

COGNITIVE PATTERNS OF COMMUNITY GROUPS,  
CONCERNING THE TASKS OF  
THE ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

By

GEORGE GENE PINGLETON

Bachelor of Science  
University of Oklahoma  
Norman, Oklahoma  
1950

Master of Science  
Oklahoma State University  
Stillwater, Oklahoma  
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Thesis Approved:

*Robert E. Switzer*  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Thesis Adviser  
*Guy R. Dornell*  
\_\_\_\_\_  
*J. Paschal Lyman*  
\_\_\_\_\_  
*Richard P. Jungers*  
\_\_\_\_\_  
*W. Ware Marsden*  
\_\_\_\_\_  
*Robert Marsden*  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Dean of the Graduate School

504630

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## CHAPTER I

### THE NATURE AND CONTEXT OF THE PROBLEM

Educational programs of the public schools in the United States are the object of critical appraisal by many groups and individuals. A survey of the literature reveals that such critical appraisals are not unique to this period of time. The interest of the American public in the offerings of its public schools has always stirred up a great deal of controversy, especially in times of crisis. [The American public does not speak with a common voice as to what it expects of its schools. Among the milieu of criticisms and suggested improvements can be found different viewpoints, often diametrically opposed, concerning the tasks that the school should perform.] In defining the tasks of the school there are those who would place particular emphasis on the needs of the individual learner, others on the needs of society, and still others on the nature of the subject matter to be learned. In attempts to clarify the issue it has been suggested that the various levels of the school should place particular emphasis on certain tasks.

It is the job of those who are charged with the responsibility of conducting the educational programs of the

public schools to attempt to determine what the tasks of the school should be. Campbell, Corbally, and Ramseyer suggest the role of the school may become so broad that it fails to serve its unique purposes. They further suggest that one administrative task in respect to the definition of the role of the school is to determine what the citizens of the community expect of the schools.<sup>1</sup>

Local school administrators need to know what local citizens expect the school to do and whether these citizens see the school performing those tasks which they consider important.

#### General Problem

The nature of the job of the school administrator requires him to make decisions concerning the operation of the schools which are of interest to the public, often with little concrete information at hand about what the public thinks. The administrator, in light of conflicting opinions among various groups in his community, often finds himself in a dilemma as to what course of action to follow. Views are not static; the position taken by a particular group at a particular time will not necessarily be permanent. As the school administrator makes decisions, how does he satisfy

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<sup>1</sup>R. F. Campbell, J. E. Corbally, and J. A. Ramseyer, Introduction to Educational Administration (Boston, 1958), pp. 88-90.

various reference groups within the community which may hold to different viewpoints? Or should he attempt to do so? Campbell, Corbally, and Ramseyer<sup>2</sup> suggest that it is right and proper for citizens to set some limits for the school administrator. [ They suggest, however, that even when conflicts exist among groups, there is usually an area of tolerance within which groups can work. It is within these areas of tolerance that school administrators may be able to make decisions and resolve some of the conflicts which seem to exist both within and among major reference groups in the community. ]

The administrator cannot be content to merely wait and hope that time will alter conflicts of opinion. He needs to have valid information, as complete as possible, upon which to base his decisions and also be able to effectively communicate to the public the bases upon which his decisions were made. [ Seldom can the administrator hope to take a position which will satisfy all groups but his reasons for the decisions he makes should be made clear, and he should be seen as serving the larger constituency. ]

The literature suggests that administrators have often made decisions about school offerings without complete information regarding what groups in the community think the school should offer. This lack of information on the part

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<sup>2</sup>Ibid., p. 143.

of the administrator is unnecessary since he can, with some effort, facilitate the fact gathering and information sharing process.

The present research was a case study of an Oklahoma school district to determine the views of persons occupying selected school-related social positions in the district concerning the objectives of the elementary schools in that district. The study was designed to extend a body of literature concerning the tasks of the public schools. At the same time, it was hoped that the methodology employed to gather and analyze the data would demonstrate a technique that could be used by any administrator to determine the views held by various groups in his community about the objectives the school should attempt to attain.

The data were analyzed to accomplish three specific purposes:

(1) To determine the extent to which five selected school-related social positions (school officials, teachers, school board members, influential citizens, and parents of elementary school children) viewed the public elementary schools as attaining those objectives which each considered important.

(2) To determine (a) the extent to which the members of five selected school-related social positions agreed or or disagreed concerning the objectives which each expected the elementary school to stress; and (b) the extent to which

they agreed or disagreed as to what objectives each thought the schools were actually emphasizing.

(3) To determine the extent to which school officials could accurately predict what teachers, school board members, influential citizens, and parents of elementary children thought the objectives of the elementary school should be.

### Review of the Literature

A number of years ago, John Dewey<sup>3</sup> pointed out that there are many publics, or groups with common interests, whose views must be taken into account by school people. These views not only overlap but at times are in conflict with each other.

Campbell, Corbally, and Ramseyer<sup>4</sup> suggest that the school administrator deals not with one school public but with many. These publics may differ by way of occupation, income, politics, religion, organizational membership, residential area, national background, race, and many other factors. The number and diversity of the school publics places the educational administrator in a unique position when contrasted with administrators in fields other than education. His position becomes extremely complex when an

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<sup>3</sup>John Dewey, The Public and Its Problems (New York, 1927).

<sup>4</sup>Campbell, Corbally, and Ramseyer, p. 127.

assessment is made of the various expectations the many publics have for schools and administrators. [ Campbell, Corbally, and Ramseyer suggest that, to be effective, the school administrator must be cognizant of the values, beliefs, and feelings of publics with which he deals. ]

Brameld<sup>5</sup> has classified the different beliefs about education held by various individuals and groups in America. He classified these beliefs as (1) reactionary, (2) conservative, (3) liberal, and (4) radical. Such a classification helps to point up the possible areas of disagreement among various school publics.

The reactionary belief is expressed by those who would like to see the schools go back to a past era or former culture pattern for the goals of the educational program. Those who hold this belief would have the schools return to the political, social, and religious practices of the medieval era or even Greek civilization for their goals and objectives. Those who suggest such a course of action are relatively few in number and are concerned mainly with higher education rather than with the common schools.

Those who hold to the conservative position represent perhaps the most widespread and popular belief about education. The conservative would like to see a system of schools which upholds an established and thoroughly tested

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<sup>5</sup>Theodore Brameld, Patterns of Educational Philosophy (Yonkers-on-Hudson, 1950), passim.



set of educational and social values. The conservative sees our present social structure and economic system as being satisfactory. He believes that the aims and practices in the schools adequately uphold the present social system and are good, having weathered the test of time. To him, the ideal school is one which holds to tradition and stresses order, discipline, and the "essentials" in education.

The educational liberal is somewhat more forward looking than the conservative but is by no means radical. He would have the schools try new techniques and establish new aims in keeping with what he believes are desirable changes in the social system. He does not believe that one can look to the past for guidance and direction for present practices and aims in education. [ To him, values in education, politics, economics, and morals are relative to the times and cannot be considered definitely established and already proved. ] He sees the job of the school as that of quickly reflecting changes in the social order, and giving some direction to those changes. The educational liberal is represented by that group which is often labeled "progressive" in education.

The radical position is represented by a relatively few educators and is somewhat new. The person who takes this position is dissatisfied with the economic system, moral tradition, and the way our political system works. He is a firm believer in democracy but believes it should be established on a new social and economic basis. His

dissatisfaction with the school system stems from what he believes it has failed to do rather than what it has actually done. He sees the school as a means of reconstructing the social order by bringing about revolutionary and immediate changes.

A review of the literature reveals that many statements have been made by various groups and individuals throughout the history of this nation concerning the tasks that the public school should carry out. Although not all of these statements deal primarily with the tasks to be performed specifically by the elementary school, they are reported here as general background for other statements to follow dealing specifically with the tasks of elementary education.

The National Education Association made one of the first attempts to define the function of the public schools when it published the Cardinal Principles of Secondary Education in 1918. It listed good health; ethical character; command of fundamental processes; vocational and civic efficiency; worthy use of leisure time; and worthy home membership as goals of secondary education.<sup>6</sup> In 1937 the Committee on Social and Economic Goals of the NEA, reflecting feeling in the depression years, defined the goals to be accomplished by education as freedom and fair play;

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<sup>6</sup>Commission on Reorganization of Secondary Education, Cardinal Principles of Secondary Education (Washington, 1918).

hereditary strength; physical security; participation in growing civilization; economic and mental security; equality of opportunity; a dynamic and flexible personality; and a suitable occupation.<sup>7</sup>

In 1936 the United States Office of Education, in its Conference on the Reorganization of School Units, included in a culminating report those things it considered basic to an adequate educational opportunity. These were guidance in social living; an adequate health and physical education program; mastery by the student of essential integrating knowledges and skills; a program for the socially, mentally and physically handicapped as well as a program for the academically superior student; programs in the fine arts and manual arts; and pre-vocational studies for the skilled trades. In addition it was suggested that the curriculum should be organized around the idea of child growth and development rather than around separate subjects.<sup>8</sup>

Once again in 1938, the National Education Association, through the Educational Policies Commission, issued the well known Purposes of Education in American Democracy which, briefly stated, were self-realization; human relationships;

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<sup>7</sup>Committee on Social and Economic Goals, Implications of Social and Economic Goals for Education (Washington, 1937).

<sup>8</sup>Katherine M. Cook, editor, Reorganization of School Units (Washington, 1936), p. 13.

economic efficiency; and civic responsibility.<sup>9</sup>

In 1946 the Harvard Committee, addressing itself to the task of defining the purposes of the public schools, said that the school had a two-fold purpose: to provide both a general and a special educational opportunity for students.<sup>10</sup> Such a view was endorsed by James B. Conant, who contended that our civilization cannot be preserved by the mere acquisition of information and the development of special skills and talents by our populace.

Such a program lacks contact with both man's emotional experience as an individual and his practical experiences as a gregarious animal. It includes little of what was once known as the "wisdom of the ages" and might nowadays be described as "our cultural pattern". It includes no history, no art, no literature, no philosophy. Unless the educational process includes at each level of maturity some continuing contact with those fields in which value judgements are of prime importance, it must fall short of the ideal. The student..... must be concerned, in part, at least, with the words "right" and "wrong" in both the ethical and mathematical sense.<sup>11</sup>

In 1948 the American Federation of Teachers published what it considered to be the tasks of the public schools. It was concerned with such problems as closing the gap between scientific advance and social retardation; preparing individuals to live in a cooperative independent society;

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<sup>9</sup>Educational Policies Commission, The Purposes of Education in American Democracy (Washington, 1938).

<sup>10</sup>Committee on the Objectives of General Education in a Free Society, General Education In A Free Society (Cambridge, 1946).

<sup>11</sup>Ibid., p. viii.

fostering international cooperation and understanding; securing acceptance of the ideals of democracy in social, economic and political arrangements; the development of moral and ethical values; the development of creative and constructive abilities; and promoting the mastery of common integrating knowledges and skills necessary for effective daily living.<sup>12</sup>

Some notable individuals have also contributed their views about the tasks of the public schools. In 1953, Paul Woodring, in discussing the fundamental purposes of the public schools and the fundamental skills which should be taught, questioned the extent to which the school should be responsible for character education, the child's recreational activities, vocational training, and religious training. He also questioned the importance of athletics and the parts of the cultural heritage which should be passed on to the children by the school.<sup>13</sup>

Mortimer Smith expressed the view that the public school should accentuate the intellectual and cultural function. It was his contention that emphasis should be placed on the education of the individual and only secondarily on the improvement of society. He believed that every teacher

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<sup>12</sup>L. A. Kirkendall, I. R. Kuenzli, and F. W. Reeves, Goals for American Education (Chicago, 1948), chapter ii.

<sup>13</sup>Paul Woodring, Let's Talk Sense About Our Schools (New York, 1953), p. 194.

should be the type person who would imbue in each child a devotion to moral, spiritual, and ethical values.<sup>14</sup>

Dorothy Thompson asserted that the school alone could not possibly educate a child, since education in its broadest sense is all that a person learns from personal and vicarious experiences. She said the task of the school was merely to teach children the basic subjects without which they could not continue to learn. She felt the school should appeal to the child's aesthetic and ethical tastes through a study of the fine arts and the study of the lives of a few great men.<sup>15</sup>

The review of the literature reveals that there is much disagreement concerning the tasks that the public schools should perform. Hansen has very succinctly pointed this out:

It is obvious to anyone who has attended the public schools, who has observed them in action, and who has listened to or read discussions about our schools that there is no complete agreement on the tasks of the schools or the aims of education. It would be foolish and presumptuous to try to reconcile, just for the sake of simplification, these divergent beliefs, these different philosophies. We must recognize that perfectly intelligent, well-informed, and interested citizens will not always be in agreement about what is expected from the schools.<sup>16</sup>

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<sup>14</sup>Mortimer Smith, The Diminished Mind (Chicago, 1954), p. 6.

<sup>15</sup>Dorothy Thompson, "The Limits of Public School Education," The Public Schools in Crisis, Mortimer Smith, ed. (Chicago, 1956), pp. 78-85.

<sup>16</sup>Kenneth H. Hansen, Public Education In American Society (Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey, 1956), p. 90.

### Objectives of the Elementary School

Ragan<sup>17</sup> points out that efforts to give a separate meaning to such terms as functions, goals, purposes, aims, and objectives has led to a great deal of confusion. He asserts that all of these refer to the values sought through public education and may accrue to the child, the community, the nation, or the world. Furthermore, efforts in behalf of these values may be put forth by a teacher, by a faculty, by the administration of a school system, by the board of education, by the parent-teacher association, or by the organized teaching profession. A survey of the literature reveals that such statements have been made by many individuals and groups. The multiplicity of such lists made by groups and individuals, with varying viewpoints as to outcomes expected, often leads to much confusion on the part of the reader as to just what objectives the school should attempt to attain. Another question which often arises is whether the elementary school should have different objectives from those of the secondary school. Ragan asserts the following:

No distinction need be made between the objectives of the elementary school and those of the high school. Certain objectives may be given more emphasis at one level than another but the objectives are the same.<sup>18</sup>

<sup>17</sup>William B. Ragan, Modern Elementary Curriculum (New York, 1953).

<sup>18</sup>Ibid., p. 107.

Otto, Floyd and Rouse concur in this opinion. They cite the objectives listed by the Educational Policies Commission (self-realization, human-relationships, economic efficiency, and civic responsibility) and have this to say concerning them:

These general objectives or purposes of education constitute the broad goals for each of the units in our system of public schools--the elementary schools, the secondary schools, and to some extent the junior colleges. The commonality of general purposes is an important fact for us to recognize. Along with this recognition, however, should come the realization that each segment of the school system has its particular contribution to make to the general goals, such contributions to be determined by the maturity of the age group served.<sup>19</sup>

What then are the objectives that are to receive special emphasis in the elementary schools? Attempts to define objectives specifically for the elementary schools have been a comparatively recent phenomenon. As late as 1929, Horn, in commenting on this problem said, "No adequate formulation of the aims of elementary education has ever been made."<sup>20</sup> He cited earlier attempts to do so by such individuals as Davis, Bonser, and Chapman and Counts. It was the contention of Davis that educational theory based upon physiological, psychological, and sociological studies of children and adolescents, leads definitely to the conclusion that elementary education should have the following aims:

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<sup>19</sup>H. J. Otto, Hazel Floyd, and Margaret Rouse, Principles of Elementary Education (New York, 1955), p. 109.

<sup>20</sup>John Louis Horn, Principles of Elementary Education (New York, 1929), p. 61.



- (1) To acquaint children with the tools of culture;
- (2) To give moderate skill in the use of tools;
- (3) To impart a fund of knowledge that shall include the larger concepts of the world and its life, together with the means of making adjustments thereto;
- (4) To establish desirable physical, mental and social habits.<sup>21</sup>

In 1920, Bonser formulated a list of objectives for the elementary school which run along much the same lines of those of Davis. Bonser's objectives were:

- (1) Acquaintance with and moderate use of the tools of culture;
- (2) A fund of knowledge that shall include the larger concepts of the world;
- (3) Acquaintance with the world's most important interests;
- (4) A well organized stock of useful knowledge that will enable the child to employ his powers effectively;
- (5) Experience in meeting the common needs of all;
- (6) Activities in which everyone must participate with a like degree of skill.<sup>22</sup>

In 1924, Chapman and Counts had the following to say about the objectives of the elementary school:

Under the supervision of men and women carefully trained for their work (children) should be inducted into the life of modern society. Through participation in activities which would insure the acquisition of those basic skills, habits, attitudes, dispositions, ideals, and powers required by all members of the group this central purpose of the elementary school would be achieved. (To achieve this goal, the children must attain) elementary mastery of the language and number arts, and through them the reading, imaginative study, and appreciation of those human experiences

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<sup>21</sup>Ibid., pp. 61-62.

<sup>22</sup>F. G. Bonser, The Elementary School Curriculum (New York, 1920), pp. 61-64.

which have found expression in history, natural science, social science, literature, art, and philosophy.<sup>23</sup>

Horn, in commenting on the foregoing lists of objectives has this to say, "These formulations are typical of most of the efforts found in the literature--an indication, one would venture to assert, of the lack of clarity in the minds of the formulators."<sup>24</sup>

Following these early attempts to define the objectives or goals of the elementary school, others were formulated which were stated in more operational terms. One of these attempts set up objectives in terms of the qualities to be expected in the "educated adult". This list of objectives was formulated by the Commission on the Reorganization of Secondary Education and, according to Herrick, influenced elementary education more than secondary.<sup>25</sup> This formulation was not without criticism by those interested primarily in elementary schools. These critics implied that it was plagued with overlapping concepts and unidentified objectives, and that vocational efficiency should not be a goal of the elementary school.

Such ongoing criticisms led to the formulation of a set of objectives specifically for the elementary schools by the

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<sup>23</sup>J. C. Chapman and G. S. Counts, Principles of Education (New York, 1924), p. 434.

<sup>24</sup>Horn, p. 63.

<sup>25</sup>Virgil E. Herrick, "Elementary Programs," Encyclopedia of Educational Research, Chester W. Harris, ed. (New York, 1958), pp. 430-432.

Committee for Elementary Education for the State University of New York. This list included objectives which would help every child to:

- (1) Understand and practice desirable social relationships;
- (2) Discover and develop his own desirable individual aptitudes;
- (3) Cultivate the habit of critical thinking;
- (4) Appreciate and desire worthwhile activities;
- (5) Gain command of common integrating knowledges and skills;
- (6) Develop a sound body and normal mental attitudes.<sup>26</sup>

The most recent attempt to state the objectives of the elementary school was made by the Mid-Century Committee on Outcomes of Elementary Education.<sup>27</sup> This report assumes that education is for the purpose of bringing about desirable behavioral changes. These changes are grouped under the following types:

- (1) Knowledge and understanding;
- (2) Skill and competence;
- (3) Attitudes and interest;
- (4) Action pattern;
- (5) Determining conditions.

The nine broad areas of elementary learning in which behavioral changes of the five types mentioned above should occur are listed as the following:

- (1) Physical development, health, and body care;
- (2) Individual, social and emotional development;
- (3) Ethical behavior;

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<sup>26</sup>Committee for Elementary Education, University of the State of New York, Cardinal Objectives In Elementary Education--A Third Report (New York, 1932).

<sup>27</sup>Nolan C. Kearney, Elementary School Objectives (New York, 1953), pp. 42-113.

- (4) Social relations;
- (5) The social world;
- (6) The physical world;
- (7) Esthetic development;
- (8) Communications;
- (9) Quantitative relationships.

"Determining conditions" were described by Kearney as relating to those factors outside the school that affect the realization of educational objectives. These determining factors may represent the biological and social context in which children and the school carry on together. He indicates that growth, development, maturation, and learning are regarded as continuums and that outcomes are to be considered in terms of the range of abilities within a group of children, or among traits in one child at each of three levels: (1) primary to end of grade three, (2) intermediate, or to end of grade four, or (3) upper grade, or to end of grade nine. This listing, in its entirety, has a high degree of specificity and attempts a detailed organization by purpose and grade level.

Other attempts to develop over-all statements of objectives of the elementary school have been made by Caswell and Campbell<sup>28</sup> and by Stratemeyer, Forkner, McKim, and Passow.<sup>29</sup>

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<sup>28</sup>Hollis H. Caswell and Doak S. Campbell, Curriculum Development (New York, 1935).

<sup>29</sup>Florence B. Stratemeyer, H. L. Forkner, Margaret G. McKim, and A. H. Passow, Developing A Curriculum For Modern Living (New York, 1957).

In listing their objectives these authors defined them in terms of "persistent problems of living".

The Virginia State Board of Education developed in 1934, and revised in 1943, a set of objectives which emphasized the "major functions of social life" as the base.<sup>30</sup>

Still another approach to the stating of objectives for the elementary school has been to consider the child and his needs. Such an approach was developed by Havighurst from his concept of the developmental tasks of individuals as they relate to the educative experience.<sup>31</sup>

The foregoing discussion of various sets of objectives for the elementary schools points up the difficulty encountered in trying to determine what sorts of objectives are most desirable. Herrick succinctly points out the problem and resolves it in the following statement:

Much of the problem of giving adequate direction to the elementary school program grows out of a lack of agreement as to what is the basic referent for determining educational objectives. Is it the organized subject fields of knowledge which man has categorized and systematized, the nature of the society the school serves, or the nature of the human being and his developmental growth processes? All three of these considerations have to be considered in any adequate program.<sup>32</sup>

If, then, as has been found, there are numerous lists of objectives for the elementary school, each reflecting the

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<sup>30</sup>Virginia State Board of Education, Course of Study For Virginia Elementary Schools, Grade 1-7 (Virginia, 1943).

<sup>31</sup>Robert J. Havighurst, Developmental Tasks and Education (New York, 1952).

<sup>32</sup>Herrick, p. 432.

viewpoints and values held by the individuals or groups who formulated them, how is a set of objectives to be chosen for use in a particular school? Cramer and Domian present an approach which many people feel gives the correct point of view and a solution to the dilemma. They state:

It is apparent that no ready-made statements of objectives can be transplanted into any school. Objectives cannot be ordered by catalog number but must be developed to fit the particular characteristics of the specific school. The nature of the children, the kinds of homes from which they come, the community environment, the qualifications of the staff, the nature and adequacy of the instructional facilities color the objectives that may be most appropriate. The formulation of goals and objectives thus becomes the responsibility of each school.<sup>33</sup>

The survey of the literature has revealed that individuals and groups are not always in agreement as to what the tasks of the elementary school should be. It was proposed in the present research to study one local school district to determine the priorities that various groups in that community would give to the task dimensions that have been identified from the literature as being appropriate tasks for the elementary schools.

The following chapter presents the theoretical framework upon which the present study was based, the terms and concepts indigenous to the study and selected hypotheses which were set up to be tested.

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<sup>33</sup>Roscoe V. Cramer and Otto E. Domian, Administration and Supervision in the Elementary School (New York, 1960), p. 15.

## CHAPTER II

### THE THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

#### Introduction

The theoretical orientation for the present study has been field theory. Lewin<sup>34</sup> used the concept of cognitive structure in his Field Theory In Social Science and from this concept role theory has developed. Lewin explained the behavior and development of individuals in terms of the psychological field, field theory being a concept in psychology dealing with the measurement of macroscopic rather than microscopic units. In defense of field theory Lewin says:

It is possible to obtain objective and reliable observations in regard to units of any size if one uses methods fitted to the various types. The attempt to determine reliable large macroscopic units by observing microscopic units is bound to fail. It is technically impossible to describe the movements of the sun by describing the movements of every ion in it.<sup>35</sup>

Lewin, then, explained behavior of individuals as a function of the total situation or the psychological field.

[ It was his contention that the behavior and development of a person depend both on the person and the environment. ]

<sup>34</sup>Kurt Lewin, Field Theory in Social Science (New York, 1951).

<sup>35</sup>Ibid., p. 244.

These two variables are mutually dependent on each other. To understand or predict behavior of an individual, both the person and his environment must be considered as one constellation of interdependent factors. The totality of these factors he called the life space of the individual. One of the hypothetical constructs used by Lewin to help explain behavior was the cognitive structure of the life space. Cognitions are the mapping structures presumed to be maintained by individuals in social situations and are utilized by these individuals in structuring behavior. Cognitions, however, are not necessarily stable. Lewin says:

A change can occur in any part of the person's life space, including the psychological future, the psychological present, and the psychological past..... According to field theory, all changes are due to certain forces..... one resulting from the structure of the cognitive field itself, and the other from certain valences (needs and motivations [of the individual]). The first type of forces leading to change in cognitive structure is very similar to, if not identical with, those forces which govern the perceptual fields..... We should get accustomed to include within perception psychology also the perception of the character of other persons and social facts..... It is a corollary of the relation between cognitive structure and perception that perception, too, is dependent on the needs and emotions of the individual.<sup>36</sup>

In summary, then, Lewin has pointed out that there is a hypothetical construct he calls the cognitive structure. The cognitive structure can be changed, and this change depends upon the environment or field in which the individual finds himself and also upon his own needs as an individual.

<sup>36</sup>Ibid., pp. 83-84.



Lewin's hypothetical construct of cognitive structure, as it relates to role theory, served as a basis for certain assumptions underlying the hypotheses in this study.

Role theory as presented by Parsons and others<sup>37</sup> suggests a general conceptual framework for examining the cognitive patterns which members of various social positions maintain. The present study was concerned with the cognitive patterns which school officials, school board members, influential citizens, teachers, and parents of elementary school children maintain about the tasks of the elementary school. The school is a social institution and the cognitive structures which each individual maintains about the tasks of the elementary school will depend upon several factors. Some of these factors will be the school-related social position to which he belongs and the group socialization process he has undergone, including the kind of experiences required for membership in that particular group and his position in that group with its attending role requirements. The individual's cognitive structures will depend in part upon his own value concepts, purposes, and personality.

Concerning role theory, Sweitzer<sup>38</sup> has pointed out the

<sup>37</sup>Talcott Parsons et al., Toward A General Theory of Action (Cambridge, 1951).

<sup>38</sup>Robert E. Sweitzer, Fulfillment of Role Expectation and Teacher Morale (unpub. Ph. D. dissertation, University of Chicago, 1957), p. 10.

following:

Broadly conceived, role theory holds that almost every activity of an individual may be viewed as being in conformity with or in opposition to the expectations of his role. These expectations include his own concept of his role and the role-expectations of others regarding his behavior. The role is the resulting complex of the varied specific activities made incumbent on a person in a particular position in a social system. This role tends to be defined in terms of the behavior and attitudes which others expect and think appropriate for the role incumbent in the performance of that role. Thus the role of the individual is defined not by himself alone, but also by the role-expectations of others with whom he associates and by his reactions to his perceptions of these role-expectations. Thus, role-expectations have personal as well as group dimensions.

According to role theory, individuals tend to act on what they perceive. They tend to perceive that which they have learned to perceive through the group socialization process, the attending role requirements for the position they occupy in that group, and by their own personality structures. It was the thesis of this study that membership in a particular social position would be a major determining factor in the cognitive patterns individuals in these groups would maintain about the tasks of the elementary school.

Several studies in the recent past have been carried out using field theory, and the attending concepts of cognitive theory and role theory, as the bases for determining the viewpoints of various groups about their public schools.

Downey, Seager, and Slagle<sup>39</sup> sampled 1,285 past and

<sup>39</sup>L. W. Downey, R. C. Seager, and A. T. Slagle, *The Task of Public Education* (University of Chicago: Midwest Administration Center, 1960).

present professional educators and 2,544 non-educators in fifteen selected communities representing the far west, the midwest, the south, New England and the prairie provinces of Canada. The purpose of the research was to determine priority among sixteen functions commonly expected of the public schools. This research shows differences of opinion concerning the task of public education among various sub-publics according to age, occupation, and amount of schooling. Some regional and community differences were also found.

McPhee,<sup>40</sup> in a study of four midwestern communities concerning individual values, educational viewpoint, and local school approval, discovered a close relationship between educational viewpoint and local school approval. The sample included 632 respondents including four superintendents and twenty-six board members in addition to members of such local organizations as PTA groups, Rotary Clubs, Leagues of Women Voters, Lions Clubs, Optomists Clubs, a Chamber of Commerce, a Junior Federated Women's Club and a Central Labor Council.

Respondents whose educational viewpoints were closest to the superintendent's viewpoint were higher in school approval than those whose educational viewpoints were more

<sup>40</sup>Roderick F. McPhee, "Individual Values, Educational Viewpoint, and Local School Approval", Administrators Notebook VII, No. 8. (University of Chicago: Midwest Administration Center, 1959).

divergent from the superintendent's viewpoint. Disparity between the educational viewpoints of teachers and laymen would appear to be one potential source of conflict regarding the schools. Citizens found to be lower in school approval were those whose viewpoints were most divergent from the superintendent's, who were more traditional on educational matters, who were members of labor unions, who were in the lower economic groups and income levels, who were over fifty years of age and who had the least schooling. Conversely, the greatest support for the school was found among citizens whose educational viewpoints were closest to the superintendent's, were most emergent in their educational beliefs, were PTA members, were in the higher socio-economic groups, were between the ages of thirty and fifty, and who had received the most schooling.

Downey, Seager, and Slagle<sup>41</sup> found that when amount of education was considered, agreement among various groups as to the tasks the schools should perform increased as the amount of schooling of the members of these groups increased. This trend of close agreement between groups did not hold when amount of education past the undergraduate college level was considered. Laymen with graduate training

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<sup>41</sup>Downey, Seager, and Slagle, p. 49.

disagreed markedly with educators. Shipton<sup>42</sup> found the same phenomenon when he investigated variables associated with criticism of the public schools.

DeGood,<sup>43</sup> in a study concerning the superintendent's perception of community viewpoints found that there were differences in educational viewpoints among the various sub-publics of a given community. He found further that there are differences in communities with respect to the educational viewpoints held by citizens.

Prince,<sup>44</sup> in a study of the relationship between individual values and administrative effectiveness in the school situation, concluded that the school administrator faces the difficult task of attempting to work with individuals who hold differing values and to coordinate them into an effective and efficient organization for dealing with the problems of the school.

Downey, Seager, and Slagle<sup>45</sup> found little difference in

<sup>42</sup>James M. Shipton, Who Are The Critics Of The Public Schools? Staff Research Memorandum No. 3, September 1954, Graduate School of Education (Cambridge: Harvard University, 1954).

<sup>43</sup>Kenneth DeGood, "Can Superintendents Perceive Community Viewpoints?", Administrators Notebook Vol. VIII, No. 3, November 1959. (University of Chicago: Midwest Administrative Center, 1959).

<sup>44</sup>Richard Prince, "Individual Values and Administrative Effectiveness", Administrators Notebook Vol. VI, No. 4, December 1959. (University of Chicago: Midwest Administration Center, 1959).

<sup>45</sup>Downey, Seager, and Slagle, p. 48.

viewpoints regarding the task of the public schools among educators. As a group, educators agreed more closely with one another than with any lay group. This close agreement was consistent for those making up the professional educator group; it held for classroom teachers, principals, superintendents, and even for educators who had left the profession. They tested the hypothesis that closer contact with the school on the part of laymen would influence the amount of agreement between laymen's and educators' perceptions of the tasks of the school. Data did not support the contention that close contact with the school brings closer agreement between laymen and educators.

DeGood<sup>46</sup> investigated the perceptions of educational administrators concerning community viewpoints. He found that an administrator's precision in appraising certain educational viewpoints held in his community was related to the general effectiveness of that administrator. The effective administrator was defined in this instance as one who produced a change or maintained a level of operation in his working area that was deemed desirable by and apparent to selected observers. He further found that the more effective school administrator was less likely to be influenced by his own educational viewpoints in appraising community viewpoints than was the less effective administrator.

<sup>46</sup>DeGood, p. 3.

In general, the foregoing review of the literature reveals that:

- (1) Most of the studies dealing with the tasks of the public schools have been conducted on a regional basis in the United States.
- (2) These studies have dealt with variables other than social position.
- (3) Most of the studies have dealt primarily with the expectations of groups for the tasks of the elementary and secondary schools.

The present study proposed to intensively examine one local community to determine disparity between the expectations and perceptions of five school-related social groups regarding the tasks of the elementary schools in that community. The present study also proposed to study cognitive disparities among social positions on both expectations and perceptions of the tasks of the elementary school. In addition, it was proposed in the present study to determine cognitive disparity between school officials' attributed expectations to teachers, influential citizens, school board members, and parents of elementary school children and the actual expectations of these groups. Finally, it was proposed to determine if there was concordance among school officials on their attributed expectations to influential citizens.

#### Definition of Terms and Concepts

The present study used certain concepts from role

theory developed by Biddle, Rankin, and Twyman<sup>47</sup> in conjunction with the Kansas City Teacher Role Study. Although the present study was not concerned basically with role theory, certain concepts from this study dealing with cognitions were applicable to this study. Terms from the study mentioned and certain other terms applicable to the present study are defined below:

1. Cognitions - The mapping structures presumed to be maintained by individuals in social situations. Cognitions are modeled after the physical and social environments in which people live and behave and are utilized by individuals in structuring behavior. Classes of cognitions included in the present study include expectations and perceptions.
2. Expectations - The cognitions maintained by a person consisting of subjective desirability maps concerned with the person's view of what he would like to exist.
3. Perceptions - The cognitions maintained by a person consisting of subjective probability maps concerned with the person's view of what he thinks actually exists.
4. First Order Cognitions - The cognitions maintained by persons about social objects or events. In the present study, first order cognitions will consist of the expectations and perceptions of individuals regarding the tasks of the elementary school.
5. Second Order Cognitions - The cognitions maintained by persons about the cognitions of others. In the present study, second order cognitions will consist of the expectations attributed by school officials to teachers, influential citizens, parents of elementary children, and school board members.

<sup>47</sup>B. J. Biddle, J. F. Twyman, and E. F. Rankin, The Concept of Role Conflict (Forthcoming as a monograph, presently available in mimeographed form, Washington, 1960).



6. Tasks of the Elementary School - The cognitions held by individuals about the learnings and functions of the elementary school.
7. School-Related Social Position - A group of people in a community who, because of the particular relationship they have with the school, tend to hold similar cognitions about the tasks of the elementary school. The social positions included in the present study include school officials, teachers, school board members, influential citizens, and parents of elementary school children.
8. Inter-Positional Cognitive Disparity - The differences among the school-related social positions in expectations held concerning the tasks the elementary school should perform and the differences in their perceptions concerning the tasks the elementary schools are actually carrying out.
9. Intra-Positional Cognitive Disparity - The differences between expectations and perceptions, within a school-related social position, concerning the tasks of the elementary school.
10. Second Order Cognitive Disparity - The differences between the expectations attributed by school officials to the members of another school-related social position and that group's actual expectations concerning the tasks of the elementary school.

### Hypotheses

Four general hypotheses stemming from field theory and the attending concepts of cognitive and role theory were put forth to be tested in the present study. They were divided into four categories to represent the four types of analyses which were made: (1) one dealing with intra-positional cognitive disparity of the five school-related social positions regarding their expectations and perceptions for the task dimensions of the elementary schools; (2) one dealing with inter-positional cognitive disparity among the five school

related social positions regarding their expectations and perceptions for the task dimensions of the elementary schools; (3) another dealing with second order cognitive disparity between the expectations attributed by school officials to school board members, teachers, influential citizens, and parents of elementary school children and the actual expectations of these groups; and finally, (4) one dealing with the degree of concordance among school officials in their expectations attributed to influential citizens.

Hypothesis I - The incidence of cognitive disparity between expectations and perceptions will be greater for the non-professional educator groups (school board members, influential citizens, parents of elementary school children) than it will be between the professional educator groups (teachers, school officials).

It was assumed that the public elementary school would require, for successful operation, a recognition on the part of school personnel that the school was accomplishing the tasks which persons occupying these positions viewed as important tasks for the elementary school. It was further assumed that school board members, influential citizens, and parents of elementary school children, lacking the common orientation of school personnel, would not necessarily see the school as fulfilling their expectations.

Hypothesis II - The incidence of cognitive disparity will be greater when contrasting expectations or perceptions of professional educator groups with non-educator groups (school officials and teachers versus influential citizens, school board members, and parents) than it will be when contrasting the professional educator groups (school officials and teachers) or the

non-educator groups (school board members, influential citizens, and parents).

It was assumed that the greater the commonality in training and background required for membership in a particular position, the more similar would be the expectations of the individuals in this group concerning the tasks that the elementary schools should perform and their perceptions concerning the tasks the schools actually perform. School personnel (teachers and school officials) having certain basic requirements such as long training programs in teacher education institutions would, it was assumed, have some basis for a common orientation and would tend to hold similar viewpoints concerning the tasks the schools should perform. Close contact with the school program should give this group some basis for knowing what tasks the schools actually perform. Those groups which make up the non-educator public (parents, influential citizens, school board members), as opposed to the groups which make up the professional educator group (school officials and teachers), lacking the commonality of training and close contact with the educational program, might be expected to have views divergent from the professional educator group. On the other hand, the groups which make up the non-educator public might be expected to hold similar views about the schools since, in essence, they tend to receive their information about what the schools should do and what the schools are doing through common channels of communications.

Hypothesis III - The incidence of cognitive disparity will be greater when contrasting the expectations attributed by school officials to non-educator groups with the actual expectations of these groups (school board members, influential citizens, parents) than it will be when contrasting the expectations attributed by school officials to teachers with teachers' actual expectations.

It was assumed that those positions which interacted more closely would establish common two-way patterns of communication. School officials, having not only the common background of training with teachers, but also greater interaction with this group, should be able to predict more closely the expectations of teachers than they would the expectations of the members of the other social positions.

Hypothesis IV - There will be no concordance among school officials in the expectations they attribute to influential citizens.

It was assumed that school officials would view influential citizens as individuals rather than as a group, since they were named individually by school officials. Each school official would maintain his own cognitive pattern about this individual according to his experiences with him. The cognitive patterns maintained by each school official would be different because of the type of contact he has had with this person, the things he has heard others say about him, and the school official's own need dispositions which this individual might be able to affect.

The following chapter describes the setting in which the study was conducted, the sample and population, the instrument used to collect data, and the statistical analyses employed.

## CHAPTER III

### METHODOLOGY OF THE STUDY

#### Introduction

Many authors have pointed out the need for the involvement of citizens of the community in the affairs of the school. Beauchamp has stated the following:

Lay citizens have the right to determine the role of our public elementary schools just as they have the obligation to support them; furthermore, the political philosophy upon which our democracy is based demands such participation. Lay participation in curriculum matters is inevitable to some degree, and professional personnel must make use of the important aid in organized curriculum planning.<sup>48</sup>

Smith, Stanley and Shores<sup>49</sup> agree that citizens of the community must be involved in the establishment of goals for the schools. Campbell, Corbally, and Ramseyer suggest that the role of the school may become so broad that it fails to serve its unique purposes. They further suggest that the administrative task in respect to the definition of the role of the school is two-fold:

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<sup>48</sup>George A. Beauchamp, Planning the Elementary School Curriculum (New York, 1956), p. 11.

<sup>49</sup>B. Othaniel Smith, William O. Stanley, J. Harlan Shores, Fundamentals of Curriculum Development (New York, 1957), p. 165.

There is first of all the stimulation of school workers and lay citizens in thinking about the role of the school in a particular attendance area or school district, with, of course, the clear recognition that state, regional, national, and world forces impinge upon every locality. Second, this consideration must be continued until agreements can be reached, which will serve as operating bases for the schools.<sup>50</sup>

In keeping with the above suggestions, one purpose of the present research was to study intensively one local school district to determine the viewpoints of individuals in various school-related social positions regarding the tasks of the elementary school. It was hoped that some implications could be drawn from the research that would be useful to school officials in their jobs. In addition, it was intended to demonstrate the use of a relatively simple technique whereby local school officials might determine the opinions held by people in various school-related social positions in their local school districts.

#### Setting for the Study

The present study was conducted in a selected school district in north central Oklahoma. This district consists of one city of approximately twenty-five thousand population and some territory outside the city limits proper. The economy of the area is supported primarily by industry in the form of oil refining and agricultural enterprises, including wheat farming and cattle raising.

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<sup>50</sup>Campbell, Corbally, and Ramseyer, p. 90.

The schools of the district, at the time the study was conducted, included a senior high school, a junior high school, and nine elementary schools; each of these schools was included in the present study.

Elementary age children living within the district but outside the city limits proper were transported to the elementary schools. Children living in adjacent districts having no secondary schools were transported, upon completion of elementary school in their own districts, to the secondary schools of this district.

The regular classroom teachers employed in the district numbered two hundred and thirty-three, of which fifty-seven were high school teachers, sixty-one were junior high school teachers, and one hundred fifteen staffed the elementary schools.

The pupil-teacher ratio in the high school was 21.4 pupils for each regular classroom teacher, while the junior high school pupil-teacher ratio was 27.9 pupils per teacher, and in elementary school the ratio increased to 29.04 pupils per teacher. Administrative and supervisory personnel were not included in the computation of these ratios.

In addition to the elementary schools of the district, a special elementary school, with an enrollment of thirty students and a staff of two teachers, was maintained for handicapped students. A speech therapist was employed by the school district to work not only with the handicapped children in the special school but also with children having

speech problems in the other elementary schools. Two instrumental music teachers were employed by the school district and carried on an instrumental music program for children in the elementary schools who desired such training.

Administrative personnel of the district included a superintendent of schools, an assistant superintendent, a supervisor of elementary education, a supervisor of special services, a senior high school principal, a junior high school principal, and nine elementary school principals.

Two services offered to the schools by community agencies were those of a child guidance clinic, toward which the school contributed some financial support, and those of the county health department, through which the school received the services of health nurses.

### Sample and Population

Statements from the literature suggest that individuals in various groups or social positions hold different views about the responsibilities of the school. Beauchamp identifies six groups who might conceivably hold different views regarding the tasks of the school.

Many different groups of people are concerned with and affected by the education of children. They fall into interest groups according to the manner in which they are implicated in the affairs of the schools, and they are implicated through the relationships between the schools and the social positions the persons occupy. The most familiar of these groups are the parents of children in school, the patron group other than parents of children in school, teachers in the schools, school



administrators, boards of education, and the pupils themselves.<sup>51</sup>

A sample of respondents was chosen which would be representative of five school-related social positions in the school district in which the study was made. These were school board members, influential citizens of the community, teachers, parents of elementary school children, and school officials (comprised of superintendents, supervisors, and principals). Pupils were not included as a group to be sampled because of difficulty in eliciting responses from children on an instrument constructed for adult use.

The Tasks of the Elementary School Opinionnaire was distributed by mail to members of the school board and influential citizens. Opinionnaires were distributed to teachers in their schools and were sent to parents by their children from the schools. Administrators received their opinionnaires from the investigator at which time he explained the nature of the study to them.

Since several members of the other school-related social positions were also parents of elementary school children, the investigator, in order to avoid duplication, removed their names from the school lists of parents before drawing the sample for the parent group. After the deletion of these names it was found that there were 2,280 families remaining from which to draw the sample of the parent group

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<sup>51</sup>Beauchamp, p. 6.

(Table I). Since families were not evenly distributed among the various elementary schools and since different schools represented various socio-economic levels of the community, it was felt that a number should be drawn from each school which would represent that school proportionately in the entire sample (Table I). Such a procedure is described by Garrett<sup>52</sup> as stratified or quota sampling. This technique is appropriate when the population is composed of subgroups of different sizes. Thus, a representative sample will include individuals from each stratum according to the size of the various subgroups. Forty percent of the parent group was chosen by the investigator as being an adequate random sample.

To insure randomness in the selection of the parent group from the various schools, an alphabetical roster of parents from each school was numbered consecutively and a table of random numbers was used to select a sample from each school. The appropriate procedure for the use of the table was followed and parents were chosen from each school roster until the proportionate allotment for that school had been exhausted.<sup>53</sup> Garrett points out that when random samples are properly drawn from a population it may be assumed that there will be no consistent biases and on the average,

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<sup>52</sup>Henry E. Garrett, Statistics in Psychology and Education (New York, 1958), p. 206.

<sup>53</sup>Merle W. Tate, Statistics in Education (New York, 1955), pp. 568-569.

samples will be representative of the population from which they were drawn.<sup>54</sup>

TABLE I

NUMBER AND PERCENTAGE OF OPINIONNAIRES DISTRIBUTED TO  
AND RETURNED BY MEMBERS OF EACH OF  
FIVE SOCIAL POSITIONS

Social Positions	Number in Position	Distributed	Returned	Per Cent Returned
Administrators	15	15	15	100.00
School Board Members	9	9	8	88.80
Influential Citizens	46	46	35	80.40
Teachers	234	234	150	64.10
Parents	2,280	912*	424	46.40
Total		1,216	632	51.97

\* Forty per cent random-stratified sample of parents.

#### Selection of Influential Citizens Group

School officials were asked, in individual interviews with the investigator, to name local citizens whom they considered to be influential citizens of the community. Each

<sup>54</sup>Garrett, p. 203.

school official was told that an influential citizen, in this instance, should be one whom the school official viewed as having the ability, through a position of power in the community or through personal influence among large numbers of people in the community, to affect the determination of school policies if he so desired. School officials were further told that these individuals could be persons who were considered to be supporters of schools but that it was also pertinent to know those who were not generally thought to be favorable to the present school policies.

Since it was the feeling of the investigator that there might be some reluctance on the part of school officials to name such individuals, each was assured anonymity and was further assured that no individual would be named in the report nor would the school system be identified by name. It was desirable that the investigator not bias the school officials in the naming of these individuals; he, therefore, attempted to make the interview as non-threatening as possible and to give little direction to the interview other than that described.

A total of one hundred persons were named by the school officials as being influential citizens. It was decided to include only those who were mentioned by two or more school officials as being influential. This resulted in a final group of forty-six individuals who met this criterion.

The Tasks of the Elementary School Opinionnaire was mailed to each of the individuals included in the final

influential citizens group, along with a letter which explained the purpose of the study (APPENDIX A). Of the forty-six persons to whom opinionnaires were mailed, thirty-five were completed and returned (Table II).

TABLE II

INFLUENTIAL CITIZENS GROUP\* -- NUMBER OF RETURNS AND  
FREQUENCY OF TIMES MENTIONED BY SCHOOL OFFICIALS  
GROUP\*\* AS BEING INFLUENTIAL

Times Mentioned As Being Influential	Opinionnaires Distributed	Opinionnaires Returned
2	16	9
3	5	4
4	6	5
5	3	3
6	5	4
7	4	4
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9	1	---
10	2	2
11	1	1
12	3	3
	Total 46	Total 35

\* Influential Citizens Group N = 46

\*\* School Officials Group N = 15

Table III indicates the occupations of those named by school officials as being influential in the community. It will be noted that owners of retail businesses made up the largest group of those named, followed by executives of large companies and housewives who were active in PTA and civic work. Doctors made up the fourth largest group; it is interesting to note that although the five doctors mentioned did not make up the largest occupational group, they were mentioned the greatest percentage of times as being influential by the school official group. It will also be noted that the two individuals who worked with youth programs were mentioned a greater number of times as being influential than were civic officials, executives of large companies and housewives, even though the individuals who made up these latter groups were greater in number.

No claim could be made that the individuals named were actually the most influential citizens of the community, only that they were people who were perceived as being influential by two or more school officials.

A complete sociological analysis of the community to determine those members of the community viewed by different social strata and reference groups as being influential would have been interesting and such an approach could be useful for future investigations. It was felt by the investigator that the present approach was appropriate for the purposes of this study since administrators will be affected in their policy-making decisions by those persons in the

TABLE III

ANALYSIS OF INFLUENTIAL CITIZENS GROUP ACCORDING TO NUMBER  
AND PERCENTAGE RATIO IN EACH OCCUPATION GROUP:  
FREQUENCY AND PERCENTAGE RATIO  
OF BEING MENTIONED

Occupation	Number	Per Cent of Total	Times Mentioned	Per Cent of Total
Owner-Manager, Retail Business	10	21.74	30	13.64
Executive, Large Company	6	13.04	18	8.18
Housewife, PTA, Civic Worker	6	13.04	14	6.36
Doctor	5	10.87	33	15.00
Banker	4	8.70	26	11.82
Attorney	4	8.70	24	10.91
Minister	3	6.52	21	9.55
Businessman, Civic Official	3	6.52	17	7.73
Newspaperman	2	4.35	16	7.27
Youth Program Workers - YMCA, Juvenile Policeman	2	4.34	19	8.64
Architect	1	2.18	2	.90
Totals	46	100.00	220	100.00

community whom they consider to be influential citizens, not necessarily by those whom other people might consider to be powerful or influential. This approach demonstrates the relationship between power and influence as explained by Biddle.<sup>55</sup> In experiments done at Wayne University, it was found that a powerful person has less influence on an individual than a less powerful person if the individual perceives the less powerful person to be powerful. Biddle proposes an explanation of power which he calls the expectational concept, and defines expectational power as follows:

Any one of a number of expectations held by Individual A that Individual B can behave in such a manner under certain conditions to affect the needs of Individual A.

He assumes that people hold expectations\* about the behaviors of others, among which are expectations relating to behaviors that others may take, imposing on the individual, called power expectations. This implies that the basis of power is that Individual A expects that Individual B can do certain things to him that will impose upon him.

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<sup>55</sup>Bruce J. Biddle, Power and Social Influence, A Simple Relationship? (Paper delivered before The American Sociological Society, Seattle, Washington, August 28, 1958).

\* It should be noted that Biddle's use of the word "expectations" in this instance is not the same as that used elsewhere in this study (see page 30 of this dissertation) to describe the tasks people in various school-related social positions believe the schools should carry out.



## The Instrumentation

The instrument used in the present study was a part of the instrument, The Tasks of Educational Institutions Opinionnaire, which was adapted with permission, by Dr. Robert E. Sweitzer<sup>56</sup> from the instrument, The Tasks of Public Education, developed by Downey, Seager, and Slagle<sup>57</sup> at the University of Chicago, Midwest Administration Center. Permission was granted by the Midwest Administration Center for the use of the instrument in the present study.

Downey, Seager, and Slagle developed the instrument, The Tasks of Public Education Opinionnaire, from a synthesis of notable statements by individuals and groups about the tasks of public education in America from the time of Horace Mann to the time of their study in 1960. A review of the literature in Chapter I of this study included some of these statements. Since it was found that many of the statements overlapped, it was necessary for the authors to synthesize them into a conceptual framework from which an instrument could be developed.

The simple grid was employed as a device to synthesize the statements. Along a vertical axis were listed the names of the individuals or groups whose contributions were

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<sup>56</sup>Robert E. Sweitzer and Larry K. Hayes, Educational Administration in Oklahoma--Status and Problems, 1961 College of Education, Oklahoma State University, 1961.

<sup>57</sup>L. W. Downey, R. C. Seager, and A. T. Slagle, The Tasks of Public Education (Chicago, 1960).

included and along its horizontal axis were listed the classifications into which the elements were grouped. When redundancy was eliminated, it was found that the grid summarized, in an abbreviated and categorized form, all the task elements which had been drawn from the literature reviewed. Four dimensions emerged from the synthesized statements of the tasks of public education. They were "intellectual development", "social development", "personal development", and "productive development".

In the "intellectual development dimension", four elements which appeared regularly were command of fundamental processes, fundamental skills of communication, intellectual curiosity and eagerness for life-long learning, and the ability to think and evaluate constructively and creatively.

The "social development dimension" included civic rights and responsibilities and knowledge of American institutions, cultural heritage--common core of traditions and values, cooperation in living and working together, and an awareness of our relationship with the world community.

Synthesized statements listed under the "personal development dimension" were physical and mental health, ethical behavior based on a sense of moral and spiritual values, effective work habits and self-discipline, aesthetic appreciations and self-expression in the arts, and wise use of leisure time including constructive leisure pursuits.

The authors noted that of the twenty-seven persons and organizations listed on the grid, eleven did not include

statements having to do with the "productive dimension". Three elements appeared regularly in the other sixteen formulations. These were occupational information and training, homemaking skills and satisfaction in home and family living, and skill for carrying on the economic life of the society.<sup>58</sup>

The review of the various statements of the tasks of public education and relevant research projects was the first step in the conceptualization process. The next step according to the authors was, "to refine and order the resulting synthesis into one comprehensive statement which could be assumed to contain the basic elements of education's task and become the conceptual framework for subsequent instrumentation and data analysis".<sup>59</sup>

Through the process of logic and simplification, the authors restated the elements of education's task in simple, mutually exclusive functions which taken together comprised the total task.

The conceptual framework of the dimensions of the task of public education which emerged are as follows:

#### Intellectual Dimensions

1. POSSESSION OF KNOWLEDGE: A fund of information.  
Concepts.
2. COMMUNICATION OF KNOWLEDGE: Skill to acquire and transmit.

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<sup>58</sup>Ibid., p. 20.

<sup>59</sup>Ibid., p. 21.

3. CREATION OF KNOWLEDGE: Discrimination and imagination. A habit.
4. DESIRE FOR KNOWLEDGE: A love for learning.

#### Social Dimensions

1. MAN TO MAN: Cooperation in day-to-day relations.
2. MAN TO STATE: Civic rights and duties.
3. MAN TO COUNTRY: Loyalty to one's own country.
4. MAN TO WORLD: Inter-relationships of peoples.

#### Personal Dimensions

1. PHYSICAL: Bodily health and development.
2. EMOTIONAL: Mental health stability.
3. ETHICAL: Moral integrity.
4. AESTHETIC: Cultural and leisure pursuits.

#### Productive Dimensions

1. VOCATION-SELECTIVE: Information and guidance.
2. VOCATION-PREPARATIVE: Training and placement.
3. HOME AND FAMILY: Housekeeping, do-it-yourself, family.
4. CONSUMER: Personal buying, selling and investment.<sup>60</sup>

The authors make the following statement about this formulation of the tasks of the public schools:

This framework claims to include most of the important elements of education's task, as suggested by previous formulations; it claims that no one element is duplicated by any other, and it claims that each item is stated in such a definitive term that there is little chance of overlapping or ambiguity among items. It should be further noted that education's task is stated here in terms of final products or outcomes; there is no specification of what the school ought to be, what subjects it ought to teach, or how it ought to teach them. The task is formulated in fundamental but general terms, and every effort has been made to distinguish the general from the particular. Implementation is another problem--a problem appropriate only to those task elements which are ultimately retained as the task of the school.<sup>61</sup>

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<sup>60</sup>Ibid., p. 24.

<sup>61</sup>Ibid., p. 26.

Since the framework was couched in educational terminology which might not be familiar to or understood by the general public, the next step in the process of instrumentation was to translate the educational terminology into commonly understood "lay" language. This was done through interview, item construction, empirical check, item emendation, and re-check. The instrument can be seen in APPENDIX A.

In addition to the Tasks of the Elementary School Opinionnaire, certain other information pertinent to the present study was elicited from respondents (APPENDIX A, General Information, Part I). This information pertained to certain personal data about the respondents and was used to define limitations of the present study. The findings relative to these data are reported in Chapter IV.

#### Data Collection and Statistical Analyses

The Tasks of the Elementary School Opinionnaire, the instrument used in the present study, consisted of sixteen statements of education's task, representing four elements under each of the four task dimensions of the public elementary school.

One object of the present inquiry was to determine the priorities that the members of five selected school-related social positions would give to the various task dimensions (expectations). Another object of the inquiry was to determine what priorities the members of each position felt the

school was actually giving to the various task dimensions (perceptions). In addition, school officials attributed expectations to school board members, teachers, influential citizens, and parents of elementary school children.

The sixteen items in the Tasks of Public Education Opinionnaire were printed with space for indicating the level of priority to be given each statement. The scale ranged from one to five with one being the lowest priority and five the highest. Information from the opinionnaires was then coded and punched on IBM cards for use with the IBM 650 Computer. The instructions for marking the opinionnaires may be seen in the instrument (APPENDIX A).

The data in the present study were ordinal in nature and, therefore, required the use of a nonparametric statistic. The statistic used for the analysis of the difference between the expectations and perceptions of the tasks of the elementary school within each school-related social position, and the difference in expectations and perceptions among the various positions, was the Mann-Whitney  $z_U$  Test.<sup>62</sup> This is a statistic which tests the difference between two rank distributions, and is comparable to the  $t$  test of the difference between two means. It is appropriate when interval scaled data or better cannot be assumed and when normality of the distribution is not known.

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<sup>62</sup>Sidney Siegel, Nonparametric Statistics for the Behavioral Sciences (New York, 1956), pp. 116-127.

Biddle points out the appropriateness of this nonparametric statistic for data such as those obtained in the present study.

The Mann-Whitney U is a nonparametric statistic having essentially the same function as a  $t$  test for the difference between two sample means.  $\bar{U}$  tests the null hypothesis that two sample distributions are insignificantly different against the signed hypothesis that the central rank tendency of one sample is greater than the central rank tendency of another..... moreover, it has been shown by Mann and Whitney that the statistic  $z_U$  may be defined as a linear function of  $U$  ..... and has the form of a normal deviate when the total frequency of items in each of two distributions are sufficiently large.<sup>63</sup>

After coding the instruments and punching the information on IBM cards, statistical computations were performed on the IBM 650 Computer at the Oklahoma State University Computing Center. The procedures used in programming the statistical analysis were those suggested by Biddle,<sup>64</sup> and were adapted for use on the IBM 650 from the program he set up to be used on the Burroughs Datatron Computer.

It was hypothesized that there would be no concordance among the rankings of school officials on expectations attributed to influential citizens on the four dimensions of the tasks of the elementary school. The statistic used to measure concordance among the expectations school officials

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<sup>63</sup>Bruce J. Biddle and Ann W. Simpson, A Program For The Processing of Ordinal Data and Computation of Significance For Selected Central Tendency Differences, Social Psychology Laboratory, The University of Missouri, (Columbia, Missouri, 1961), pp. 34-49.

<sup>64</sup>Ibid., pp. 34-48.

attributed to influential citizens as a group was described by Walker and Lev as concordance among rankings.<sup>65</sup> It was also desirable to know whether there would be a correlation between the expectations school officials attributed to each influential citizen and that citizen's actual expectations. The formula for rank order correlation<sup>66</sup> provided a measure of the relationship between the expectations attributed by school officials to teachers, parents, school board members, and influential citizens and the actual expectations of these groups.

Chapter IV presents information relative to the characteristics of the sample and defines certain limitations to the study based upon these data. Succeeding chapters deal with the disparity between the expectations and perceptions of the five social positions for the tasks of the elementary school; the disparity among the five social positions on both expectations and perceptions; the degree of concordance among school officials on expectations attributed to influential citizens; and disparities between expectations attributed by school officials to school board members, teachers, parents and influential citizens and the actual expectations of these groups.

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<sup>65</sup>Helen M. Walker and Joseph Lev, Statistical Inference (New York, 1953), pp. 283-286.

<sup>66</sup>Ibid., pp. 278-280.



## CHAPTER IV

### GENERAL CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SAMPLE

Findings from the general information portion of the opinionnaire helped not only to describe the population of the study but also served to help define certain limitations for the study.

Information was elicited from each respondent concerning his age, sex, occupation, and amount of schooling. Certain other information was also obtained. This included the organizations to which he belonged, the religious groups with which he was affiliated, whether or not he had ever been a teacher, the number of children he had in school, and the grade level of the children. Furthermore, the respondent was asked to indicate whether he was head of the household, and the amount of contact he had had with the public schools.

Table IV shows the number and percentage of respondents in each age category by decades. The table reveals that there was much overlapping among groups in the age categories from thirty-one through sixty. The ages of the majority of school officials fell into the fifty-one through sixty years category, while school board members were represented mainly in the categories thirty-one through forty and fifty-

TABLE IV

## NUMBER AND PERCENTAGE OF RESPONDENTS IN EACH AGE CATEGORY

Ages by Decades	21-30	31-40	41-50	51-60	61-70	70 or Above
School Officials N = 15	---	6.67% 1	26.66% 4	60.00% 9	6.67% 1	---
School Board N = 8	---	37.50% 3	12.50% 1	25.00% 2	25.00% 2	---
Influential Citizens N = 35	---	11.42% 4	51.43% 18	20.00% 7	14.29% 5	2.86% 1
Teachers N = 150	20.67% 46	14.67% 22	21.33% 32	23.33% 35	10.00% 15	---
Parents N = 424	11.55% 49	64.15% 272	22.17% 94	2.13% 9	---	---

one through seventy. The ages of a majority of influential citizens were in the forty-one through fifty years bracket but older age groups were represented as well. Teachers were fairly well represented in all age categories but it is interesting to note the large number in the twenty-one to thirty age groups. Parents were found primarily in the thirty-one through forty age category, being most representative of the young to middle age categories. It could possibly be shown that age is a factor in the values people hold. It would be of interest in future studies to investigate age as it influences the expectations and perceptions of individuals for the tasks of education.

Table V indicates whether the respondent was male or female. It can be seen from this table that a large majority of the school officials, school board members and influential citizens were male, while a large proportion of the teachers were female. In the parents group a large proportion of the opinionnaires were marked by the mother, although some parents collaborated in the endeavor.

Table VI indicates the occupations of the heads of the household in the various school-related groups. School officials and teachers are listed in the professional-technical category. It is interesting to find that school board members were for the most part equally divided between the professional-technical and the managers-officials-proprietors categories. Influential citizens were almost equally divided between these two groups but tended toward the

latter category. Parents, on the other hand, were represented in most occupational groups. The large numbers in the categories headed professional-technical, clerical, craftmen-foremen, and operative-industry labor reflect the occupations to be found in the oil industry which is the major source of employment for the community.

TABLE V  
NUMBER AND PERCENTAGE OF RESPONDENTS ACCORDING TO SEX

	Male		Female		Husband & Wife	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
School Officials N = 15	11	73.33	4	26.67	---	---
School Board N = 8	7	87.50	---	---	1	12.50
Influential Citizens N = 35	30	85.72	2	5.71	3	8.57
Teachers N = 150	28	18.67	120	80.00	2	1.33
Parents N = 424	90	21.23	190	44.81	144	33.96

Table VII reveals the academic achievement level of the members of the five social positions. While all teachers

TABLE VI  
OCCUPATIONS OF HEADS OF HOUSEHOLD

	School Officials N = 15	School Board N = 8	Influential Citizens N = 35	Teachers N = 150	Parents N = 424
Professional- Technical	15	4	16	150	96
Farmers, Farm Managers	---	---	1	---	9
Clerical, etc.	---	---	---	---	48
Sales Workers	---	---	---	---	32
Craftmen- Foremen	---	1	---	---	58
Operatives- Industry Labor	---	---	---	---	91
Service, Household	---	---	---	---	41
Farm Laborers or Foremen	---	---	---	---	---
Managers, Officials, Proprietors (except farmers)	---	3	18	---	49

TABLE VII

NUMBER AND PERCENTAGE OF RESPONDENTS IN RELATION TO  
LEVELS OF ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT

	Eighth Grade or Less		High School		College not Complete		College Degree		Graduate Work		Master's Degree		Work beyond Masters		Doctor's Degree	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
School Officials N = 15	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	3	20.00	12	80.00	--	--
School Board N = 8	--	--	2	25.00	1	12.50	1	12.50	1	12.50	1	12.50	--	--	2	25.00
Influential Citizens N = 35	--	--	3	8.57	7	20.00	9	25.71	2	5.71	5	14.29	5	14.29	4	11.43
Teachers N = 150	--	--	--	--	--	--	32	21.33	58	38.67	35	23.33	25	16.67	--	--
Parents N = 424	25	5.90	194	45.75	99	23.35	48	11.32	26	6.13	18	4.25	6	1.41	8	1.89

and school officials had at least a college degree, none had earned doctorate degrees. It is interesting to note that the other three positions had members who had achieved the doctorate level. With the exception of the parent group, the majority in each of the five groups had completed college; in the parent group, approximately one-third had achieved this academic level.

Although educational level was not used as a variable in the present study, past studies have indicated that the educational level of respondents has some bearing on their viewpoints concerning education's tasks. Further research in this area could be fruitful.

It is interesting to note in Table VIII the types of organizations to which the members of the various groups indicated they belong. The members of all five school-related social positions had a number of memberships in civic and service organizations, but the influential citizens and parents maintained the greatest number of memberships in these organizations. School officials, school board members and teachers had the greatest number of memberships in professional organizations.

Table IX reveals the civic and service clubs in which there was the greatest overlapping in memberships among the various groups. They are the Chamber of Commerce, the PTA, and the YMCA. Fraternal and religious organizations, though not high on the list in terms of numbers of memberships from any group, represent a common meeting ground for some

TABLE VIII

NUMBER AND PERCENTAGE OF MEMBERSHIPS IN EACH TYPE OF ORGANIZATION  
 COMPARED WITH TOTAL MEMBERSHIPS IN ALL TYPES OF ORGANIZATIONS

Total Memberships	Civic and Service		Fraternal		Social		Religious		Professional	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
School Officials 121	35	28.92	2	1.66	11	9.09	2	1.66	71	58.67
School Board 26	7	26.92	4	15.39	3	11.54	--	--	12	46.15
Influential Citizens 166	104	62.65	17	10.25	15	9.03	7	4.22	23	13.85
Teachers 841	149	17.71	18	2.15	121	14.38	32	3.81	521	61.95
Parents 581	283	48.70	87	14.97	81	13.95	44	7.57	86	14.81



TABLE IX

## THREE LEADING ORGANIZATIONS IN MEMBERSHIP BY TYPE AMONG THE VARIOUS GROUPS

	School Officials	School Board	Influential Citizens	Teachers	Parents
CIVIC AND SERVICE	P.T.A.	Chamber of Commerce	Chamber of Commerce	P.T.A.	P.T.A.
	Lions Club	-----	Rotary	Art Ass'n	Y.M.C.A.
	Y.M.C.A.	-----	Y.M.C.A.	Kiwanis	Chamber of Commerce
FRATERNAL	Masonic Lodge	Masonic Lodge	Masonic Lodge	Eastern Star	Masonic Lodge
	-----	I.O.O.F.	Shriners	Masonic Lodge	Elks
	-----	-----	Moose	White Shrine	Knights of Pythias
SOCIAL	Schoolmasters	Country Club	Country Club	A.A.U.W.	Mothers Club
	-----	-----	Isaac Walton League	Kappa Kappa Iota	Square Dance Club
	-----	-----	-----	Delta Kappa Gamma	Garden Club
RELIGIOUS	Men's Group	-----	Men's Group	Women's Group	Women's Group
	Women's Group	-----	Women's Group	Men's Group	Men's Group
	-----	-----	-----	Choir	Choir
PROFES- SIONAL	A.C.E.	Medical Ass'n	Medical Ass'n	A.C.E.	Amer. Chemical Society
	D.E.S.A.	-----	Bar Ass'n	Beta Sigma Phi	Industrial Oil Workers Union
	-----	-----	Ministerial Alliance	Iota Lambda Sigma	Daugherty Men's Institute

members of all groups. The Masonic Lodge and its affiliated organizations ranked highest of those mentioned.

There was little overlapping in membership among the various professional and social groups to which respondents belonged. These do not appear to be organizations in which there can be much fraternization among the members of the various school-related social positions included in the present study.

Table X indicates the religious groups with which the members of the various social positions were affiliated and reveals that the majority of the members in all groups belonged to a few dominant religious institutions. Of the twenty religions mentioned, it can be seen that four religious groups appear to be most dominant among the five social groups. They are the Christian, Methodist, Baptist, and Presbyterian churches. Church affiliation was not used as a variable in the present study. It would appear that church affiliated social groups may be instrumental in helping members from the various school-related social positions to get to know each other. It would be interesting in future studies to attempt to determine whether church affiliation could be a factor in the values and attitudes people hold for education.

In summary, the organizations which offer the greatest potential for contact among the members of the various groups are the Chamber of Commerce, the PTA, the YMCA, the Masonic Lodge, and church-affiliated social organizations.

TABLE X

NUMBER AND PERCENTAGE OF RESPONDENTS AFFILIATED  
WITH VARIOUS RELIGIOUS GROUPS

	School Officials N = 15	School Board N = 8	Influential Citizens N = 35	Teachers N = 150	Parents N = 424
Christian	5	3	7	21	71
%	33.33	37.50	20.00	14.00	16.75
Episcopal	1	---	2	5	15
%	6.67		5.71	3.33	3.53
Methodist	6	1	9	50	83
%	40.00	12.50	25.71	33.33	19.58
Baptist	2	---	4	30	107
%	13.33		11.43	20.00	25.24
Presbyterian	1	3	9	17	36
%	6.67	37.50	25.71	11.33	8.49
Church of Christ	---	1	1	4	15
%		12.50	2.86	2.67	3.53
Unitarian	---	---	---	2	---
%				1.33	
Church of God	---	---	---	1	4
%				.69	.94
Evangelical United Brethern	---	---	---	2	15
%				1.33	3.53
Catholic	---	---	---	2	9
%				1.33	2.12
Lutheran	---	---	---	3	9
%				2.00	2.12
Assembly of God	---	---	---	2	4
%				1.33	.94

TABLE X (Continued)

	School Officials N = 15	School Board N = 8	Influential Citizens N = 35	Teachers N = 150	Parents N = 424
Pentecostal Holiness %	---	---	---	---	2 .47
Salvation Army %	---	---	---	---	1 .24
Nazarene %	---	---	---	---	7 1.65
Evangelistic Center %	---	---	---	---	2 .47
Foursquare Gospel Tabernacle %	---	---	---	---	2 .47
Jewish %	---	---	1 2.86	---	2 .47
Christian Temple %	---	---	---	---	1 .24
Christian Science %	---	---	1 2.86	---	1 .24
Jesus Christ of the Latter Day Saints %	---	---	---	---	1 .24
No Response	---	---	1 2.86	11 7.33	37 8.74

Since it was hypothesized in the present study that those groups having similar background and training programs would tend to view the tasks of the elementary school similarly, it was necessary to know how many former teachers were represented in the other social groups. Table XI indicates that approximately ten per cent of the individuals comprising these groups had at one time been teachers. These opinionnaires could have been removed before the data were analyzed but it was felt such a procedure would have been of little value since several of the social positions have similar overlapping characteristics. For example, many individuals in all social positions were parents of elementary school children and to some degree it could be expected that all individuals exert influence on school policy. It was pertinent in the present study to determine whether the groups, in spite of their overlapping characteristics, showed differences in their expectations and perceptions of the tasks of the elementary school.

Table XII shows the number and percentage of respondents in each social group who had children in elementary, junior high, and senior high schools. Few school officials, school board members, and teachers had any children in school. Approximately half of the influential citizens had children in school at the elementary and junior high school levels. By definition, parents of elementary children were represented one hundred per cent with children at the

elementary level. The table shows that they had fewer children at the junior and senior high levels.

TABLE XI  
NUMBER OF RESPONDENTS INDICATING EXPERIENCE  
IN THE TEACHING PROFESSION

	Experience in Teaching		No Experience in Teaching	
	No.	%	No.	%
School Officials N = 15	15	100.00	---	---
School Board N = 8	1	12.50	7	87.50
Influential Citizens N = 35	5	14.29	30	85.71
Teachers N = 150	150	100.00	---	---
Parents N = 424	41	9.67	383	90.33

Table XIII reveals that in most cases those returning the opinionnaire indicated they were the head of the household. It will be noted that teachers are the exception to this finding.

TABLE XII

NUMBER AND PERCENTAGE OF RESPONDENTS HAVING CHILDREN IN  
ELEMENTARY, JUNIOR AND SENIOR HIGH SCHOOL

	None	Elementary Age Children		Junior High Age Children		Senior High Age Children		None	%	1 or More	%	
		%	1 or More	%	1 or More	%	1 or More					
School Officials N = 15	14	93.33	1	6.67	12	80.00	3	20.00	11	73.33	4	26.67
School Board N = 8	5	62.50	3	37.50	7	87.50	1	12.50	7	87.50	1	12.50
Influential Citizens N = 35	19	54.29	16	45.71	20	57.14	15	42.86	25	71.43	10	28.57
Teachers N = 150	125	83.33	25	16.67	130	86.67	20	13.33	140	93.33	10	6.67
Parents N = 424	---	---	424	100.00	283	66.75	141	33.25	354	83.49	70	16.51

TABLE XIII

NUMBER AND PERCENTAGE OF RESPONDENTS WHO INDICATED  
THEY WERE HEAD OF THE HOUSEHOLD

	Head of Household		Not Head of Household	
	No.	%	No.	%
School Officials N = 15	14	93.33	1	6.67
School Board N = 8	8	100.00	---	---
Influential Citizens N = 35	33	94.29	2	5.71
Teachers N = 150	67	44.67	83	55.33
Parents N = 424	247	58.25	177	41.75

It was desirable in the present study to know the degree of contact influential citizens and parents had with the public schools. Table XIV reveals this information. The positions of teacher, school official, and school board member had by definition the closest contact possible. A scale represented by statements arranged in a hierarchy of closeness was used to represent the degree of contact with the schools. Those who were present or past members of the school board, members of planning or advisory boards to the schools, elected officers in PTA, or regularly attended PTA



meetings were considered to be in closer contact with the schools than were those who merely attended some school affairs, sometimes made it a practice to meet their child's teacher, visited school occasionally, or talked to their child about school.

TABLE XIV  
DEGREE OF CONTACT WITH THE PUBLIC SCHOOLS

	Close Contact		Little Contact	
	No.	%	No.	%
School Officials N = 15	15	100.00	---	---
School Board N = 8	8	100.00	---	---
Teachers N = 150	150	100.00	---	---
Influential Citizens N = 35	19	54.29	16	45.71
Parents N = 424	98	23.11	326	76.89

Influential citizens showed a close balance between those with close contact and those with little contact. Three-fourths of the parents, however, indicated by their reaction to the instrument that they had little contact

with the public schools. Research in the area as cited on page 28 in this dissertation revealed that close contact with the school seemed not to have any appreciable effect upon the individual's expectations for the tasks of public education. The present study did not use degree of contact with the public schools as a variable but this would be an interesting and perhaps fruitful area to explore in future studies.

This chapter has pointed out some of the general characteristics of the sample, some limitations for the study, and has pointed the way toward further research in this area.

Chapter V and subsequent chapters will be concerned with the analyses of the data gathered on the Tasks of Elementary Schools instrument, and the findings from the analyses, some conclusions from the findings, and some implications of the findings for education.

## CHAPTER V

### INTRA-POSITIONAL COMPARISONS BETWEEN EXPECTATIONS AND PERCEPTIONS ON THE TASK DIMENSIONS OF THE ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

One of the primary concerns in the present research was to discover differences between what members of the five school-related social groups thought the tasks of the elementary schools should be and their perceptions of the tasks the schools were actually emphasizing. Respondents indicated their preference for a particular task item on a five point scale, with five showing a high degree of preference and one showing a low degree of preference. Instruments were coded and the information punched on IBM cards, after which frequencies of responses on the various items were grouped and statistically analyzed on the IBM 650 Computer to determine whether there was a significant difference between the central rank tendencies of expectations and perceptions. The statistic used to make this analysis was the Mann-Whitney  $z_U$  Test.

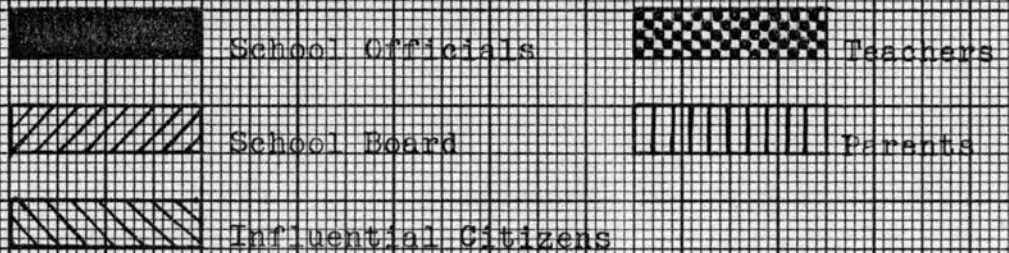
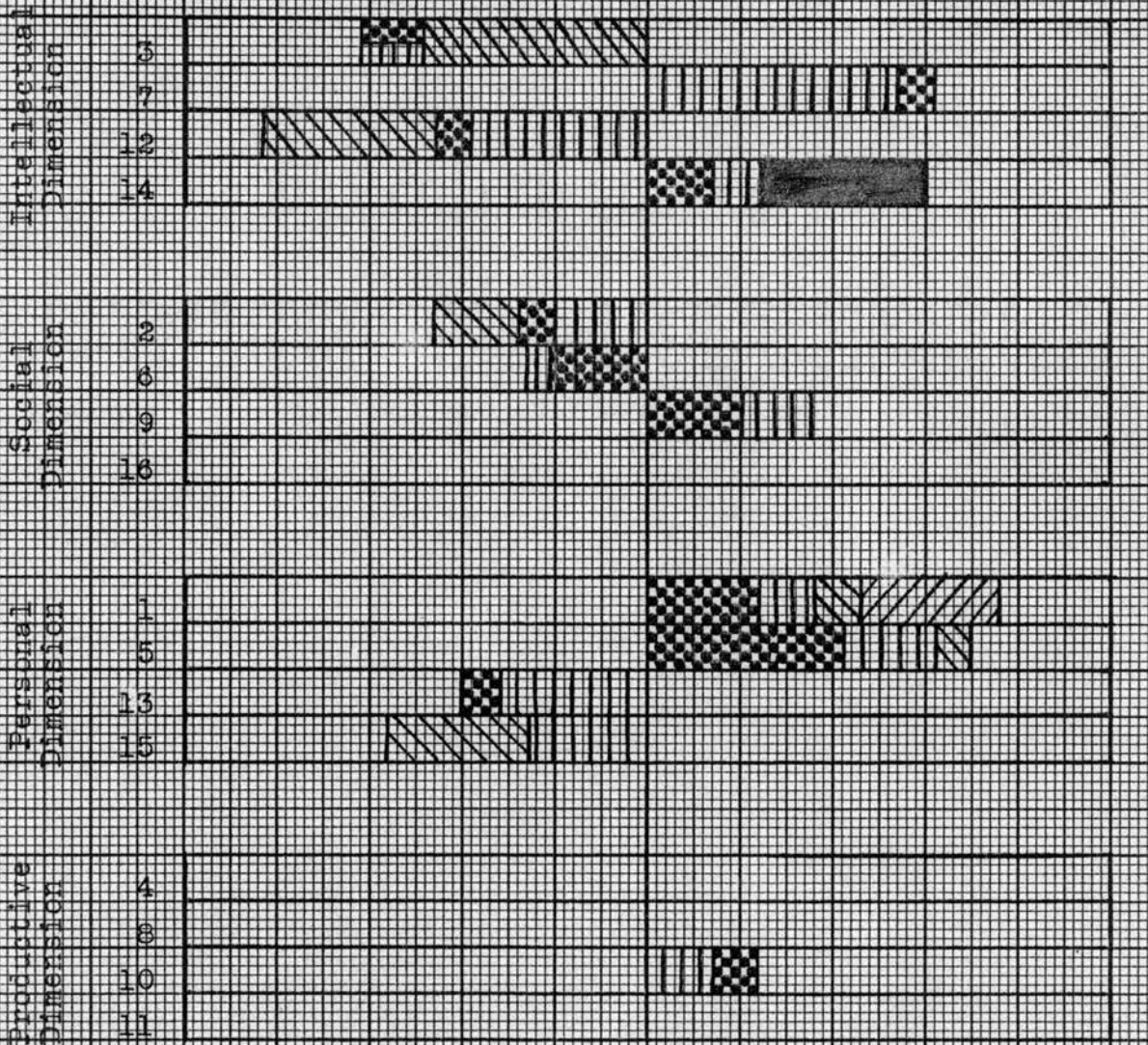
Tables XV through XVIII present the mean differences between the expectations and perceptions of the five school-related social groups, those that are significantly different, and the direction of this difference. This information is also presented in graphic form (Plate I) to facilitate

Plate I

DEGREE OF EXCEPTIONAL FULFILLMENT ON TASKS OF THE ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

Does less than should ----- Does more than should

1.0 .80 .60 .40 .20 0 .20 .40 .60 .80 1.0



interpretation. Actual mean scores may be seen in APPENDIX B, and are also presented graphically in Plate II. The items from the Tasks of the Elementary School Opinionnaire are grouped according to the task dimension they represent. In Tables XV through XVIII significant mean differences are designated by asterisks. Where the mean for expectations was found to be significantly greater than the mean for perceptions, the indication was that the school was not doing enough on this task, while the opposite was indicated when the mean perception was significantly greater.

#### Intellectual Tasks Dimension

Table XV indicates the mean differences between expectations and perceptions on the items comprising the intellectual tasks dimension of the school. Significant mean differences and the level of their significance are represented by asterisks. This table reveals that school officials, parents, and teachers saw the school giving more attention to the three R's than they considered desirable, while school board members and influential citizens showed no disparity between expectations and perceptions on this particular task. The fact that school officials, parents, and teachers perceived the school doing more in the area of the three R's than they expected is deceptive unless their expectations of this task are also considered. When the mean for this item is located on the five point scale, it can be seen that all three groups placed it toward the upper end of the continuum. Therefore, although these three

Plate II

MEAN EXPECTATIONS AND PERCEPTIONS FOR ALL GROUPS  
BY ITEM AND DIMENSION

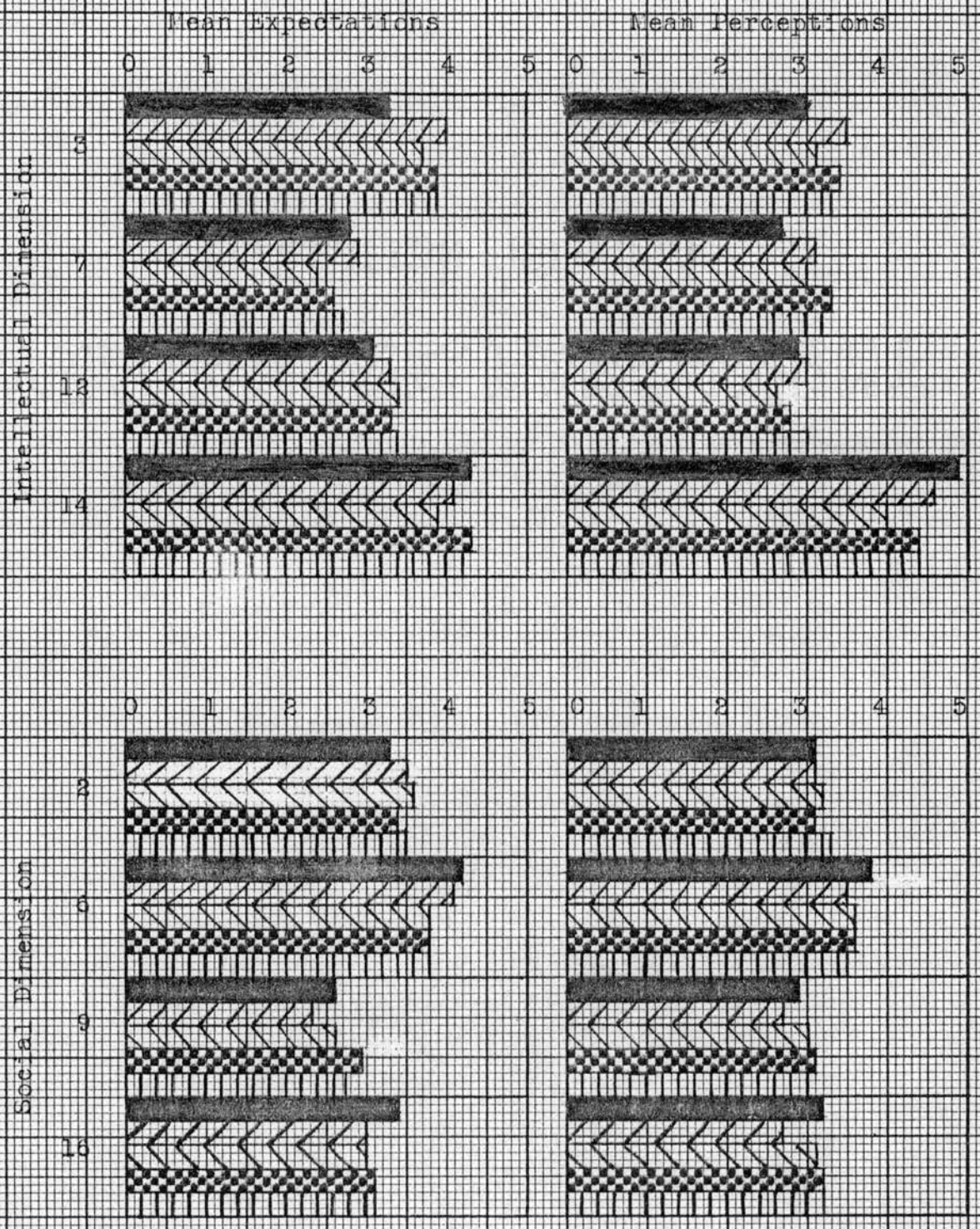


Plate II (Continued)

Mean Expectations

Mean Perceptions

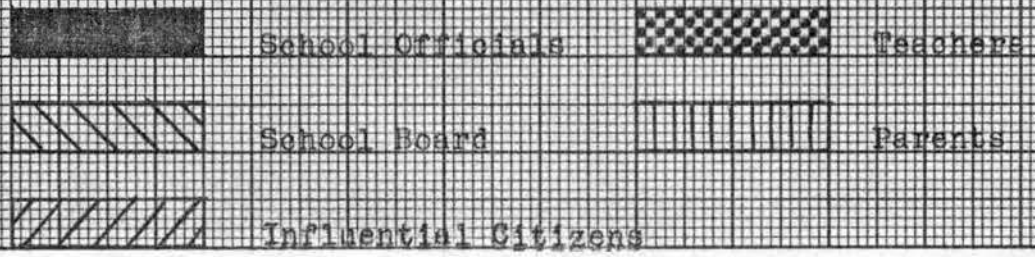
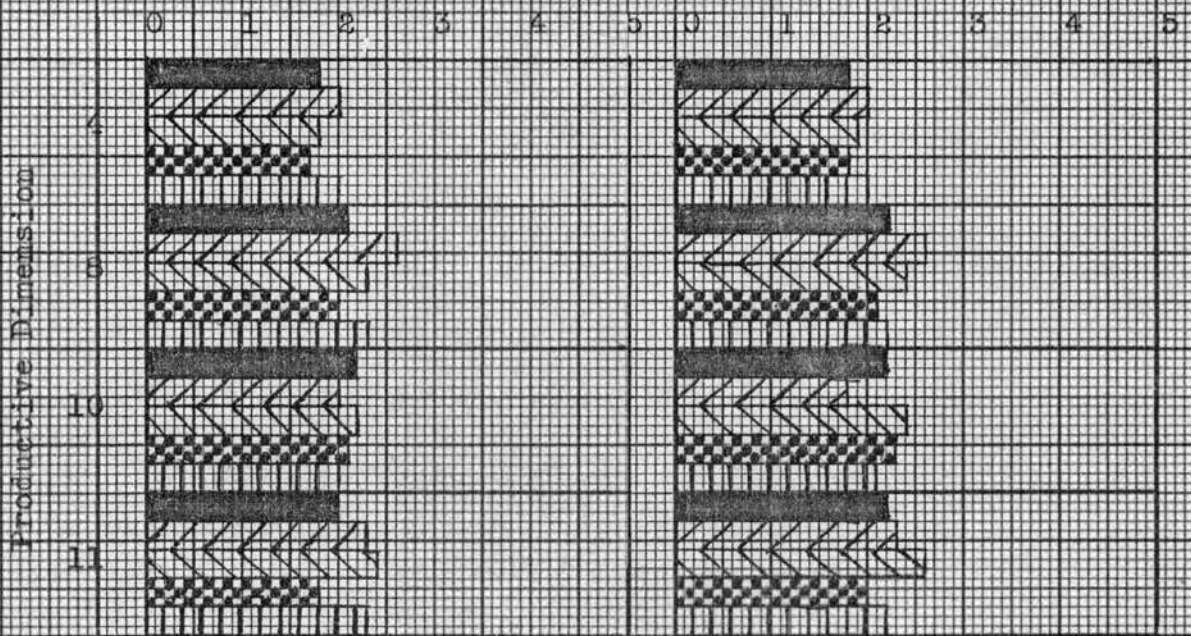
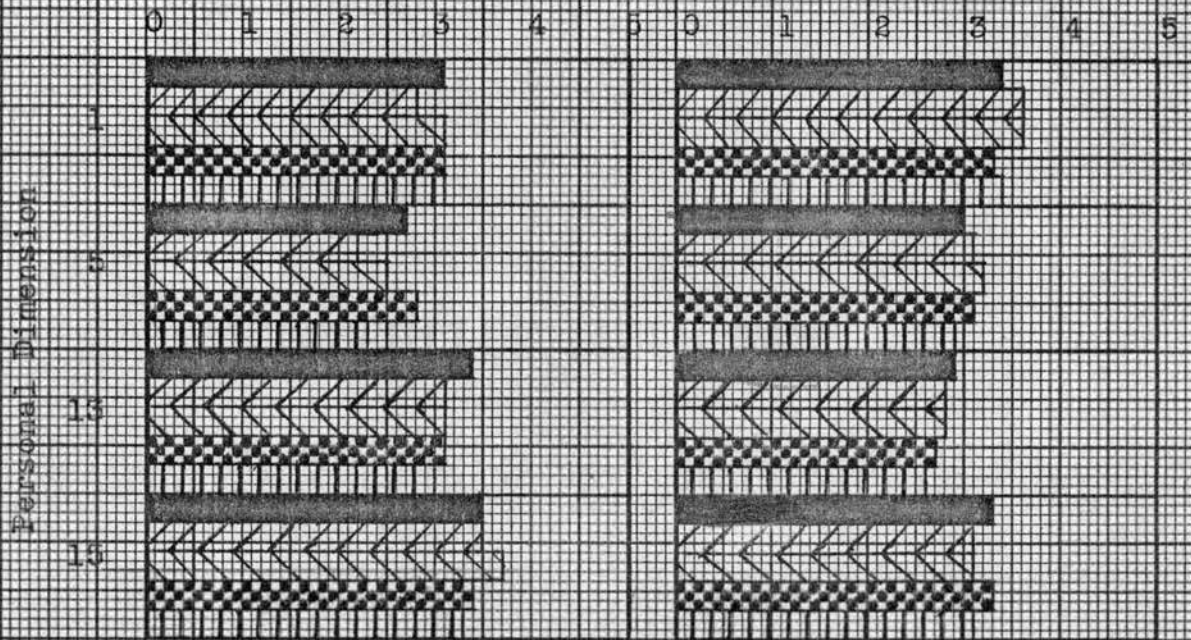


TABLE XV

INTRA-POSITIONAL MEAN DIFFERENCES BETWEEN EXPECTATIONS AND PERCEPTIONS  
ON THE INTELLECTUAL TASKS OF THE ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

Task Items	School Officials	School Board	Influential Citizens	Teachers	Parents
3. Desire to learn more-- the inquiring mind.	-0.26	-0.50	-0.49*	-0.62***	-0.62***
7. A fund of information about many things.	-0.13	0.38	0.43	0.62***	0.54***
12. The habit of figuring things out for one's self.	-0.27	-0.38	-0.83***	-0.47***	-0.39***
14. The basic tools for acquiring and commu- nicating knowledge-- the three R's	0.60*	0.50	0.18	0.14*	0.22

Note: For Tables XV through XVIII a negative sign in mean difference indicates that the mean for expectation is higher than the mean for the perception on a particular item. (A high mean score on any item is indicative of a desire for the fulfillment of the task or the perception that the task is fulfilled to a great degree by the school. Mean scores may be seen in APPENDIX B.) For the above named tables, differences significant at  $.01 < p < .05$  are indicated by a single asterisk, at  $.001 < p < .01$  with two asterisks, and at  $p < .001$  with three asterisks.



groups thought the school gave too much attention to the three R's, they nevertheless had high expectations that the school would give a great deal of emphasis to this task of teaching the basic tools for acquiring and communicating knowledge. The degree of expectation any group held for a particular task can be similarly interpreted by referring to the original mean scores in APPENDIX B.

Influential citizens, teachers and parents indicated they would like the school to do more in stimulating the child's desire to learn, while school officials and board members saw the school fulfilling their expectations in developing this attitude of an inquiring mind in children.

Teachers and parents indicated by their responses that they thought the school was giving children a fund of information about many things. They did not, however, see this as altogether desirable since the school was doing more in this area than they expected. Each held only moderate expectations for this task. The other three groups indicated no significant difference between their expectations and what they saw the school doing in this area.

Influential citizens, teachers and parents agreed that the school could do more in the area of helping children to figure things out for themselves, while the school fulfilled the expectations of school officials and school board members in this matter of teaching self-reliance to children.

### Social Tasks Dimension

Table XVI indicates mean differences between expectations and perceptions of groups on items comprising the social tasks dimension of the elementary school. This table reveals that influential citizens, teachers, and parents thought the school was doing less than it should in the matter of teaching loyalty to America and the American way of life, while the desires of school officials and board members were fulfilled by the school in this matter.

School officials, school board members, and influential citizens thought the school was doing an adequate job of teaching children how to live and work with others. Teachers and parents indicated by their responses they believed the school could do more along these lines.

Teachers and parents were also in agreement concerning the matter of giving elementary school children knowledges and appreciations for the peoples of other lands. In this instance, however, they saw the school doing more of this than they considered necessary. School officials, board members and influential citizens revealed no disparity between their expectations and perceptions on this matter.

All groups saw the school fulfilling their expectations in the matter of helping children to understand the rights and duties of citizenship and the acceptance of reasonable rules and regulations.

TABLE XVI

INTRA-POSITIONAL MEAN DIFFERENCES BETWEEN EXPECTATIONS AND PERCEPTIONS  
ON THE SOCIAL TASKS OF THE ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

Task Items	School Officials	School Board	Influential Citizens	Teachers	Parents
2. Loyalty to America and the American way of life.	-0.20	-0.37	-0.46*	-0.27**	-0.20**
6. The ability to live and work with others.	-0.40	-0.63	-0.20	-0.22*	-0.26***
9. Knowledge of and appreciation for the peoples of other lands.	0.26	0.37	0.37	0.20*	0.34***
16. Understanding the rights and duties of citizenship and acceptance of reasonable regulations.	-0.20	-0.25	0.05	0.02	0.08

### Personal Tasks Dimension

Table XVII presents the mean differences between what members of the five social groups thought the school should do in relation to four task statements representing the personal tasks dimension and what they perceived the school to be doing relative to these tasks of the elementary school. It will be noted that all groups except school officials saw more attention given to bodily development in the school than they deemed desirable. Since these data were gathered prior to the President's pronouncement that Americans should give more attention to physical fitness, it would be interesting to know whether the cognitive patterns of these groups have changed.

The literature suggests that teaching children to enjoy cultural activities is a function of the elementary school. School officials and school board members saw the school doing about what they expected in this area but influential citizens, teachers, and parents indicated that too much emphasis is placed on this task in the schools.

Each group agreed with the others that the school should give attention to the production of an emotionally stable person who is able to cope with new situations. Only teachers and parents showed concern that the school was not performing this task as well as it might.

All groups expected that the school would instill in children a sense of right and wrong. Influential citizens and parents did not, however, see the school fulfilling its

TABLE XVII

INTRA-POSITIONAL MEAN DIFFERENCES BETWEEN EXPECTATIONS AND PERCEPTIONS  
ON THE PERSONAL TASKS OF THE ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

Task Items	School Officials	School Board	Influential Citizens	Teachers	Parents
1. A well cared for, well developed body.	0.34	0.75*	0.46*	0.22**	0.35***
5. Enjoyment of cultural activities--the finer things of life.	0.34	0.88	0.69**	0.42***	0.62***
13. An emotionally stable person, able to cope with new situations.	-0.54	-0.25	-0.22	-0.40***	-0.31***
15. A sense of right and wrong--a moral standard of behavior.	-0.20	-0.37	-0.57**	-0.15	-0.26***

obligation in the matter of providing children this moral standard of behavior.

#### Productive Tasks Dimension

Table XVIII provides a summary of the expectations and perceptions of the five groups regarding the productive tasks dimension of the elementary school. Plate II (pages 76,77) shows graphically that the items of this dimension were rated relatively low by all groups as important tasks of the school. It is interesting to note that all groups, even though they seemed not to prefer these tasks, saw the school adequately fulfilling their expectations in relation to them. It will be noted that teachers and parents, although they expected the school to do little in this area, saw the school doing even more than they expected in relation to the task of teaching children to understand the roles of various family members.

#### Summary

This chapter has presented findings relative to disparities between what the members of five social groups in a community felt the tasks of their elementary schools should be and those tasks they saw the schools emphasizing. Table XIX indicates that thirty-one significant differences were found among the various groups between expectations and perceptions. Of these thirty-one significant differences, sixteen were concerned with the school doing more on a particular task than was considered desirable while fifteen were concerned with the school doing less on a particular

TABLE XVIII

INTRA-POSITIONAL MEAN DIFFERENCES BETWEEN EXPECTATIONS AND PERCEPTIONS  
ON THE PRODUCTIVE TASKS OF THE ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

Task Items	School Officials	School Board	Influential Citizens	Teachers	Parents
4. An introduction to budgeting and effective use of money and property.	0.07	0.00	0.08	0.08	-0.03
8. General awareness of occupational opportunities and how people prepare for them.	0.14	0.00	0.12	0.11	-0.14
10. Understanding the role of various family members.	0.00	-0.12	0.23	0.21*	0.13*
11. Classification and training for specific kind of high school program--academic, technical, etc.	0.13	0.00	0.17	0.11	-0.08

TABLE XIX

## NUMBER OF COGNITIVE DISPARITIES BY POSITION AND DIMENSION

Dimension	Intellectual	Social	Personal	Productive	Total
School Officials	1	0	0	0	1
School Board	0	0	1	0	1
Influential Citizens	2	1	3	0	6
Teachers	4	3	3	1	11
Parents	4	3	4	1	12
Total	11	7	11	2	31

item than the groups felt appropriate. School officials and school board members showed little dissatisfaction with the way the school was performing its various tasks, each revealing only one cognitive disparity between their expectations and perceptions. School officials saw the school giving too much attention to the three R's and board members saw the school giving too much attention to bodily development. Influential citizens revealed six cognitive disparities. They saw the school doing too little toward developing in children an inquiring mind and teaching them self reliance. They also saw the school not teaching enough



patriotism and morality. They felt, however, that the school did too much in the area of bodily development and appreciation of cultural activities.

Teachers and parents revealed more dissatisfaction with the school than any of the other groups. Teachers revealed eleven out of a possible total of sixteen cognitive disparities. Parents revealed twelve out of a possible total of sixteen cognitive disparities.

It is interesting to note (Plate I, page 74) the close resemblance between the cognitive patterns of parents and teachers. On only one of the eleven tasks where disparities were revealed did teachers and parents differ. Parents saw the school doing too little toward giving students a moral standard of behavior while teachers saw the school doing an adequate job in this matter.

An inspection of the mean scores of the groups on the various tasks where significant disparities were found reveals that these groups expected the school to place a great deal of emphasis on all tasks comprising the intellectual dimension. They likewise expected the school to place much emphasis on the items comprising the social dimension with the exception of the task dealing with the teaching about the peoples of other countries. On this item they would expect only moderate emphasis. In relation to the tasks comprising the personal dimension, those groups which showed disparities between expectations and perceptions wished that only a moderate amount of attention be given to this

dimension. On the one item in the productive dimension where disparities were shown, the expectations of the groups for this task were low. Teachers and parents, then, expect the school to do little in the matter of teaching children about the roles of various family members and yet the small amount they perceive the school doing they consider to be too much.

This chapter has dealt primarily with the cognitive disparities between the expectations and perceptions of the individuals who made up the five social groups. Chapter VI will present data relative to cognitive disparities among groups on their expectations concerning the tasks of the schools and on their perceptions of what the schools were doing regarding these tasks.

## CHAPTER VI

### INTER-POSITIONAL COGNITIVE DISPARITIES ON EXPECTATIONS AND PERCEPTIONS OF THE TASKS OF THE ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

#### Introduction

A purpose of the present research was to determine whether there were disparities among the various school-related social groups represented in the study, concerning their expectations and perceptions on the various tasks of the elementary school. It was a prime object of the present research to determine where the differences in cognitions occurred and among which groups the disparities were most prevalent.

Following the tabulation of the frequency with which the various groups placed a particular task on a five point scale, these data were punched on IBM cards and statistically analyzed for significant differences. The Mann-Whitney  $z_U$  Test described earlier in the report was programmed for the IBM 650 Computer and employed in these analyses.

Tables XX through XXIII present the mean differences on expectations among the various groups, while Tables XXIV through XXVII show mean differences on perceptions. Plate II (pages 76,77) graphically represents the means for all

groups on all items to facilitate interpretation. Actual mean scores may be seen in APPENDIX B.

### Inter-Positional Expectational Disparities

Table XX shows the mean differences among the various groups on the items comprising the intellectual tasks dimension of the elementary schools. Six cognitive disparities were found among the different social groups. Five of these occurred on task item three which is, "The desire to learn more--the inquiring mind." These disparities occurred between school officials and board members, school officials and teachers, school officials and parents, influential citizens and teachers, and influential citizens and parents. School officials showed less concern for this particular task item than did school board members, teachers or parents. Influential citizens showed less concern for the development of this inquiring mind in children than did teachers and parents.

On the intellectual task item dealing with the three R's, that is, giving children the basic tools for acquiring and communicating knowledge, there were no disparities among any of the groups except influential citizens and teachers. Teachers showed a greater expectation for this task than did influential citizens.

Table XXI reveals only two disparities on expectations for tasks of the social dimension. Influential citizens more than teachers thought the school should teach loyalty

Note: For Tables XX through XXVII a negative sign in mean difference indicates that the mean for the first named social position is higher. The lack of a sign preceding the mean score indicates the mean for the second named social group is higher. A high mean score on any item is indicative of a desire for the fulfillment of the task or the perception that the task is given a great deal of attention in the school. (Mean scores may be seen in APPENDIX B.) For the above named tables, differences significant at  $.01 < p < .05$  are indicated by a single asterisk, at  $.001 < p < .01$  with two asterisks, and at  $p < .001$  with three asterisks.

TABLE XX

MEAN DIFFERENCES AMONG THE EXPECTATIONS OF FIVE SOCIAL  
POSITIONS ON EACH ITEM OF THE INTELLECTUAL TASK  
DIMENSION OF THE ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

Item No.	3	7	12	14
School Officials --- School Board	0.67*	-0.05	0.18	-0.20
School Officials --- Influential Citizens	0.27	-0.37	0.26	-0.42
School Officials --- Teachers	0.58**	-0.18	-0.10	0.00
School Officials --- Parents	0.57**	-0.14	0.24	-0.12
School Board --- Influential Citizens	-0.40	-0.32	0.08	-0.22
School Board --- Teachers	-0.09	-0.13	-0.08	-0.20
School Board --- Parents	-0.10	-0.09	0.06	0.08
Influential Citizens --- Teachers	0.31*	0.19	-0.16	0.42*
Influential Citizens --- Parents	0.30*	0.23	-0.02	0.30
Teachers --- Parents	-0.01	0.04	0.14	-0.12

TABLE XXI

MEAN DIFFERENCES AMONG THE EXPECTATIONS OF FIVE SOCIAL  
POSITIONS ON EACH ITEM OF THE SOCIAL TASK  
DIMENSION OF THE ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

Item No.	2	6	9	16
School Officials --- School Board	0.17	-0.07	-0.29	-0.47
School Officials --- Influential Citizens	0.36	-0.34	-0.04	-0.41
School Officials --- Teachers	0.11	-0.35	0.28	-0.28
School Officials --- Parents	0.20	-0.40	0.08	-0.30
School Board --- Influential Citizens	0.19	-0.27	0.25	0.06
School Board --- Teachers	-0.06	-0.28	0.57	0.19
School Board --- Parents	0.03	-0.33	0.37	0.17
Influential Citizens --- Teachers	-0.25*	-0.01	0.32	0.13
Influential Citizens --- Parents	-0.16	-0.06	0.12	0.11
Teachers --- Parents	0.09	-0.05	-0.20**	-0.02

to America and the American way of life. Teachers felt that the elementary schools should do more in the area of giving children knowledge of and appreciation for the peoples of other countries than did parents. The cognitive patterns of all other groups when compared showed no significant disparities on expectations for any of the social tasks of the schools.

In Table XXII are displayed the mean differences on items comprising the personal tasks dimension of the elementary schools. It can be seen that disparities on expectations occurred in four instances. These occurred between school board members and teachers, influential citizens and parents, and teachers and parents. The latter groups showed disparities on two task items. Teachers, more than school board members or parents, thought it was one job of the schools to teach children to appreciate and enjoy cultural activities. Teachers more than parents believed it was a task of the elementary school to produce an emotionally stable person who could readily cope with new situations. Finally, parents were not as concerned with the school giving children a moral standard of behavior as were the individuals comprising the influential citizens group. It should be noted however that all groups rated this particular task high as appropriate for the elementary school.

Teachers and parents displayed the majority of cognitive disparities on items making up the productive dimension. Table XXIII shows that in each of three instances



TABLE XXII

MEAN DIFFERENCES AMONG THE EXPECTATIONS OF FIVE SOCIAL  
POSITIONS ON EACH ITEM OF THE PERSONAL TASK  
DIMENSION OF THE ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

Item No.	1	5	13	15
School Officials --- School Board	-0.25	-0.48	-0.34	-0.03
School Officials --- Influential Citizens	0.01	-0.16	-0.36	0.18
School Officials --- Teachers	0.02	0.02	-0.28	0.06
School Officials --- Parents	-0.02	-0.43	-0.47	-0.15
School Board --- Influential Citizens	0.26	0.32	-0.02	0.21
School Board --- Teachers	0.27	0.50*	0.06	-0.03
School Board --- Parents	0.23	0.05	-0.13	-0.12
Influential Citizens --- Teachers	0.01	0.18	0.08	-0.24
Influential Citizens --- Parents	-0.03	-0.27	-0.11	-0.33*
Teachers --- Parents	-0.04	-0.45***	-0.19*	-0.09

TABLE XXIII

MEAN DIFFERENCES AMONG THE EXPECTATIONS OF FIVE SOCIAL  
POSITIONS ON EACH ITEM OF THE PRODUCTIVE TASK  
DIMENSION OF THE ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

Item No.	4	8	10	11
School Officials --- School Board	0.20	0.50	-0.20	0.31
School Officials --- Influential Citizens	0.03	0.18	0.00	0.42
School Officials --- Teachers	-0.01	-0.05	-0.10	-0.18
School Officials --- Parents	0.25	0.24	-0.20	0.26
School Board --- Influential Citizens	-0.17	-0.32	0.20	0.11
School Board --- Teachers	-0.21	-0.55	0.10	-0.49
School Board --- Parents	0.05	-0.26	0.00	-0.05
Influential Citizens --- Teachers	-0.04	-0.23	-0.10	-0.60***
Influential Citizens --- Parents	0.22	0.06	-0.20	-0.16
Teachers --- Parents	0.26**	0.29***	-0.10	0.44**

parents, more than teachers, were concerned that the school should attend to productive tasks. These tasks are concerned with introducing children to budgeting and effective use of money, giving them a general awareness of occupational opportunities and how people prepare for them, and classifying and training children for specific kinds of high school programs. On the latter task, influential citizens also showed a disagreement with teachers. They, more than teachers, believed it to be a task of the elementary school to classify and train children for specific kinds of high school programs. It should be pointed out, however, that no group rated any of the productive tasks highly as appropriate for their elementary schools.

#### Inter-Positional Perceptual Disparities

Tables XXIV through XXVII show the disparities among groups concerning those tasks they saw their elementary schools emphasizing.

The majority of perceptual disparities were on items comprising the intellectual dimension. Table XXIV shows nine perceptual cognitive disparities among various groups on three tasks. School officials disagreed with both teachers and parents as to what they saw the school doing in the matter of giving children a fund of information in many areas. Both teachers and parents saw the school doing more concerning this task than did school officials.

TABLE XXIV

MEAN DIFFERENCES AMONG THE PERCEPTIONS OF FIVE SOCIAL  
POSITIONS ON EACH ITEM OF THE INTELLECTUAL TASK  
DIMENSION OF THE ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

Item No.	3	7	12	14
School Officials --- School Board	0.43	0.46	0.07	-0.30
School Officials --- Influential Citizens	0.04	0.19	-0.30	-0.84**
School Officials --- Teachers	0.22	0.57*	-0.10	-0.46
School Officials --- Parents	0.21	-0.53*	0.12	0.50*
School Board --- Influential Citizens	-0.39	-0.27	-0.37	-0.54
School Board --- Teachers	-0.21	0.11	-0.17	-0.16***
School Board --- Parents	-0.22	0.07	0.05	-0.20
Influential Citizens --- Teachers	0.18	0.38	0.20	0.38*
Influential Citizens --- Parents	0.17	0.34	0.42**	0.34*
Teachers --- Parents	-0.01	-0.04	0.22*	-0.04

Parents disagreed with both influential citizens and teachers about what the school was doing to teach children self-reliance. In both instances parents saw the school doing more to teach the child the habit of figuring things out for himself than did teachers or influential citizens.

Four of the nine cognitive disparities found on items comprising the intellectual dimension occurred on the task concerned with what the school was doing in relation to teaching the three R's. School officials thought the school was doing more in this area than did influential citizens and parents. Teachers indicated by their responses that they believed the school was doing more teaching of the three R's than did influential citizens. Parents and influential citizens also showed different perceptual patterns on this item, with parents indicating they thought the school was doing more teaching of the basic tools for acquiring and communicating knowledge than did influential citizens.

Table XXV presents the perceptual disparities on items comprising the social dimension of the elementary school. Only one disparity was found in this particular dimension. It occurred between teachers and parents concerning what the school was doing to teach loyalty and patriotism to children. Parents thought the schools were doing more toward teaching loyalty to America and the American way of life than did teachers.

Two disparities were found in the personal tasks dimension. Both occurred between teachers and parents and can be

TABLE XXV

MEAN DIFFERENCES AMONG THE PERCEPTIONS OF FIVE SOCIAL  
POSITIONS ON EACH ITEM OF THE SOCIAL TASK  
DIMENSION OF THE ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

Item No.	2	6	9	16
School Officials --- School Board	0.00	-0.30	-0.18	-0.52
School Officials --- Influential Citizens	0.10	-0.14	0.07	-0.16
School Officials --- Teachers	0.04	-0.17	0.22	-0.06
School Officials --- Parents	0.20	-0.26	0.16	-0.02
School Board --- Influential Citizens	0.10	0.16	0.25	0.36
School Board --- Teachers	0.04	0.13	0.40	0.46
School Board --- Parents	0.20	0.04	0.34	0.50
Influential Citizens --- Teachers	-0.06	-0.03	0.15	0.10
Influential Citizens --- Parents	0.10	-0.12	0.09	0.14
Teachers --- Parents	0.16*	-0.09	-0.06	0.04

seen in Table XXVI. Teachers more than parents thought the schools were teaching children to appreciate and enjoy cultural activities. They likewise saw the school doing more to give children a moral standard of behavior than did parents.

The second greatest number of perceptual disparities among groups occurred on items making up the productive dimensions. These can be seen in Table XXVII. Five disparities occurred among teachers, parents, and influential citizens. Influential citizens, more than teachers and parents, thought the school was classifying and training children for specific kinds of high school programs. Influential citizens, more than parents, saw the schools teaching children about the roles of various family members, while teachers saw the school doing more in this area than did parents. Parents more than teachers, on the other hand, thought the school was doing more to classify and train children for specific kinds of high school programs.

It is interesting to note that there were no perceptual disparities between school officials and school board members, influential citizens and board members, or parents and school board members on any of the items comprising the tasks of the elementary school. The majority of perceptual disparities occurred among the influential citizen, teacher, and parent groups.

It is interesting to note the number of disparities which existed among groups when they were divided along

TABLE XXVI

MEAN DIFFERENCES AMONG THE PERCEPTIONS OF FIVE SOCIAL  
POSITIONS ON EACH ITEM OF THE PERSONAL TASK  
DIMENSION OF THE ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

Item No.	1	5	13	15
School Officials --- School Board	0.16	0.06	-0.05	-0.20
School Officials --- Influential Citizens	0.13	0.19	-0.04	-0.19
School Officials --- Teachers	-0.10	0.10	-0.14	-0.01
School Officials --- Parents	-0.01	-0.15	-0.24	-0.21
School Board --- Influential Citizens	-0.03	0.13	0.01	0.01
School Board --- Teachers	-0.26	0.04	-0.09	0.19
School Board --- Parents	-0.17	-0.21	-0.19	-0.01
Influential Citizens --- Teachers	-0.23	-0.09	-0.10	0.18
Influential Citizens --- Parents	-0.14	-0.34	-0.20	-0.02
Teachers --- Parents	0.09	-0.25*	-0.10	-0.20**



TABLE XXVII

MEAN DIFFERENCES AMONG THE PERCEPTIONS OF FIVE SOCIAL  
POSITIONS ON EACH ITEM OF THE PRODUCTIVE TASK  
DIMENSION OF THE ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

Item No.	4	8	10	11
School Officials --- School Board	0.13	0.36	-0.32	0.18
School Officials --- Influential Citizens	0.04	0.16	0.23	0.46
School Officials --- Teachers	0.00	-0.08	0.11	-0.20
School Officials --- Parents	0.15	-0.04	-0.07	0.05
School Board --- Influential Citizens	-0.09	-0.20	0.55	0.28
School Board --- Teachers	-0.13	-0.44	0.43	-0.38
School Board --- Parents	0.02	-0.40	0.25	-0.13
Influential Citizens --- Teachers	-0.04	-0.24	-0.12	-0.66*
Influential Citizens --- Parents	0.11	-0.30	-0.30*	-0.41*
Teachers --- Parents	0.15	0.04	-0.18*	0.25**

educator and non-educator lines. Such a division yields three groupings; the educator and non-educator comparisons, the educator groups comparisons, and the non-educator groups comparisons.

Table XXVIII presents the number of cognitive disparities on expectations among groups in the three gross categories named above. The greatest number of disparities on expectations occurred between teachers and parents with six disparities revealed. Teachers and influential citizens revealed four disparities, and parents and influential citizens revealed two disparities.

Table XXIX shows that the greatest number of cognitive disparities on perceptions occurred between teachers and parents. There were six cognitive disparities between these two groups. Influential citizens and parents revealed four disparities, and school officials and parents revealed two disparities.

On both expectations and perceptions, it is interesting to note the great number of cognitive disparities which occurred between parents and other groups.

The chapter to follow will present findings concerning expectations attributed by school officials to teachers, school board members, influential citizens, and parents. In addition, findings related to concordance among school officials on attributed expectations to influential citizens will be presented.

## TABLE XXVIII

NUMBER OF COGNITIVE DISPARITIES AMONG SCHOOL-RELATED  
SOCIAL POSITIONS ON EXPECTATIONS

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Positional Comparisons	Number of Disparities
<b>EDUCATOR - NON-EDUCATOR</b>	
School Officials - School Board	1
School Officials - Influential Citizens	0
School Officials - Parents	1
Teachers - School Board	1
Teachers - Influential Citizens	4
Teachers - Parents	6
<b>EDUCATOR</b>	
School Officials - Teachers	1
<b>NON-EDUCATOR</b>	
School Board - Influential Citizens	0
School Board - Parents	0
Influential Citizens - Parents	2

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TABLE XXIX

NUMBER OF COGNITIVE DISPARITIES AMONG SCHOOL-RELATED  
SOCIAL POSITIONS ON PERCEPTIONS

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Positional Comparisons	Number of Disparities
<b>EDUCATOR - NON-EDUCATOR</b>	
School Officials - School Board	0
School Officials - Influential Citizens	1
School Officials - Parents	2
Teachers - School Board	0
Teachers - Influential Citizens	1
Teachers - Parents	6
<b>EDUCATOR</b>	
School Officials - Teachers	1
<b>NON-EDUCATOR</b>	
School Board - Influential Citizens	0
School Board - Parents	0
Influential Citizens - Parents	4

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## CHAPTER VII

### COGNITIVE DISPARITIES BETWEEN EXPECTATIONS ATTRIBUTED BY SCHOOL OFFICIALS TO SCHOOL-RELATED SOCIAL GROUPS AND THE ACTUAL EXPECTATIONS OF THESE GROUPS

#### Introduction

It was a purpose of the present research to determine whether school officials could accurately attribute to teachers, school board members, parents, and individual influential citizens expectations which these groups and individuals held for the tasks of the elementary school. A further purpose was to determine whether school officials were in accord concerning what they thought influential citizens as a group expected of the school on the various task dimensions of the elementary school.

School officials attributed expectations to the various groups and individuals on forms of the Tasks of the Elementary School Opinionnaire designed for this purpose. These forms may be seen in APPENDIX A.

Following the tabulation of the frequencies of expectations attributed by school officials to the various groups, means were calculated and placed in rank order. The rank order of attributed expectations were then correlated with the rank order of actual expectations to determine whether

there was a significant measure of correlation between the two sets of rankings.

Expectations Attributed by School Officials  
to School Board Members

Table XXX shows the rank order correlation between the expectations attributed by school officials to school board members and school board members' actual expectations on the items comprising the four task dimensions of the elementary school. A method of determining the degree of significance of an obtained coefficient correlation is presented by Garrett.<sup>67</sup> The N in the present instance is four. The table requires  $N - 2$  degrees of freedom. For two degrees of freedom, a correlation coefficient of .95 is required for significance at the .05 level of confidence and .99 at the .01 level of confidence. Since no obtained correlation coefficient matched or exceeded .95, the indication was that those obtained could have happened by chance alone more than five times out of one hundred chances and therefore one could not be confident that there was any correlation between expectations attributed by school officials to school board members and the actual expectations of the latter group.

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<sup>67</sup>Garrett, p. 201.

TABLE XXX

RANK ORDER CORRELATION OF EXPECTATIONS ATTRIBUTED BY  
SCHOOL OFFICIALS TO SCHOOL BOARD MEMBERS WITH  
BOARD MEMBERS' ACTUAL EXPECTATIONS

Item	School Officials' Mean Scores	School Officials' Ranks	School Board Mean Scores	School Board Ranks	Rho
<u>Intellectual Dimension</u>					
3	4.40	2	4.00	2	
7	4.07	3	2.75	4	
12	4.00	4	3.38	3	
14	4.80	1	4.13	1	.80
<u>Social Dimension</u>					
2	4.80	1	3.50	2	
6	4.47	3	4.13	1	
9	3.60	4	2.38	4	
16	4.53	2	3.00	3	.30
<u>Personal Dimension</u>					
1	4.00	2	2.88	3	
5	3.73	4	2.25	4	
13	3.87	3	3.13	2	
15	4.47	1	3.50	1	.80
<u>Productive Dimension</u>					
4	3.80	2	2.00	3.5	
8	3.73	3	2.63	1	
10	3.40	4	2.00	3.5	
11	3.93	1	2.38	2	.25

Note: For Tables XXX, XXXI, and XXXII correlations significant at  $.01 < p < .05$  are indicated by a single asterisk and at  $.001 < p < .01$  with two asterisks. When no asterisk appears the correlation was not significant.

### Expectations Attributed by School Officials to Teachers

Table XXXI presents the rank order correlations between expectations attributed by school officials to teachers and the actual expectations of teachers. In this instance, significant correlations were found on three of the task dimensions. Correlations of 1.00 were obtained on the intellectual and personal dimensions while a correlation of .95 was evidenced on the productive tasks. The former correlations were significant at the .01 level of confidence, indicating that this could have occurred by chance alone less than one time out of one hundred. The latter correlation is significant at the .05 level of confidence and reliance can be placed in this finding since it meets the accepted level of confidence; that is, it could have happened by chance alone less than five times out of one hundred. The correlation of .65 obtained on the social dimension did not meet the accepted level of confidence since it could have occurred more than five times out of one hundred by chance alone.

### Expectations Attributed by School Officials to Parents

Table XXXII reveals the correlations between expectations attributed by school officials to parents and parents' actual expectations. It can be seen that the obtained correlation coefficients do not meet the accepted requirements for significance and therefore it can be assumed that school



TABLE XXXI

RANK ORDER CORRELATION OF EXPECTATIONS ATTRIBUTED  
BY SCHOOL OFFICIALS TO TEACHERS WITH  
TEACHERS' ACTUAL EXPECTATIONS

Item	School Officials' Mean Scores	School Officials' Ranks	Teachers' Mean Scores	Teachers' Ranks	Rho
<u>Intellectual Dimension</u>					
3	4.53	2	3.91	2	
7	3.47	4	2.62	4	
12	4.20	3	3.30	3	
14	4.93	1	4.33	1	1.00**
<u>Social Dimension</u>					
2	4.60	3	3.44	2	
6	4.73	1.5	3.85	1	
9	3.80	4	2.95	4	
16	4.73	1.5	3.19	3	.65
<u>Personal Dimension</u>					
1	4.00	3	3.15	3	
5	3.93	4	2.75	4	
13	4.20	2	3.19	2	
15	4.47	1	3.47	1	1.00**
<u>Productive Dimension</u>					
4	2.86	4	1.79	4	
8	3.33	2.5	2.08	2	
10	3.40	1	2.17	1	
11	3.33	2.5	1.89	3	.95*

TABLE XXXII

RANK ORDER CORRELATION OF EXPECTATIONS ATTRIBUTED  
BY SCHOOL OFFICIALS TO PARENTS WITH  
PARENTS' ACTUAL EXPECTATIONS

Item	School Officials' Mean Scores	School Officials' Ranks	Parents' Mean Scores	Parents' Ranks	Rho
<u>Intellectual Dimension</u>					
3	3.80	3	3.90	2	
7	3.47	4	2.66	4	
12	3.87	2	3.44	3	
14	4.60	1	4.21	1	.80
<u>Social Dimension</u>					
2	4.13	1	3.53	2	
6	3.87	2	3.80	1	
9	3.07	4	2.75	4	
16	3.80	3	3.17	3	.80
<u>Personal Dimension</u>					
1	4.07	1	3.11	2	
5	3.33	4	2.30	4	
13	3.80	3	3.00	3	
15	4.00	2	3.38	1	.80
<u>Productive Dimension</u>					
4	2.93	4	2.05	3	
8	3.47	1	2.37	1	
10	3.20	3	2.00	4	
11	3.27	2	2.33	2	.80

officials did not accurately attribute expectations to parents on any of the task dimensions of the elementary school.

Expectations Attributed by School Officials  
to Individual Influential Citizens

When correlating the rankings of each individual influential citizen on the task dimensions of the elementary school with the combined rankings which school officials attributed to each influential citizens, it was found that in only four cases out of thirty-five did school officials' attributed expectations correlate significantly with the citizen's expectations. The findings in this instance are summarized in Table XXXVIII.

The individuals whose rankings coincided significantly with school officials' attributed ranks were an attorney, a minister, and two housewives who were active in PTA and civic affairs. No sufficient reason could be found to indicate why school officials would more accurately predict the expectations of these particular persons more than other persons in the group. The small number of significant correlations in this instance would seem to indicate that they were merely chance occurrences.

These findings indicate that school officials as a group did not accurately predict the expectations of influential citizens. Another way of stating this finding is that school officials in general did not perceive very

TABLE XXXIII

CORRELATION BETWEEN INDIVIDUAL INFLUENTIAL CITIZEN'S RANKINGS AND THE COMBINED  
SCHOOL OFFICIALS' ATTRIBUTED RANKINGS TO INFLUENTIAL CITIZENS  
ON THE FOUR TASK DIMENSIONS OF THE ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

Influential Citizens	Task Dimensions	Citizen's Scores	Citizen's Ranks	School Officials' Scores	School Officials' Ranks	Rho
1. Doctor	I	10	3	55	1	.20
	S	16	1	49	3	
	Per.	13	2	53	2	
	Pro.	9	4	45	4	
2. Doctor	I	16	1	61	1	.80
	S	13	2	58	3	
	Per.	11	3	59	2	
	Pro.	8	4	48	4	
3. Housewife PTA, Civic Worker	I	13	2.5	29	2.5	1.00**
	S	14	1	31	1	
	Per.	13	2.5	29	2.5	
	Pro.	8	4	27	4	
4. Banker	I	11	3	48	3.5	-.78
	S	12	2	55	2	
	Per.	15	1	48	3.5	
	Pro.	10	4	57	1	
5. Owner-Manager Retail Business	I	12	2	16	3.5	-.10
	S	11	3.5	18	1	
	Per.	14	1	16	3.5	
	Pro.	11	3.5	17	2	

TABLE XXXIII (Continued)

Influential Citizens	Task Dimensions	Citizen's Scores	Citizen's Ranks	School Officials' Scores	School Officials' Ranks	Rho
6. Executive Large Company	I	14	1.5	44	2	-.80
	S	14	1.5	39	3.5	
	Per.	13	3	39	3.5	
	Pro.	7	4	45	1	
7. Executive Large Company	I	13	2	50	2	-.40
	S	15	1	49	3	
	Per.	11	3	46	4	
	Pro.	9	4	51	1	
8. Attorney	I	13	1.5	61	1	.95*
	S	13	1.5	60	2	
	Per.	12	3	52	3	
	Pro.	10	4	51	4	
9. Attorney	I	12	3	71	1	.20
	S	15	1	62	3	
	Per.	13	2	63	2	
	Pro.	8	4	61	4	
10. Owner-Manager Retail Business	I	12	2.5	61	1	.65
	S	16	1	60	2	
	Per.	12	2.5	57	4	
	Pro.	8	4	58	3	

TABLE XXXIII (Continued)

Influential Citizens	Task Dimensions	Citizen's Scores	Citizen's Ranks	School Officials' Scores	School Officials' Ranks	Rho
11. Doctor	I	15	1	73	1	.80
	S	12	3	69	2	
	Per.	13	2	67	3	
	Pro.	8	4	65	4	
12. Minister	I	11	3	62	1	.35
	S	14	1	59	2.5	
	Per.	13	2	59	2.5	
	Pro.	10	4	49	4	
13. Youth Worker	I	14	1	57	4	-.20
	S	13	2	66	1	
	Per.	12	3	62	2	
	Pro.	9	4	60	3	
14. Attorney State Senator	I	13	2.5	70	1	.35
	S	13	2.5	64	2	
	Per.	17	1	59	3	
	Pro.	9	4	56	4	
15. Businessman State Representative	I	10	3.5	47	4	-.05
	S	11	2	54	2	
	Per.	17	1	51	3	
	Pro.	10	3.5	62	1	

TABLE XXXIII (Continued)

Influential Citizens	Task Dimensions	Citizen's Scores	Citizen's Ranks	School Officials' Scores	School Officials' Ranks	Rho
16. Executive Large Company	I	11	3	26	1	.30
	S	13	2	25	3	
	Per.	15	1	27	2	
	Pro.	9	4	22	4	
17. Housewife PTA, Civic Worker	I	16	1	36	1	1.00**
	S	14	2	35	2	
	Per.	11	3	33	3	
	Pro.	7	4	29	4	
18. Banker	I	14	1	43	4	-.80
	S	13	2	47	2	
	Per.	11	3	46	3	
	Pro.	10	4	29	1	
19. Owner-Manager Retail Business	I	13	1.5	25	4	-.65
	S	13	1.5	27	2.5	
	Per.	12	3	27	2.5	
	Pro.	10	4	29	1	
20. Owner-Manager Retail Business	I	13	2	47	2	-.80
	S	12	3	46	3	
	Per.	14	1	41	4	
	Pro.	9	4	51	1	

TABLE XXXIII (Continued)

Influential Citizens	Task Dimensions	Citizen's Scores	Citizen's Ranks	School Officials' Scores	School Officials' Ranks	Rho
21. Owner-Manager Retail Business	I	14	2	38	4	-0.00
	S	15	1	43	2	
	Per.	9	4	40	3	
	Pro.	10	3	46	1	
22. Banker	I	15	1	66	1	.30
	S	13	2	56	3	
	Per.	12	3	54	4	
	Pro.	8	4	60	2	
23. Minister	I	13	2	66	1	.55
	S	10	3.5	62	2.5	
	Per.	15	1	62	2.5	
	Pro.	10	3.5	56	4	
24. Newspaperman	I	15	1	57	1	.40
	S	12	3	48	3	
	Per.	14	2	45	4	
	Pro.	7	4	49	2	
25. Newspaperman	I	15	1	57	1	.30
	S	13	2	53	3	
	Per.	11	3	43	4	
	Pro.	9	4	54	2	



TABLE XXXIII (Continued)

Influential Citizens	Task Dimensions	Citizen's Scores	Citizen's Ranks	School Officials' Scores	School Officials' Ranks	Rho
26. Attorney	I	14	1.5	67	1	.65
	S	13	3	63	2	
	Per.	14	1.5	58	3	
	Pro.	7	4	57	4	
27. Banker	I	14	1	50	3	-.40
	S	13	2	54	2	
	Per.	12	3	46	4	
	Pro.	9	4	59	1	
28. Executive Large Company	I	12	3	30	4	.60
	S	15	1	36	2	
	Per.	13	2	38	1	
	Pro.	8	4	33	3	
29. Owner-Manager Retail Business	I	12	2.5	58	4	.10
	S	12	2.5	68	1	
	Per.	13	1	59	2.5	
	Pro.	11	4	59	2.5	
30. Owner-Manager Retail Business	I	14	1.5	42	4	-.55
	S	14	1.5	48	2	
	Per.	12	3	44	3	
	Pro.	8	4	49	1	

TABLE XXXIII (Continued)

Influential Citizens	Task Dimensions	Citizen's Scores	Citizen's Ranks	School Officials' Scores	School Officials' Ranks	Rho
31. Architect	I	15	1.5	61	2	-.15
	S	15	1.5	48	4	
	Per.	11	3	44	1	
	Pro.	7	4	60	3	
32. Housewife PTA, Civic Worker	I	16	1	58	1	.80
	S	13	2	49	3	
	Per.	12	3	55	2	
	Pro.	7	4	45	4	
33. Owner-Manager Retail Business	I	12	2.5	49	4	-.55
	S	12	2.5	54	2	
	Per.	13	1	53	3	
	Pro.	11	4	61	1	
34. Doctor	I	16	1	63	1	.80
	S	14	2	60	3	
	Per.	10	3	62	2	
	Pro.	8	4	54	4	
35. Minister	I	16	1	70	1	.95**
	S	12	2	66	2.5	
	Per.	11	3	66	2.5	
	Pro.	9	4	54	4	

accurately the emphases that influential citizens thought should be given to the various task dimensions of the elementary school program.

Degree of Concordance Among Expectations Attributed by  
School Officials to Influential Citizens

It was hypothesized in the present study that there would be no concordance among school officials in the expectations they would attribute to the influential citizens group on the four task dimensions of the elementary school. To obtain a measure of concordance among school officials' rankings, the statistical procedure described by Walker and Lev<sup>68</sup> as "the relation among ranks given by several judges" was employed. Table XXXIV presents a summary of the findings on these calculations. In no case was it found that there was a significant degree of concordance among school officials on expectations attributed to influential citizens as a group on the four task dimensions of the elementary school.

Summary

The findings in this chapter indicate that school officials more accurately predict the expectations of teachers than they predict the expectations of school board members, parents and influential citizens. Furthermore, school

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<sup>68</sup>Walker and Lev, pp. 283-285.

officials were not in accord concerning the tasks they thought influential citizens expected the elementary schools to perform.

TABLE XXXIV

CONCORDANCE AMONG SCHOOL OFFICIALS' ATTRIBUTED RANKINGS TO THE INFLUENTIAL CITIZENS GROUP ON EXPECTATIONS FOR THE FOUR TASK DIMENSIONS OF THE ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

Task Dimensions	Intellectual	Social	Personal	Productive
Sum of school officials' ranks attributed to influential citizens	1,820	1,785	1,710	1,720
Deviation of sums-of-rank around their mean	7,205	5,558	5,555	4,935
Coefficient of concordance	.0089	.0069	.0069	.0061
F	.125	.097	.097	.086
F needed for significance at P (.05) = (1.49)				
School Officials N = 15				
Influential Citizens N = 35				

In Chapter VIII the findings of the study will be summarized, an attempt will be made to draw some conclusions relative to these findings, and some implications which the present research has for education will be pointed out.

## CHAPTER VIII

### RESULTS AND IMPLICATIONS

#### Review of the Purpose and Design of the Study

The conceptual framework of the present study had field theory and the attending concepts of cognitive theory and role theory as its basis. Lewin's hypothetical construct of the cognitive structure served as the basis for certain hypotheses to be tested. Cognitions were defined as the mapping structures presumed to be maintained by individuals in social situations. They are modeled after the physical and social environments in which people live and behave and are utilized by these individuals in structuring behavior. Classes of cognitions included in the present study were expectations and perceptions. Expectations were the cognitions maintained by a person, consisting of subjective desirability maps of what that person would like to exist. Perceptions were the cognitions maintained by a person, consisting of subjective probability maps concerned with that person's view of what he thinks actually exists.

The major purposes of the present study were to determine disparities in cognitions held by the members of several school-related social groups in a school district, and

the implications these disparities have for school policy makers as they attempt to define the tasks of the elementary school.

The individuals included in the sample were fifteen school officials, eight school board members, one hundred fifty teachers, thirty-five influential citizens, and four hundred twenty-four parents of elementary school children.

The study was conducted in a single school district in north central Oklahoma. The population of the school district was approximately twenty-five thousand and the economy was supported by the oil refining and agricultural industries.

The instrument used in the present study consisted of sixteen statements of elementary education's tasks. These task statements were drawn from the literature and represented a synthesis of many notable statements from the time of Horace Mann to the present. The sixteen statements represented four dimensions of education's task which were the intellectual, social, personal, and productive dimensions.

Respondents from five school-related social groups ranked each task statement on a five point scale and in so doing revealed how it ranked in their value system as to its appropriateness for the elementary school. They further rated each task according to their perception of the emphasis that was being given to it in the elementary schools of their community. In addition, school officials ranked the tasks according to the way they perceived teachers, school

board members, parents, and influential citizens would rank them as appropriate for the elementary schools of the district.

Statistical analyses were made to determine disparities within each social position between expectations held for particular tasks and the perceptions these groups had of the emphasis being given to the various tasks. In addition, analyses were made to determine disparities between positions on expectations held for each task, and the perceptions of the attention the elementary schools were giving to that task. The statistic employed to determine disparities both within and among groups was the Mann-Whitney  $z_U$  Test, which measures the difference between two rank central tendencies. Furthermore, analyses were made to determine disparities between the expectations school officials attributed to the other school-related social groups and the actual expectations of these groups. The statistic used in this instance was rank order correlation which measures the degree of relationship between two sets of ranks. Finally, the expectations which school officials attributed to influential citizens were statistically analyzed to determine the degree to which school officials were in accord concerning these attributions. The statistic used in this instance was the coefficient of concordance which tests the relation among ranks assigned by several judges.

## Summary of Findings

Four hypotheses were put forth to be tested in the study. They were divided into four categories and were representative of the four types of analyses which were made. The findings of the study are reported in relation to a particular hypothesis and serve to support or infirm the hypothesis.

### Hypothesis I --

The incidence of cognitive disparity between expectations and perceptions will be greater for the non-professional educator groups than it will be for the professional educator groups.

The findings relative to this hypothesis are found in Chapter V and the results are inconclusive. Although the greatest number of cognitive disparities occurred among parents, a non-educator group, the second highest number occurred among teachers, an educator group. On the other hand, the fewest number of disparities were found in both educator and non-educator groups, with school officials and school board members showing only one disparity each. Influential citizens revealed a moderate number of disparities. Factors other than background and training appeared to be instrumental in producing these results.

It is interesting to speculate why school officials and school board members saw little difference between the tasks they expected the school to carry out and the tasks they perceived the school to be emphasizing, whereas teachers, influential citizens, and parents revealed a large number of



disparities between expectations and perceptions. One explanation might be that the school officials and school board members viewed the task statements as relating to policy. Being policy makers for the schools, these groups tended to perceive their policy decisions being implemented in the schools. Teachers, influential citizens, and parents, on the other hand, being further removed from policy decisions and more on the implementation level, would have less reason to see the school conforming to their expectations.

#### Hypothesis II --

The incidence of cognitive disparity will be greater when contrasting expectations and perceptions of professional educator groups with non-professional educator groups than it will be when contrasting the professional educator groups or the non-professional educator groups.

The findings relative to this hypothesis are found in Chapter VI. The hypothesis can be confirmed or infirmed only on individual comparisons. Although the greatest number of cognitive disparities were revealed when comparing particular groups of the educator and non-educator categories, this was not the case in all instances.

Teachers and influential citizens revealed four disparities on expectations whereas teachers and parents revealed six disparities. In both cases, these numbers exceeded the greatest number of disparities to be found on either educator or non-educator group comparisons. On these two comparisons the hypothesis was confirmed. The hypothesis must be

infirm on the remaining four comparisons between educator and non-educator groups.

Teachers and parents showed six disparities on perceptions. This exceeded the greatest number of disparities between either educator or non-educator group comparisons. In this instance the hypothesis was confirmed. The hypothesis was infirmed on the remaining five comparisons between educator and non-educator groups.

### Hypothesis III --

The incidence of cognitive disparity will be greater when contrasting the expectations attributed by school officials to non-educator groups with the actual expectations of these groups than it will be when contrasting the expectations attributed by school officials to teachers with teachers' actual expectations.

The findings relative to this hypothesis are found in Chapter VII. When correlating the rankings of teachers, school board members, parents, and influential citizens with the attributed rankings of school officials on the task items of the opinionnaire, it was found that on three dimensions school officials attributed the expectations of teachers at a significant level of confidence. On no dimension did they attribute the expectations of school board members and parents at a significant level of accuracy. In attributing to influential citizens, school officials accurately predicted expectations for these individuals in only four cases out of thirty-five, which indicated only possible random significance. These findings tend to confirm the hypothesis. It would appear that commonality of training

programs and close contact among teachers and school officials contribute to accurate perception of teacher expectations by school officials.

#### Hypothesis IV --

There will be no concordance among school officials in the expectations they attributed to influential citizens.

The findings relative to this are found in Chapter VII and confirm the hypothesis. It was found that school officials maintained their own distinct cognitive patterns about the expectations of each influential citizen. These patterns were not in accord. On none of the task dimensions of the elementary school were school officials in accord on the expectations they attributed to the influential individuals of the community.

#### Implications

General implications may be derived from the findings. Some of these apply to policy making, concerning the tasks the schools should attempt to carry out in this community, whereas others deal with the fruitfulness of the study of cognitive patterns of social groups as a basis for future studies.

#### For Policy Making --

The roles of school officials and school board members require these persons to be policy makers for the schools. Teachers, influential citizens, and parents, although not directly responsible for policy decisions, do influence the

policy makers. When disparities in expectations and perceptions occur among groups, conflict situations can arise which are a potential impairment to the development of an effective school program. Difficulties can arise not only in relation to the making of policies but also on the level of implementation.

It is not only the responsibility of those who make school policy to attempt to determine what people expect from their schools, but also to determine how well people perceive the school implementing such policies. Although potential conflict situations are often hard to resolve, policy makers should recognize their existence. By so doing, they should be in a better position to determine areas of tolerance within which they can work effectively in attempting to improve the educational program of the school.

The large number of intra-positional disparities between the expectations and perceptions of teachers, parents and influential citizens and the lack of such disparities on the part of school officials and school board members indicate potential conflict situations between the policy makers and those concerned with how well policy is accepted and implemented. On the other hand, the large number of disparities between the educator groups and the non-educator groups on both expectations and perceptions points to another cleavage in viewpoints.

Better channels of communication between and among groups might decrease the possibility of situations arising which

might be detrimental to the schools. Such communication needs to be a two way process. School officials and teachers must find better ways of communicating to the general public what the schools are doing. At the same time, the process of cross-fertilization of ideas as to what the community should expect from its schools must constantly go on among all social groups. Such processes of communication tend to be complex, but given thoughtful attention and refinement should lead to improved communication patterns among social groups in the community. The school official would then be in a better position to give positive leadership to the development of community thinking about education.

For the Study of Cognitive Patterns of Social Groups --

Although the study of social groups appears to be a fruitful area for the study of cognitive patterns, other group structures should be investigated. Such characteristics as age, sex, amount of schooling, values, and many other factors may be important variables in what people expect of their schools and what they perceive the schools doing. These variables appear to be fruitful areas for further research.

#### Recommendations

Some limitations inherent in the present study are readily apparent. First, it is limited in scope to the elementary school. Furthermore, the collection of data from

one school district precludes the projection of the findings to other school districts.

Second, the data collection instruments and analyses techniques should be refined. Of prime importance would be the development of instruments from empirical studies in local communities to determine those tasks the social groups in a particular community would name as most important. From such empirical studies, instruments could be developed which would more nearly reflect the opinions of people in a particular locality. It would be well to conduct such studies in various communities to determine whether the patterns of findings hold true in localities with varying economic, social, and historical backgrounds.

School districts vary in many respects but the basic task of the school administrator remains the same. It is his responsibility to implement the best teaching-learning situation possible in the schools which he administers. He receives his authority from the state through representatives elected by citizens of the school district. Therefore, it is the ultimate responsibility of the total citizenry of a community to determine the policies that should be followed and the goals that should be established for their schools. It is a basic responsibility of the school official to provide leadership for the development of these policies and goals. The present study has demonstrated that various groups of citizens in one school district in Oklahoma were not always in agreement in regard to what the tasks of the

school should be, nor were they in agreement concerning what they saw the school doing. Furthermore, it was demonstrated that school officials' assessments of what various community groups expected of the schools was rather poor. Before an administrator can provide effective leadership he must know what the people of his community expect of the schools, what they perceive the school doing, and where disparities in cognitive patterns occur among groups.

The present study demonstrated one technique that could be used by educational leaders in any school district to study the cognitive patterns of the community's social groups.

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## APPENDIX A

## THE TASKS OF THE ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

## An Opinionnaire

Dear Citizens and Educators:

We are soliciting your help in finding out some ways to improve education in Oklahoma.

A study is being made to determine your opinions as citizens and educators concerning the tasks of your public elementary schools. This research project is an extension of other projects being carried out on a state, regional, and national level concerning the tasks of all institutions of public education.

As an interested and important citizen of your community, your opinion needs to be known. By answering the questions in the attached opinionnaire you not only have a chance to say what you think, but you will be rendering public education a great service.

Sincerely,

Gene Pingleton

## APPENDIX A (Continued)

## AN OPINIONNAIRE OF THE TASKS OF THE ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

## PART I --- GENERAL INFORMATION

Please fill in the blanks or check the most appropriate response for each item. Teachers need not respond to item ten in this part. Other citizens will respond to all items in this part.

1. Is the person filling out the opinionnaire male or female?

Male  Check here if husband and wife  
are filling it out together.  
 Female

2. Is the person filling out the opinionnaire the head of the household?

Yes  No

3. What is the present occupation of the head of your household?

\_\_\_\_\_

4. Are you now, or have you ever been a teacher?

Yes  No

5. Indicate your age as of nearest birthday. Teachers should indicate their own age. If husband and wife (other than teachers) are filling this out together, answer for the head of the household.

<input type="checkbox"/> 20 or below	<input type="checkbox"/> 51 to 60 years
<input type="checkbox"/> 21 to 30 years	<input type="checkbox"/> 61 to 70 years
<input type="checkbox"/> 31 to 40 years	<input type="checkbox"/> 70 or above
<input type="checkbox"/> 41 to 50 years	

6. Number of children in school

Elementary School  Junior High  Senior High

## APPENDIX A (Continued)

7. Amount of education. (check one) If husband and wife are filling this out together, answer for the head of the household.

<input type="checkbox"/> 8th Grade or less	<input type="checkbox"/> Graduate work beyond college (no degree)
<input type="checkbox"/> High School	<input type="checkbox"/> Masters Degree (or equivalent)
<input type="checkbox"/> College (not completed)	<input type="checkbox"/> Graduate work beyond Masters
<input type="checkbox"/> College (completed)	<input type="checkbox"/> Doctorate Degree

8. Name of the elementary school nearest your home.

\_\_\_\_\_

9. Please list all local organizations of which you are a member.

Church \_\_\_\_\_

Civic or Fraternal

Other Organizations

10. Please check any of the following items which describe your present or past contact with the public schools.

Member of Board of Education.  
 Member of planning or advisory group to schools.  
 Elected officer in school-parent group (PTA).  
 Attend meetings of school-parent group (PTA).  
 Attend most school affairs which involve my child.  
 Make it a practice to meet my child's teacher.  
 Visit school occasionally and talk to the teacher about my child's progress.  
 Talk to my child about his activities and progress at school.

## APPENDIX A (Continued)

## THE TASKS OF THE ELEMENTARY SCHOOL OPINIONNAIRE

## PART II --- INSTRUCTIONS

(Adapted with permission from the "T.P.E. Opinionnaire",  
Midwest Administration Center, University of Chicago)

You are being asked in this instrument to indicate your opinion about the job of the elementary school in your city. This opinionnaire is not a test of your knowledge or skill; there are no right or wrong answers or responses. You are merely asked to indicate your opinion as to what emphasis you think should be given to various educational tasks and what emphasis you think is being given to these tasks in your elementary schools.

On the next page you will find a list of sixteen functions or tasks of the elementary school. Will you please indicate your feeling about these tasks in the following manner:

1. Read the list of items and ask yourself the question, "Which are the most important functions and which are the least important functions?" or "Which should be emphasized and which should not be emphasized?"
2. In the space provided, indicate the importance of these items in the following manner:
  - a. Place a plus mark in the space opposite those five functions that you think are most important.
  - b. Place a zero in the space opposite those five functions that you think are least important.
  - c. That means there are six functions that are not marked.
  - d. Now go back to those items that you have marked with a plus, and place another plus mark in the space representing the function that you think is the most important function of all.
  - e. Then go back to the items you have marked with a zero and place another zero in the space representing the function that you think is the least important function of all.

## APPENDIX A (Continued)

3. Now re-read the list of items and indicate on the right hand side of the page what emphasis is being given to those functions in your elementary schools in the following manner:
- a. Place a plus mark in the space opposite the five functions that are being given the greatest emphasis.
  - b. Place a zero in the space opposite the five functions that are being given the least emphasis.
  - c. Place another plus mark in the space opposite the function that is being given the greatest emphasis of all.
  - d. Place another zero in the space opposite the function that is receiving the least emphasis of all.



## APPENDIX A (Continued)

## THE TASKS OF THE ELEMENTARY SCHOOL OPINIONNAIRE

## PART II --- THE OPINIONNAIRE

What Should Be the Emphasis  
Given to the Following Tasks  
by the Elementary Schools?

What Is the Emphasis Given  
to the Following Tasks by  
the Elementary Schools?

WHAT SHOULD BEWHAT IS

- |   |         |
|---|---------|
| ___ 1. A well cared for, well developed body.   | ___ 1.  |
| ___ 2. Loyalty to America and the American way of life.   | ___ 2.  |
| ___ 3. The desire to learn more -- the inquiring mind.  | ___ 3.  |
| ___ 4. An introduction to budgeting and effective use of money and property.                              | ___ 4.  |
| ___ 5. Enjoyment of cultural activities -- the finer things of life.                                      | ___ 5.  |
| ___ 6. The ability to live and work with others.  | ___ 6.  |
| ___ 7. A fund of information about many things.   | ___ 7.  |
| ___ 8. General awareness of occupational opportunities and how people prepare for them.                   | ___ 8.  |
| ___ 9. Knowledge of and appreciation for the peoples of other lands.                                      | ___ 9.  |
| ___ 10. Understanding the role of various family members.   | ___ 10. |
| ___ 11. Classification and training for specific kind of high school program -- academic, technical, etc. | ___ 11. |
| ___ 12. The habit of figuring things out for one's self.  | ___ 12. |
| ___ 13. An emotionally stable person, able to cope with new situations.                                   | ___ 13. |
| ___ 14. The basic tools for acquiring and communicating knowledge -- the three R's.                       | ___ 14. |
| ___ 15. A sense of right and wrong -- a moral standard of behavior.                                       | ___ 15. |
| ___ 16. Understanding rights and duties of citizenship and acceptance of reasonable regulations.          | ___ 16. |

## APPENDIX A (Continued)

## WHAT DO MEMBERS OF THE SCHOOL BOARD THINK?

Please read the following list of sixteen items and ask yourself this question, "Which of the following functions do School Board members think are the most important functions?" or "Which functions do School Board members think should be emphasized and which functions do they think should not be emphasized?" Assign a value to each function in the space provided as follows:

If you think School Board members think the function is:

Very important . . . . .(5)  
 Important . . . . .(4)  
 Of average importance or unimportance . .(3)  
 Unimportant . . . . .(2)  
 Very unimportant . . . . .(1)

1. A well cared for, well developed body.
2. Loyalty to America and the American way of life.
3. The desire to learn more -- the inquiring mind.
4. An introduction to budgeting and effective use of money and property.
5. Enjoyment of cultural activities -- the finer things of life.
6. The ability to live and work with others.
7. A fund of information about many things.
8. General awareness of occupational opportunities and how people prepare for them.
9. Knowledge of and appreciation for the peoples of other lands.
10. Understanding the role of various family members.
11. Classification and training for specific kind of high school program -- academic, technical, etc.
12. The habit of figuring things out for one's self.
13. An emotionally stable person, able to cope with new situations.
14. The basic tools for acquiring and communicating knowledge -- the three R's.
15. A sense of right and wrong -- a moral standard of behavior.
16. Understanding rights and duties of citizenship and acceptance of reasonable regulations.

## APPENDIX A (Continued)

## WHAT DO PARENTS OF ELEMENTARY SCHOOL CHILDREN THINK?

Please read the following list of sixteen items and ask yourself this question, "Which of the following functions do the parents of elementary school children in your city think are the most important functions?" or "Which functions do the parents of elementary school children think should be emphasized and which functions do parents of elementary school children think should not be emphasized?" Assign a value to each function in the space provided as follows:

If you think parents of elementary children think the function is:

Very important . . . . .	(5)
Important . . . . .	(4)
Of average importance or unimportance . . .	(3)
Unimportant . . . . .	(2)
Very unimportant . . . . .	(1)

- \_\_\_ 1. A well cared for, well developed body.
- \_\_\_ 2. Loyalty to America and the American way of life.
- \_\_\_ 3. The desire to learn more--the inquiring mind.
- \_\_\_ 4. An introduction to budgeting and effective use of money and property.
- \_\_\_ 5. Enjoyment of cultural activities--the finer things of life.
- \_\_\_ 6. The ability to live and work with others.
- \_\_\_ 7. A fund of information about many things.
- \_\_\_ 8. General awareness of occupational opportunities and how people prepare for them.
- \_\_\_ 9. Knowledge of and appreciation for the peoples of other lands.
- \_\_\_ 10. Understanding the role of various family members.
- \_\_\_ 11. Classification and training for specific kind of high school program--academic, technical, etc.
- \_\_\_ 12. The habit of figuring things out for one's self.
- \_\_\_ 13. An emotionally stable person, able to cope with new situations.
- \_\_\_ 14. The basic tools for acquiring and communicating knowledge--the three R's.
- \_\_\_ 15. A sense of right and wrong--a moral standard of behavior.
- \_\_\_ 16. Understanding rights and duties of citizenship and acceptance of reasonable regulations.

## APPENDIX A (Continued)

## WHAT DO TEACHERS THINK?

Please read the following list of sixteen items and ask yourself this question, "Which of the following functions do teachers in your city schools think are the most important functions?" or "Which functions do teachers think should be emphasized in the elementary schools and which functions do teachers think should not be emphasized?" Assign a value in the space provided as follows:

If you think the teachers in your city think the function is:

Very important . . . . .	(5)
Important . . . . .	(4)
Of average importance or unimportance . . .	(3)
Unimportant . . . . .	(2)
Very unimportant . . . . .	(1)

- \_\_\_ 1. A well cared for, well developed body.
- \_\_\_ 2. Loyalty to America and the American way of life.
- \_\_\_ 3. The desire to learn more -- the inquiring mind.
- \_\_\_ 4. An introduction to budgeting and effective use of money and property.
- \_\_\_ 5. Enjoyment of cultural activities -- the finer things of life.
- \_\_\_ 6. The ability to live and work with others.
- \_\_\_ 7. A fund of information about many things.
- \_\_\_ 8. General awareness of occupational opportunities and how people prepare for them.
- \_\_\_ 9. Knowledge of and appreciation for the peoples of other lands.
- \_\_\_ 10. Understanding the role of various family members.
- \_\_\_ 11. Classification and training for specific kind of high school program -- academic, technical, etc.
- \_\_\_ 12. The habit of figuring things out for one's self.
- \_\_\_ 13. An emotionally stable person, able to cope with new situations.
- \_\_\_ 14. The basic tools for acquiring and communicating knowledge -- the three R's.
- \_\_\_ 15. A sense of right and wrong -- a moral standard of behavior.
- \_\_\_ 16. Understanding rights and duties of citizenship and acceptance of reasonable regulations.

## APPENDIX A (Continued)

## WHAT DO INFLUENTIAL CITIZENS THINK?

The opinionnaire, The Tasks of the Elementary School, with which you have been working distinguishes between four task dimensions of the public elementary school. These dimensions are:

1. The Intellectual Dimension

The Desire for Knowledge . . . . .	Item 3
The Possession of Knowledge . . . . .	Item 7
The Creation of Knowledge . . . . .	Item 12
The Communication of Knowledge . . . . .	Item 14

2. The Social Dimension

Man to Country . . . . .	Item 2
Man to Man . . . . .	Item 6
Man to World . . . . .	Item 9
Man to State . . . . .	Item 16

3. The Personal Dimension

Physical . . . . .	Item 1
Aesthetic . . . . .	Item 5
Emotional . . . . .	Item 13
Ethical . . . . .	Item 15

4. The Productive Dimension

Consumer . . . . .	Item 4
Vocation-Selective . . . . .	Item 8
Home and Family . . . . .	Item 10
Vocation Preparation . . . . .	Item 11

Local school administrators have named the following citizens as being influential in the community. Will you please take a moment to think about each individual listed and give your impression as to how you think he would rate each dimension on a five point scale. If you think the person would rate a dimension:

Very important . . . . .	(5)
Important . . . . .	(4)
Of average importance or unimportance . . . . .	(3)
Unimportant . . . . .	(2)
Very unimportant . . . . .	(1)

If you do not know a particular individual do not rate him.

Example:	Intellectual	Social	Personal	Productive					
John Doe	<u>1</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>1</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>1</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>1</u>	<u>5</u>	<u>1</u>

Note: This instrument took the form of the example above. Actual names have not been included.

POSITIONAL MEAN SCORES ON EXPECTATIONS AND PERCEPTIONS FOR  
INTELLECTUAL TASKS OF THE ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

Intellectual Tasks	School Officials		School Board		Influential Citizens		Teachers		Parents	
	Exp.	Per.	Exp.	Per.	Exp.	Per.	Exp.	Per.	Exp.	Per.
3. The desire to learn more--the inquiring mind.	3.33	3.07	4.00	3.50	3.60	3.11	3.91	3.29	3.90	3.28
7. A fund of informa- tion about many things.	2.80	2.67	2.75	3.13	2.43	2.86	2.62	3.24	2.66	3.20
12. The habit of figur- ing things out for one's self.	3.20	2.93	3.38	3.00	3.46	2.63	3.30	2.83	3.44	3.05
14. The basic tools for acquiring and commu- nicating knowledge.	4.33	4.93	4.13	4.63	3.91	4.09	4.33	4.47	4.21	4.43

POSITIONAL MEAN SCORES ON EXPECTATIONS AND PERCEPTIONS FOR  
SOCIAL TASKS OF THE ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

Social Tasks	School Officials		School Board		Influential Citizens		Teachers		Parents	
	Exp.	Per.	Exp.	Per.	Exp.	Per.	Exp.	Per.	Exp.	Per.
2. Loyalty to America and the American way of life.	3.33	3.13	3.50	3.13	3.69	3.23	3.44	3.17	3.53	3.33
6. The ability to live and work with others.	4.20	3.80	4.13	3.50	3.86	3.66	3.85	3.63	3.80	3.54
9. Knowledge of and appreciation for the peoples of other lands.	2.67	2.93	2.38	2.75	2.63	3.00	2.95	3.15	2.75	3.09
16. Understanding rights and duties of citizenship and acceptance of reasonable regulations.	3.47	3.27	3.00	2.75	3.06	3.11	3.19	3.21	3.17	3.25

POSITIONAL MEAN SCORES ON EXPECTATIONS AND PERCEPTIONS FOR  
PERSONAL TASKS OF THE ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

Personal Tasks	School Officials		School Board		Influential Citizens		Teachers		Parents	
	Exp.	Per.	Exp.	Per.	Exp.	Per.	Exp.	Per.	Exp.	Per.
1. A well cared for well developed body.	3.13	3.47	2.88	3.63	3.14	3.60	3.15	3.37	3.11	3.46
5. Enjoyment of cultur- al activities--the finer things of life.	2.73	3.07	2.25	3.13	2.57	3.26	2.75	3.17	2.30	2.92
13. An emotionally stable person, able to cope with new situations.	3.47	2.93	3.13	2.88	3.11	2.89	3.19	2.79	3.00	2.69
15. A sense of right and wrong-- a moral standard of behavior.	3.53	3.33	3.50	3.13	3.71	3.14	3.47	3.32	3.38	3.12



POSITIONAL MEAN SCORES ON EXPECTATIONS AND PERCEPTIONS FOR  
PRODUCTIVE TASKS OF THE ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

Productive Tasks	School Officials		School Board		Influential Citizens		Teachers		Parents	
	Exp.	Per.	Exp.	Per.	Exp.	Per.	Exp.	Per.	Exp.	Per.
4. An introduction to budgeting and effec- tive use of money.	1.80	1.87	2.00	2.00	1.83	1.91	1.79	1.87	2.05	2.02
8. General awareness of occupational op- portunities and how people prepare for them.	2.13	2.27	2.63	2.63	2.31	2.43	2.08	2.19	2.37	2.23
10. Understanding the role of various family members.	2.20	2.20	2.00	1.88	2.20	2.43	2.10	2.31	2.00	2.13
11. Classification and training for specific kind of high school program--academic, technical, etc.	2.07	2.20	2.38	2.38	2.49	2.66	1.89	2.00	2.33	2.25

## APPENDIX B (Continued)

SCHOOL OFFICIALS' MEAN SCORES ON ATTRIBUTED EXPECTATIONS  
TO SCHOOL BOARD MEMBERS, TEACHERS, AND PARENTS

Task Items	School Board	Teachers	Parents
3. The desire to learn more-- the inquiring mind.	4.40	4.53	3.80
7. A fund of information about many things.	4.07	3.47	3.47
12. The habit of figuring things out for one's self.	4.00	4.20	3.87
14. The basic tools for acquiring and communicating knowledge.	4.80	4.93	4.60
2. Loyalty to America and the American way of life.	4.80	4.60	4.13
6. The ability to live and work with others.	4.47	4.73	3.87
9. Knowledge of and appreciation for the peoples of other lands.	3.60	3.80	3.07
16. Understanding rights and dut- ies of citizenship and accep- tance of reasonable regula- tions.	4.53	4.73	3.80
1. A well cared for well de- veloped body.	4.00	4.00	4.07
5. Enjoyment of cultural activi- ties--the finer things of life.	3.73	3.93	3.33
13. An emotionally stable person, able to cope with new situa- tions.	3.87	4.20	3.80
15. A sense of right and wrong-- a moral standard of behavior.	4.47	4.47	4.00
4. An introduction to budgeting and effective use of money.	3.80	2.86	2.93
8. General awareness of occupa- tional opportunities and how people prepare for them.	3.73	3.33	3.47
10. Understanding the role of various family members.	3.40	3.40	3.20
11. Classification and training for specific kind of high school program--academic, technical, etc.	3.93	3.33	3.27

## VITA

George Gene Pingleton

Candidate for the Degree of

Doctor of Education

Thesis: COGNITIVE PATTERNS OF COMMUNITY GROUPS CONCERNING  
THE TASKS OF THE ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

Major Field: Educational Administration

Biographical:

Personal Data: Born at Haileyville, Oklahoma, August 28, 1927, the son of Julius B and Rachel A. Pingleton.

Education: Attended grade school in Haileyville, Oklahoma; graduated from high school in McAlester, Oklahoma in 1945; received the Bachelor of Science degree from the University of Oklahoma, with a major in Education, in August, 1950; received the Master of Science degree from the Oklahoma State University, with a major in Educational Administration, in August, 1954; completed requirements for the Doctor of Education degree in August, 1962.

Professional experience: Teacher of science and social studies in the schools of Ponca City, Oklahoma, from 1950 to 1956; principal of Liberty Elementary School in Ponca City from 1956 to 1960; graduate assistant and instructor in the College of Education at the Oklahoma State University during the 1960-61 school year; Assistant Director for the Elementary Schools at Oklahoma City, Oklahoma, 1962.

Professional organizations: National Education Association; Oklahoma Education Association; Kappa Delta Pi; Phi Delta Kappa; National Elementary Principals Association; Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development.