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A COMPARISON OF THE ATTITUDES OF TEACHERS AND  
PARENTS TOWARD DISCIPLINE

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A Thesis  
Presented to  
the Graduate Faculty  
Central Washington State College

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

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by  
James R. Watson  
August 1967

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APPROVED FOR THE GRADUATE FACULTY

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## CHAPTER I

### THE PROBLEM AND DEFINITION OF TERMS

No group of people can share anything or work together without rules and regulations. This is true whether individuals are working as individuals or as members of a group. Good discipline is a way of achieving teamwork toward goals. This is particularly true of the learning situation in the classroom. Without good discipline the class is chaotic and the school room experience is a waste of everybody's time. No wonder the teacher who has to spend most of the time on behavior problems cannot teach the students what they should learn (24:2-3).

"Discipline" is one of the most disturbing problems confronting parents as well as teachers. This is partially due to the fact that discipline is felt necessary and yet, at the same time, it is a word that is frequently used without a common, single definition. Parents are usually anxious to employ the type of discipline that will be the most effective for their children. They are also fearful of using improper kinds of discipline which might possibly result in maladjusted children. Teachers are also anxious to use the most effective types of discipline, without causing any psychological or physical damage to the child.

It would be difficult to confidently state the "best" types of discipline for maximum effectiveness in the classroom and the home and also the most conducive to the optimal adjustment of the child. If optimal discipline were to be determined, one of the first logical steps would seem to be a measurement and comparison of the attitudes of teachers and parents toward discipline.

## I. THE PROBLEM

### Statement of the Problem

It was the purpose of this study to measure and compare the attitudes of teachers and parents toward discipline.

The null hypothesis on which this study was based was that there would be no statistically significant difference between the attitudes of teachers and parents toward discipline.

### Importance of the Study

Carter found, in the study of parents' attitudes toward the disciplinary actions taken by the school, that the educators at the school involved in his study often used corporal punishment, even though the majority of parents felt that it was never justified (7:115).

On the basis of the above statement, it would appear that an important concept in good discipline is consistency. Often the type of discipline employed in the home will

differ drastically from the methods of control at school. If the child is punished for certain types of behavior at school and rewarded for the same types of behavior at home, parents, teachers, and administrators should realize that this inconsistency does exist.

If communication between home and school were more effective, this discrepancy in attitudes and practices between parents and teachers would possibly be not so pronounced. Once their attitudes were examined, steps could be taken to insure closer communications between home and school. Possibly, frank discussions on various types of disciplinary problems encountered in the home and school could be discussed and compared and, hopefully, a deeper understanding and appreciation of the unique problems of both parents and teachers could lead to more consistent discipline for the child. This study was seen as a possible first step in developing more effective communication between the home and the school.

#### Limitations of the Study

One of the limitations was that a questionnaire was the instrument used to obtain the desired data. Teachers and parents involved in the study may have reacted to the thirty problem situations on the questionnaire differently than their true feelings; they may have selected what they

believed to be the "best" answer. (A copy of the questionnaire is located in Appendix A.)

Another limitation was the many different interpretations of the word "discipline." Some of the meanings of "discipline" are as follows: (1) a branch of knowledge; (2) training that develops self-control; (3) the result of such training; (4) acceptance or submission to authority; (5) a system of rules or methods; and (6) treatment that corrects or punishes (34:416). The type of responses would be somewhat dependent upon the respondent's connotation of "discipline." No attempt was made in this study to determine the meaning attributed to discipline on the part of the respondents.

A final limitation of the study was the fact that Bellevue is not a "typical" city because of the disproportionate amount of education and income of the parents. The majority of the fathers are professional people and receive well above the national median income of \$5660. The average amount of education of the parents involved in the study was slightly over fifteen years of school; the median school years completed nationally, according to the 1960 census, was 10.6 years.

## II. DEFINITION OF TERMS USED

For the purposes of this study, the terms below were defined in the following manner:

Discipline. This was the ability or inability of teacher or parent efforts to discourage disorder or misbehavior and maintain behavioral control of the child.

Self-discipline. A control of conduct exercised not by an external authority but by the child who accepts a task as his own and controls his activities accordingly was considered self-discipline.

Permissive. The child is allowed much freedom of choice in the type of behavioral pattern he will follow; few restraints or barriers will restrict his desired behavior.

Atmosphere. This was a type of leadership or emotional climate; it can be democratic, autocratic, or laissez-faire.

Autocratic. Discipline tends to be severe and violent; this type of leadership involves a parent or teacher exercising unlimited power over children.

Democratic. Discipline in this group tends to be more humane and less violent; this type of leadership is characterized by group discussions and decisions.



Laissez-faire. Adults abstain from any direction or planning; this is the type of leadership in which children will be able to do as they please without adult interference.

### III. ORGANIZATION OF THE REMAINDER OF THE STUDY

The remainder of the paper is divided into four chapters. Chapter II is a review of the literature dealing with a history of discipline. Chapter III consists of methods and procedures used in conducting the study. Chapter IV is a report of the results of the study. The final chapter consists of conclusions drawn from the study and recommendations for further research.

## CHAPTER II

### REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

Webster defines discipline as "training that develops self-control character, or orderliness and efficiency" (34:416).

Krug believes that from a positive view discipline is

1. A combination of all the constructive influences that parents and teachers can have in the growth of children.
2. Kindly, helpful training for the child that is as important to his well-being and comfort as it is to the well-being and comfort of others.
3. Guidance that draws upon resources within the child himself and is not merely imposed upon him from the outside.
4. A process by which the child, in learning to control himself, also learns to master his environment (16:5).

#### History of Discipline

The further an individual researches back in time, at least within the last two centuries in our country, the more "discipline" is found to connote punishment. Punishment, in the past, meant some kind of physical stress--spanking, smacking, switching--to which the child was submitted (24:13).

In the article, "Discipline in the Good Old Days," John Manning describes the severely harsh punishment found

in New England in the eighteenth century, which included: Standing on one foot placed within a wooden shoe with sharp pegs projecting upwards from the sole, standing before the class with the nose wedged into the split end of a sapling, flogging the boy next to a pupil who was delinquent in his recitation, and many others (18:99).

It is easy to see how revulsion to these tactics grew as the urgency of control lessened. The reaction to physical or corporal punishment became so great that many states passed laws against "laying of hands" on the child at school. Only recently, with a revival of interest in firmer discipline in the schools, has repeal of this type of law been considered in some states (24:13).

In the state of Washington the law regarding abuse of pupils is stated as follows:

It is a misdemeanor for any teacher to maltreat or abuse any pupil by administering unjust punishment or to inflict punishment about the head or face. On conviction of such an act in a court of competent jurisdiction, the teacher shall be fined any sum not to exceed one hundred dollars. The fine shall be paid to the county treasurer to be credited to the current State School Fund (2:196).

### Different Approaches to Good Discipline

It does appear that discipline of some type is with us to stay. It was then, in this writer's opinion, a matter of determining the better possible forms of discipline.

Kline mentions several keys to good discipline. Six of the more significant were as follows:

1. Handle the discipline problem yourself.
2. Be persistent and consistent.
3. Be truthful and keep promises.
4. Try voice control (Don't Yell!).
5. Accentuate the positive.
6. The punishment should fit the crime (15:100).

Most parents and educators would probably agree that all children should feel they are wanted and loved. Some might, however, question the disciplinary approach discussed by Laura Johnson in the article, "Love Therapy." One day when a student lost control of his temper and was on the verge of fighting, she put her arms around him and kissed him on the cheek. She believes that the classroom is not designed as a battleground between teacher and pupils. The teacher should not try to assume the role of a stern disciplinarian but should constantly strive to become the trusted friend that many children desperately need (14:19).

A. S. Neill, author and founder of Summerhill, would probably agree with this type of child rearing philosophy. Neill expressed his interpretation of "love" in the following manner:

Hate breeds hate, and love breeds love. Love means approving of children, and that is essential in any school. You can't be on the side of children if you punish them and storm at them. Summerhill is a school in which the child knows that he is approved of (22:8).

Many authors believe that an important concept in acquiring good discipline is the leveling of natural consequences for undesirable behavior. It is very necessary that the deed carry its own consequences, and the doer himself is not punished. In place of punishment, an individual should think of the natural consequences that would follow an action (24:24).

Dreikurs made the following statement regarding natural consequences:

A teacher's action in permitting the natural consequences to take place may be identical in some regards to a punitive measure. But the similarity is superficial; upon closer scrutiny it has none of the retaliatory qualities of punishment nor--if properly applied--the attribute of personal power and superiority of the teacher characteristic in punishment (9:76-77).

Another interpretation of Dreikurs' statement above might be that the punishment should fit the crime. This statement is frequently mentioned as another important key to successful control of children.

Phillips, Wiener, and Haring said, "The corrective measure should fit the infraction in a way meaningful to the child" (24:15).

Neill found that even when children are responsible for governing their peers, the punishment had some relation to the crime. He relates the example of three small girls that were disturbing the sleep of others. Their punishment was that they must go to bed an hour earlier every night for a week (22:51).

## Self-Discipline

The main goal of discipline is self-discipline. This is the objective that teachers, parents, and counselors would hope that all students as well as adults could achieve. Even though this ideal is rarely reached, all discipline should be directed toward self-discipline. Hymes states,

People must take discipline unto themselves. The real laws must be inside. Life is too complex; no outside force can govern all its perplexities. When we rely on outside law alone, each person is free to do whatever he can get away with (13:43).

According to Richardson,

Self-discipline grows as each person is able to find a balance between the inner urges of his developing organism and the outer pressures represented by the approval and disapproval of other people (3:9).

Carboni's description of the self-disciplined child is as follows:

The truly disciplined child recognizes his responsibilities. His own reason provides him with the motivation for behaving properly. He understands that good social behavior makes for personal and group happiness. He abstains from doing what is wrong, because doing what is right makes him happy. He provides his own reason for behaving well (6:42).

## Types of Leadership and Control

Most authors differ in the method advocated for better discipline. Some believe in a more permissive control, others believe in more autocratic control, but many experts endorse a "middle course."

If a child lives both at home with his parents and, in a sense, at school with his teacher, he is probably

subjected to different types of atmosphere and leadership.

Lippitt and White related a study regarding the reaction of children to various types of leaders--democratic, autocratic, and laissez-faire.

In the study, children's reactions to leaders who were autocratic, democratic, or laissez-faire were compared, and the changes in attitude and behavior when leadership shifted from one type to another were discussed. Some of the major findings of the Lippitt and White study were as follows:

#### Democratic Leadership

1. This club showed less feeling of discontent in their relations with the adult leader than did members of the other clubs.
2. Members in the democratic atmosphere felt much freer and more inclined to make suggestions on matters of group policy than in the other groups.
3. Expressions of irritability and aggressiveness toward fellow club members were much less prevalent than in the other social climates.
4. Intermember suggestions for group action and group policy were significantly higher than in the other atmospheres.
5. When leaders arrived late, democratic groups were already active in a productive fashion while autocratic groups did not start new work or continue with previous work.

#### Autocratic Leadership

1. Two distinct types of reactions were shown to the same pattern of authoritarian leadership.

- (a) Dependent leaning on the adult leader, relatively low levels of frustration, tension, and practically no capacity for initiating group action.
  - (b) Considerable frustration and some degree of aggression toward the authoritarian leader.
2. In the authoritarian atmosphere the members were marked by more dependency upon the leader than in either the democratic or laissez-faire situations.
  3. In authoritarian situations the demands for attention from the adult were greater than in the other atmospheres.
  4. There were less requests for attention and approval from fellow club members in the authoritarian climate than in the other atmospheres.
  5. The behavior of the groups under authoritarian domination after a transition to laissez-faire and democratic atmospheres was characterized by great outbursts of horseplay on the first day. This need to "blow off steam" disappeared with more meetings in the freer atmosphere.

#### Laissez-faire Leadership

1. The greater responsibility of the members of the laissez-faire clubs to get their own information is shown by the fact that about 37% of their behavior toward their leader consisted of asking for information, as compared to about 15% in the other club situations.
2. The dissatisfaction arising from any lack of feeling of real progress in the laissez-faire situation led to a high frequency of expressions of ideas about "something to do." These suggestions seldom became reality because of the lack of techniques necessary for cooperative planning.
3. The laissez-faire group was active in a non-productive fashion when leaders arrived late (17:312-326).



Krug and Beck feel that adults sometimes find it difficult to set up clear-cut standards of conduct for their children. This confusion may be due to the fact that in recent years the trend has shifted from the rigid, authoritarian measures that frustrated the child to the opposite extreme of such complete freedom of expression that the child was confused. Today more and more educators have come to recognize that either extreme--authoritarian or permissive--can interfere with healthy personality development (16:18).

#### Teachers' Attitudes Toward Discipline

Many experts have been alarmed by teachers' inadequate understanding of the relative importance of behavior problems.

Sparks discusses how the relative degree of importance teachers assign to behavior problems has been a matter of great concern ever since the well-known investigation by Wickman. His study seemed to show, according to Sparks, that teachers do not have an adequate understanding of the relative importance of the various behavior problems of children. Sparks used two forms of a questionnaire, each containing the fifty behavioral problems from Wickman's study. Form I was developed to sample attitudes of teachers toward behavior problems in relation to the seriousness to

future adjustment of the child. Form II represented an attempt to determine which problems teachers felt were most troublesome to them (27:284).

The following conclusions seem to be substantiated by the data:

1. The amount of education seems to make a difference in the attitudes of teachers toward the seriousness of certain behavior problems.
2. The fact that the teachers rated honesty, social morality, and sexual morality high would tend to show that those traits of virtue which our society has always been most concerned with are more important to teachers than the personality traits which indicate the state of a child's personal adjustment (27:290).

In a similar study, Schrupp and Gjerde reached the following conclusion:

Although clinician and teacher groups agreed much more closely in 1951 than in 1927 (The Wickman Study), definite disagreements were still evident. . . . Teachers, when compared with clinicians, still appeared to be less concerned about behavior traits associated with withdrawal and more concerned about those which appear to be transgressions against orderliness and, perhaps, morality (25:214).

Smither reported the article, "A Study of Teachers' Beliefs Regarding Control of Child Behavior." A short questionnaire was given to approximately one hundred teachers in the education extension classes of the University of California, Los Angeles. The following five questions were asked:

1. For what kinds of behavior are children in your school usually punished?

2. What are the most frequent kinds of punishment used?
3. State briefly the point-of-view which your principal holds regarding control and punishment.
4. In what ways do you agree or disagree with your principal's point-of-view on control.
5. In your opinion what are the most common causes of children's misbehavior? (29:11)

The teachers seemed to realize that much of children's misbehavior in school often stems from home: no feeling of parental love or concern, lack of consistency in parental standards, lack of proper values, and no respect for authority at home (29:12).

The general conclusions of the study are as follows:

1. Nearly all teachers who participated were able to adequately express themselves regarding the causes of children's behavior.
2. Several teachers were actually using their understanding of the causes of misbehavior as indicated by the school action taken.
3. The most significant finding was the gap between many teachers' statements regarding causes of misbehavior and the disciplinary action taken. The difference between knowledge and action is glaringly apparent in this study.
4. Most teachers appear to need the security of their principal's authority. Many of the teachers agree with their principal regardless of his philosophy (29:14-15).

The results of the Davis study offers a remedy for the teacher's lack of knowledge regarding the importance of various behavioral problems of children.

The purpose of the Davis study was to note whether beliefs about the relative seriousness of school behavior problems would be changed at the end of a six-week university summer session course in mental hygiene. The teachers were asked to rank in the order of seriousness fifty behavioral problems used in the original Wickman study. The same procedure was followed at the end of the six weeks of instruction. At the end of that time, the class group indicated a belief in the relative seriousness of behavior problems which mental hygienists also considered to be serious behavior problems (8:44-46).

The findings of a recent NEA teacher-opinion poll seems to indicate that either a significant behavioral change is taking place in American children, or present disciplinary problems tend to appear larger in the minds of teachers than do remembrances of similar problems in the past (21:25).

Another significant conclusion of the study was that when opinions were analyzed by teaching experience, more than twice as many teachers who taught 20 or more years-- compared to those who have taught 5-9 years--felt that it is more difficult to maintain discipline these days (21:25).

As an example of a specific discipline problem, or a situation indicating lack of discipline to some teachers, the problem of noise in the classroom was used. Many

teachers feel that noise in the classroom is an indicator of discipline or lack of it. Several writers believe, however, that the amount of noise in the classroom is of no great consequence. Hockstad says, "The important thing is not the quiet atmosphere that prevails in a class, but the kind of results that are obtained in the room" (11:44).

Smith believes that teachers attempt to set up a noise free environment when such an environment is impossible. It would probably be better to allow some noise; teachers must learn to live with it like the children have done (28:81).

#### Parents' Attitudes Toward Discipline

Parents are as actively involved in the area of discipline as teachers. There has always been much controversy concerning the home atmosphere most conducive to the raising of well-adjusted children.

Spector relates, "A Study of Firm and Permissive Home Discipline." A questionnaire was employed in an attempt to determine the home discipline patterns of children. The sample included 181 thirteen-year-old children, 106 boys and 75 girls, who were in the eighth grade. Most of their parents were white, Jewish, middle class, and native born. The results of this study showed that there is no relationship between the type of home discipline and conduct, academic success, social behavior, and social attitude (30:117).

Carter measured parents' attitudes toward various disciplinary actions taken by a specific school staff. He made a ten-item questionnaire consisting of summaries relating typical classroom disciplinary situations. For example: A girl had been warned on two occasions in one class to stop her excessive talking but disregarded the teacher's instructions (7:112-113).

After reading each question, the parents were asked to choose from a list of ten types of disciplinary actions the one they would administer in each situation (7:113).

Some of the most significant results were as follows:

1. Warning was used more times than any other type of punishment.
2. Rated second in importance by both parents was requiring the parents to confer with the teacher and principal.
3. There was fairly close agreement between parents concerning the use of corporal punishment. Fathers ranked it seventh and mothers eighth.
4. The minority of parents consistently felt that physical punishment should be used only after other methods had been tried; the majority, however, indicated that physical punishment should not be used by the teacher under any circumstances (7:115).

Carter further says that the school officials and teachers use physical punishment in many situations (7:115-116).

## Comparison of Parents' and Teachers' Attitudes Toward Discipline

A doctoral thesis written by Thompson was the only study found relating directly to the comparison of teachers' and parents' attitudes toward discipline.

The investigator selected the University of Southern California Parent Attitude Survey as the measuring instrument. A random sample of 45 elementary schools (grades 1-6) P-TA's was selected and the attitude instrument was administered in the group meetings of the P-TA (31:402).

Thompson reached the following conclusions:

1. There were significant variations at the .01 level between teachers and parents (non-teaching) and between mothers and fathers in their attitudes toward child rearing.
2. There was a significant variation at the .01 level among parents in their attitudes in relation to: offspring, religious affiliation, occupation, and education.
3. Teachers were found to be less dominant, passive, and ignoring in their attitudes toward child rearing when compared to mothers (31:402).

### Summary

The types of discipline used today differ drastically from the methods employed in the eighteenth century. Teachers and parents have become more humane in their procedures of control. Many parents and educators try to employ approaches that are conducive to "good discipline."

The main goal of all discipline is self-discipline. When a child reaches this goal, he behaves well because he wants to; no outside force is exerting pressure on him to behave properly.

Several studies have found that many teachers have an inadequate understanding of the relative importance of behavior problems of children. Unfortunately, teachers appear to be less concerned about behavior traits associated with withdrawal and more concerned about traits such as honesty and morality. Furthermore, many appear to have difficulty even stating which situations in the classroom denote a discipline problem.



## CHAPTER III

### METHODS AND PROCEDURES USED

The null hypothesis on which this study was based was that there would be no statistically significant difference between the attitudes of teachers and parents toward discipline.

This study was conducted during the 1966-1967 school year in Bellevue, Washington. In order to gain the desired data, a questionnaire was developed and used. A copy of the questionnaire is located in Appendix A.

#### The Questionnaire

The questionnaire was composed of thirty problem situations. Each of the situations sets up a problem and then the problem was handled in one of the following ways: (1) isolation, (2) corporal punishment, (3) loss of privilege, (4) ignoring misbehavior, (5) professional help, (6) warning, (7) assignment of extra work, (8) verbal criticism, (9) contacting parents, or (10) temporary expulsion or suspension.

There were three problem situations that were handled via each of the ten preceding categories. Half of the situations involved boys and the other half girls. Also, half the situations centered around the home and half around the

school. The thirty situations were evenly divided in each of the first six grades.

The ten preceding methods of handling the problem situations were divided into two groups--autocratic methods and democratic methods. For the purpose of this study they were classified as follows: autocratic methods--(1) isolation, (2) corporal punishment, (3) loss of privilege, (4) assignment or extra work, (5) verbal criticism, and (6) temporary expulsion; democratic methods--(1) ignoring misbehavior, (2) professional help, (3) warning, and (4) contacting parents.

### The Research Sample

The questionnaires were sent to 200 teachers randomly selected from grades one through six in Bellevue and 200 parents randomly selected who had children in grades one through six in the Bellevue Public Schools. Approximately ten parents and ten teachers from each of the twenty elementary schools in Bellevue were selected.

The 200 parents were selected in the following manner: A letter was sent to each elementary principal asking that his secretary randomly select two student files (one boy and one girl) from each grade level (one through six) and send the parents' name, address, and telephone number to the Bellevue Research Office. By employing the preceding procedure, 240 parents were selected. Consequently, 40 parents

were randomly excluded from the sample in order to maintain an equal number of parents and teachers.

The teachers were selected in the following manner: The statistician at the Bellevue Research Office randomly selected ten teachers from each of the twenty elementary schools in Bellevue.

The parents selected for the study received their questionnaire through the mail along with a letter asking their cooperation, signed by this writer and the Bellevue Research Director. A self-addressed envelope was also enclosed.

The teachers selected for the study received their questionnaire through the school mail with a similar letter requesting their cooperation. The teachers' questionnaires, when completed, were sealed in the envelope provided and returned to the research office via the school mail.

Copies of the letters sent to the teachers, parents, principals, and the follow-up post card are included in Appendix B.

### Treatment of the Data

After allowing sufficient time for return of the questionnaire, a follow-up post card was sent to all the parents who had not responded. Also, each elementary school in Bellevue was contacted and asked that a note be placed in

the box of each teacher that had not responded. Additional questionnaires were sent to the parents and teachers who had misplaced their original copy.

The questionnaires were then arranged into a number of groups for statistical comparisons. Some of the main groupings were as follows: (1) experienced teachers, (2) inexperienced teachers, (3) parents with three or fewer children, (4) parents with four or more children, (5) teachers with a B. A. degree, and (6) teachers with an M. A. degree.

Teachers and parents could respond to each of the problem situations in one of the following ways: (1) strongly agree, (2) agree, (3) uncertain, (4) disagree, or (5) strongly disagree. On the basis of their responses, numerical ratings were accorded. Strongly Agree was assigned a rating of one, Agree a rating of two, Uncertain was assigned no numerical rating, Disagree was given a value of three, and Strongly Disagree was given a numerical rating of four. These scores were tabulated, means were computed, and treated statistically through the use of the t test. Statistical significance was determined at both the .05 and the .01 levels of confidence.

## CHAPTER IV

### RESULTS OF THE STUDY

Questionnaires were sent to 200 parents and 200 teachers in the Bellevue School District in an attempt to measure and compare their attitudes toward discipline.

The total number of questionnaires used in the study were 114 teachers and 115 parents, a total of 229 questionnaires (58%). The parents returned 116 questionnaires (58%). Only one questionnaire was not used in the study because of a wrong address. The teachers returned 132 questionnaires (62%). From this total, 14 questionnaires were rejected because of the following reasons: (1) several were completed by kindergarten teachers (only teachers in grades 1 through 6 were involved in the study); (2) several teachers had resigned, consequently their incompleting questionnaires were returned unusable; (3) one teacher returned the questionnaire with reasons why she refused to complete it.

Table I shows the total comparison of responses of teachers and parents toward discipline.

TABLE I

A TOTAL COMPARISON OF RESPONSES OF TEACHERS  
AND PARENTS TOWARD DISCIPLINE

Parents (Mean)	Teachers (Mean)	Diff.	t	Level of Significance
2.47	2.26	.21	4.730	.01

When the responses of parents and teachers were compared on all situations, there was a significant difference between the attitudes of parents and teachers toward discipline. The  $t$  was statistically significant at the .01 level of confidence.

Table II shows the comparison of responses of parents and teachers on situations involving the home and the school.

TABLE II

A COMPARISON OF RESPONSES OF PARENTS AND TEACHERS ON SITUATIONS INVOLVING THE HOME AND THE SCHOOL

Situations	Parents (Mean)	Teachers (Mean)	Diff.	t	Level of Significance
School	2.60	2.31	.29	4.510	.01
Home	2.34	2.20	.14	2.410	.05

When the responses of parents and teachers were compared on situations involving the school, the results indicated a significant difference between their attitudes on school situations. The  $\underline{t}$  was significant at the .01 level of confidence.

Table II also shows that the attitudes of parents and teachers toward situations centering around the home were also significantly different. The  $\underline{t}$  was significant at the .05 level of confidence.

Table III shows the comparison of responses of parents and teachers involving autocratic and democratic types of discipline.

TABLE III

A COMPARISON OF RESPONSES OF PARENTS AND TEACHERS  
INVOLVING AUTOCRATIC AND DEMOCRATIC  
TYPES OF DISCIPLINE

Type of Discipline	Parents (Mean)	Teachers (Mean)	Diff.	t	Level of Significance
Autocratic*	2.41	2.10	.31	6.151	.01
Democratic**	2.57	2.48	.09	1.343	NS

\*No. of autocratic situations - 18

\*\*No. of democratic situations - 12

When the responses of parents and teachers were compared on autocratic types of discipline, parents tended to prefer autocratic types of discipline to a significant degree more than teachers. The  $t$  was statistically significant at the .01 level of confidence.

Table III also reveals that parents favored democratic types of discipline more than teachers. The difference was not significant.



Table IV shows the comparison of responses between parents and teachers on home situations involving autocratic and democratic types of discipline.

TABLE IV

A COMPARISON OF RESPONSES OF PARENTS AND TEACHERS INVOLVING AUTOCRATIC AND DEMOCRATIC TYPES OF DISCIPLINE IN HOME SITUATIONS

Type of Discipline	Parents (Mean)	Teachers (Mean)	Diff.	t	Level of Significance
Autocratic*	2.398	2.133	.265	6.401	.01
Democratic**	2.238	2.322	.084	.971	NS

\* No. of autocratic situations - 10

\*\* No. of democratic situations - 5

When the responses of parents and teachers were compared on autocratic types of discipline, one can see that parents favored autocratic discipline in the home to a significant degree more than teachers. The  $t$  was statistically significant at the .01 level of confidence.

Table IV also shows that when the responses of teachers and parents were compared on democratic types of discipline, teachers favored democratic types of discipline in home situations to a small degree more than parents. The difference, however, was not significant.

Table V shows the comparison of responses of parents and teachers using autocratic and democratic types of discipline in home situations.

TABLE V

A COMPARISON OF RESPONSES OF PARENTS AND TEACHERS INVOLVING AUTOCRATIC AND DEMOCRATIC TYPES OF DISCIPLINE IN HOME SITUATIONS

Group	Autocratic* (Mean)	Democratic** (Mean)	Diff.	t	Level of Significance
Parent	2.398	2.238	.160	.484	NS
Teacher	2.133	2.322	.189	.189	NS

\* No. of autocratic situations - 10

\*\* No. of democratic situations - 5

The parents' responses revealed that parents favored autocratic types of discipline in the home to a slight degree over democratic types of discipline. The difference was small and not significant.

The teachers responses, however, indicated that they preferred democratic types of discipline in the home. The teachers' preference for democratic discipline was very slight and not significant.

Table VI shows the comparison of responses of parents and teachers involving autocratic and democratic types of discipline in school situations.

TABLE VI

A COMPARISON OF RESPONSES OF PARENTS AND TEACHERS  
INVOLVING AUTOCRATIC AND DEMOCRATIC TYPES OF  
DISCIPLINE IN SCHOOL SITUATIONS

Type of Discipline	Parents (Mean)	Teachers (Mean)	Diff.	t	Level of Significance
Autocratic*	2.420	2.069	.351	3.414	.05
Democratic**	2.800	2.594	.206	2.990	.05

\* No. of autocratic situations - 8

\*\* No. of democratic situations - 7

When the responses of parents and teachers were compared on autocratic types of discipline, the parents preferred autocratic discipline in the school to a significant degree more than teachers. The  $\underline{t}$  was statistically significant at the .05 level of confidence.

Table VI reveals that parents also favored democratic discipline in the school to a significant degree more than teachers. The  $\underline{t}$  was significant at the .05 level of confidence.

Table VII shows the comparison of responses of parents and teachers involving autocratic and democratic types of discipline in school situations.

TABLE VII

A COMPARISON OF RESPONSES OF PARENTS AND TEACHERS INVOLVING AUTOCRATIC AND DEMOCRATIC TYPES OF DISCIPLINE IN SCHOOL SITUATIONS

Group	Autocratic* (Mean)	Democratic** (Mean)	Diff.	t	Level of Significance
Parent	2.420	2.800	.380	1.872	NS
Teacher	2.069	2.594	.525	2.119	NS

\* No. of autocratic situations - 8

\*\* No. of democratic situations - 7

The parents' responses revealed that they preferred democratic types of discipline in the school to a slight degree over autocratic types. The difference was not significant.

The teachers' responses showed that they also preferred democratic types of discipline in the school. The difference, however, was not statistically significant.

Table VIII shows the comparison of responses of inexperienced teachers (0-5 years) and experienced teachers (6 or more years) on situations involving autocratic and democratic types of discipline.

TABLE VIII

A COMPARISON OF RESPONSES OF INEXPERIENCED TEACHERS (0-5 YEARS) AND EXPERIENCED TEACHERS (6 OR MORE YEARS) ON SITUATIONS INVOLVING AUTOCRATIC AND DEMOCRATIC TYPES OF DISCIPLINE

Type of Discipline	Exper. Teachers (Mean)	Inexper. Teachers (Mean)	Diff.	t	Level of Significance
Autocratic*	2.141	2.134	.007	.123	NS
Democratic**	2.534	2.468	.066	1.170	NS

\* No. of autocratic situations - 18

\*\* No. of democratic situations - 12

When the responses of experienced and inexperienced teachers were compared on autocratic types of discipline, one can see that experienced teachers favored autocratic types of discipline to a small degree more than inexperienced teachers. The difference was not significant, however.

Table VIII also shows that when the responses of experienced and inexperienced teachers were compared on democratic types of discipline, experienced teachers tended

to favor democratic types of discipline more than inexperienced teachers. The difference, however, was not significant.

Table IX shows the comparison of responses of inexperienced teachers (0-5 years) and experienced teachers (6 or more years) on situations involving autocratic and democratic types of discipline.

TABLE IX

A COMPARISON OF RESPONSES OF INEXPERIENCED TEACHERS (0-5 YEARS) AND EXPERIENCED TEACHERS (6 OR MORE YEARS) ON SITUATIONS INVOLVING AUTOCRATIC AND DEMOCRATIC TYPES OF DISCIPLINE

Group	Autocratic* (Mean)	Democratic** (Mean)	Diff.	t	Level of Significance
Exper. Teach.	2.141	2.534	.393	2.059	.05
Inexp. Teach.	2.134	2.468	.334	1.695	NS

\* No. of autocratic situations - 18

\*\* No. of democratic situations - 12

The responses of the experienced teachers revealed that they favored democratic types of discipline to a significant degree more than autocratic types of discipline. The t was statistically significant at the .05 level of confidence.

The inexperienced teachers' responses indicated that they also favored democratic types of discipline but not to a significant degree.

Table X shows the comparison of responses of parents having three or less children and parents having four or more children on situations involving autocratic and democratic types of discipline.

TABLE X

A COMPARISON OF RESPONSES OF PARENTS HAVING THREE OR LESS CHILDREN AND PARENTS HAVING FOUR OR MORE CHILDREN ON SITUATIONS INVOLVING AUTOCRATIC AND DEMOCRATIC TYPES OF DISCIPLINE

Type of Discipline	Parents 1 - 3 (Mean)	Parents 4 or more (Mean)	Diff.	t	Level of Significance
Autocratic*	2.394	2.420	.026	.985	NS
Democratic**	2.569	2.563	.006	.164	NS

\* No. of autocratic situations - 18

\*\* No. of democratic situations - 12

When the responses of parents with three or less children were compared with the responses of parents with four or more children on autocratic types of discipline, the data indicated that parents with four or more children tended to favor autocratic discipline more than parents with fewer children. The difference was small and not significant.

Table X also shows that parents with three or less children tended to favor democratic types of discipline more than parents with four or more children. The difference was again small and not significant.

Table XI shows the comparison of responses of parents having three or less children and parents having four or more children on situations involving autocratic and democratic types of discipline.

TABLE XI

A COMPARISON OF RESPONSES OF PARENTS HAVING THREE OR LESS CHILDREN AND PARENTS HAVING FOUR OR MORE CHILDREN ON SITUATIONS INVOLVING AUTOCRATIC AND DEMOCRATIC TYPES OF DISCIPLINE

Group	Autocratic* (Mean)	Democratic** (Mean)	Diff.	t	Level of Significance
Parents (3 or less)	2.394	2.569	.175	.888	NS
Parents (4 or more)	2.563	2.420	.143	.736	NS

\* No. of autocratic situations - 18

\*\* No. of democratic situations - 12

The responses revealed that parents with three or less children preferred democratic types of discipline to autocratic types of discipline. The difference, however, was not significant.

The parents with four or more children tended to favor autocratic types of discipline. The difference, however, was not significant.



Table XII shows the comparison of responses of teachers having a B.A. degree and teachers having an M.A. degree on situations involving autocratic and democratic types of discipline.

TABLE XII

A COMPARISON OF RESPONSES OF TEACHERS HAVING A B.A. DEGREE AND TEACHERS HAVING AN M.A. DEGREE ON SITUATIONS INVOLVING AUTOCRATIC AND DEMOCRATIC TYPES OF DISCIPLINE

Type of Discipline	Teachers with M.A. (Mean)	Teachers with B.A. (Mean)	Diff.	t	Level of Significance
Autocratic*	2.048	2.163	.115	2.102	NS
Democratic**	2.524	2.504	.020	.205	NS

\* No. of autocratic situations - 18

\*\* No. of democratic situations - 12

When the responses of teachers having a B.A. degree and teachers having an M.A. degree were compared on autocratic types of discipline, teachers with a B.A. degree tended to favor autocratic types of discipline more than teachers with an M.A. degree. The difference, however, was not significant.

Table XII also shows that when the responses of B.A. teachers and M.A. teachers were compared on democratic types of discipline, teachers with an M.A. degree preferred democratic types of discipline more than teachers with their B.A. degree. The difference was small and not significant.

Table XIII shows the comparison of responses of teachers having a B.A. degree and teachers having an M.A. degree on situations involving autocratic and democratic types of discipline.

TABLE XIII

A COMPARISON OF RESPONSES OF TEACHERS HAVING A B.A. DEGREE AND TEACHERS HAVING AN M.A. DEGREE ON SITUATIONS INVOLVING AUTOCRATIC AND DEMOCRATIC TYPES OF DISCIPLINE

Group	Autocratic* (Mean)	Democratic** (Mean)	Diff.	t	Level of Significance
M.A. Teachers	2.048	2.524	.476	2.402	.05
B.A. Teachers	2.163	2.504	.341	1.738	NS

\* No. of autocratic situations - 18

\*\* No. of democratic situations - 12

The responses of the teachers with M.A. degrees revealed that they preferred democratic types of discipline to a significant degree more than autocratic types of discipline. The  $t$  was statistically significant at the .05 level of confidence.

The responses of the teachers with B.A. degrees showed that they also preferred democratic types of discipline more than autocratic types of discipline. The difference, however, was not significant.

Table XIV shows the comparison of responses of parents and teachers involving autocratic and democratic types of discipline in situations dealing with boys.

TABLE XIV

A COMPARISON OF RESPONSES OF PARENTS AND TEACHERS INVOLVING AUTOCRATIC AND DEMOCRATIC TYPES OF DISCIPLINE IN SITUATIONS DEALING WITH BOYS

Type of Discipline	Parents (Mean)	Teachers (Mean)	Diff.	t	Level of Significance
Autocratic*	2.552	2.189	.363	4.395	.01
Democratic**	2.450	2.378	.072	.653	NS

\* No. of autocratic situations - 10

\*\* No. of democratic situations - 5

When the responses of parents and teachers were compared on autocratic types of discipline, parents preferred autocratic types of discipline when dealing with boys to a significant degree more than teachers. The  $t$  was statistically significant at the .01 level of confidence.

Table XIV also shows that parents preferred democratic types of discipline when dealing with boys to a small degree more than teachers. The difference, however, was not significant.

Table XV shows the comparison of responses of parents and teachers involving autocratic and democratic types of discipline in situations dealing with boys.

TABLE XV

A COMPARISON OF RESPONSES OF PARENTS AND TEACHERS INVOLVING AUTOCRATIC AND DEMOCRATIC TYPES OF DISCIPLINE IN SITUATIONS DEALING WITH BOYS

Group	Autocratic* (Mean)	Democratic** (Mean)	Diff.	t	Level of Significance
Parents	2.552	2.450	.102	.533	NS
Teachers	2.189	2.378	.189	.681	NS

\* No. of autocratic situations - 10

\*\* No. of democratic situations - 5

The responses of the parents shows that parents tended to favor autocratic types of discipline when dealing with boys rather than democratic means of discipline. The difference was not significant.

Table XV also reveals that teachers preferred democratic types of discipline when dealing with boys rather than autocratic types of control. Again, the difference was not significant.

Table XVI shows the comparison of responses of parents and teachers involving autocratic and democratic types of discipline in situations dealing with girls.

TABLE XVI

A COMPARISON OF RESPONSES OF PARENTS AND TEACHERS INVOLVING AUTOCRATIC AND DEMOCRATIC TYPES OF DISCIPLINE IN SITUATIONS DEALING WITH GIRLS

Type of Discipline	Parents (Mean)	Teachers (Mean)	Diff.	t	Level of Significance
Autocratic*	2.228	1.874	.354	9.147	.01
Democratic**	2.649	2.554	.095	1.082	NS

\*No. of autocratic situations - 8

\*\*No. of democratic situations - 7

When the responses of parents and teachers were compared on autocratic types of discipline, the data revealed that parents definitely favored autocratic types of discipline when dealing with girls to a significant degree more than teachers. The t was statistically significant at the .01 level of confidence.

Table XVI also reveals that parents favored democratic types of discipline when dealing with girls more than teachers. The difference, however, was not significant.

Table XVII shows the comparison of responses of parents and teachers involving autocratic and democratic types of discipline in situations dealing with girls.

TABLE XVII

A COMPARISON OF RESPONSES OF PARENTS AND TEACHERS INVOLVING AUTOCRATIC AND DEMOCRATIC TYPES OF DISCIPLINE IN SITUATIONS DEALING WITH GIRLS

Group	Autocratic* (Mean)	Democratic** (Mean)	Diff.	t	Level of Significance
Parents	2.228	2.649	.421	1.537	NS
Teachers	1.874	2.554	.680	2.698	.05

\* No. of autocratic situations - 8

\*\* No. of democratic situations - 7

The parents' responses revealed that parents tended to favor democratic types of discipline when dealing with girls more than autocratic methods of discipline. The difference, however, was not significant.

The teachers' responses showed that they favored democratic types of discipline when dealing with girls to a significant degree more than autocratic types of discipline. The  $t$  was statistically significant at the .05 level of confidence.

Teachers' attitudes toward the ten major types of problem situations were recorded by grades taught in percentages. These tables are located in Appendix C. These ten methods are presented below in order of preference by teachers.

#### Warning (Table XXIII)

Teachers agreed more with the situations involving warning than any other method. The per cent of agreement ranged from 68 per cent (fifth grade teachers) to 88 per cent (second grade teachers).

#### Isolation (Table XVIII)

The per cent of agreement ranged from 36 per cent (second and fifth grade teachers) to 51 per cent (teachers in combination grades). There was the same amount of agreement and disagreement among third grade teachers (44%) and also fourth grade teachers (42%).

#### Contacting Parents (Table XXVI)

There was more disagreement than agreement on this type of approach. Second grade teachers and teachers in combination grades were the only groups to agree more than disagree with this approach. The agreement ranged from 29 per cent (second grade teachers) to 55 per cent (teachers in combinations grades).

Expulsion or Suspension (Table XXVII)

The per cent of agreement on this approach ranged from 21 per cent (second grade teachers) to 52 per cent (first grade teachers). First, fourth, and fifth grade teachers were the only groups that were more in agreement than disagreement with this method.

Professional Help (Table XXII)

Third grade teachers were the only ones to agree more than disagree with seeking professional help as a method of handling problem situations. Agreement ranged from 26 per cent (fourth grade teachers) to 44 per cent (third grade teachers).

Loss of Privilege (Table XX)

The per cent of agreement on this approach ranged from 11 per cent (sixth grade teachers) to 41 per cent (fourth grade teachers). All teachers disagreed more than they agreed with this type of approach.

Corporal Punishment (Table XIX)

All the teachers also disagreed more than agreed to this type of approach. The per cent of agreement ranged from 15 per cent (sixth grade teachers) to 37 per cent (fifth grade teachers). Third and fifth grade teachers registered the greatest approval (31% to 37% respectively).



Ignoring Misbehavior (Table XXI)

All teachers in the study again disagreed more than agreed with this type of method. The per cent of agreement ranged from 15 per cent (fourth grade teachers) to 33 per cent (first grade teachers). First grade teachers definitely favored this approach more than any other group.

Extra Assignments or Work (Table XXIV)

The amount of agreement by teachers toward this method was small compared to the disagreement. The per cent of agreement ranged from 11 per cent (fifth grade teachers) to 26 per cent (fourth grade teachers).

Verbal Criticism (XXV)

Teachers agreed less with the situations involving verbal criticism than any other method. The per cent of agreement ranged from 12 per cent (second grade teachers) to 23 per cent (third grade teachers).

## CHAPTER V

### SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

#### I. SUMMARY

This study was designed to measure and compare the attitudes of parents and teachers toward discipline.

A review of literature showed that although there were many articles and several books related to discipline, very few studies had been undertaken in the comparison of attitudes of parents and teachers toward discipline.

This study was conducted during the 1966-1967 school year in Bellevue, Washington. First, a questionnaire composed of 30 problem situations was devised. Then, the questionnaires were sent to 200 teachers randomly selected from grades one through six in Bellevue and 200 parents randomly selected who have children in grades one through six in Bellevue. Approximately ten parents and ten teachers from each of the twenty elementary schools in Bellevue were selected. Finally, the responses were accorded numerical ratings and treated statistically through the use of the t test.

## II. CONCLUSIONS

The null hypothesis that there would not be a statistically significant difference between the attitudes of parents and teachers toward discipline was rejected. The null hypothesis was rejected on the basis of the following conclusions from this study.

The t test for the total comparison of the responses of parents and teachers toward discipline revealed that there was a statistically significant difference between the attitudes of parents and teachers toward discipline at the .01 level of confidence.

The two t tests comparing the responses of parents and teachers on home and school situations were both significant. Both t tests revealed that there was a statistically significant difference (.01 level of confidence) between the responses of parents and teachers on both home and school situations. There was less difference on situations involving the home than the school. The reasons for this could be that both parents and teachers are constantly involved in home situations; parents, however, usually have little experience in dealing with school disciplinary problems.

One of the two t tests comparing the responses of teachers and parents on autocratic and democratic types of

discipline was statistically significant (.01 level of confidence). This test showed that parents tended to favor autocratic types of discipline to a significant degree more than teachers. This finding has generally been supported in several other t tests.

Only one of the four t tests comparing the responses of parents and teachers toward discipline on home situations was significant. The results of this test showed that parents tended to be more autocratic than teachers in home situations. This could possibly indicate that parents have been more successful with the various autocratic methods employed than teachers have been. Also, parents may use autocratic methods more frequently than teachers because most of the educational training of teachers tends to discourage autocratic types of control.

Two of the four t tests comparing the responses of parents and teachers on school situations were significant. Both the t's were statistically significant at the .05 level of confidence. The first test revealed that parents favored autocratic types of discipline in the school to a significant degree more than teachers. This result would seem logical considering the fact that parents are also more autocratic in home situations. The second t test, however, seemed paradoxical. Parents were found to also favor democratic methods more than teachers in school situations.

In other words, parents were both more autocratic and more democratic than teachers in school situations. Parents probably responded more strongly to both the democratic and autocratic situations; teachers, on the other hand, were possibly less opinionated on both types of situations.

One of the four t tests comparing the responses of experienced (6 or more years) and inexperienced (0-5 years) teachers was statistically significant at the .05 level of confidence. This test indicated that experienced teachers tended to favor democratic types of discipline to a significant degree more than autocratic methods of control. Inexperienced teachers also tended to favor democratic types of discipline but not to a significant degree. Two possible explanations for experienced teachers tending to favor democratic types of discipline would be (1) because of the amount of training and experience, these teachers have discovered the desirability of democratic types of control, and (2) these teachers are possibly more secure in their teaching positions and do not fear being labeled "permissive," as often happens when democratic controls are employed.

None of the four t-tests comparing the responses of parents having three or less children and ones having four or more children were statistically significant. On all four tests, however, parents with four or more children

tended to be more autocratic than parents with less children. This could indicate that parents with several children believe they cannot afford the luxuries of democratic controls.

Only one of the four t tests comparing the responses of teachers having a B.A. degree and ones having an M.A. degree was statistically significant (.05 level of confidence). The results of this test revealed that teachers with their M.A. degree tended to prefer democratic types of discipline rather than autocratic means of control. This would seem to correspond to the previously mentioned t test concerning experienced and inexperienced teachers. Most of the teachers with their M.A. degrees would also be experienced teachers (6 or more years). It would seem logical that teachers with their M.A. degrees, because of their training and experience, would usually employ democratic types of control.

Only one of the four t tests comparing the responses of teachers and parents on situations involving boys were significant. The t was statistically significant at the .01 level of confidence. The t test showed that parents favored autocratic types of discipline when dealing with boys to a significant degree more than teachers. Parents would be more likely to use corporal punishment, for example, on their fourth grade son than a teacher would on

someone else's child. Parents also favored autocratic types of discipline when dealing with boys rather than democratic types. The difference, however, was not significant.

Two of the four t tests comparing the responses of parents and teachers on situations involving girls were significant. The first test revealed that parents favored autocratic types of discipline with girls to a statistically significant degree more than teachers (.01 level of confidence). The second test showed that teachers favored democratic types of discipline to a significant degree more than autocratic means of control on situations dealing with girls. Some of the possible reasons for these results are as follows: (1) teachers usually approve of the behavioral patterns of elementary school girls; they are many times more helpful and tend to be less of a behavior problem in class than boys; (2) parents are less affected by this "halo" effect than teachers; girls many times are more of a behavior problem at home than at school.

The ten methods of handling problem situations are discussed below in the order of preference by teachers.

Teachers agreed more with the situations involving warning than any other method. The per cent of agreement ranged from 68 per cent (fifth grade teachers) to 88 per cent (second grade teachers). Even though warning was considered a democratic type of discipline in this study,

many teachers feel that they would achieve better control by employing the old adage that "action speaks louder than words."

Isolation was the next most popular approach. Teachers operating in combination grades favored this approach more than teachers of any single grade. The necessity for removing a disturbance from the classroom setting in multiple grades could be the reasoning behind this preference.

Contacting parents was the next approach endorsed by teachers. Teachers involved in combination grades again favored this type of method more than any teachers of the other grades. Third grade teachers, however, were also in agreement with this approach.

The fourth most favored type of control was expulsion or suspension. The per cent of agreement ranged from 21 per cent (second grade teachers) to 52 per cent (first grade teachers). This drastic form of control was agreed upon by teachers only in extreme cases (the three situations in the questionnaire could be considered extreme).

Professional help for the child was the fifth most favored approach to the problem situations. The third grade teachers preferred this approach more than any other group of teachers.



Loss of privilege was preferred next by teachers. The per cent of agreement ranged from 11 per cent (sixth grade teachers) to 41 per cent (fourth grade teachers). Possibly fourth grade teachers have found this type of discipline successful with fourth grade children, while sixth grade teachers have discovered that loss of privilege has little meaning to sixth graders.

Teachers in grade five tend to favor corporal punishment more than other teachers. The per cent of agreement ranged from 12 per cent (first grade teachers) to 37 per cent (fifth grade teachers). There are probably more men teachers in the fifth grade and above than in any of the lower grades; men possibly employ corporal punishment more than women teachers.

Teachers tended to disapprove of the method of ignoring misbehavior. First grade teachers were more in agreement with this approach than the other respondents. Teachers of this grade might be more inclined to ignore certain types of behavior that would not be discounted in other grades.

The ninth most favored means of dealing with the problem situations was extra assignments or work. Teachers generally disapproved of this approach. The highest agreement (26 per cent) was from fourth grade teachers. It was gratifying to see the amount of disagreement from teachers

on using school work as punishment; parents, however, tended to endorse this approach.

The method of control least preferred by teachers was verbal criticism. The per cent of agreement ranged from 11 per cent (fifth grade teachers) to 26 per cent (fourth grade teachers). This type of punishment is many times more damaging to a child, especially if done in front of other class members, than some of the more violent autocratic types of control.

Teachers generally favored the more democratic types of control. When the means of handling problem situations are placed in order of teacher preference, only one of the democratic types of control (ignoring misbehavior) was not selected in the five most preferred methods.

### III. RECOMMENDATIONS

On the basis of the evidence presented as a result of this study, the following recommendations appear appropriate:

1. Bellevue elementary teachers should attempt to employ more democratic types of discipline in dealing with boys, as they have done in situations dealing with girls. Even though it may be expedient to continue to squelch the active and inquisitive nature of boys via autocratic types of control, teachers

should, rather, channel this energy into constructive and acceptable types of behavior. It is not only unfair to favor different methods of control for boys than girls, but most autocratic types of control are generally undesirable and ineffective.

2. Steps should be taken to insure closer communications between home and school. If there were a deeper understanding between home and school, the inconsistency in disciplinary practices would not be so evident. With increasing consistency between parents and teachers, children would have fewer conflicts in selecting an appropriate behavioral pattern.
3. Research studies should be undertaken to insure communication between both teachers and parents as to what constitutes discipline in teaching and learning situations.
4. Research studies that attempt to examine the understanding of discipline and measure the better or more successful types of discipline could be undertaken.
5. Further research should be conducted similar to this study in other more "typical" cities. The results

could indicate the influence of education and above average income on parental attitudes toward discipline.

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APPENDIX A  
QUESTIONNAIRE

## PERSONAL DATA--Teachers

Please circle the appropriate answer

1. Sex:        Male        Female
2. Age:        20-30        31-40        41-50        51 and over
3. Grade taught:        1st        2nd        3rd        4th        5th        6th
4. Number of pupils: \_\_\_\_\_
5. Number of years of teaching experience:  
      0-5        6-10        11-15        16-20        21-25        26 and over
6. Education Degree held:  
      B.A.  
      B.A. 15 quarter hours  
      B.A. 30 quarter hours  
      B.A. 45 quarter hours (5th year)  
      M.A.  
      Other \_\_\_\_\_
7. How long have you lived in the community? \_\_\_\_\_

## PERSONAL DATA--Parents

Please circle the appropriate answer

1. Sex of respondent:      Male      Female
2. Age:      20-30      31-40      41-50      51 and over
3. Number of children:      1      2      3      4      5      6 or more
4. Grade(s) you have child (children) enrolled in school:  
    1    2    3    4    5    6    7    8    9    10    11    12
5. Educational background (Circle highest grade completed)  
    1    2    3    4    5    6    7    8    9    10    11    12    13    14    15    16  
    17 or more

If you received a college degree(s), please specify

- \_\_\_\_\_
6. How long have you lived in the community?\_\_\_\_\_

## QUESTIONNAIRE

**DIRECTIONS:** This questionnaire consists of 30 problem situations designed to sample opinions about discipline. There is considerable disagreement as to what constitutes good discipline; therefore, there are no right or wrong answers. What is wanted is your individual reaction to the statements. Please read each problem and decide how YOU FEEL ABOUT THE WAY THE PROBLEM WAS HANDLED. Then check your answer in the space provided. If you Disagree or Strongly Disagree with the problem situation below, please briefly state your reason(s) on the lines provided.

1. Bob and Joe started fighting on the playground after school. The fight was quickly stopped by a teacher and the boys were taken to their fifth grade classroom. Mr. Morgan, the boys' fifth grade teacher, secured a witness and gave the boys each three sound swats with a paddle.

Strongly Agree     Agree     Uncertain     Disagree     Strongly Disagree

Comment: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

2. Jackie and Janie Warner are identical twin girls in the first grade. They are alike in almost every aspect except academic achievement; Jackie is well below average while Janie is exceptionally bright. After Mr. and Mrs. Warner returned from work one evening, Janie tearfully explained how her sister had ripped all her school papers that she had been saving to shreds. Since this had happened before, Mr. Warner felt that Jackie needed and should receive professional help--a psychiatrist, psychologist, or school counselor.

Strongly Agree     Agree     Uncertain     Disagree     Strongly Disagree

Comment: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

3. Sam Phillips is a tall, nice looking boy for his 11 years. He is an only child and lives in a large, modern house with his parents and grandmother. One Saturday he was caught in the basement smoking a cigarette. His father decided that a loss of privilege, such as watching T.V., allowance, or some favorite activity, would be a good punishment.

Strongly Agree    Agree    Uncertain    Disagree    Strongly Disagree

Comment: \_\_\_\_\_

---

4. Martha Miller is quite small and physically immature for a second grader. She always appears to be preoccupied with her own thoughts. On the way to school one morning she narrowly escaped serious injury when she stepped directly in the path of an oncoming car. The patrol boy who prevented this near tragedy took the girl to the principal. The principal explained the seriousness of her act and warned her to be more careful in the future.

Strongly Agree    Agree    Uncertain    Disagree    Strongly Disagree

Comment: \_\_\_\_\_

---

5. John Barnes is a fourth grader in a private school. He is considered trustworthy by all who know him--friends, teachers, and relatives. One day his teacher caught him cheating on a math assignment. Mr. Peterson assigned Sam two extra pages of math for the next day.

Strongly Agree    Agree    Uncertain    Disagree    Strongly Disagree

Comment: \_\_\_\_\_

---

6. Barbara Anderson is eight years old and is noted for her strong desire to do everything perfect. The class has been learning to write short sentences and most of the pupils are genuinely proud of this accomplishment. Barbara, however, shouted out in class, "I can't do it, and it's stupid!" She then proceeded to rip her paper to pieces. Mrs. Brown said nothing to the class but called Barbara's mother about the matter during recess.

Strongly  Agree  Uncertain  Disagree  Strongly  
 Agree  Disagree

Comment: \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_

7. Vance Williams is 11 years old and in the fifth grade. He has several brothers and sisters and has never had an allowance of any amount because his father felt it was too expensive. One day after school, unknown to Vance, his mother observed him going through his father's pockets; he had collected about 75¢. Mrs. Williams believed that he deserved some money of his own and said nothing more about the matter to anyone.

Strongly  Agree  Uncertain  Disagree  Strongly  
 Agree  Disagree

Comment: \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_

8. Eric Johnson is a polite, popular boy and does superior work in his sixth grade classroom. His major complaint is his six-year-old sister. Although he is very fond of her, he resents being a baby sitter practically every Saturday night. The last Saturday he stayed with her, some of his boy friends came over to visit. They persuaded Eric to come to their house and play. Mr. and Mrs. Johnson returned and were very upset to find their daughter alone. When Eric returned home, he was informed that he would be confined to his bedroom every evening after supper for a week.

Strongly  Agree  Uncertain  Disagree  Strongly  
 Agree  Disagree

Comment: \_\_\_\_\_

9. George Baker is a constant trouble maker and discipline problem. Even though he is only a fourth grader, many people believe he is already a juvenile delinquent. Before school one morning, he purposely tossed a rock through the large cafeteria window. The principal called his parents and asked them to take him home for the day.

Strongly  Agree  Uncertain  Disagree  Strongly  
 Agree  Disagree

Comment: \_\_\_\_\_

---

10. Sally Collins is a rather quiet and moody seven year old; she appears to daydream both at home and at school. Her widowed mother works hard to support the two of them and becomes perturbed when Sally refuses to do her share. After Mrs. Collins returned from work one day, Sally said, "Mother, I wish you were pretty like our teacher." In anger Mrs. Collins replied, "If I didn't have a lazy, good for nothing daughter, I could spend more time making myself beautiful."

Strongly  Agree  Uncertain  Disagree  Strongly  
 Agree  Disagree

Comment: \_\_\_\_\_

---

11. Mary Jordan is a third grader in a large elementary school. She is an average student in practically every way and has never been considered a problem. One recess near the end of the school year she was taken to the office for kicking another little girl in the stomach. When questioned she gave no reason for this act. The principal decided to take away her recess for a week.

Strongly  Agree  Uncertain  Disagree  Strongly  
 Agree  Disagree

Comment: \_\_\_\_\_

---

12. Janice Sands is a very small, quiet third grader. Her parents both work until late in the evening, while she stays with a baby sitter. When Mr. and Mrs. Sands arrive home, Janice is usually asleep. Even though she is eight years old, "thumb sucking" is still very much a problem. She only does this before going to sleep and sometimes during sleep. The Sands have tried most everything and now believe that Janice should be taken to a psychiatrist or psychologist.

Strongly  Agree  Uncertain  Disagree  Strongly  
 Agree  Disagree

Comment: \_\_\_\_\_

---

13. Roger Peters is a very active nine year old. He has never been in any trouble but has a violent temper. After school one day, he became very angry with his mother because she asked him to do his chores. He called her obscene names and ran out of the room. Mrs. Peters followed and gave him a spanking.

Strongly  Agree  Uncertain  Disagree  Strongly  
 Agree  Disagree

Comment: \_\_\_\_\_

---

14. June Sawyer is a popular second grader. She has many little girl friends that look up to her as their leader. Sometimes she appears to be somewhat "bossy" in her dealings with other children. One afternoon her teacher overheard June telling another second grade girl to play by herself because the other girls didn't like her. The teacher said nothing to the children but called Mrs. Sawyer after school to discuss the matter.

Strongly  Agree  Uncertain  Disagree  Strongly  
 Agree  Disagree

Comment: \_\_\_\_\_

---



15. Barry Woods is the only child of a young couple. He is six years old and in the first grade. His mother has spent much time and effort helping Barry learn to read at home; she feels he is progressing too slowly in his first grade classroom. Mrs. Woods was furious when she entered the living room and saw all Barry's reading books going up in flames in the fireplace. She controlled her temper, however, and quietly explained that his allowance would be used to purchase some more reading books.

Strongly \_\_\_Agree \_\_\_Uncertain \_\_\_Disagree \_\_\_Strongly  
 Agree Disagree

Comment: \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_

16. Mike Mathews is fourteen years old and in the sixth grade. His widowed mother works to support them. He has been a constant discipline problem for several years. The second day of school he pushed his teacher, a middle-aged woman, into the chalkboard and stalked out of the room. He was immediately suspended from school for an indefinite period of time.

Strongly \_\_\_Agree \_\_\_Uncertain \_\_\_Disagree \_\_\_Strongly  
 Agree Disagree

Comment: \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_

17. Joyce Johnson appears to be an average, well adjusted first grader. Even though most young children enjoy talking, Joyce never seems to stop. One morning, during storytime, the teacher stopped reading and said, "Joyce, since you can't seem to keep quiet during our storytime, you will wait in the hall until we are finished."

Strongly \_\_\_Agree \_\_\_Uncertain \_\_\_Disagree \_\_\_Strongly  
 Agree Disagree

Comment: \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_

18. Debbie Riggs is considered a responsible ten year old. She lives close to her three best girl friends and spends as much time as possible with them. Wednesday evening she stayed with her friends an hour past dinner. Mr. and Mrs. Riggs decided that Debbie should be given some added chores for the next two weeks.

Strongly Agree    Agree    Uncertain    Disagree    Strongly Disagree

Comment: \_\_\_\_\_

---

19. Joe Morris is a very talkative first grader. The teacher on playground duty happened to overhear Joe tell a first grade girl that she was dirty and smelly. The teacher felt it was better for all concerned to ignore this comment.

Strongly Agree    Agree    Uncertain    Disagree    Strongly Disagree

Comment: \_\_\_\_\_

---

20. Lenora West is a thirteen-year-old in the 6th grade. She is very physically mature and could pass for sixteen. Lenora comes from a broken home and has a long history of problems. Just before the Christmas holidays, she was caught drinking beer during recess. The principal immediately suspended Lenora from school.

Strongly Agree    Agree    Uncertain    Disagree    Strongly Disagree

Comment: \_\_\_\_\_

---

21. Diane Warren is an exceptionally bright fourth grader and nearly always does the best work in the class. She also excels in most physical activities. Millie, a new fourth grader, transferred into the room and started doing better than Diane in mental and physical activities.

A few weeks later Diane related to the teacher some of the terrible things the new girl had been saying about her. After confirming her suspicions that this was a total lie, the teacher decided to have a talk with Diane and possibly help her realize the cause of this behavior.

     Strongly      Agree      Uncertain      Disagree      Strongly  
     Agree      Disagree

Comment: \_\_\_\_\_

---

22. Ted Richards is a friendly, popular ten-year-old. Although he likes school, he has very much looked forward to summer vacation. His family has planned to travel back East. Ted's little sister, however, became very ill and the family savings were used to pay her medical bills. After his sister had recovered, Ted said, "If it hadn't been for you we would be leaving on vacation next month." His mother took him to one side and said, "What a terrible thing to say. I am thoroughly ashamed of you!"

     Strongly      Agree      Uncertain      Disagree      Strongly  
     Agree      Disagree

Comment: \_\_\_\_\_

---

23. Phyllis Long is a six-year-old that has appeared very unhappy for the last year. Her mother died of cancer just before her fifth birthday, and her father is trying his best to raise her properly. Her grandmother has been helping occasionally with the cooking, washing, and other household tasks. When Mr. Long returned from work one evening, he found most of his wife's clothing ripped and cut to pieces. Phyllis was sitting in her room pouting. He said nothing to his daughter, but picked up all the clothes and destroyed them.

     Strongly      Agree      Uncertain      Disagree      Strongly  
     Agree      Disagree

Comment: \_\_\_\_\_

---

24. Jerry Simmons is a very curious third grader. He keeps his parents and teacher busy answering his many probing questions. One evening Mr. and Mrs. Simmons were attempting to discuss some family matter without assistance from Jerry. He would not, however, leave the couple alone. Finally, Mr. Simmons ordered him to stand in the corner of another room until they were finished talking.

Strongly  Agree  Uncertain  Disagree  Strongly  
 Agree  Disagree

Comment: \_\_\_\_\_

---

25. Kathy Johns is a very bitter ten-year-old. She seems to hate the world and consequently has few friends. Her parents are in their early fifties; they have two older children that are married and live a great distance away. When Kathy's parents returned from a party one evening, Kathy said, "Sure you two had enough to drink." Mrs. Johns quickly slapped her daughter's face.

Strongly  Agree  Uncertain  Disagree  Strongly  
 Agree  Disagree

Comment: \_\_\_\_\_

---

26. Jim Montgomery is considered slightly above average for a third grader. He seems to enjoy most types of school work except one--reading aloud. When it is Jom's turn to read, he simply does not even try, even though he is able to read quite well silently. Mrs. Jones feels that she should refer him to a school psychologist, counselor, or some specialist.

Strongly  Agree  Uncertain  Disagree  Strongly  
 Agree  Disagree

Comment: \_\_\_\_\_

---

27. Larry Mitchell is a very inquisitive seven-year-old. He is constantly exploring everything. One Sunday a neighbor telephoned Mr. and Mrs. Mitchell and told them that Larry had started a bonfire in a field near her house. The Mitchells immediately drove the few blocks to Larry's latest experiment. They quickly extinguished the fire and calmly explained the seriousness of playing with fire.

Strongly  Agree  Uncertain  Disagree  Strongly  
 Agree  Disagree

Comment: \_\_\_\_\_

---

28. Tina Adams is a very pleasant, agreeable eleven-year-old. She has been taking piano lessons for the last year and usually practices for an hour a day. Tina's music teacher recently told Mrs. Adams that Tina was not adequately prepared for the last few lessons. Tina did not argue when her mother said that she must practice two hours each day until her piano playing improved.

Strongly  Agree  Uncertain  Disagree  Strongly  
 Agree  Disagree

Comment: \_\_\_\_\_

---

29. Karen Benny is an alert, intelligent fourth grader. Some children think she is conceited, but she does have several friends. One Monday morning, Mrs. Brown was writing some sentences on the board. Karen blurted out, "You spelled 'receive' incorrectly, Mrs. Brown." The teacher replied, "When I want your criticism, I'll ask for it!"

Strongly  Agree  Uncertain  Disagree  Strongly  
 Agree  Disagree

Comment: \_\_\_\_\_

---

30. Adam Carter is a second grader with a "split personality" --at home he behaves like a little gentleman, but at school he is a real trouble maker. His teacher is aware of this difference in behavior and has decided to call the parents; a convenient time could possibly be arranged to meet with them in their home.

Strongly  Agree  Uncertain  Disagree  Strongly  
 Agree  Disagree

Comment: \_\_\_\_\_

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APPENDIX B

COVER LETTERS

BELLEVUE PUBLIC SCHOOLS  
Bellevue, Washington  
10 January 1967

Dear Principal:

We are presently engaged in a research project entitled "A Comparison of the Attitudes of Teachers and Parents Toward Discipline." The Bellevue School District is very interested in this study and would very much appreciate your cooperation.

We would like to send questionnaires to 10 teachers and 12 parents from your school. Ten of your teachers will be randomly selected by the research office. My we request the following selection procedure for the parents: Please ask your secretary to randomly select two student files (one boy and one girl) from each grade level (1-6) and send the parents' name, address, and telephone number to the research office by January 20. All contacts with the parents will be made by the researcher and the research office.

The results of this study will be made known to you. Any questions concerning this project may be directed to Don Mickey.

Thank you very much for your kind cooperation.

Sincerely,

/s/ James Watson

James Watson  
Researcher

/s/ Don Mickey

Don Mickey  
Director of Research



BELLEVUE PUBLIC SCHOOLS  
Bellevue, Washington  
February 6, 1967

Dear Teacher:

We are presently engaged in a research project entitled, "A Comparison of the Attitudes of Teachers and Parents Toward Discipline." The Bellevue School District is very interested in this study and would very much appreciate your cooperation.

Enclosed is a questionnaire composed of 30 problem situations dealing with discipline. It would be greatly appreciated if you could give a few minutes of your time to fill it out as completely and frankly as possible. Also enclosed is a self-addressed envelope so that you may seal your completed questionnaire in the envelope. It is not necessary to sign your name; you will in no way be identified in the final study.

Please keep in mind that this study is in no way intended to measure teacher competency in discipline. In fact, because of the wide-spread disagreement as to what constitutes good discipline, there are no right or wrong answers.

If at all possible, we would appreciate your reply to this questionnaire by February 21, 1967.

Thank you for your kind cooperation!

Sincerely,

/s/ James Watson

James Watson  
Researcher

/s/ Don Mickey

Don Mickey  
Director of Research

BELLEVUE PUBLIC SCHOOLS  
Bellevue, Washington  
February 6, 1967

Dear Parents:

We are presently engaged in a research project entitled, "A Comparison of the Attitudes of Teachers and Parents Toward Discipline." The Bellevue School District is very interested in this study and would very much appreciate your cooperation.

Enclosed is a questionnaire composed of 30 problem situations dealing with discipline. It would be greatly appreciated if you could give a few minutes of your time to fill it out as completely and frankly as possible. Also enclosed is a self-addressed envelope so that you may seal your completed questionnaire in the envelope. It is not necessary to sign your name; you will in no way be identified in the final study.

Please remember that these hypothetical situations do not necessarily reflect the policies or practices of the Bellevue School District. Also, there are no right or wrong answers. This study is merely a comparison of attitudes.

If at all possible, we would appreciate your reply to this questionnaire by February 21, 1967.

Thank you for your kind cooperation!

Sincerely,

/s/ James Watson

James Watson  
Researcher

/s/ Don Mickey

Don Mickey  
Director of Research  
Bellevue Public Schools

April, 1967

Dear Parents:

You were recently sent a questionnaire entitled, "A Comparison of the Attitudes of Teachers and Parents Toward Discipline." The Bellevue Schools Research Office is very interested in this study and would appreciate your cooperation.

If you have not returned your questionnaire, please do so as soon as possible.

If you have misplaced your questionnaire, please call AD 2-0832 and another will be sent to you.

Thank you for your cooperation.

Sincerely,

James Watson  
Researcher

APPENDIX C

PERCENTAGE TABLES

TABLE XVIII

PER CENT OF AGREEMENT AND DISAGREEMENT AMONG TEACHERS  
ON SITUATIONS INVOLVING ISOLATION

Grade	Agreement	Uncertain	Disagreement
One	41%	25%	34%
Two	36	19	45
Three	44	12	44
Four	42	16	42
Five	36	26	38
Six	35	6	59
Combination*	51	14	35

\*Various combinations from all six grades

TABLE XIX

PER CENT OF AGREEMENT AND DISAGREEMENT AMONG TEACHERS  
ON SITUATIONS INVOLVING CORPORAL PUNISHMENT

Grade	Agreement	Uncertain	Disagreement
One	12%	24%	64%
Two	17.5	17.5	65
Three	31	15	54
Four	22	8	70
Five	37	16	47
Six	15	10	75
Combination*	26	12	62

\*Various combinations from all six grades

TABLE XX

PER CENT OF AGREEMENT AND DISAGREEMENT AMONG TEACHERS  
ON SITUATIONS INVOLVING LOSS OF PRIVILEGE

Grade	Agreement	Uncertain	Disagreement
One	25%	19%	56%
Two	24	12	64
Three	27	10	63
Four	41	15	44
Five	26	11	63
Six	11	13	76
Combination*	27	19	54

\* Various combinations from all six grades

TABLE XXI

PER CENT OF AGREEMENT AND DISAGREEMENT AMONG TEACHERS  
ON SITUATIONS INVOLVING IGNORING MISBEHAVIOR

Grade	Agreement	Uncertain	Disagreement
One	33%	12%	55%
Two	17	12	71
Three	17	21	62
Four	15	26	59
Five	21	10	69
Six	19	17	64
Combination*	21	16	63

\* Various combinations from all six grades

TABLE XXII

PER CENT OF AGREEMENT AND DISAGREEMENT AMONG TEACHERS  
ON SITUATIONS INVOLVING PROFESSIONAL HELP

Grade	Agreement	Uncertain	Disagreement
One	33%	21%	46%
Two	32.5	25	42.5
Three	44	21	35
Four	26	22	52
Five	43	3	54
Six	34	15	51
Combination*	39	16	45

\* Various combinations from all six grades

TABLE XXIII

PER CENT OF AGREEMENT AND DISAGREEMENT AMONG TEACHERS  
ON SITUATIONS INVOLVING WARNING

Grade	Agreement	Uncertain	Disagreement
One	85%	9%	6%
Two	88	7	5
Three	85	6	9
Four	70	11	19
Five	68	13	19
Six	80	8	12
Combination*	75	3	22

\* Various combinations from all six grades

TABLE XXIV

PER CENT OF AGREEMENT AND DISAGREEMENT AMONG TEACHERS  
ON SITUATIONS INVOLVING EXTRA ASSIGNMENTS OR WORK

Grade	Agreement	Uncertain	Disagreement
One	24%	24%	52%
Two	14	12	74
Three	23	13	64
Four	26	7	67
Five	11	13	76
Six	17	17	66
Combination*	16	9	75

\* Various combinations from all six grades

TABLE XXV

PER CENT OF AGREEMENT AND DISAGREEMENT AMONG TEACHERS  
ON SITUATIONS INVOLVING VERBAL CRITICISM

Grade	Agreement	Uncertain	Disagreement
One	15%	6%	79%
Two	12	12	76
Three	23	10	67
Four	19	11	70
Five	21	5	74
Six	13	9	78
Combination*	17	9	74

\* Various combinations from all six grades



TABLE XXVI

PER CENT OF AGREEMENT AND DISAGREEMENT AMONG TEACHERS  
ON SITUATIONS INVOLVING CONTACTING PARENTS

Grade	Agreement	Uncertain	Disagreement
One	31%	13%	56%
Two	29	12	59
Three	52	17	31
Four	37	7	56
Five	37	8	55
Six	43	13	44
Combination*	55	7	38

\* Various combinations from all six grades

TABLE XXVII

PER CENT OF AGREEMENT AND DISAGREEMENT AMONG TEACHERS  
ON SITUATIONS INVOLVING EXPULSION OR SUSPENSION

Grade	Agreement	Uncertain	Disagreement
One	52%	21%	27%
Two	21	12	67
Three	31	34	35
Four	48	15	37
Five	50	8	42
Six	24	15	61
Combination	42	19	39

\* Various combinations from all six grades