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A study of student attitude toward school

Scott Blaine Wegner
University of Northern Iowa

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A study of student attitude toward school

Abstract

Is there a point along the K-8 continuum where there is a sharp decline in the positive student attitudes toward schooling?

A STUDY OF STUDENT ATTITUDE TOWARD SCHOOL

A Research Paper

Presented to

Dr. Donald Hanson

Department of School Administration and Personnel Services

University of Northern Iowa

In Partial Fulfillment of the
Requirements for the Degree of Master of Arts
in the College of Education
in the Graduate College of the
University of Northern Iowa

By

Scott Blaine Wegner

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Donald L. Hanson
Director of Research Paper

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Date Received

Donald L. Hanson
Graduate Faculty Adviser

April 20, 1981
Date Received

Donald L. Hanson
Head, Department of School
Administration and Personnel
Services

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I. INTRODUCTION

INTRODUCTION

". . . Attitudes are our main problem. Attitudes are our school's problems. Attitudes are our professional problems. Attitudes are our personal problem."

David Melton
Burn The Schools Save the Children

Attitude is an often used term of our recent history and as the Melton quote suggests, the source of much concern. With the advent of sophisticated polling techniques and the increase of educational research, attitudes have been categorized in relation to every topic imaginable. Just as our fascination with attitudes has grown so has educator's interest in the applicability of attitudes to its processes. Can attitude be defined? Can attitudinal breakdowns be pinpointed? These have been pressing questions to educators in the last forty years. And well they should be, for with the answers to those questions comes the concept of controlling and directing attitude for the benefit of the single most important product of our nation's schools, the student.

Because student attitudes have been shown to have a relationship to student achievement, it is paramount for educators to study attitude formation and any decline of positive attitudes there may be towards the educational system. Being able to monitor student attitude in the K-8

continuum will give educators a target area for which to concentrate efforts on combating the decline of, or maintaining the levels of, positive attitude. The rewards of such programs could result in higher percentage of graduates per class as well as enabling teachers to cultivate each child's potential to its fullest extent. Other rewards could take the form of needed curriculum changes, changes in school organizational patterns, or any number of additional changes. All these benefits point to improved efficiency in the educational process. If our schools are to make the most of educational resources it would be helpful to know exactly where to focus the efforts of specific programs. A bonus of maintaining positive attitudes of students lies in the fact that as a child proceeds through his educational career he is a potential source of information for the attitudinal modification of his parents. Positive student attitudes often result in positive parental attitudes which in turn result in positive community attitudes toward education.

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

Is there a point along the K-8 continuum where there is a sharp decline in the positive student attitudes toward schooling?

PROCEDURES

The population used for the purpose of this study was a small rural school district located in the northeast section in the state of Iowa. Although it was essentially in a farming

district of the state, its close approximation to the Cedar Falls-Waterloo area lends a substantial industrial flavor to its inhabitants. The school district contained one elementary building which housed K-6 and one secondary building which contained 7-12 both located in the same town.

The kindergarten through fourth grade was organized for self-contained classroom instruction while the fifth and sixth grade was departmentalized. All seven grades were housed in the same building. The seventh and eighth grade were departmentalized and were housed in a separate wing of the secondary building.

The survey instrument utilized in this study was a variation of the Likert Scale constructed by Ottlin A. Wegner (1976). The instrument was designed to measure students' attitudes toward several aspects of school and employed twenty-five statements with a three part, forced answer response mode. The instrument was validated through pretest and consultation with professionals. The Likert scale utilized was generally recognized as one of the best tools for gathering student attitudes. (Poetker, 1977). The Likert scale used statements which were designed to elicit a response from students. No neutral statements were included. The response mode was a standard Agree--Not Sure--Disagree format.

Although the statements used in this survey instrument were identical to those of Dr. Wegner's, there were variations in the response mode constructed to deal with the differing comprehension levels of the K-third graders. It has been noted by researchers (Educational Research Service, 1970) that this particular age group has difficulty in relating

their attitude to a continuum type scale and that this provides validity problems. To counteract these problems the researchers suggested the "smiley face" response mode on a survey instrument. The purpose was to present visual representations of emotional feelings to the respondent so that the respondent could more easily recognize the degrees of feeling. In this researchers survey instrument, the standard three part Agree--Not Sure--Disagree response mode was changed to:



Agree



Not Sure



Disagree

After consultation with several experts, this researcher concluded that such alterations only enhanced the validity factors of the survey instrument.

The validity of the instrument was tested by Dr. O. A. Wegner (Wegner, 1976) by applying the Spearman Rank Order Correlation formula to a random sampling of twenty students from each grade to establish a reliability coefficient for each respective grade level. The formula used was:

$$R_s = 1 - \frac{\sum_{i=1}^N d_i^2}{N^3 - N}$$

The Spearman-Brown split-half statistical technique was applied to the R_s to lengthen the sample test as follows:

$$R_{11} = \frac{2(R_s)}{1 + R_s}$$

A t-test was then applied to the R_s results to determine the significant level of confidence of the findings as follows:

$$t = R_s \sqrt{\frac{N - 2}{1 - R_s^2}}$$

The results of Dr. Wegner's analysis can be found in TABLE 1. The mean correlation coefficient for all grades was a respectable .75. Dr. Wegner's study showed a general trend of lower reliability for the elementary grades K through four and higher reliability for the upper elementary through junior high with an overall interval consistency sufficiently adequate.

Authorization to administer the survey was obtained from the two building principals in February of 1981. It was planned to administer the instrument during the last two weeks of that month. Administration of the instrument to elementary students was done by the classroom teachers of the individual grades after a brief conference with each, discussing the instrument and reading a short Instruction for Survey Administrators to each survey administrator. The date of administration of the survey instrument to the Junior High was facilitated by the fact that one teacher was able to administer the instrument to all students at the seventh and eighth grade levels. Following a short conference with one instructor, in which the same instruction as the Elementary Instructors received were discussed. Administration of the survey instrument to the Junior High students was February 24, 1981.

Table 1

Internal Consistency of the Survey Instrument, by Grade Level

R_s	.42	.27	.44	.47	.66	.88	.69	.40
R_{11}	.59	.74	.61	.64	.80	.89	.82	.57
t-test	2.193	1.187	2.072	5.520	3.740	7.649	4.068	1.868
df	18	18	18	18	18	18	18	18
Level of Significance	.05	.10	.10	.001	.01	.001	.001	.10
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
	Grade Levels							

TREATMENT OF DATA involved hand tabulation of scores and calculating a mean score for each student. All items on the instrument were marked on a three point scale which consisted of Agree--Not Sure--and Disagree with Agree responses given a plus one (+1), Not Sure given a zero (0), and Disagree responses being given a negative one (-1). Provision was made in the scoring to make allowance for those statements which elicited negative responses but indicated a positive attitude on the part of the student. Statistics gathered were mean scores for each grade level, mean scores by sex in each grade level, and the percentage of negative scores per grade level and by sex. A perfect positive score was +25 and a perfect negative score was -25. After compiling mean scores for each grade, the Pearson Product-Moment Correlation was applied to determine the degree of correlation between the overall survey instrument mean and the grade level.

LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

This study is limited to a case study of a single school system with a student enrollment of 460, grades K-8. The community is basically rural although it is located in close proximity to the Cedar Falls-Waterloo area.

This study will make no attempt to evaluate the school system, its faculty, or its programs to ascertain any peculiarities which might adversely affect student attitude.

DEFINITIONS OF TERMS

The following terms are defined to clarify the meaning of key words used in this study.

- Attitude --- An integral part of personality. An attitude. . .is a predisposition to think, feel, perceive, and behave toward something. (Kerlinger, 1973)
- Survey ----- A twenty-five question, one page instrument utilizing the Likert scale method of attitudinal measurement.
- Educational Programs --- The entire scope of activities present for the purposes of importing knowledge to students both academic and non-academic within a school. (Driscoll, 1974)
- School ----- All the surroundings and factors including physical plant, staff, administration, other students and educational programs the student is a part of in the educational environment. (Driscoll, 1974)

ASSUMPTIONS

Some of the basic assumptions made in this paper were:

1. Attitudes are measureable. (Poetker, 1977)
2. The Likert scale is a valid tool for such measurements. (Summers, 1970)
3. Attitudes can be shaped. (Merton, 1968)
4. Attitudes have a relationship to achievement. (Anttonen, 1967) (Malpass, 1953)
5. Children initiate their formal schooling with positive attitudes.

II. REVIEW OF THE RELATED LITERATURE

In the past three decades the topic of attitudes and their importance to the educational field has been the subject of an increasing amount of research. Both here in the United States and Great Britain, as evidenced in the early works of William Glassey (1945) and more recently P. L. Gardner (1975), a multitude of attitudinal research studies have been launched to determine the relationship between attitudes and the learning process. But it has not merely been the educators who have been concerned with attitudinal development, for as Roshal et. al. (1971, p. 999) pointed out,

" . . . there is a concern among industrial leaders as well as educators that children appreciate the benefits of technology and that they are not afraid of the many machines in their environment."

It was not difficult to understand why such importance was placed on attitudes for attitudes have been called ". . .the most distinctive and indispensable concept in contemporary American social psychology." (Allport, 1973, p. 19) Attitudes have given meaning to all we see, feel, hear, or do. They have given us a basis for passing judgments and a foundation for making sense out of our fast paced technological oriented way of life. As K. M. Evans stated (1965, p. 1),

"It would be difficult to overstress the influence of attitudes and interests in the life of individual people . . . the expression of attitudes

whether in words or actions, provides clues to the personality and to the needs, and makes possible the kind of understanding which is necessary for the formation of stable relationships."

The fact that attitudes were considered so important led to the question: What were attitudes and what was the effect of schools on attitudinal development? If a person were asked about his job, he would state many of his feelings about his work. He would either like or dislike certain aspects of the job, and from these likes and dislikes you would ascertain his overall attitude toward his job. Researchers have described attitudes as ". . .an enduring system of positive and negative evaluations, emotional feelings, and pro or con tendencies with respect to a social object." (Kretch, et. al. 1962, p. 177). But how does the school affect those evaluations and emotional feelings?

It has been readily accepted that many of a child's attitudes are acquired at home in their preschool years; however, when the child leaves the home to attend school an interesting phenomenon occurs. As the number of social contacts increase and reference groups are formed the process of 'attitude modification' begins. (Wegner, 1976) One only has to observe a school for a short while to see the complexity of its social environment. Not only does the child's own reference group provide interaction but also competing reference groups, teachers, and a myriad of other "authority figures." All these different interactions affect and shape a child's attitudes by providing new attitudes as well as building on

old ones. Perhaps the most direct link between attitudes and the actual educational process was described by Aubry Roden and Walter Hapkiewicz (1973) when they asked the question:

"It is possible for one to learn to read using cognitive processes without necessarily learning to like or dislike reading itself, reading materials, reading instruction, and perhaps even oneself as a reader or reading student? Can a student learn competencies such as reading, arithmetic, science or writing as an isolated segment of knowledge or skill, without learning attitudes toward areas and materials? Common sense and experience tell us No."

The weight of research then, seemed to show that school does indeed affect attitude. But how does attitude affect performance in school? On this question there is disagreement. In his book, Life in the Classrooms, Philip Jackson (1968) concluded that there was no significant relationship between attitudes toward school and school achievement. However, in a longitudinal study, Ralph Anttonen (1967) found significant relationships between student attitudes toward mathematics and mathematic achievement test scores. These correlations remained at the .4 level over a six year period. In another study, Leslie Malpass (1953), although finding no relationship between attitude and achievement test scores, did find a significant relationship between attitudes of students and grades given by teachers. Different research techniques may account for some of the differences in the above studies. Jackson in his study compared overall attitudes toward school with achievement while the other researchers concentrated on attitudes toward specific content areas and their relationship

with achievement in that same particular content area. This may point to the possibility that while overall attitude may have little affect on achievement, attitudes in specific content areas does. In another study, however, research conducted on sixth graders as well as other selected elementary students concluded that "a variety of interests determine the variation in school achievement" (Neale et. al., 1970). It was principally due to this that this researcher decided to study the general attitudes of students rather than specific attitudes concerning one specific content area. In this same study (Neale, et. al., 1970) the authors gave an interesting review of current literature concerning the predictive role of attitudes. Of particular interest to this researcher's paper was the contention that a significant correlation exists between attitudes and achievement then one might conclude that if a teacher could develop more positive attitudes in students then achievement scores of those students would improve. It was under this assumption that led this researcher to believe that any research which would help pinpoint a breakdown in attitude in the K-8 sequence would be beneficial to the field of education. For, if such a breakdown of attitudes could be pinpointed the corrective efforts could be instituted thus realizing the full potential of each student.

One of the last major concerns for researchers in the area of attitude was the subject of attitude scale instruction. There was a distressing lack of valid scales to utilize in attitudinal measurement. As Shaw and Wright (1967, p. 559) stated:

"There seems to have been few major breakdowns or advances in techniques of scale construction since the Thurstone and Likert were developed.

For example, there are many scales available for the measurement of attitudes toward childrearing practices, ethnic groups or toward liberal conservatism, but scales for the measurement of abstract concepts such as life, education, time and freedom are few in number."

The above coupled with the fact that this paper is essentially a replication of a previous study led this researcher to choose the Likert attitudinal measurement scale with some modifications. The modifications were basically confined to the response mode utilized. Rather than a standard 5-part response mode as was generally used in most Likert survey instruments, I chose to use a three-part response mode as did the researcher in the previous study (Wegner, 1976). The response mode utilized in this research study was AGREE-NOT SURE-DISAGREE. Another similar technique called the Semantic Differential (Osgood, 1953) was considered for the study but rejected after being considered too difficult to comprehend for elementary age children.

SUMMARY

Although attitudinal research has been around for quite some time and recognized as important by many factions in society, it is only recently that educators have begun to realize the importance of such research in their field and pursue it with vigor. The literature would seem to point that whereas there is much debate over what attitudes are, there are some common features. The concept of a person's likes and dislikes and their relationship to social objects seem to be mentioned in almost all current writings.

Literature would also seem to point to the fact that although many of the influences on a child's attitude are in the home, there is a process of attitude modification that takes place as the child enters the school social environment. Research would also seem to point to a rather complex relationship between attitudes and achievement. From this, the assumption of this paper is drawn. That assumption being that knowledge of student attitudes is of great use to teachers and that any point, if it exists where there is a significant breakdown in student attitude is of great consequence to the educational process. Finally, the literature would indicate the presence of few valid scales for attitudinal measurement, especially for use in a large cross section type study. It was because of this that this researcher selected the best known of attitudinal scales, the Likert Scale, with alterations to suit this study.

III. PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS OF DATA

INTRODUCTION

As this was a replication of study done previously, the goals of the survey were similar to those of the earlier study (Wegner, 1976). The first goal was to measure student attitude toward school within a single school system K-8, and secondly to analyze results of this study with those of Dr. Wegner's to ascertain any similarities. The goals were reached through administration of a survey instrument to all students K-8. TABLE 2 showed a summary of the enrollment population including the number and percentage of students in each grade. A total of 406 students were in attendance on the date of survey administration which reflected an attendance average of 95.3 percent. This figure was slightly higher than that of Dr. Wegner's study which enjoyed a 93.0 percent rate of attendance.

ANALYSIS OF TOTAL SURVEY

The mean scores of all students were presented in TABLE 3. A perfect positive attitude was 25, a perfect negative score was -25. The mean score for all students in kindergarten was 15.2. This positive stance was increased 5.4 points to 21.8 in the first grade. This increase was negated in the second grade as the mean fell to 17.2. Third grade continued to lower the mean as it reached 12.8. A general upswing in mean scores was

TABLE 2

ENROLLMENT SUMMARY WITH NUMBER AND PERCENTAGE IN ATTENDANCE

GRADE	ENROLLMENT	STUDENTS IN ATTENDANCE	%
K	48	40	83
1	47	47	100
2	48	48	100
3	35	35	100
4	55	55	100
5	51	46	90
6	41	39	95
7	49	48	98
8	52	48	92
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TOTALS	426	406	
		AVERAGE PERCENTAGE OF ATTENDANCE	95%

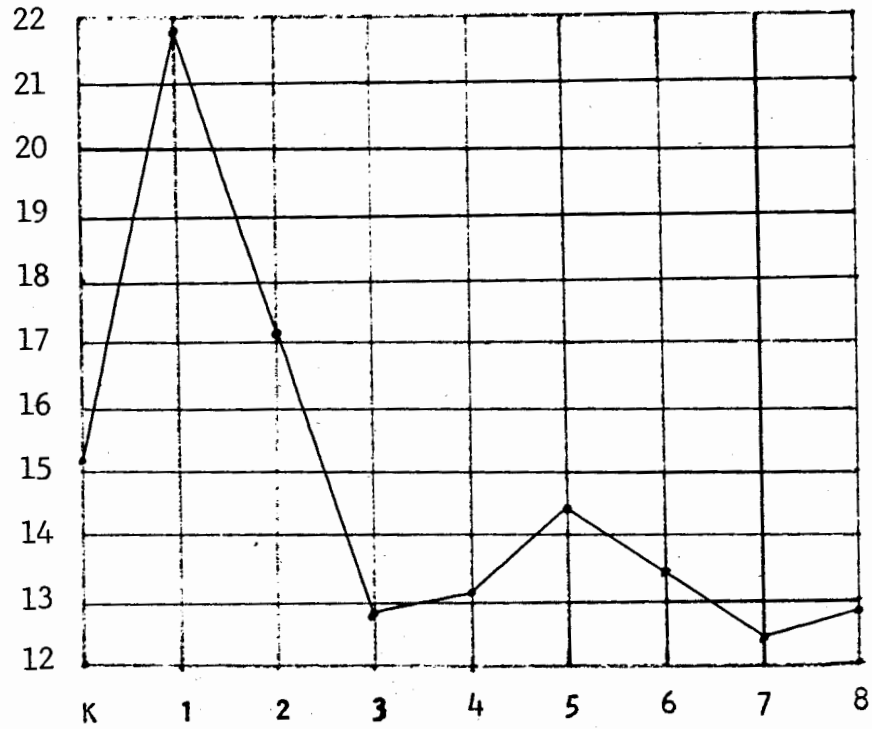


TABLE 3

CLASS MEAN FOR ALL ITEMS ON SCHOOL ATTITUDE SURVEY

experienced in fourth and fifth grade rising to a mean of 14.5 only to fall gradually back in sixth and seventh grades to 12.6. A slight increase was experienced in the eighth grade raising the mean to 12.8.

The analysis of the mean scores showed that grades K-1-2 all fell above the average mean score of 14.9, while the remainder of the survey population fell below this point. Once the second grade was reached there was a general pattern of declining positive attitudes toward school. This finding was consistent not only with this researchers assumption that positive attitude toward school declines as the student progresses through school, but it was consistent with Dr. Wegner's findings in his study in 1976.

The two largest fluctuations in scores of the positive nature were reflected in the first and fifth grades. Each of these jumps occurred at times when there was a change in the organizational pattern of the elementary school. The shift from half time to full time attendance and consequently the full time attention of an instructor occurred at the first grade level while a switch from self-contained classrooms to departmentalization occurred at the fifth grade level. Thus, the organizational pattern of the school was a possible factor in the students' general satisfaction with the school.

ANALYSIS OF RESPONSES

TABLE 4 presented the computed means of all one positive responses to all items by grade level. Of the possible twenty-five responses, the students in kindergarten responded with a mean of 17.9 positive responses. There was an increase at grade

one to a mean of 22.5 positive responses, the highest of all grades surveyed. A decrease of 3 points was shown at one second grade level followed by another substantial decrease of 3.3 to the survey low of 16.2 at one third grade level. An even growth of 1.6 was shown over the next two years to grade five, where a steady decrease was experienced to 16.7 at one eighth grade level. Analysis of these figures showed substantial positive jumps at the points where organizational changes were made just as had been shown by the analysis of the computed means of the various grade levels.

TABLE 5 presented the computed means of the Not Sure responses to all items of the survey by grade level. The table indicated a fairly consistent level of indecisiveness at all levels with exception of grade one. This pointed to the general novelty of the first year of "full time" school and perhaps the lack of sufficient experiences to present conflicting alternatives which cause indecisiveness.

TABLE 6 presented the means for all negative responses to all items for all students by grade level. The table showed a rather consistent growth in negative responses starting with grade two. Grade one showed the lowest negative response mean of 1.1 while grade two showed a mean 2.0. The largest jump in the negative response mean occurred at the third grade where a mean of 3.5 was attained--a gain of 1.5 over grade two. At grade four a mean of 4 negative responses was achieved. This was the highest negative response mean score of the grades surveyed. Grade five recorded a mean of 3.2 with a

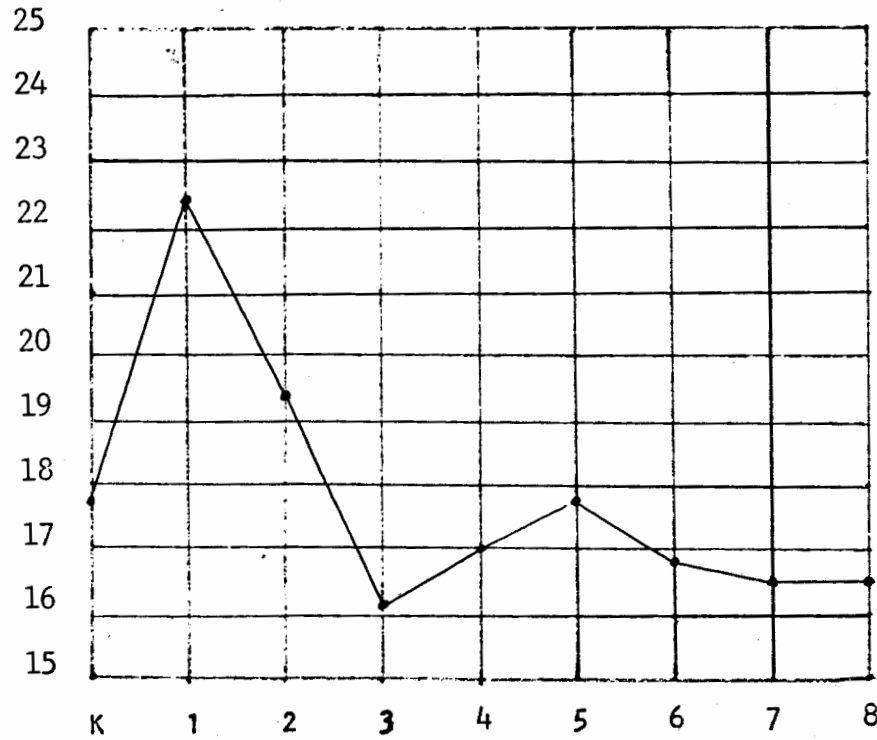


TABLE 4

CLASS AVERAGES OF POSITIVE RESPONSES FOR ALL ITEMS ON SCHOOL ATTITUDE SURVEY

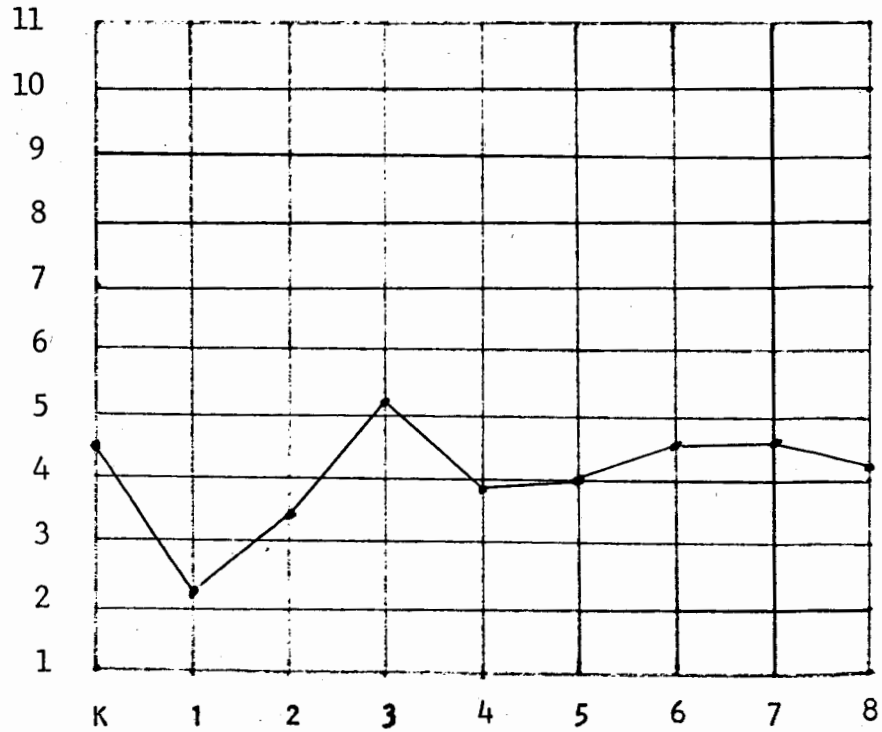


TABLE 5

CLASS AVERAGES OF NOT SURE RESPONSES FOR ALL ITEMS ON SCHOOL ATTITUDE SURVEY

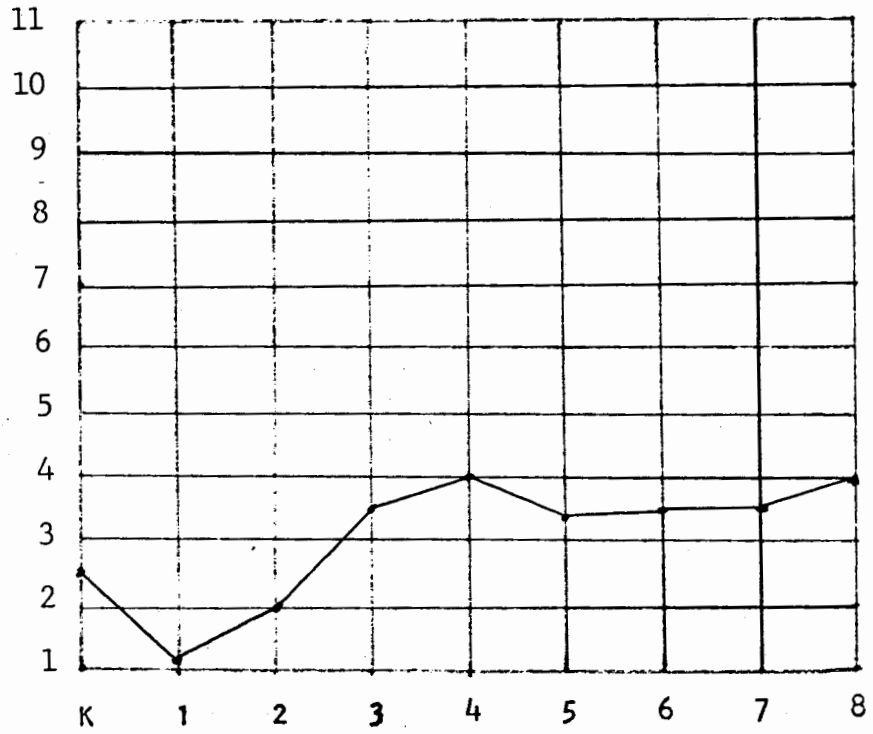


TABLE 6

CLASS AVERAGES OF NEGATIVE RESPONSES FOR ALL ITEMS ON SCHOOL ATTITUDE SURVEY

gradual increase in mean scores to grade eight, where a negative response mean of 3.9 was shown. This table presented data that reconfirmed the assumption of this researcher that not only was there a general decrease in positive attitudes of students towards school but there was an increase in negative attitudes toward school as the student progressed through the institution.

COMPARISON OF RESPONSES BY SEX

TABLES 7 and 8 presented a comparison of mean positive responses for the boys and one mean positive response for the girls at all grade levels. The trend observed indicated that grades K through 8 showed that a closely related pattern existed with two exceptions--grade five and grade eight. At grade five, the boys showed a decline in positive responses while the girls showed an increase. At grade eight, the girls showed a decline in positive responses, while the boys showed the increase. It was also at grade eight that a higher positive response mean was shown for the boys than that of the girls. This was the only grade level that this situation existed; at all other levels, the girls showed higher positive response modes than those of the boys. The greatest deviation between positive response means for the girls as compared to those of the boys occurred at grade five when the girls had a mean of 19.1 positive responses and the boys had a mean of 15.6 positive responses. The second greatest deviation occurred when the boys had a mean of 17.8 positive responses to the girls mean of 15.6 positive responses. This occurred at the eighth grade level.

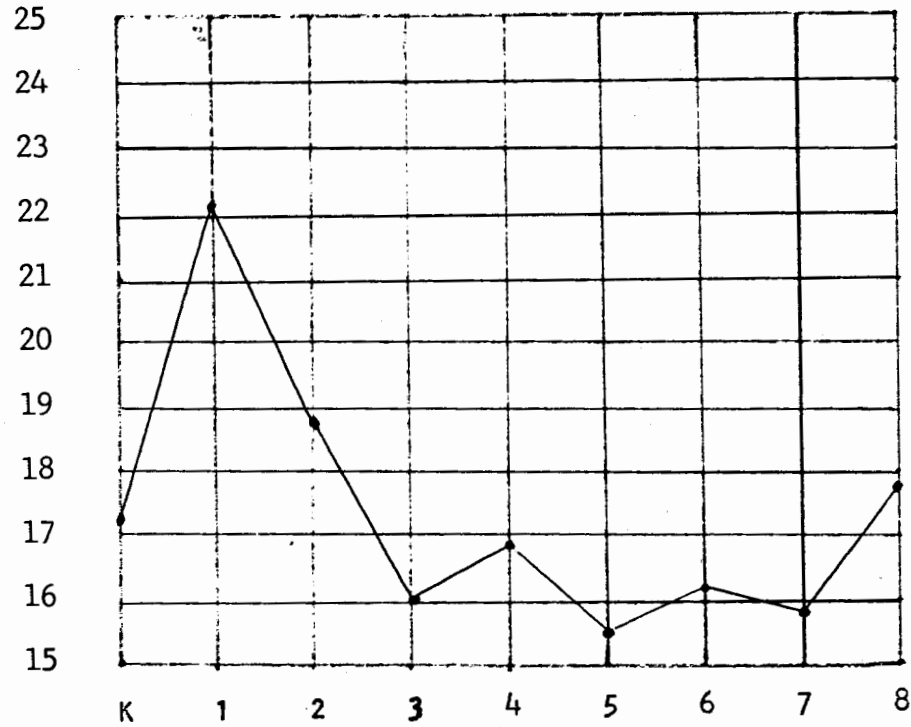


TABLE 7

CLASS AVERAGES OF POSITIVE RESPONSES FOR ALL BOYS FOR ALL ITEMS ON SCHOOL ATTITUDE SURVEY

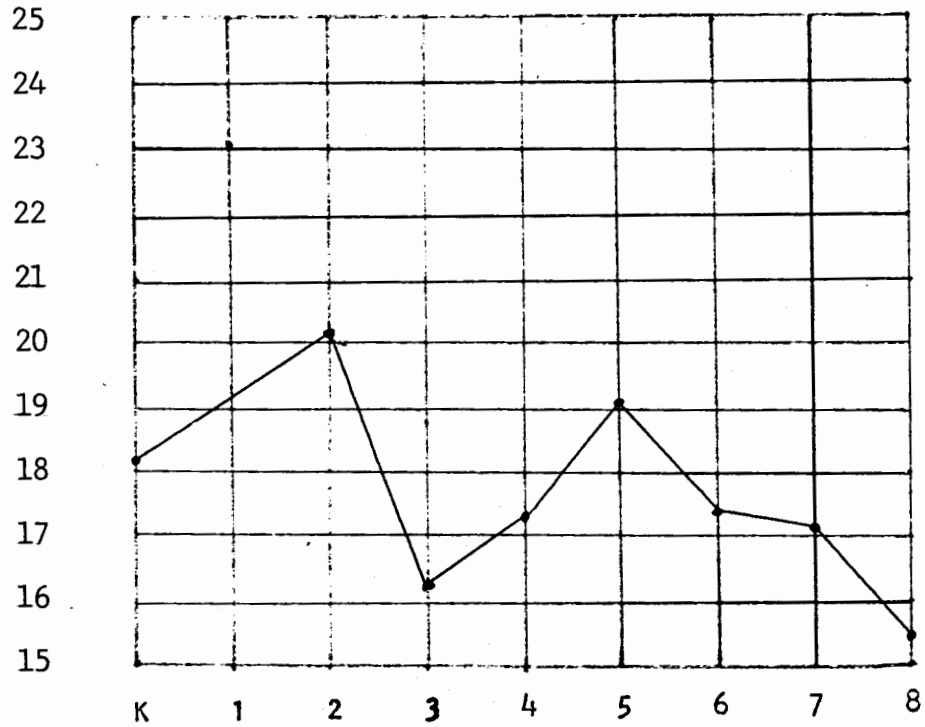


TABLE 8

CLASS AVERAGES OF POSITIVE RESPONSES FOR ALL GIRLS FOR ALL ITEMS IN SCHOOL ATTITUDE SURVEY

TABLES 9 and 10 presented a comparison of mean Not Sure responses given by the boys and those given by the girls at all grade levels. The trend which appeared in this graphical representation indicated a rather chaotic fluctuation in response means for the girls and a rather stable trend in response means for the boys. The overall mean for the girls was slightly higher than that of the boys. Although the boys Not Sure response means were higher than the girls means in five of the nine grade levels surveyed.

TABLES 11 and 12 presented a comparison of mean negative responses for the boys and the mean negative responses for the girls at all grade levels. The trend indicated in this graphical representation indicated a lower negative response mean for girls at all grade levels except grade one where the mean for the boys was identical to that of the girls. Close observation did point out that while the boys mean negative response rose quickly from grade one to four, there was a trend toward gradual reduction in the negative response mean through grade eight. Further observation also pointed to the fact that while the girls negative response means were all lower than those of the boys there was a steady increase in negative response mean from grade two through eight.

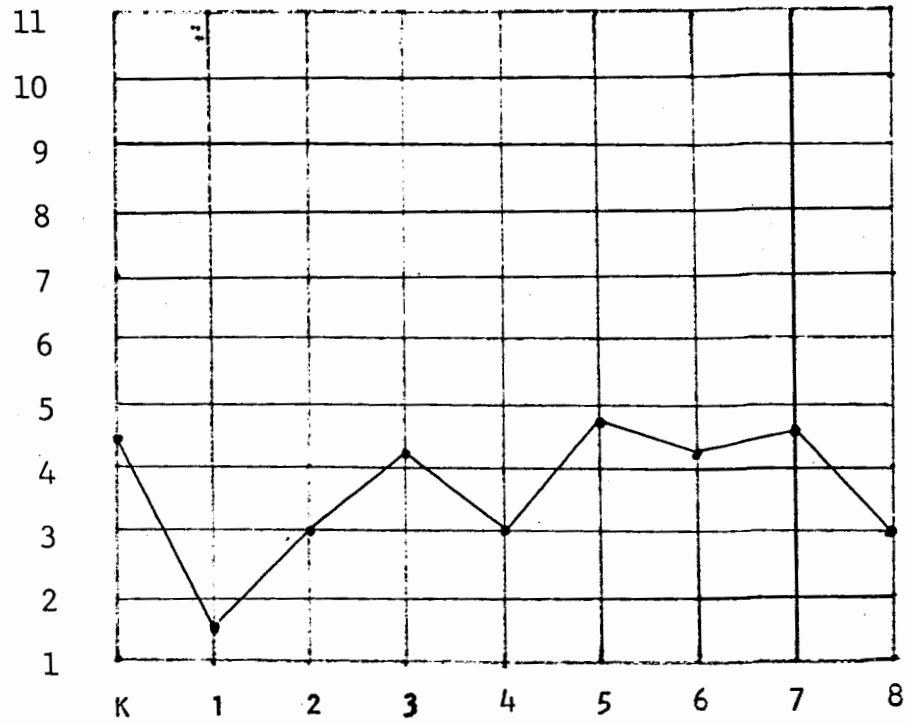


TABLE 9

CLASS AVERAGES OF NOT SURE RESPONSES FOR ALL BOYS FOR ALL ITEMS ON SCHOOL ATTITUDE SURVEY

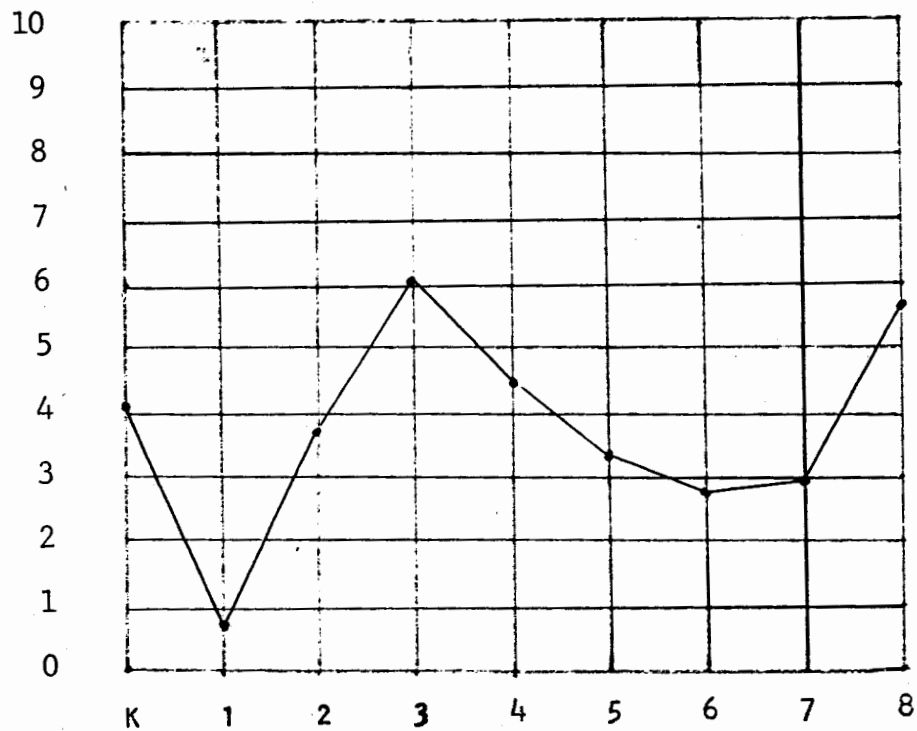


TABLE 10

CLASS AVERAGES OF NOT SURE RESPONSES FOR ALL GIRLS FOR ALL ITEMS ON THE SCHOOL ATTITUDE SURVEY

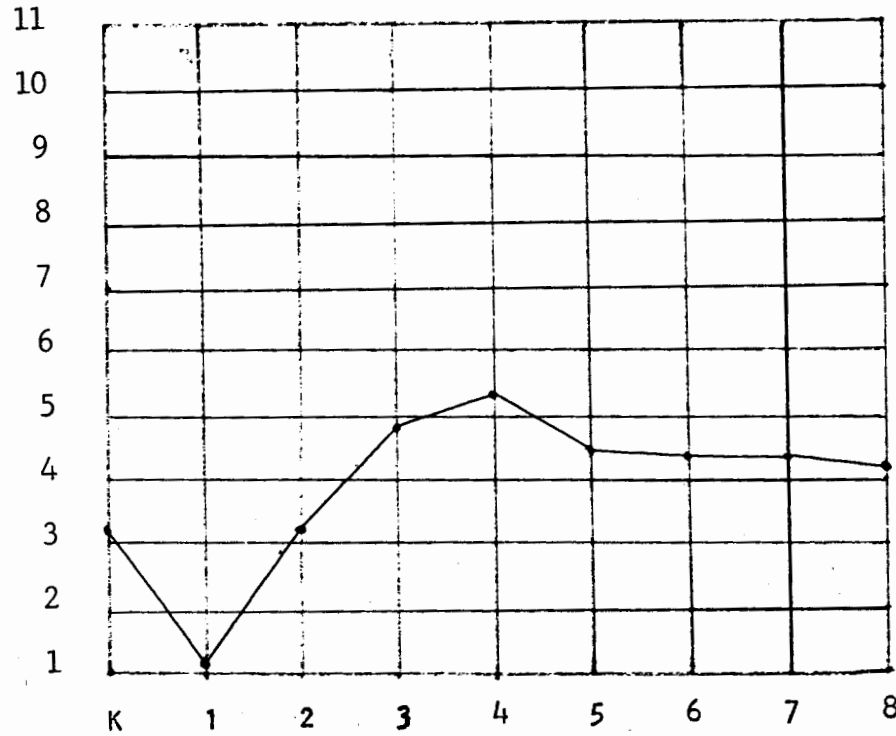


TABLE 11

CLASS AVERAGES OF NEGATIVE RESPONSES FOR ALL BOYS FOR ALL ITEMS ON THE SCHOOL ATTITUDE SURVEY

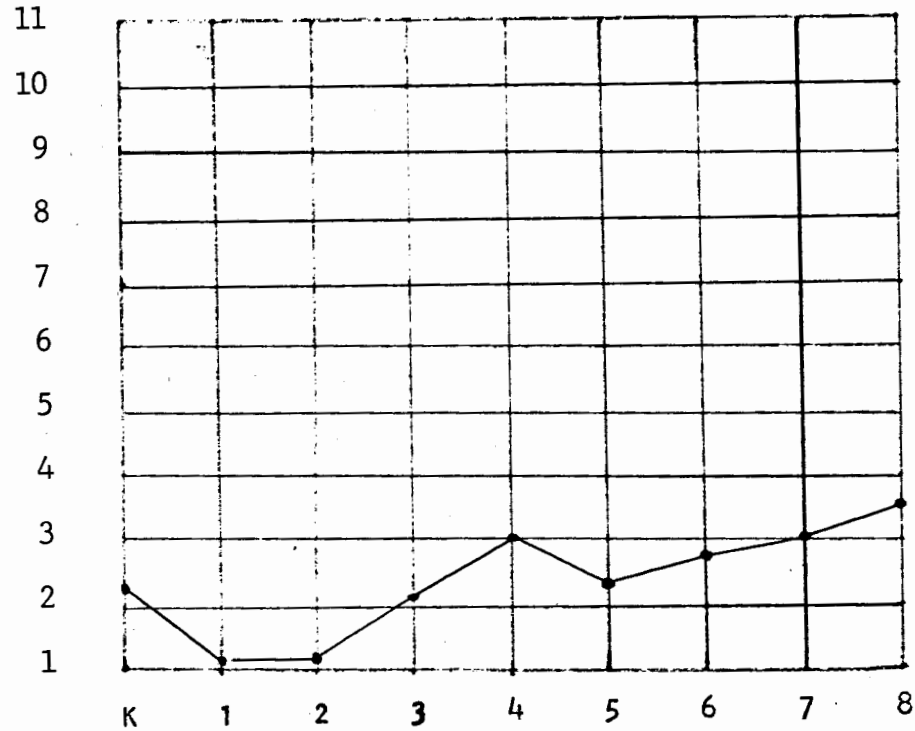


TABLE 12

CLASS AVERAGES OF NEGATIVE RESPONSES FOR ALL GIRLS FOR ALL ITEMS ON THE SCHOOL ATTITUDE SURVEY

IV. SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS, AND RECOMMENDATION

SUMMARY

The purpose of this study was to examine the attitudes toward school of the students of a single school district in the state of Iowa. The study was conducted through the use of a single instrument administered to grades K through eight. The major problem under consideration was the question, "Is there a point along the K-8 continuum where there is a decline in positive attitudes toward schooling." The survey instrument used for this study was developed by Dr. Ottlin A. Wegner for a thesis study in 1976. The survey consisted of twenty-five questions, using a Likert Scale, featuring brevity and a forced answer response mode. The items were validated through utilization of the Spearman-Brown Split-Half formula on a pre-test group. The instrument was administered in the last week of February, 1981, to a total of 406 students representing a 95 percent of the total K through 8 enrollment in the one elementary attendance center used.

CONCLUSION

A summary of the findings showed that there did exist a general trend of loss of positive feelings toward schooling by students as they progressed through the institution. A correlation of $-.497$ was found when age was compared to mean scores on the

survey instrument. This correlation was reached utilizing the Pearson-Product Moment.

$$r = \frac{N (\sum xy) - (\sum x)(\sum y)}{\sqrt{N (\sum x^2) - (\sum x)^2 \cdot N (\sum y^2) - (\sum y)^2}}$$

Although this figure was not as high as hoped for, it did indicate a moderately strong correlation which backed the assumption of this researcher that attitude toward schooling does decline as the child progresses through the institution.

Although there was a general trend of loss of positive attitude, this researcher found that just as important as the areas of decline were the two areas of increase in positive attitude. The two areas were at grade levels one and five. These two grades reflected the two major changes in the organizational pattern of the school leading this researcher to theorize that when the organizational pattern changed, perhaps better meeting the needs of the students, students reacted with more positive feelings toward schooling.

Final study was conducted in the area of attitudes toward schooling as it related to sex. Findings in this area showed that overall girls attitudes toward schooling were more positive than that of the boys although the pattern of attitudinal change were quite similar. Also of interest in this area was the finding that, although the boys had a higher rate of negative responses at all grade levels the girls had a more consistent growth in the negative response mean as compared to the boys. These findings were confirmed

through conversation with elementary staff members and the theory was offered that as schooling progressed more opportunities for extracurricular activities were offered to boys than to girls and consequently their attitudes toward schooling were caused to be more positive. The extracurricular programs mentioned were fall football league, winter basketball clinics, and spring "pee wee" wrestling.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Based upon the data accumulated in this study and the conclusions which were reached in the process, the following recommendations were made.

1. It was recommended that a longitudinal study be conducted to provide continued monitoring of student attitudes as they progress through their schooling.
2. It was recommended that the results of this study be presented to the K-8 staff in an inservice program designed to encourage further studies to ascertain possible causes for the decline of student interest at specific grade levels.
3. It was recommended that further studies be done concerning school related extracurricular activities at the elementary level and their effect on student attitude toward schooling.
4. It was recommended that further study be done to examine more closely the effects of school organizational change on student attitude. It was also recommended to study more closely the needs of the children at the various grade levels to ascertain whether an organizational change could be initiated which would develop more positive student attitudes and perhaps an atmosphere more conducive to learning.

In light of these recommendations, it seemed logical also to suggest to the administration of the school district

that they make use of this study in a school wide effort to analyze and improve student attitude toward this school. This effort should include not only the administration and teachers, but noncertified staff and the students themselves as well. Not only should the focus of this effort center on the improvement of student attitude, but staff and community attitude as well.

In this study, the trend of loss of positive attitude shown in a school district just as it had in previous studies but this trend need not be regarded as irreversible. Change is possible. Change is necessary. Allport once stated, "Americans have a great faith in the changeability of attitudes. The highly effective system of education in this country is predicated upon this premise." (Allport, 1973, p. 507).

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DIRECTIONS: Given below are 25 statements about some things you might like or dislike about school. There are 3 possible responses:

Please answer all statements. REMEMBER, this is NOT a test. There are no wrong answers. Your answer should tell how YOU feel about the statement. Your honesty and frankness will be deeply appreciated.

Grade Level _____

Boy _____ Girl _____



1. I like my school.



2. Getting a good education is important to me.



3. Students in this school are unfriendly.



4. My school subjects are boring.



5. I like my teachers.



6. I am afraid to ask questions in school.



7. My education will make me a better citizen.



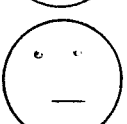
8. I have few friends at this school.



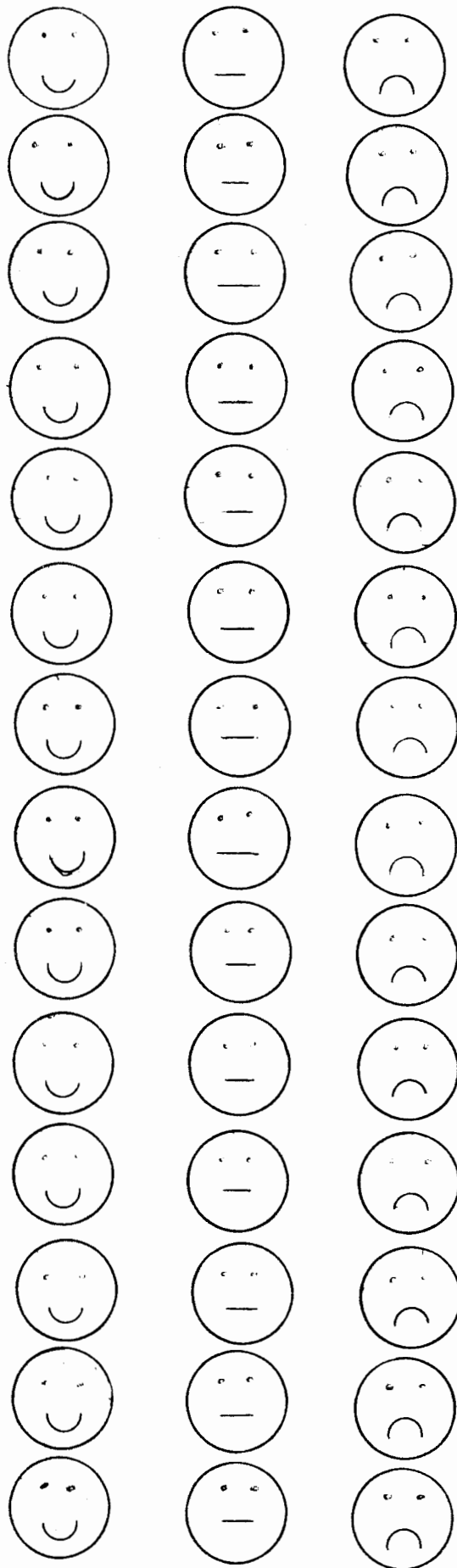
9. I like most of my subjects.



10. My teachers are unfriendly.



11. I go to school because I want to.



12. I see little value in education.
13. School is a good place for making friends.
14. Most of my subjects are useless.
15. My teachers treat me fairly most of the time.
16. There are too many rules in our school.
17. Education is more valuable than most people think.
18. I really like most of the kids in this school.
19. Doing my school work is fun.
20. Teachers are respected by other people.
21. I am proud of my school.
22. Education will help me to get a good job.
23. I like to work with other students on projects.
24. I try to do good work in all my classes.
25. I would like to be a teacher.

APPENDIX B
SCHOOL ATTITUDE SURVEY

DIRECTIONS: Given below are 25 statements about some things you might like or dislike about school. There are three possible answers: Agree Not Sure (NS) Disagree. If you would like to agree with the statement most of the time, circle Agree. If you disagree with the statement most of the time, circle Disagree. If you are not certain, circle NS. Please answer all the statements. REMEMBER, this is NOT a test. There are no wrong answers. Your answer should tell how YOU feel about the statement. Please be as honest and frank as possible.

GRADE LEVEL _____			BOY _____	GIRL _____
AGREE	NS	DISAGREE	1.	I like my school
AGREE	NS	DISAGREE	2.	Getting a good education is important to me.
AGREE	NS	DISAGREE	3.	Students in this school are unfriendly.
AGREE	NS	DISAGREE	4.	My school subjects are boring.
AGREE	NS	DISAGREE	5.	I like my teachers.
AGREE	NS	DISAGREE	6.	I am afraid to ask questions in school.
AGREE	NS	DISAGREE	7.	My education will make me a better citizen.
AGREE	NS	DISAGREE	8.	I have few friends at this school.
AGREE	NS	DISAGREE	9.	I like most of my subjects.
AGREE	NS	DISAGREE	10.	My teachers are unfriendly.
AGREE	NS	DISAGREE	11.	I go to school because I want to.
AGREE	NS	DISAGREE	12.	I see little value in education.
AGREE	NS	DISAGREE	13.	School is a good place for making friends.
AGREE	NS	DISAGREE	14.	Most of my subjects are useless.

- | | | | | |
|-------|----|----------|-----|--|
| AGREE | NS | DISAGREE | 15. | My teachers treat me fairly most of the time. |
| AGREE | NS | DISAGREE | 16. | There are too many rules in our school. |
| AGREE | NS | DISAGREE | 17. | Education is more valuable than most people think. |
| AGREE | NS | DISAGREE | 18. | I really like most of the kids in this school. |
| AGREE | NS | DISAGREE | 19. | Doing my school work is fun. |
| AGREE | NS | DISAGREE | 20. | Teachers are respected by other people. |
| AGREE | NS | DISAGREE | 21. | I am proud of my school. |
| AGREE | NS | DISAGREE | 22. | Education will help me to get a good job. |
| AGREE | NS | DISAGREE | 23. | I like to work with other students on projects. |
| AGREE | NS | DISAGREE | 24. | I try to do good work in all my classes. |
| AGREE | NS | DISAGREE | 25. | I would like to be a teacher. |

APPENDIX C

INSTRUCTIONS FOR SURVEY ADMINISTRATORS

Before distributing the questionnaire to the students, please follow the steps outlined below:

1. Explain that the results of the test will be part of a research project. Stress the importance of responding to all the statements.
2. Emphasize the fact that this is not a test, and that there are no right or wrong answers, only honest responses to their true feelings about each statement.
3. Assure them that their responses cannot be identified, and that they will remain anonymous.
4. Encourage the students to select either an Agree or Disagree answer if at all possible. Use the NS (not sure) response only after full consideration.

Distribute the questionnaire to all the class membership. For students up through grade 3, please read each statement to the class. Try not to elicit responses. You might explain what a yes or no answer means in certain of the statements. For students above grade 4, feel free to explain any statement about which they have questions. All they need to do is respond to each statement, hopefully with a yes or no.

Collect the forms as the students finish. Scan them quickly to make sure they have responded to all statements, but please do not read them so that the student feels they will lose their anonymity. When all the students have finished, clip the papers together along with a slip of paper with your name on it. This is necessary in case of a retest. If you have any students absent, don't save a test for them to take later. I plan to use only the returns of students present on the test day.

THANK YOU!