the number assigned to that pile (one through seven). A sum total was then determined for each of the 35 statements. The point totals were used to place the statements in the order of importance as determined by the ranking students. The higher the point total, the more importance the students attached to the stated reason as a factor in the non-participation of students. The lower the point total, the less importance the students attached to the stated reason as a factor in the non-participation of students.

CHAPTER FOUR

Presentation and Analysis of Data

This study sought to identify the reasons why some students at Plattsmouth High School chose not to participate in any available extracurricular activities. Following the identification of the major reasons for non-participation, the Q-Sort technique was chosen as the method to determine the importance students attached to each of the identified reasons for non-participation. Male and female reasons for non-participation were gathered independent of one another and the Q-Sort method was used to determine separate rankings for each gender group. Point totals for each of the thirty-five reasons for non-participation were determined by assigning points to each of seven categories in the Q-Sort process. When the point totals were determined, the reasons for non-participation were placed in rank-order from one to thirty-five. The results of the Q-Sort process for males are displayed in Table 1. The reasons for non-participation are placed in rank-order of importance as determined by the male non-participant population.

Table 1

Male Rankings of Reasons for Non-Participation

<u>Points</u>	<u>Rank</u>	<u>Reason for Non-Participation</u>
350	1	Students don't participate because they have a job which conflicts with before and after school activities.
289	2	Students don't participate because they have a job in order to earn money for college.
285	3	Students don't participate because of the conflict with completing homework/school assignments.
274	4	Students don't participate because they have a job so they can become independent from their parents.
269	5	Students don't participate because they feel they do not have the talent to do well in any activities.
265	6	Students don't participate because they don't like the sponsor/coach.
264	7	Students don't participate because parents won't let them because grades might drop.
259	8	Students don't participate because they don't like school and don't want to get involved.
255	9	Students don't participate because no programs exist which meet their interests.
253	10	Students don't participate because they had a bad experience when they were in a previous activity.

Table 1 Continued

<u>Points</u>	<u>Rank</u>	<u>Reason for Non-Participation</u>
252	11	Students don't participate because of lack of encouragement by coaches/sponsors.
246	12	Students don't participate because coaches/sponsors discourage students from participating by showing favoritism to some participants.
244	13	Students don't participate because their friends are non-participants and friends discourage them from participating.
242	14-15	Students don't participate because they don't want to work hard enough to do well in activities.
242	14-15	Students don't participate because they don't have enough confidence to try.
240	16	Students don't participate because they feel inferior when around new groups of students.
238	17	Students don't participate because they have grades below the minimum standards.
234	18	Students don't participate because they don't want to take the chance of failing while trying something new.
231	19	Students don't participate because they have a job in order to help support their family.
225	20	Students don't participate because those students who do participate don't encourage them to participate.

Table 1 Continued

<u>Points</u>	<u>Rank</u>	<u>Reason for Non-Participation</u>
224	21	Parents won't allow sons to participate because they need them to work at home after school.
223	22	Students don't participate because they don't have enough money to buy needed supplies and equipment.
222	23	Students don't participate because of fear of physical injury.
218	24- 25	Students don't participate because they have a job in order to buy a car in order to impress the girls.
218	24- 25	Students don't participate because their peers don't attend the activities.
215	26	Students don't participate because they don't want to be part of a losing program.
212	27	Students don't participate because they don't have transportation to and from school activities/ practices.
211	28	Students don't participate because they don't want to be labeled by other students as a jock, brain, brownie, etc.
205	29	Students don't participate because girlfriends want boyfriends to spend time with them, not activities.
200	30	Students don't participate because those who do participate discourage others from joining.
195	31	Students don't participate because they have a job in order to buy a car to become popular.

Table 1 Continued

<u>Points</u>	<u>Rank</u>	<u>Reason for Non-Participation</u>
193	32	Students don't participate because the rules for participants are too strict/unfair.
178	33	Students don't participate because parents wouldn't attend performances if they did participate.
152	34	Students don't participate because parents don't want them to because the parents didn't participate when in school.
117	35	Students don't participate because their parents won't let them because they don't want their children to do better than they did when they were in school.

The data collected from the non-participant female students and the subsequent Q-Sort activity duplicated the procedures outlined for the male subjects. The reasons for non-participation identified by the females and the rank-order of each reason's relative significance as identified by the female subjects is displayed in Table 2. Some items identified by female non-participants are similar to the male responses but no comparison or correlation between gender responses was made. Each of the gender groups were treated totally independently in this study.

Table 2

Female Rankings of Reasons for Non-Participation

<u>Points</u>	<u>Rank</u>	<u>Reason for Non-Participation</u>
298	1	Students don't participate because coaches/sponsors play favorites.
286	2- 3	Students don't participate because they are afraid to be "put down"
286	2- 3	Students don't participate because of physical/health limitations.
277	4	Students don't participate because they don't want to be embarrassed in front of their peers.
275	5	Students don't participate because they work in order to pay their own living expenses.
270	6	Students don't participate because their grades are too low to meet the minimum standards.
266	7	Students don't participate because parents fear grades will drop due to time spent on activities.
265	8- 9	Students don't participate because the cost for supplies/equipment is too high.
265	8- 9	Students don't participate because they don't want to risk being rejected.
256	10- 11	Students don't participate because of lack of transportation to and from activities.
256	10- 11	Students don't participate because they don't have enough confidence to try something new.

Table 2 Continued

<u>Points</u>	<u>Rank</u>	<u>Reason for Non-Participation</u>
252	12	Students don't participate because they work to help pay family expenses.
251	13	Students don't participate because no activities are offered which meet their interests/abilities.
248	14	Students don't participate because sponsors/coaches compare them with older brothers/sisters.
246	15	Students don't participate because they won't be accepted by the "inn crowd" of participants.
241	16	Students don't participate because they feel activities take too much time away from being with friends.
240	17- 18	Students don't participate because participation would take time away from being with boyfriend.
240	17- 18	Students don't participate because they need to work in order to buy a car to achieve independence.
239	19	Students don't participate because they have had a bad experience when they tried activities before.
238	20	Students don't participate because they don't have any abilities to offer to activities.
237	21	Students don't participate because parents would not attend activities.
231	22	Students don't participate because they have never been encouraged by peers to participate.

Table 2 Continued

<u>Points</u>	<u>Rank</u>	<u>Reason for Non-Participation</u>
227	23	Students don't participate because sponsors/coaches are too critical.
226	24- 25	Students don't participate because sponsors/coaches don't encourage them to participate.
226	24- 25	Students don't participate because they can't live up to the expectations set by parents.
225	26	Students don't participate because their parents are not supportive.
218	27	Students don't participate because they might be successful and have to live up to higher standards.
202	28- 29	Students don't participate because they feel the rules you have to follow are too strict.
202	28- 29	Students don't participate because they might have to change their group of friends.
187	30	Students don't participate because they have a job to buy a car to be popular.
186	31	Students don't participate because they prefer to be by themselves, rather than with other students.
185	32	Students don't participate because their old peer group won't accept them if they do participate.
182	33	Students don't participate because parents aren't supportive.
163	34	Students don't participate because boys don't want their girlfriends to be involved in

activities.

153	35	Students don't participate because parents don't want them to since parents didn't participate when in school.
-----	----	--

The point totals indicated in column one of Table 1 varied from a high of 350 points to a low of 117 points. The maximum number of points which could have been accumulated for any reason for non-participation was 419 while the minimum possible point total was 59.

The maximum and minimum point totals possible for female responses reported in Table 2 were 412 maximum and 58 minimum.

The 35 reasons for non-participation cited by the male and female students involved in the Q-Sort process all have importance even though some statements were considered to be more important than others by the students involved in the study. The use of the Delphi method gave each student the opportunity to state reasons he/she individually considered significant, and the very mention of a reason by a student gives the reason credibility.

No relationships or correlations were made between those reasons for non-participation cited

by the two gender groups. Each gender group was isolated throughout this study and the data collected for each group should be treated independently. The conclusions and recommendations included in Chapter Five of this study consider the male and female data separately.

CHAPTER FIVE

Summary, Conclusions, and Recommendations

Extensive research has been undertaken in the past which substantiates the positive correlation between student participation in extracurricular activities and success in adult life. As a result, educators and parents have advocated and supported the active involvement of students in activities through the organization of an assortment of activities in schools across the country.

The recent decrease in student participation patterns at Plattsmouth High School provided the impetus for this research project. The purpose of this study was to determine the reasons why some male and female students at Plattsmouth High School do not choose to participate in any extracurricular activities.

In order to identify the underlying reasons for non-participation it was determined that all non-participating students would be utilized in this study and that a unique combination of data-gathering techniques would be used.

The 191 non-participant students were divided into groups according to gender. The student groups were each assigned to one of three rounds

and met independently of one another. Males and females were segregated from one another throughout the study.

Rounds One and Two used a modified Delphi approach to identify the individual reasons students had for choosing not to participate. The student-initiated reasons for non-participation were discussed and the 35 most often cited reasons were recorded for use in Round Three group sessions.

In Round Three, male and female non-participants not utilized in Rounds One and Two met in gender segregated groups to rank-order those reasons discussed in Rounds One and Two. Using the Q-Sort process, each student was given 35 index cards with one individual reason written on each card. The students placed the cards in seven piles of five cards each along a continuum ranging from least significant reason for non-participation to most significant reason for non-participation. Once the sorting process was completed, a score was assigned to each of the reasons. The reasons were then placed in rank-order from one to thirty-five according to the point total determined for each

reason for non-participation. A separate rank-order list was assembled for each gender group.

Conclusions Regarding the Process Used

1. The Delphi method for data gathering was very effective and resulted in a maximum amount of student participation. Even though the students involved in the study were those who did not become involved in extracurricular activities they did share openly their reasons for non-participation.
2. The use of participant students in the initial two rounds of discussion to disguise the identity of the "actual" study group was effective. At no time was any statement made by non-participants that they were the real subjects. Also, the inclusion of the "seeded" students seemed to promote discussion among the other students.
3. Students involved in the study indicated a genuine interest in the results of the study. Several students asked to be apprised of the results when they were available.
4. The Q-Sort process resulted in the rank ordering of the 35 items according to the individual philosophies of the ranking

students. The use of more traditional means would not have resulted in such a personal reporting process.

Conclusions Regarding Male Findings

1. The male non-participants are actively employed at part-time jobs which adversely affect participation in activities. Three of the four highest ranked reasons for non-participation involved student employment.

2. The lack of parental support for students was not a significant problem in the opinion of the non-participants. Although identified in Rounds One and Two, the students in the Q-Sort placed the related items 33rd, 34th, and 35th in the rank-order process.

3. The eligibility requirements established for participation were not perceived as overly restrictive. Students ranked it 32nd of 35 reasons for non-participation.

4. The issue of girlfriend discouragement was ranked 29th and is not a significant factor in non-participation.

5. Males perceive a connection between

participation and the ability to complete school assignments as it ranked 3rd and 7th. Students discern that academic performance suffers from participation in activities.

6. Some students do not possess the self-confidence to attempt activity participation as it was ranked fifth among the 35 reasons.

7. The lack of rapport between some coaches/sponsors and students was identified as it ranked sixth. Additionally, coach/sponsor related reasons for non-participation were ranked 11th and 12th by males.

8. The cost of participation was mentioned but ranked only 22nd as a significant factor. The lack of financial resources does not prohibit large numbers of students from participating.

9. Some male students do not feel that programs exist which meet individual needs or talents. The ninth place ranking does indicate that a sizeable number of students feel they are "left out."

10. The concern over being part of a "losing" program is a factor in male non-participation but was ranked 26th and does not cause a disproportionate number of males to avoid

participation.

Conclusions Regarding Female Findings

1. Female non-participants perceive a lack of objectivity by coaches/sponsors. Whether this factor is perceived or real can not be determined but does have a significant effect upon participation patterns due to its overwhelming margin in points over any of the other 34 reasons for non-participation.

2. Female non-participants are very concerned about the possibility of being "put down", embarrassed, or rejected as identified in ranking related items second, fourth, eighth, and ninth. The lack of self-confidence and self-esteem could be significant factors with non-participant females.

3. Job related reasons for non-participation were not ranked among the top reasons for non-participation with the exception of the fifth ranked reason in which females identified the need to pay their own way as a factor.

4. The sixth ranking reason for non-participation is the lack of an adequate grade average to allow participation. This high ranking is not consistent with the actual number of

ineligible females and may be a perception which is inaccurate among some females. However, grades are a factor as females rank-ordered grade-related items sixth and seventh.

5. The cost of participation in some activities is a deterrent to some females as noted by its eighth place ranking. Females are involved in several activities such as cheerleading and drill team which do require a sizeable outlay of resources.

6. Some females are discouraged from participation due to the lack of transportation to and from practices or actual activities.

7. Although the lack of parental support is a concern of some females, the ranking of the related reasons 21st, 26th, 33rd, and 35th would indicate the lack of a significant problem in this area.

8. The discouragement of females by boyfriends does not seem to be a major factor in participation patterns of females.

9. The lack of support by peers ranked 28th, 29th, and 32nd. Peers, thus, do not seem to negatively impact female participation patterns.

Recommendations

The results of this study will be invaluable

to the Plattsmouth Community Schools in an attempt to promote student participation. Significant insights into the attitudes of students toward their coaches/sponsors, peers, and parents should provide ample opportunities to deal with specific problems underlying the general pattern of indifference toward activities by some students.

The following recommendations are appropriate as a result of the reasons for non-participation determined through this study:

1. The school district should make an effort to advise parents of the positive impact activity participation can have on their sons/daughters. Some of the students have identified parental concerns which are not consistent with research findings. An effort to educate parents may assist in the development of additional parental understanding of the positive role activities do play in the total education of a student.

2. Coaches/sponsors of activities involving females should be made aware of the perception that some students are shown favoritism. An effort should be made to study present practices and regulations as well as the scheduling of in-

service opportunities for coaches/sponsors to refine human relations skills.

3. Appropriate personnel should be used to work with local employers to assist in the establishment of reasonable expectations for students so that employed students will be able to participate in activities, as well as work. Coaches/sponsors also might also work with the administration to develop more flexible practice or meeting schedules. Open communication channels would possibly provide additional cooperation with the students becoming the beneficiaries.

4. Guidance counselors might become more pro-active in advising and assisting students in their attempt to obtain necessary resources to attend college or other post-secondary institutions. The over-reliance on student-generated income might be reduced if other financial assistance were more aggressively sought.

5. Students attitudes and participation patterns might be improved through a more thorough public relations effort throughout the educational system to explain the positive impact activity participation might have on students' success in life after high school. Several of the concerns

voiced by the students indicate a very shallow understanding of activities, in general, and the value of participation, specifically.

6. Additional efforts should be undertaken to enhance student self-confidence and self-esteem. Several of the reasons for non-participation alluded to the lack of these key factors. Concentration on activities in which students can achieve success beginning at an early age might be beneficial along with additional activities through the prevailing student advisement program. This attempt should include a conscientious effort on the part of each coach and activity sponsor to make certain that every prospective participant is given individual encouragement and assistance.

7. School administrators and coaches/sponsors should seek additional funding where necessary to provide the resources necessary to overcome the problem of students not being able to afford to participate in some activities. Alternative revenue sources or school subsidies might be useful.

8. Finally, a committee of coaches, sponsors, and administrators should be established to monitor progress in reversing the pattern of non-

participation. The establishment of both short and long-term goals should be established and continuous evaluation of the progress of the committee's actions should be undertaken.

Activity participation by all students is an unreasonable goal. However, the concerted use of the information gathered in this study can be of considerable value to the attainment of a significant increase in student participation patterns at Plattsmouth High School. This study has been very insightful in the identification of the significant reasons for non-participation and will provide the necessary information to launch an organized attempt to remove some of the arbitrary barriers to student participation.

REFERENCES

- Allen, H.W., & Gansneder, B. (1977). Student perceptions about student activities. High School Journal, (60), 10-15.
- Alley, L.E. (1974). Athletics in education: The double-edged sword. Phi Delta Kappan, (Oct.), 102-113.
- Armer, M. (1968). Athletes are not inferior students. Transaction, (5), 21-26, 61-62.
- Bailey, S.K. (1970). Disruption in urban public secondary schools. NASSP Bulletin, (54), 27.
- Baird, L. (1969). Big school, small school: A critical examination of the hypothesis. Journal of Educational Psychology, (60), 253-260.
- Ballentine, R.J. (1981). What research says: About the correlation between athletic participation and academic achievement. Educational Resources Information Center. (ED233994).
- Barker, R., & Gump, P. (1964). Big school, small school: High school size and student behavior. Stanford, California: Stanford University Press.

- Barrett, L., & Connott, R. (1986). Knowing student personality can help school, classroom, and activity participation. NASSP Bulletin, (69), 39-43.
- Bend, E. (1968). The impact of athletic participation on academic and career aspiration and achievement. New Brunswick, N.J.: National Football Foundation.
- Boyer, E. (1983). High School. Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement for the Advancement of Teaching, 207.
- Brown, G. (1988). Why kids drop out of sports. Athletic Business, July, 27.
- Buser, R.L. (1971). What's happening in student activities in the schools of the seventies. NASSP Bulletin, (60), 73-75. Buser, R.L.,
- Long, R., & Tweedy, H. (1975). The who, what, why, and why not of student activity participation. Phi Delta Kappan, (October), 73-75.
- Coleman, J.S. (1961). The adolescent society: The social life of the teenager and its impact on education. New York: Free Press, 120-131.
- D' Amico, R. (1985). Does working in high school impair academic progress. Sociology of Education , 62-75.

- Dawis, R.V., & Sung, Y.H. (1984). The relationship of participation in school activities to abilities and interests in high school student sample. Journal of Vocational Behavior, (24), 159-168.
- Dishman, R.K., Ickes, W., & Morgan, W.P. (1980). Self-motivation and adherence to habitual physical activity. Journal of Social Psychology, (10), 115-132.
- Divoky, D., & Schrag, J. (1972). Football and cheers. Saturday Review, (November), 59-65.
- Durbin, B.B. (1986). High school athletics: A valuable educational experience. NASSP Bulletin, (70), 32-34.
- Eitzen, D.S. (1975). Athletics in the status system of male adolescents: A replication of Coleman's The Adolescent Society. Adolescence, (10), 267-275.
- Evans, B., & Wagner, H. (1971). Have students activity costs gotten out of hand? NASSP Bulletin, (55), 22-33.
- Feltz, D.L. (1978). Athletics in the status system of female adolescents. Review of Sports and Leisure, (25), 98-108.
- Fritch, G.H., & Clark, R. (1984). Extracurricular

- activities: Academic incentive or nonessential functions. Clearinghouse, (57), 325-327.
- Gallup, G.H. (1978). The tenth annual Gallup Poll of the public's attitude toward the public schools. Phi Delta Kappan, (60) 40-44.
- Gholson, R.R. (1985). Student achievement and cocurricular activity participation. NASSP Bulletin, (69), 17-20.
- Gholson, R.R., & Buser, R.L. (1981). Student activities: A guide for determining who is participating in what. NASSP Bulletin, (65), 66-71.
- Gottfredson, D.C. (1985). Is work beneficial to teenagers? NASSP Bulletin, (69), 66-71.
- Grabe, M. (1976). Big school, small school: Impact of the high school environment. Contemporary Educational Psychology, (1), 20-25.
- Grabe, M. (1981). School size and the importance of school activities. Adolescence, (16), 21-29.
- Graham, G. (1964). Student activities: An overview and a rationale. NASSP Bulletin, (48), 1-16.
- Hamilton, H. (1960). The educational values of applied research of pupil activities. Texas

Study of Secondary Education, 36.

Hanks, M.P., & Eckland, B.K. (1974). Athletics and social participation in the educational attainment process. Sociology of Education, (49), 271-294.

Hansen, C.W., & Terry, P.W. (1950).

Extracurricular activities. Encyclopedia of Educational Research. London: Macmillan Co., 425-426.

Harvancik, M.J., & Golsan, G. (1986). Academic success and participation in high school extracurricular activities: Is there a relationship? Paper presented to American Psychological Association, Washington, D.C., 1986.

Hedgepeth, W.D. (1981). A comparison among students' extracurricular involvement, school attendance, GPA, and other selected variables. Dissertation Abstracts International, (42), 2400.

Johnson, J.S. (1982). Sports participation and psychological adjustment. International Social Science Journal, (34), 272-276.

Landers, D.M., Felitz, D.L., Obermeier, G.E., & Brouse, T.R. (1978). Socialization vs

interscholastic athletics: Its effects on educational attainment. Research Quarterly, (49), 475-483.

Lawrence, R. (1985). School performance, containment theory, and delinquent behavior. Youth and Society, (17), 69-95.

Long, R., Buser, R., & Jackson, M. (1977). Student activities in the seventies: A survey report. Reston, Va.: NASSP, 7.

Loy, J.W., McPherson, B.D., & Kenyan, G. (1978). What research says: About the correlation between athletic participation and academic achievement, Educational Resources Information Center, (41), 1872.

McBride, A. (1980). The perceived effects of discontinued extracurricular activities on public schools. Dissertation Abstracts International, (41), 1872.

Mead, G. (1934). Mind, self, and society. Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 113-120.

National Federation of State High School Associations. (1985). The case for high school activities. Federation Newsletter, (85), 1-4.

Negri, R. (1973). The perceptions of students, teachers, and administrators toward selected

aspects of student activity programs in high schools in St. Louis County, Missouri.

(Unpublished doctoral dissertation, Southern Illinois University, Carbondale, 1973).

- Otto, L.B. Extracurricular activities in the educational attainment process. Rural Sociology, (40), 171.
- Otto, L.B., & Alwin, D.F. (1977). Athletics, aspirations, and attainments. Sociology of Education, (42), 102-113.
- Phillips, J.C. (1965). Motivation for participation in athletics: An exploratory study. Unpublished master's thesis. San Jose State College, San Jose California.
- Phillips, J.C., & Schafer, W.E. (1971). Consequences of participation in interscholastic sports. Pacific Sociological Review, (14), 328-337.
- Reck, U.M., Reck, G.G., & Keefe, S.E. (1982). The effects of ethnicity, class, and residence on student participation in a southern Appalachian high school. A report for Appalachian State University.
- Rehberg, R.A. (1969). Behavioral and attitudinal consequences of high school interscholastic

sports: a speculative consideration.

Adolescence , (4), 69-88.

Rehberg, R.A. & Schafer, W.E. (1968).

Participation in interscholastic athletics and college expectations. American Journal of Sociology, (73), 732-740).

Rehberg, R.A. & Schafer, W.E. (1973).

Participation in student activities as a variable in the educational attainment and expectation process. Educational Abstracts, (60), 20.

Rehberg, R.A., & Schafer, W.E. (1987). Adolescent educational expectations and high school interscholastic athletics. Paper presented to the American Sociological Association Convention.

Rogers, R.G. (1987). Is big better? Fact or fad concerning school district organization. Paper presented to American Association of School Administrators, New Orleans, La.

Schafer, W.A., & Rehberg, R.A. (1970). Athletic participation, college aspirations, and college encouragement. Pacific Sociological Review, (93), 182-186.

Soltz, D.F. (1986). Athletics and academic

- achievement: What is the relationship? NASSP Bulletin, (70), 21-24.
- Sowa, C.J., & Gressard, C.F. (1983). Athletic participation: Its relationship to student development. Journal of College Student Personnel, (67), 236-239.
- Spady, W.G. (1970). Lament of the lettermen: Effects of peer status and extracurricular activities on goals and achievement. American Journal of Sociology, (75), 680-702.
- Spreitzer, E., & Pugh, M. (1973). Interscholastic athletics and educational experiences. Sociology of Education, (46), 171-182.
- Straley, J.G. (1956). A comparative study of academic achievement and social adjustment of transported and non-transported high school seniors. Unpublished doctoral dissertation, University of Virginia.
- Vornberg, J.A., Zukowski, J.J., Southern, J.S., & Gipson, V.W. (1983). Student activities: What are the problems now? Clearinghouse, (56), 269-270.
- Williams, J.M., & White, K.A. (1983). Adolescent status systems for males and females at three age levels. Adolescence, (43), 381-389.

Wilson Sporting Goods Co. (1988). The Wilson Report: Moms, dads, daughters, and sports. Treadway, 1, 10.

United States Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics. (1981). High school and beyond: A national longitudinal study for the 1980's. National Opinion Research Center, Chicago.

Appendix A

GUIDELINES FOR BRAINSTORMING ACTIVITY

The process of brainstorming will be used in order to assist the group assembled in identifying all possible responses to the question--Why do some students at Plattsmouth High School choose not to participate in any extracurricular activities?

The process of brainstorming is designed to allow members of a group to use the collective ideas of all persons in the group to identify useful ideas about a pre-determined question or issue. In order to promote the maximum amount of creative thinking within the group, members will be asked to follow several basic guidelines. The following guidelines will be used in this activity:

1. Criticism is not allowed during the thinking stage. This will provide a positive reinforcing environment in which no one will inhibit ideas for fear or bear evaluated or ridiculed by other group members.
2. "Free-wheeling" is encouraged. The wilder the idea, the better. Wild ideas can be eliminated or altered during the follow-up discussion following the listing of all ideas.
3. Quantity is sought. The more ideas available, the higher the probability off producing quality.
4. Members are encouraged to combine and improve previous ideas of their own and others.
5. When moving around the group, each member will be limited to one idea at a time. Time will allow for all responses to be heard in the session.
6. All ideas presented by group members will be written on the overhead projector transparency as they are listed and will be individually discussed following the listing of all ideas.

Although all individual ideas stated will be recorded, no reference as to the identity of the individual stating the idea will be made.

Appendix B

STUDENT SORTING DIRECTIONS

Each of you will receive a packet of 35 index cards. Written on each card is a statement describing a reason why some students at Plattsmouth High School may choose not to participate in available extracurricular activities. The purpose of this group session is to obtain from you your personal opinion as to the relative importance of each of the statements by having you rank-order statements obtained from other groups of students. In order to complete this activity you will be asked to complete the following process:

1. Remove the rubber band from the packet of cards and follow along as each of the statements is read aloud.
2. Think about the reasons you feel other students do not participate in extracurricular activities. Using your own beliefs as a guide, place the cards you were given in seven piles of five cards according to the importance each of the reasons has upon student non-participation. You will use the scale shown below in sorting the cards.

Least Important							Most Important
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	

3. No ranking within each of the seven piles will be made.
4. All cards must be placed in a pile. For those which you feel have no importance, place them in the Number 1 pile.
5. You may move cards from pile to pile until the ranking session ends. At the completion of the allowed time period, you will place your cards on the counter at the front of the room according to ranking you have determined.
6. There are no right or wrong rankings involved with this process. The only criteria used should be your

own personal knowledge and beliefs about the reasons for student non-participation.

Appendix C

Q-Sort Items

Males

The following causes of non-participation identified through group discussions were used in the Q-Sort process.

1. Students don't participate because their peers don't attend the activities.
2. Students don't participate because of the conflict with completing homework/school assignments.
3. Students don't participate because they don't want to take the chance of failing while trying something new.
4. Students don't participate because they have grades below the minimum standards.
5. Students don't participate because coaches/sponsors discourage students from participating by showing favoritism to some participants.
6. Students don't participate because parents wouldn't attend performances if they did participate.
7. Students don't participate because no programs exist which match their interests.
8. Students don't participate because of lack of encouragement by coaches/sponsors.
9. Students don't participate because parents won't let them because their grades might drop.
10. Students don't participate because they have a job in order to help support their family.
11. Students don't participate because they don't have transportation to and from school activities/practices.
12. Students don't participate because they are afraid of physical injury.
13. Students don't participate because they don't want to be part of a losing program.

14. Students don't participate because they don't have enough confidence to try.
15. Students don't participate because they feel they do not have the talent to do well in any activities.
16. Students don't participate because they have a job in order to buy a car to become popular.
17. Students don't participate because they don't have enough money to buy needed supplies or equipment.
18. Students don't participate because parents don't want them to because the parents didn't participate when in school.
19. Students don't participate because they have a job in order to earn money for college.
20. Students don't participate because they have a job in order to buy a car to impress the girls.
21. Students don't participate because they don't like school and don't want to get involved.
22. Students don't participate because girlfriends want boyfriends to spend time with them, not activities.
23. Students don't participate because they don't want to be labeled by other students as a jock, brain, brownie, etc.
24. Students don't participate because those students who do participate don't encourage them to join.
25. Students don't participate because the rules for participants are too strict/unfair.
26. Students don't participate because their parents won't let them because they don't want their children to do better than they did when they were in school.
27. Students don't participate because they have a job so they can become independent from their parents.
28. Students don't participate because they don't like the sponsor/coach.
29. Students don't participate because they have a job which

conflicts with after and before school activities.

30. Students don't participate because their friends are non-participants and friends discourage them from participating.
31. Students don't participate because those who do participate discourage others from joining.
32. Students don't participate because they don't want to work hard enough to do well in the activities.
33. Parents won't allow sons to participate because they need them to work at home after school.
34. Students don't participate because they had a bad experience when they were in a previous activity.
35. Students don't participate because they feel inferior when around new groups of students.

Q-Sort ResultsMales

<u>Item</u>	<u>1</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>4</u>	<u>5</u>	<u>6</u>	<u>7</u>
1.	4	10	19	5	7	9	4
2.	3	2	3	13	15	12	10
3.	5	9	10	10	7	13	4
4.	10	8	7	6	9	4	14
5.	6	10	7	8	3	16	8
6.	13	16	8	6	8	4	3
7.	3	9	5	11	12	11	7
8.	4	7	9	11	8	10	9
9.	3	6	9	9	8	15	8
10.	10	8	10	6	7	3	14
11.	9	9	11	11	6	6	6
12.	10	8	10	9	5	7	9
13.	9	15	9	4	4	6	11
14.	6	10	6	6	15	6	9
15.	2	7	7	9	13	9	11
16.	16	10	7	9	3	4	9
17.	8	5	14	7	13	7	4
18.	15	18	11	5	7	1	1
19.	3	5	4	11	8	9	18
20.	16	9	3	5	6	8	11
21.	8	5	5	7	12	9	12
22.	11	6	10	14	9	5	3
23.	13	5	8	12	9	6	5

	<u>1</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>4</u>	<u>5</u>	<u>6</u>	<u>7</u>
Item							
24.	4	8	10	15	12	8	1
25.	12	11	9	11	5	7	3
26.	32	13	4	2	3	4	0
27.	5	7	3	9	8	12	14
28.	8	4	8	6	8	7	17
29.	2	2	7	2	5	10	30
30.	7	7	8	7	12	8	9
31.	5	17	12	7	7	8	2
32.	9	6	6	9	8	13	7
33.	9	4	13	11	8	7	6
34.	3	6	11	10	8	15	5
35.	7	8	7	7	12	11	6

Appendix E

Q-Sort Items

Females

The following causes of non-participation identified through group discussions were used in the Q-Sort process.

1. Students don't participate because their parents are not supportive.
2. Students don't participate because sponsors/coaches are too critical.
3. Students don't participate because their grades are too low to meet the minimum standards.
4. Students don't participate because participation would take time away from being with boyfriend.
5. Students don't participate because they have had a bad experience when they tried activities before.
6. Students don't participate because they prefer to be by themselves, rather than with other students.
7. Students don't participate because they don't want to be embarrassed in front of their peers.
8. Students don't participate because they have never been encouraged by peers to participate.
9. Students don't participate because they might have to change their group of friends.
10. Students don't participate because parents would not attend activities.
11. Students don't participate because they need to work in order to buy a car to achieve independence.
12. Students don't participate because of physical/health limitations.

13. Students don't participate because they don't have enough confidence to try something new.
14. Students don't participate because boys don't want their girlfriends to be involved in activities.
15. Students don't participate because coaches/sponsors play favorites.
16. Students don't participate because they don't have any abilities to offer to activities.
17. Students don't participate because they are afraid to be "put down" by other participants.
18. Students don't participate because they don't want to risk being rejected.
19. Students don't participate because parents are not supportive.
20. Students don't participate because they have a job to pay for a car in order to be popular.
21. Students don't participate because they might be successful and have to live up to higher standards.
22. Students don't participate because they feel the rules you have to follow are too strict.
23. Students don't participate because parents don't want them to since parents didn't participate when in school.
24. Students don't participate because sponsors/coaches don't encourage them to participate.
25. Students don't participate because they can't live up to the expectations set by parents.
26. Students don't participate because their old peer group won't accept them if they do participate.
27. Students don't participate because they work in order to pay their own living expenses.
28. Students don't participate because sponsors/coaches compare them with older brothers/sisters.
29. Students don't participate because they work to help pay

family expenses.

30. Students don't participate because of lack of transportation to and from activities.
31. Students don't participate because they feel activities take too much time away from being with friends.
32. Students don't participate because parents fear grades will drop due to time spent on activities.
33. Students don't participate because no activities are offered which meet their interests/abilities.
34. Students don't participate because the cost for supplies/equipment is too high.
35. Students don't participate because they won't be accepted by the "in crowd" of participants.

Q-Sort ResultsFemales

<u>Item</u>	<u>1</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>4</u>	<u>5</u>	<u>6</u>	<u>7</u>
1.	6	8	10	8	14	10	3
2.	11	7	11	4	10	9	7
3.	5	5	7	7	14	11	10
4.	6	14	8	2	9	11	9
5.	6	10	5	12	8	8	10
6.	16	13	9	5	6	3	7
7.	5	6	5	8	9	14	12
8.	4	11	9	10	16	5	4
9.	14	7	13	7	12	2	5
10.	8	8	7	9	9	15	3
11.	10	6	3	15	7	12	6
12.	5	4	9	4	8	13	16
13.	6	2	9	15	11	8	8
14.	24	6	9	8	7	2	3
15.	7	2	4	6	10	9	21
16.	4	9	9	14	10	8	5
17.	5	5	10	3	5	13	18
18.	8	7	2	10	7	13	12
19.	15	12	12	6	4	7	3
20.	17	9	6	12	7	5	3
21.	7	13	11	8	7	6	7
22.	4	16	15	11	5	4	4
23.	23	9	14	5	2	2	4

	<u>1</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>4</u>	<u>5</u>	<u>6</u>	<u>7</u>
Item							
24.	8	8	7	15	10	6	5
25.	4	11	12	11	10	7	4
26.	14	15	7	8	6	5	4
27.	5	8	5	9	5	11	16
28.	7	7	7	9	8	10	10
29.	9	8	4	8	6	15	9
30.	7	7	11	6	9	7	13
31.	5	10	10	8	11	6	9
32.	2	4	14	10	11	7	11
33.	8	8	6	7	9	11	10
34.	4	10	8	8	4	10	15
35.	6	10	8	7	9	10	9