FACTORS RELATED TO VOLUNTARY PARTICIPATION AND NON-PARTICIPATION IN PHYSICAL EDUCATION

by

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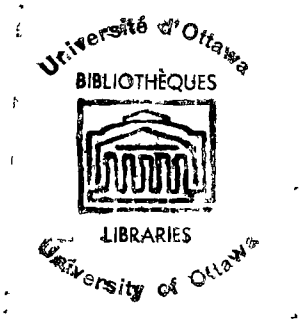
B.P.E., University of Ottawa, 1973

Thesis submitted to the School of Graduate Studies in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Science in Kinanthropology in the School of Physical Education and Recreation, University of Ottawa, 1975.



ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I would like to thank the people whose assistance and encouragement made this thesis possible:

- Dr. Terry Orlick for his direction and unfailing support,
- The Carleton Roman Catholic School Board, the staff and students of Beacon Hill South Senior Elementary School and Frank Ryan Senior Elementary School for their co-operation in gathering the needed data,
- Audrey Bayles for her genuine interest and encouragement,
- Ann Hyland for her help, understanding and gentle persuasion.

ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study was to investigate some factors related to participation and non-participation in grade nine physical education.

The hypotheses proposed were: (1) Participants in physical education would have a higher self esteem than the non-participants, (2) participants in physical education would have a higher perceived physical ability than non-participants, (3) participants in physical education would perceive their bodies in a more positive way than non-participants.

The subjects were forty-eight male and female students from two senior elementary school in the Carleton Roman Catholic School Board. The subjects' perceptions of general self and physical self, as well as reasons for participation and non-participation were assessed through the means of a questionnaire. Interviews were also conducted with selected non-participants.

The physical education teachers of the subjects also listed their perception of reasons for student participation or non-participation in physical education.

The self perception data were statistically analysed by the use of the Kruskal-Wallis Test. Perceived reasons for participation and non-participation were

categorized, tabulated and listed in rank order.

The results showed significant differences between participants and non-participants with respect to self esteem, perceived physical ability and perceived body. In all cases the participant groups had higher scores than the non-participant groups.

The factors related to non-participation in physical education as determined by this study were inability and a dislike for the subject as perceived by the students, inadequate skills and a poor self concept as stated by the elementary teachers and, thirdly, poor elementary programs and parental pressure as cited by the high school teachers. The main factor thought to influence participation in physical education for students and teachers alike was enjoyment.

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

In examining the philosophical objectives of education in Ontario the following is noted:

> The primary purpose of a school is to help students develop to the maximum of their potential as individuals and as members of society. This purpose can be achieved by facilitating the intellectual, social, physical and emotional growth of young people and developing more fully the knowledge, skills and aptitudes that they bring with them to the secondary school. (Ministry of Education, Ontario, Secondary School Organization and Diploma Requirements, 1973).

The role of physical education in helping to accomplish these objectives has been recognized throughout the world. The following recommendations were made by the UNESCO Council:

> An individual, whatever his ultimate role in society, needs in his growing years a due balance of intellectual, physical, moral and aesthetic development which must be reflected in the educational curriculum and timetable.... Between 1/3 and 1/6 of the total timetable should be devoted to physical activity. (International Council of Sport and Physical Education, Declaration on Sport, Paris, UNESCO, Place de Fontenoy, 1964).

For the past eighty-five years physical education has been a compulsory subject for students in Ontario (Cosentino & Howell, 1970). However, it became a completely optional subject for the first time in 1972.

Since that time there has been a decrease in the number of students participating in physical education even though there has been a province-wide increase in the total student population. Approximately 29 percent of the total population in Ontario public high schools (175,000 students) were not enrolled in physical education in 1973-74 (Ministry of Education, Ontario, 1974).

To determine what the trends were in the Ottawa area, several schools were surveyed.

At the Ottawa Technical High School, the enrollment of 1972 was 985 students and in September 1973, 902 students, a decrease of 8.4 percent. The enrollment in physical education was, in September 1972, 796 students and in September 1973, 638, or a decrease of 21 percent. Of the total school population in 1973, 30 percent had not enrolled in physical education (Collins, 1974). The figures for this school are consistent with the provincial figures.

A pilot survey was conducted with seven physical education department heads in the Ottawa area to see if the dropout trend was similar in different schools and to determine if they knew who was dropping out. One teacher in an interview said that his enrollment was down but he did not know exactly by what percent. When asked who was opting out, he said:

> We are losing the ones that need phys. ed. the most; that is, the overweight kids, the kids with slight handicaps and the deadheads. Once the kids start in grade nine we don't generally lose them, except for the odd one who thought it was going to be easy (Neff, 1974).

Another department head who was interviewed said: "poor general fitness of kids makes them drop out," and also, "ones that come from an elementary school with a poor program drop out" (Urbach, 1974).

Five other physical educators were interviewed and all agreed that the number of non-participants was increasing, especially among the girls. They could give no factual reasons for the decline in enrollment, but all agreed that the subject needed to be investigated. Empirical evidence gathered from this type of eclectic study would certainly provide further insight into the problem and perhaps would even serve as criteria for improving existing and future programs.

Statement of Problem.

The purpose of this study was to investigate some factors related to participation and non-participation in high school physical education by students entering grade nine. Through the use of questionnaires and an interview the following areas were explored:

1. self esteem of participants and non-participants in physical education,
2. perceived physical ability of participants and non-participants in physical education,
3. perceived body concept of participants and non-participants in physical education,
4. reasons grade eight students give for participating or not participating in grade nine physical education,
5. reasons teachers give for students' participation or non-participation in grade nine physical education.

Delimitations.

This study was limited to the grade eight students in the Beacon Hill South Senior Elementary School and the Frank Ryan Senior Elementary School. Much of the data obtained was of a self report nature and will consequently rely on face validity.

Definition of Terms.

The following terms are defined with regard to their particular usage in this study:

Physical Education - The regularly scheduled class program that includes activities offered in the current

school year.

Participant - A student who has elected to enroll in physical education for the 1974/75 high school year (i.e., actually registered).

Non-Participant - A student who has elected not to enroll in physical education for the 1974/75 high school year (i.e., actually not registered).

Self esteem - The degree to which an individual respects himself and considers himself worthy as measured by the Rosenberg Self Esteem Scale.

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

The subjects of the study were the adolescent participants and non-participants in physical education. In an attempt to answer the question of who the adolescent is, Havighurst enumerated the following ten developmental tasks of adolescence.

> Achieving new and more mature relations with age mates of both sexes... Achieving a masculine or feminine social role... Accepting one's physique and using the body effectively... Achieving emotional independence of parents and other adults... Achieving assurance of economic independence... Selecting and preparing for an occupation... Preparing for marriage and family life... Developing intellectual skills and concepts necessary for civic competence... Desiring and achieving socially responsible behavior... Acquiring a set of values and an ethical system as a guide to behavior." (Havighurst, 1953, pp. 111-158).

The developmental task which appears to relate most directly to participation or non-participation in physical education is acceptance of one's physique, using one's body effectively, and the overall acceptance of self. All of these seemingly important factors were investigated in the present study.

For the specific purpose of this study the review of the literature was focused in the following pertinent areas: dropout, self esteem, body concept and attitude

toward physical education.

Dropout.

Why do students opt out of physical education when they have a choice? It was not possible to find a single study on this subject. However, Orlick (1972) investigated the participation and non-participation of eight- and nine-year olds in sport. He concluded:

> 1. Participation was largely dependent upon environmental factors, particularly family sports environment.
>
> 2. Three major factors within the child's environment appeared to account for his attraction to, or avoidance of sports participation, (a) the significant sport role models which were available to the child (i.e., parents), (b) the expectancies the child had regarding sports participation and (c) the sport-related reinforcement contingencies to which the child was exposed (Orlick, 1972, p. 151).

Elsewhere, in a paper on the athletic dropout he found that young children dropped out of sports because of lack of exposure (i.e., playing time) and because of a lack of success in the sports environment. "For many children competitive sport operates as a kind of failure factory... For the majority of the children the goals and rewards in terms of positive outcomes are consistently out of reach" (Orlick, 1973). Scott (1973) stated that high school football dropouts, if they are in a situation

where there is no"cutting" recognize the coach's devaluation and drop out on their own accord. The dropouts quite often report that the cause for dropping out was lost interest. Although there is a lack of literature on the subject of the athletic dropout and more particularly the physical education dropout, there have been studies pertaining to the school dropout which may help to provide a cross disciplinary perspective.

Daniel Schreiber (1964) cited socio-economic factors, school size and standardization, lack of relevance, personality disorders and family attitudes as causes of school dropout.

Bent (1966) noted that low intelligence was overrated as a factor of dropping out. He found that only a small percent of dropouts do not have a high enough I.Q. He listed the following reasons for dropping out: 1) failure and retardation, 2) sex, boys drop out in greater numbers than girls, 3) socio-economic, parents from low socio-economic backgrounds do not encourage their children to remain in school, 4) economic reasons, 5) poor health, the students get behind and fail, 6) age, when there is a negative correlation between I.Q. and age in a given grade, 7) compulsory attendance laws, 8) inarticulation, students cannot make the adjustment from grade eight to grade nine, 9) home conditions,

there is a relationship between the amount of education of parents and children.

Rhodes et al. (1971) listed the following symptoms of dropout: 1) failure, 2) two or three year retardation in grade for age, 3) irregular attendance, 4) active antagonism to teachers, 5) disinterest in school, 6) low scholastic aptitude, 7) low reading ability, 8) frequent changes in schools, 9) non-acceptance of staff and classmates, 10) friends much older or younger, 11) unhappy family situation, 12) difference in size to schoolmates, 13) non-participation in extracurricular activities, 14) physical or emotional handicap, and 15) a record of delinquency.

Vander Well and Sartoris (1973) studied the reasons for withdrawal of 614 students at the University of Alberta. They found the reasons for dropout here to be quite different from those leading to high school dropout. The prior academic achievements of withdrawing and non-withdrawing students were comparable. University dropouts seem, in general, to be less goal-oriented and motivated. Adams (1973) considered dropping out of school a symptom of previously existing problems rather than a problem in its own right.

From the literature it is apparent that the reasons for school dropout are socio-economic, lack of

success, family attitudes, disinterest, physical and emotional handicaps and poor health. From the sports related literature it appears that the main factors related to participation are available sports role models, the expectancies the child had regarding participation and the sports related reinforcement. The main reasons for sport dropouts were found to be lack of playing time and lack of success.

Perhaps some of the dropout factors cited in this review of the literature will have some relevance for examining the withdrawal from physical education. Other factors are expected to be situation specific. One underlying factor in dropout from both sport and school is lack of success. When a person experiences lack of success how does it affect his self esteem?

Self Esteem.

Rosenberg (1965) after studying over 5,000 adolescents found that those with low self esteem were not likely to participate in extracurricular activities, while subjects with high self esteem joined school clubs and participated more often in extracurricular activities. He also found that adolescents with low self esteem tended to be highly sensitive to criticism, deeply disturbed when laughed at, scolded or criticized, bothered if

others had a poor opinion of them, deeply disturbed if they did poorly at an attempted task and likely to be disturbed when they became aware of some fault or inadequacy in themselves.

Neale et al. (1969), in a study with 165 boys enrolled in high school physical education took measures of physical fitness, self esteem and attitudes toward physical activity. There was a significant difference between high fit and low fit in self estimates of physical ability and self attraction to physical activities but not in general self esteem.

Schendel (1965) compared ninth grade participants with non-participants in athletics. He concluded that the athletic participants possessed more qualities of leadership and social initiative, were more sociable, possessed a greater sense of personal worth, had less self doubt, made fewer complaints and had more social maturity. In a follow-up study, Schendel (1970) retested his subjects who were by then in grade twelve. He concluded that the participants in athletics had a higher sense of personal worth and self acceptance than non-participants in athletics in both grades nine and twelve.

There are several characteristics of people with low self esteem which might account for their opting out. They are highly sensitive to criticism, ridicule, failure

and inadequacy. They feel threatened by others and doubt that they have much worthwhile to offer. They feel self conscious about performing in front of others and awkward when trying new tasks (Rosenberg, 1965). Participants, on the other hand, have been found to possess a greater sense of personal worth and social maturity. The literature therefore shows a strong relationship between self esteem and participation. How are these factors related to body concept?

Body Concept.

Havighurst (1953) cited accepting one's physique and using the body effectively as one of the ten developmental tasks of adolescence. It is often assumed that overweight or underweight students do not like to participate in physical education. Dowell et al. (1970) stated that:

> the individual continually evaluates his performance by assessing social feedback relative to success or failure and by formulating personal criteria for success. To a large extent, society not only evaluates the actual physical performance of an individual, but by inspecting his physique, status and general appearance, more often judges his potential for vigorous expression (Dowell, 1970, p. 657).

In his study Dowell et al. (1970) found a positive relationship between physical prowess and the physical self concept. He also found that underweight students had a lower

self concept than average weight and overweight students. Secord and Jourard (1953) examined the appraisal of body cathexis and self cathexis. They found that there was a significant correlation between feelings about the body and feelings about the self. They also found support for the hypothesis that low body cathexis is associated with undue concern with pain, disease or bodily injury. In a similar study Rosen and Ross (1968) took into account that certain parts of the body may be more important to the person than other parts and concluded that satisfaction with body image and satisfaction with self concept are related. Felker (1968) found that boys with differing body builds differed in self concept. The significant difference was reportedly caused by the lower self concept of the heavy boys. In a study with two hundred college women, Zion (1965) found that there was a significant linear relationship between self concept and body concept. She concluded that the security one has for one's body is related to the security with which one faces oneself and the world.

In a discussion of body image and the self, Gordon (1962) stated:

> The adolescent's body is his fundamental base line. When he deviates from his peers, or fails to meet his own idealized hopes, his self concept is affected and his generalized self-image becomes an adverse one (1962, p. 268).

From the literature support is given to the proposition that underweight people have lower self concepts than average weight or overweight people. Several studies have shown a strong relationship between feelings about the body and feelings about the self (Secord and Jourard, 1953; Rosen and Ross, 1968; Felker, 1968; Zion, 1965). It seems clear that body image influences the way people feel about themselves and the way people feel about themselves influences their behavior. Consequently, it is probable that the way a student perceives his physical self and total self will influence his participation or non-participation in sport related activities. If he sees himself as physically inferior (e.g., fat or skinny), or as an unworthy person his self esteem will likely be negatively affected. This may lead to non-participation in physical education for the reasons mentioned by Rosenberg (1965) (i.e., self conscious, threatened, feelings of nothing to offer).

Attitude Toward Physical Education.

There have been many studies on attitudes toward physical education at the high school and college level. Keogh (1962), Semotiuk (1967), Kenyon (1968), Wilson (1972) and Newman (1974) conducted studies to determine attitudes of students toward physical education. They concluded that the attitude toward physical activity and

physical education was favourable.

Attitudes toward physical education tend to be positive on the basis of data from male and female students either in college or high school when measured by attitude inventories. No attitudinal studies were found indicating negative attitudes. This leads one to question the validity of attitude inventories in assessing negative attitudes toward physical education and to ponder the relationship between stated attitudes and behavior (i.e., participation and non-participation). Therefore a study of attitudes of participants and non-participants toward physical education through the means of an attitude inventory did not appear likely to afford a great deal of insight.

However, Orlick (1972) was able to gain considerable insight into the feelings and attitudes of dropout children through the use of the open-ended interview. One nine-year old boy said he dropped out because he was an extra and did not play much. Asked if he would like to be good at sports and why, he replied: "Yes - so when I wanted to play I could play' (Orlick, 1972, p. 121). Another boy, when asked how good he would like to be in sports replied: "Real good." When asked why, he said: "Because if you're not, the coach won't think very much about you" (Orlick, 1972, p. 237). Another dropout in

response to the same question said: "Good enough so I could play sports and I wouldn't get fired on anything I went on" (Orlick, 1972, p. 238). A seven-year old boy who dropped out of soccer was asked if he would go out for the team again. He said: "If they let me play, I would." If the perceived reasons for non-participation are to become known, it appears that through an open-ended approach and the employment of the open-ended interview, the heart of the problem may be exposed.

Literature pertaining specifically to factors related to participation and non-participation in physical education was not readily available. However, from a review of the related literature certain variables emerged. It became clear that dropouts from school and from sport had one important factor in common, a lack of success or a lack of positive reinforcement. A strong relationship between participation and self esteem was established. People with low self esteem were shown to be threatened by others and unlikely to participate. Several studies showed a significant relationship between body concept and self esteem. In summary, three important factors have been identified. The unsuccessful tend to drop out, body concept is related to self esteem and self esteem is related to participation. These variables form the bases of the hypotheses for this study.

Hypotheses.

1. Participants in physical education will have a higher self esteem than the non-participants.
2. Participants in physical education will have a higher perceived physical ability than non-participants.
3. Participants in physical education will perceive their bodies in a more positive way than non-participants.

CHAPTER III

RESEARCH METHODS

The purpose of this study was to investigate some factors related to participation and non-participation in grade nine physical education. This chapter illustrates the methods used with reference to subjects, questionnaires, interviews and statistical analysis.

Subjects.

The subjects were 295 grade eight students in the Carleton Roman Catholic School Board. These students attended Beacon Hill South Senior Elementary School and Frank Ryan Senior Elementary School. This population of 295 students completed Questionnaire I - S and II - S (Appendix A and B). From this population 24 students indicated that they would not take physical education in grade nine. These twenty-four non-participants (12 male and 12 female) were matched by age, sex and school with a group of randomly selected participant subjects who fulfilled the necessary criteria. Thus, a sample of 24 participants and 24 non-participants for a total sample of 48 was used as well as their physical education teachers. In order to obtain perceived factors of participation and non-participation the first student questionnaire

asked the students to list reasons why students participate in physical education and reasons why they do not. This questionnaire included general information such as age, sex and whether the student would or would not take physical education in grade nine. (Appendix A.)

The teachers were also asked to list the reasons why students participate or do not participate in physical education in grade nine. (Appendix C.)

The second student questionnaire (Appendix B) measured self esteem, perception of physical ability and perception of body. This questionnaire was given to all the subjects.

Questionnaires.

Self Esteem

The self esteem scale utilized in this study was developed by Rosenberg (1965). The ten items (1 - 10) comprise a Guttman Scale which gives scores from zero (high self esteem) to six (low self esteem). Neale (1969) reported that because high self esteem on the Rosenberg Scale is expressed as a low number, difficulty arises in reporting correlations. They changed the signs because boys who were high in self esteem tended to score high in other variables. Since other variables in this study indicating high perceptions of physical ability and body

were expressed as a high number, the Rosenberg Scale was reversed in scoring to be consistent. That is, the scale ranges from zero (low self esteem) to six (high self esteem).

The scale was employed by Rosenberg in a study of 5,024 high school subjects. The instrument ranks subjects along a single continuum ranging from very high self esteem to very low self esteem. The validity and reliability of this test meet the criteria established by Guttman (1950). Distribution of self esteem scores for participants and non-participants were compared by the Kruskal-Wallis Test (Keith, 1973).

Perceived Physical Ability

To determine if there was a significant difference between perceived physical ability of participants and non-participants and between boys and girls, four items were used (11 - 14). This follows the format of the Thomas (1971) Self Concept Instrument. Orlick (1972) adapted this instrument for sport and found it to be valid for separating eight- and nine-year-old participants and non-participants in organized sports.

The four items represent self value dimensions and are reported in terms of how the subjects perceive themselves as well as how they feel significant others perceive them. The subjects choose either a positive or

negative response for each item. For example, the subject is asked to check off one answer to the following question:

I am good at gym_____ or not very good at gym_____

The positive response which is considered a more socially keyed choice is given a value of +1 while a negative choice would receive a -1. The maximum range will be +4 to -4. Distribution scores were compared by the Kruskal-Wallis Test.

Perception of Body

To determine if the subjects had a positive or negative perception of their bodies, items 16 - 19 were employed. The format is the same as that used to measure perceived physical ability with a range of +4 to -4. The Kruskal-Wallis Test for the analysis of distribution of scores was used.

Interview Schedule.

In the review of the literature it was stated that in an attempt to get to the heart of the problem (i.e., why students are opting out of physical education for grade 9), an open-ended interview would be used. Orlick justified the use of the interview technique with children in sports in the following manner:

> The child was the only individual who could relay his own phenomenological view of the sports scene. It was, therefore, deemed important to allow the child to express in his own words such things as... his perception of the place of sports in his life (Orlick, 1972, p. 31).

In addition it was stated that the interview "can provide the needed flexibility to elicit valid information" (Orlick, 1972, p. 50). The following advantages were outlined:

> (1) the face to face nature of the interview allows the possibility of eliciting a high degree of cooperation on the part of the interviewee,
>
> (2) there is an opportunity to ask the interviewee additional questions when necessary,
>
> (3) the oral responses provide for a greater amount of detailed information,
>
> (4) the information concerning the dynamic process of the environment is more readily obtained by this technique (Orlick, 1972, p. 56).

The interview that was used in this study was based on interview schedules from previous research done on sport dropouts by Glassford, Orlick and Scott (1973) and Orlick (1972, 1975). The interviews were recorded on tape in order to facilitate categorization and to ensure against the possibility of deleting valid and pertinent information.

Statistical Analysis

Questionnaire I

The perceived reasons for participation and non-participation are of a descriptive nature and were presented in percentage form. No a priori predictions were made about why students participate or do not participate. The responses were categorized, tabulated and listed in rank order with the greatest number of responses first.

The rank order of the teachers' perceived reasons for student participation or non-participation in physical education were categorized, tabulated and listed in rank order and were also compared with the reasons given by the students, so that comparisons in perception could be made.

Questionnaire II

Non-parametric methods (Kruskal-Wallis Test) were utilized to test for significance of difference between participant and non-participant groups.

Pilot Study.

A pilot study was conducted to ensure that grade 8 students thoroughly comprehended the instruments, instructions, vocabulary level, etc. The children went through each instrument individually with the researcher to determine if there was anything they did not understand

and to see whether there was anything that could be changed to make the questions easier to comprehend and respond to. Before the study commenced, the researcher was thereby assured that the children could handle the research instruments.

CHAPTER IV

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The results and discussion are presented under the following headings: Self Esteem, Perception of Physical Ability, Perception of Body, Perceived Reasons for Participation, Perceived Reasons for Non-Participation.

Self Esteem.

Rosenberg Self Esteem Test

The results of the Rosenberg Self Esteem Test showed a significant difference ($p < .05$) existed in self esteem between participants and non-participants.

Table I.-

Self Esteem as Measured by the Rosenberg Self Esteem Test: Kruskal-Wallis Test to Compare the Self Esteem of the Participants and Non-Participants (N = 48).

ITEM	GROUPS	H*
Self Esteem	Participants vs Non-Participants	5.85**

* The chi squared value required for significance at the 0.05 level is 3.84.

** significant at 0.05 level.

When the self esteem results were further analysed by sex a significant difference was also found ($p < .05$) between male participants and male non-participants and between female participants and female non-participants. In all cases the participant groups had higher self esteem scores than the non-participant groups.

Table II.-

Self Esteem as Measured by the Rosenberg Self Esteem Test: Kruskal-Wallis Test to Compare the Self Esteem Scores of the Male Participants Versus the Male Non-Participants (N = 24) and the Female Participants Versus the Female Non-Participants (N = 24).

ITEM	GROUPS	H*
Self Esteem	Male Participants vs Male Non-Participants	5.96**
Self Esteem	Female Participants vs Female Non-Participants	4.96**

* The chi squared value for significance at the 0.05 level is 3.84.

** significant at the 0.05 level.

The findings of this study support the findings of Rosenberg (1965) who found that the lower an individual's self esteem the less likely he will be to become involved in extracurricular activities.

The study also supports Schendel's (1970) study which found that participants in athletics had a higher sense of personal worth and self acceptance than non-participants at both the grade 9 and grade 12 level. This difference, in terms of statistical significance, was greater at the grade 9 level than at the grade 12 level and in a previous study Schendel (1965) noted that this gap was eliminated for college students and in some cases was reversed.

However, Orlick (1972) found no significant difference in general self concept of eight- and nine-year-old participants and non-participants in organized sports. Perhaps this relates to the fact that not participating on a community team is less drastic than not seeing oneself as good enough to make the grade in physical education class.

The question of how self esteem is related to participation is still largely unanswered. Is physical education and sport in its present form a contributor to high self esteem or low self esteem? What happens to the overweight child, the uncoordinated child or the child who lacks confidence when he enters the environment of the gymnasium? Generally he or she receives only negative reinforcement. He is often ridiculed or embarrassed and when it comes time to select teams he is often rejected

by his peers or made to feel unworthy. Could this threatening environment contribute to, or be a factor in enhancing one's self esteem? Perhaps for some it is but for many others it would appear to be a factor contributing to low self esteem.

Perception of Physical Ability.

The results of the perceived ability evaluation showed that there was a highly significant difference ($p < .05$) in perceived physical ability between the groups of participants and non-participants.

Table III.-

Perception of Physical Ability: Kruskal-Wallis Test to Compare the Perceived Physical Ability of the Participants Versus the Non-Participants (N = 48).

ITEM	GROUPS	H*
Perceived Physical Ability	Participants vs Non-Participants	23.12**

* The chi squared value for significance at the 0.05 level is 3.84.

** significant at the 0.05 level.

When the results were broken down by sex there was also a significant difference in perceived physical ability between the male participants and the male

non-participants and between the female participants and the female non-participants. In each case the participants had higher or more positive perceptions of their physical ability.

Table IV.-

Perception of Physical Ability: Kruskal-Wallis Test to Compare the Perceived Physical Ability of the Male Participants Versus the Male Non-Participants (N = 24) and the Female Participants Versus the Female Non-Participants (N = 24).

ITEM	GROUPS	H*
Perceived Physical Ability	Male Participants vs Male Non-Participants	10.85**
	Female Participants vs Female Non-Participants	11.81**

* The chi squared value for significance at the 0.05 level is 3.84.

** significant at the 0.05 level.

This finding supports Orlick's (1972) study which found that eight- and nine-year-old sport participant children had more positive perceptions of their sports ability than the children who had elected not to participate in sport. The implication is that if a child perceives himself as being good at gym he is more likely to enroll in physical education than the student who perceives his ability as being not very good. This is supported by

Scott (1973) who stated that:

> The person strives to maintain congruency within his interpersonal perceptual matrices. Thus, once a person establishes a self perception relative to some role, he will strive to maintain that perception by seeking out others and activities which will confirm that self description (p. 15).

Rosenberg (1965) also wrote that adolescents tend to participate in activities in which their self evaluation is reinforced or confirmed.

Perception of Body.

There was a significant difference ($p < .05$) in the way in which the participant students perceived their bodies when compared with non-participant students. Participants had significantly more positive images of their bodies than did non-participants.

Table V.-

Perception of Body: Kruskal-Wallis Test to Compare the Perceived Body of the Participants Versus the Non-Participants (N = 48).

ITEM	GROUPS	H*
Perceived Body	Participants vs Non-Participants	7.60**

* The chi squared value for significance at the 0.05 level is 3.84.

** significant at the 0.05 level.

However, when broken down by sex, although the male participants perceived their bodies in a more positive way than did the non-participants ($p < 0.05$) there was no significant difference between female participants and non-participants in terms of body perception. However, it should be pointed out that although the difference was not significant, the participant girls did have more positive body perceptions than the non-participant girls and the difference did approach significance.

Table VI.-

Perception of Body: Kruskal-Wallis Test to Compare the Perceived Body of the Male Participants Versus Male Non-Participants (N = 24) and Female Participants Versus Female Non-Participants (N = 24).

ITEM	GROUPS	H*
Perceived Body	Male Participants vs Male Non-Participants	5.46**
Perceived Body	Female Participants vs Female Non-Participants	3.70

* The chi squared value for significance at the 0.05 level is 3.84.

** significant at the 0.05 level.

Though the participant girls may have been more physically attractive than the non-participant girls, they did not indicate this as strongly as their male counterparts. Perhaps physically active girls are not as convinced as boys that this is desirable for their bodies, or perhaps girls are conditioned to be over-concerned with body details and so, even when they are trim and fit they may find faults with themselves.

From the present study we have seen that the participants had higher self esteem and higher body perception than the non-participants. The literature does support a relationship between self perception and body perception.

Secord and Jourard (1953) noted a relationship between feelings about the self and feelings about the body. In addition, people with poor body images were overconcerned about bodily injury.

Rosen and Ross (1968) also found that satisfaction with self concept and satisfaction with body image are related.

Zion (1965) reported that there was a linear relationship between self concept and body concept.

Perceived Reasons for Participation.

Grade 8 Students' Perceived Reasons for Taking Physical Education

In response to a request to list the reasons why some grade eight students would take physical education in grade nine, the following results were obtained:

Table VII.-

Grade Eight Students' Perceived Reasons for Taking Physical Education (N = 48).

REASON	NUMBER OF RESPONSES	PERCENT
1. Enjoyment ("Like it," "like sports," "for fun")	30	62.5
2. Ability ("Are good at it")	19	39.6
3. Fitness ("To become or remain physically fit")	18	37.5
4. An easy credit	6	12.5
5. Parental pressure ("Parents make you take it")	4	8.3
6. To show off ("Some kids are good and can show off")	4	8.3
7. To relax ("Relieve tension")	3	6.3
8. Preference over other subjects	3	6.3
9. To fill in for a lack of exercise or sport at home	3	6.3
10. To learn	2	4.2

"Enjoyment," "like it," "like sports," or "for fun" were given the most times (62.5%) as a reason for taking physical education. If we expect children to continue in physical education in high school the child's past experience will play an important role. If the child perceives his elementary program as being fun or enjoyable he is likely to want to continue in high school when given a choice of subjects. The next most frequent reason given for taking physical education was that those who would continue in physical education are the students who are "good at it" (39.6%). This would indicate that if a child has good motor ability or physical ability he will probably receive more positive rewards from a physical education program and thus receive more satisfaction or enjoyment.

Fitness was stated as the next most frequent reason (37.5%) for taking physical education. This is important for the physical educator because physical fitness and the health related benefits of fitness are often one of the aims of the physical education program. This may also be an indication that the recent campaign by the federal government which is aimed at making Canadians aware of physical fitness as a goal is reaching the students.

"An easy credit" was next on the list at 12.5%. To those who are natural athletes or those who possess a high level of motor ability, physical education probably is an easy credit, but the converse is probably also true. The unfit, uncoordinated or obese students find physical education a very difficult credit and possibly unobtainable.

The remainder of the reasons, "parental pressure" (8.3%), "to show off" (8.3%), "to relax" (6.3%), "a preference over other subjects" (6.3%), "to fill in for a lack of exercise at home" (6.3%), "to learn" (4.2%), varied a great deal and no consensus of opinion was evident.

Elementary School Teachers' Perception of the Reasons for Students' Participation in Grade 9 Physical Education

In response to a request to list the reasons why some grade eight students take physical education in grade nine, the following results were obtained from all the elementary school physical education teachers who taught the subjects in this study.

Table VIII.-

Elementary School Teachers' Perception of the Reasons for Students' Participation in Grade 9 Physical Education (N = 4).

REASON	NUMBER OF RESPONSES	PERCENT
1. Enjoyment	3	75
2. Ability	3	75
3. Easy credit	2	50
4. Competition	2	50
5. Fitness	2	50
6. To gain popularity	1	25
7. Opportunity to be successful	1	25
8. Liking for team situation	1	25
9. Need for physical activity	1	25
10. Peer pressure	1	25

The most frequent response given was that the students had "ability" (75%) or for "enjoyment" (75%). This was followed by "easy credit" (50%) and "competition" (50%). The remaining responses at 25% each were "fitness," "to gain popularity," "opportunity to be successful," "liking team situations," "need for physical activity," and lastly "peer pressure." From these responses we see that the elementary school physical education teachers perceive

the participants as having the ability to do physical activity, enjoying physical education classes and finding the course an easy credit. This supports Rosenberg's (1965) notion that high school children when given a free choice, will gravitate toward those activities in which they are already skilled and avoid those in which they are not. In other words, if the child has ability, it would seem evident that physical education will become a positive experience, giving positive rewards. Therefore, it will be reinforcing, an easy credit and the probability of its being "fun" under the present reward structure is greatly increased.

The elementary school teachers also see participants as people who enjoy competition and are aware of the importance of physical fitness. These perceived reasons are similar to those given by the students. They differ from the reasons presented by the high school teachers in that the high school teachers felt that parental influence was a reason for student participation at the high school level.

High School Teachers' Perception of the Reasons for Student Participation in Grade 9 Physical Education

In response to a request to list the reasons why some grade eight students will take physical education in grade nine the following results were obtained:

Table IX.-

High School Teachers' Perception of the Reasons for Student Participation in Grade 9 Physical Education (N = 10).

REASON	NUMBER OF RESPONSES	PERCENT
1. Enjoyment	8	80
2. Parental pressure or influence	5	50
3. Easy credit or fun credit	4	40
4. Good elementary program	4	40
5. Need for physical activity	3	30
6. Fitness	3	30
7. Competition	2	20
8. To socialize	1	10
9. To learn skills	1	10
10. To relieve tension	1	10

Eight of the ten high school teachers (80%) stated that they saw the primary reason for student participation in physical education to be enjoyment. In other words, they perceived the students as enjoying physical education and, for that reason, choosing to participate in it. This was also the reason given most frequently by the students.

Parental pressure or parental influence (50%) was the next most frequent reason given by the teachers. The students placed less importance on this reason. It was ranked in fifth place at only 8.3% of the responses.

The teachers cited "easy credit" or "fun credit" as the third most frequent reason (40%) while the students placed this into the fourth slot at 12.5%

It is interesting to note that the reason "a good elementary program" (40%) was not mentioned by the students yet this was the fourth-ranked reason given by the high school teachers.

The remaining perceived reasons were given by 30% or less of the teachers and are similar to the students' perceived reasons; for example, "need for physical activity" (30%), "fitness" (30%), "competition" (20%), "to socialize" (10%), "to learn skills" (10%), and "to relieve tension" (10%).

Perhaps the most interesting finding here is the fact that the second reason given by the students, "ability" (39.6%) was not mentioned by one high school teacher. Although students appear to see this as a priority item (in terms of reinforcement or perceived reinforcement) the teachers ignored it completely. Perhaps this relates to the teachers' perception of the social acceptability of teachers' distributing

reinforcement on the basis of ability, or perhaps they actually believe that ability is not a factor influencing participation.

With respect to perceived reasons for participation and non-participation in grade 9 physical education one can conclude that the students and their elementary teachers perceive the reasons for participation in physical education in a similar manner and differ somewhat from the high school teachers.

Table X.-

Summary of the Perception of the Reasons for Student Participation in Grade 9 Physical Education.

STUDENTS (N=48)		ELEMENTARY TEACHERS (N=4)		HIGH SCHOOL TEACHERS (N=10)	
REASON	PERCENT	REASON	PERCENT	REASON	PERCENT
1. Enjoyment	63	Enjoyment	75	Enjoyment	80
2. Ability	40	Ability	75	Parental Pressure	50

Perceived Reasons for Non-Participation.

Grade 8 Students' Perceived Reasons for Not Taking Physical Education

In response to a request to list the reasons why some grade eight students will not take physical education in grade nine the following results were obtained:

Table XI.-

Grade 8 Students' Perceived Reasons for Not Taking Physical Education (N = 48).

REASON	NUMBER OF RESPONSES	PERCENT
1. Inability	26	54.2
2. Dislike it	25	52.0
3. Prefer other subjects	11	22.9
4. Fear of being teased or embarrassed	8	16.7
5. Too lazy	8	16.7
6. Unfit	7	14.6
7. Overweight	7	14.6
8. Physical defect	7	14.6
9. Uninteresting program	7	14.6
10. Are involved in outside sports	3	6.3

The main reasons for not taking physical education as perceived by the students were "inability" (54.2%),

closely followed by a simple "dislike it" (52.0%). These two reasons, although in different order, are the converse of the reasons for taking physical education which are "enjoyment" and "ability." These results support the finding of Orlick (1973, 1974) inasmuch as if a student has motor ability he will have expectancies of positive consequences. In the present system these expectancies will be contingent on his ability to perform physical tasks. Thus, the student's ability will often lead to positive reinforcement from the activity environment (i.e., success as well as positive feedback from the teacher and peers). The student's ability may also allow him or her the freedom to enjoy the activity because it is less threatening for him. On the other hand, for the student with low motor ability or, as the students said "inability," the whole gymnasium environment will appear threatening and, this being the case, will contribute to his dislike for the subject. Because the student is not capable and performs poorly he receives only negative reinforcement. These notions are also supported by the physical education teachers as the main reasons for student non-participation in physical education.

The third reason given (22.9%) for non-participation is that the student prefers other courses.

If the student does not have ability for the existing program he will probably dislike it and, when given the choice, opt for something else which may appear less threatening and more rewarding.

The remaining reasons "too lazy" (16.7%), "fear of being teased or embarrassed" (16.7%), "unfit" (14.6%), "overweight" (14.6%), "a physical defect" (14.6%) would all lead to the child's inability to reach the teacher's standard and, once again, lead to negative reinforcement causing the student to avoid physical education.

The two last reasons given were "boring or uninteresting programs" (14.6%) and that the students were "involved in outside sports" (6.3%).

Elementary School Teachers' Perception of the Reasons for Student Non-Participation in Grade 9 Physical Education

In response to a request to list the reasons why some grade eight students will not take physical education in grade nine, the following results were obtained from all four elementary school physical education teachers who taught the subjects.

Table XII.-

Elementary School Teachers' Perception of the Reasons for Student Non-Participation in Grade 9 Physical Education (N = 4).

REASON	NUMBER OF RESPONSES	PERCENT
1. Inadequate skills	4	100
2. Poor self concept	3	75
3. Fear of failure	2	50
4. Poor physical development	2	50
5. Uninteresting classes	2	50
6. Peer or parental pressure	2	50
7. Not essential part of learning	1	25
8. Awkwardness	1	25
9. Disinterest	1	25
10. Fear of being ridiculed	1	25

All the elementary teachers cited "inadequate skills" as the main reason for student non-participation. "Poor self concept" was given as the second reason by three (75%). "Fear of failure," "poor physical development," "uninteresting classes" and "peer or parental pressure" were listed by two of the elementary teachers (50%), while "not an essential part of learning," "awkwardness," "disinterest" and "fear of being ridiculed"

were mentioned by one teacher each (25%).

Not surprisingly, the elementary school teachers' perception of the reasons for non-participation were again similar to the students' and divergent from the high school teachers'. The elementary teachers are the ones who are working with these students and can perhaps better evaluate the abilities and attitudes of the participants and non-participants.

The reason "inadequate skills" was called "inability" by the students. The importance of "inadequate skills" or "inability" as a reason for dropping out is supported by the work of Orlick (1975) which indicates that many children drop out of sport because of lack of success. This implies that for "low ability children" the goals or standards set are unrealistic for them.

The findings of this study also support the work of Dowell et al. (1970), Felker (1968), Zion (1965) and Gordon (1962) in that the teachers see the non-participant children as having poor self concept, fear of failure and poor physical development. If the student has inadequate skills and poor physical development, his self concept will be affected. The elementary teachers feel that inadequate skills, poor self concept and poor physical development are closely related to non-participation.

Although it cannot be stated with assurance, it may be that the "uninteresting classes" and "disinterest" named by some teachers as a reason for non-participation are related to feelings of inadequacy. Scott (1973) stated that less successful football players dropped out even if there was no cutting and often gave as their reason loss of interest.

In conclusion the elementary school teachers perceive the non-participant as a person with inadequate skills in physical education whose self concept is poor and who has poor physical development and a fear of failure.

High School Teachers' Perception of the Reasons for Student Non-Participation in Grade 9 Physical Education

In response to a request to list the reasons why some grade eight students will not enroll in physical education in grade nine the following results were obtained:

Table XIII.-

High School Teachers' Perception of the Reasons for Student Non-Participation in Grade 9 Physical Education (N = 10).

REASON	NUMBER OF RESPONSES	PERCENT
1. Poor elementary program	8	80
2. Parental influence or attitude	5	50
3. Prefer other subjects	4	40
4. Embarrassment	4	40
5. Poor physical development	3	30
6. Overweight	3	30
7. Not interested in physical activity	2	20
8. Poor motor ability	2	20
9. Unfit	2	20
10. Lack of success in the past	2	20

The first reason for non-participation cited by the high school teachers was the students' having experienced a "poor elementary program" (80%). If the program has been poor at the elementary level then the student has probably developed a negative attitude towards physical education. Also, if the program is poor the child will feel inadequate in skills and therefore feel threatened when placed in a new environment where he

perceives the skills of others as being superior. Although the high school teachers listed this reason, it was not directly mentioned by the students or the elementary school teachers. It may have been alluded to by the students' "dislike it." But dislike may have been shaped before school began. It may have also been alluded to by the elementary teachers' "uninteresting classes" as a reason for non-participation (Table VII). It would be interesting to see if these high school teachers would attribute dropping out later in high school, which increases with each grade, to a "poor high school program."

The second reason given was "parental influence or attitude" (50%). Thus the high school teachers attributed non-participation to the elementary program and parental influence. As stated earlier, the students attributed non-participation to the students' inability and/or dislike of physical education and a preference for other subjects. Thus we see divergent perceptions of the reasons for students' non-participation in physical education by the students and high school teachers.

The next two most frequent reasons for non-participation were "embarrassment" (40%) and the students' "preference for other subjects" (40%). These were followed at three responses each by the following reasons, "poor physical development" (30%) and "overweight" (30%). The

last group at 20% each were, "not interested in physical activity," "poor motor ability," "unfit" and "lack of success in the past."

In summary one can conclude that the students and their elementary teachers were similar in their perception of the reasons for non-participation in physical education. The high school teachers differed somewhat from both.

Table XIV.-

Summary of the Perception of the Reasons for Student Non-Participation in Grade 9 Physical Education.

	STUDENTS (N=48)		ELEMENTARY TEACHERS (N=4)		HIGH SCHOOL TEACHERS (N=10)	
	REASON	PERCENT	REASON	PERCENT	REASON	PERCENT
1.	Inability	54.2	Inadequate skills	100	Poor elementary program	80
2.	Dislike it	52	Poor self concept	75	Parental influence or attitude	50
3.	Prefer other subjects	22.9	Fear of failure	50	Prefer other subjects	40
4.	Fear of being embarrassed	16.7	Poor physical development	50	Embarrass-ment	40
5.	Too lazy	16.7	Uninteresting classes	50	Poor physical development	30

Interviews Excerpts - Case Studies.

It was planned to interview fifteen students who had opted out of physical education for grade nine. When permission was obtained from the school board to proceed with the testing certain conditions were imposed. One of these conditions was that the students had to be presented with the choice of being interviewed or not being interviewed. All the non-participants were asked to participate in the interview session but only nine elected to do so, thus, the interview sample consisted of nine subjects, three girls and six boys. It is possible that those who consented to be interviewed were the least threatened. The most threatened dropouts may have rejected the interview. These limitations or conditions must be considered in evaluating the interview data.

Generally, the interviews tended to support and add to the reasons that were given for non-participation in physical education such as the students' inability, dislike of physical education and a preference for other courses. The students did not reject all physical activity. They disliked certain parts of the physical education program and enjoyed other parts. From this limited number of interviews and the conditions imposed, it would seem premature and speculative to make any

general categorical comments at this time. However, interview excerpts have been presented in Appendix E which provide further insight into specific case studies of grade eight dropouts.

CHAPTER V

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

In the Province of Ontario grade eight students have the option of enrolling or not enrolling in physical education for grade nine. In 1973-74 approximately 29 percent of the total student population enrolled in Ontario public high schools were not enrolled in physical education. The purpose of this study was to investigate some factors related to participation and non-participation in high school physical education by students entering grade nine. The subjects were selected from 295 male and female grade eight students in the Carleton Roman Catholic School Board. These students attended Beacon Hill South Senior Elementary School and Frank Ryan Senior Elementary School. In this population, 24 students indicated that they would not take physical education in grade nine. These 24 non-participants were randomly matched by age, sex and school with a group of participant subjects. Thus, a sample of 48 students and their physical education teachers was used.

Through the use of a questionnaire and an interview, the following areas were explored: (1) self esteem of participants and non-participants in physical education, (2) perceived physical ability of participants and

non-participants in physical education, (3) perceived body of participants and non-participants in physical education, (4) reasons grade eight students give for participating or not participating in grade nine physical education and (5) reasons teachers give for student participation or non-participation in grade nine physical education.

Conclusions.

From the results and within the limitations of this study the following may be concluded:

1. The self esteem of the participants was significantly higher than that of the non-participants.
2. The perceived physical ability of the participants was significantly higher than that of the non-participants.
3. The perceived body of the participants was significantly higher (i.e., more positively perceived) than that of the non-participants.
4. The students' perception of the main reasons for participation were enjoyment and ability. Their main reasons given for non-participation were inability and a dislike for the subject.
5. Elementary teachers' perception of the main

reasons for participation were enjoyment and ability. Their main reasons given for non-participation were inadequate skills and poor self concept.

6. High school teachers' perception of the main reasons for participation were enjoyment and parental pressure. The main reasons given for non-participation were poor elementary program and parental pressure or attitude.

Recommendations.

To ensure that more children elect to participate, physical education should above all be enjoyable. There should be a variety of activities and goals, some of which are obtainable and rewarding for all the students, not just the ones with natural ability. A program should be designed to be suitable to the lowest group so that they too can have positive expectancies and reinforcement through being able to perform some physical tasks with a reasonable level of competence. Carry over sports should be taught so that the student, when he leaves the education environment can join community clubs or join in informal activities with friends. This may help develop the person's self esteem by allowing him to participate

in and be accepted in community activities. Such sports include badminton, archery, cross-country skiing, bowling and volleyball.

As far as possible, embarrassment in the gym should be minimized. Some students have a poor body concept or are embarrassed by their bodies. They should be allowed to wear warm-up suits rather than shorts and T-shirt, if this will help them overcome their self-consciousness. In boys' team sports it may be advisable to have colour markers instead of "skins and shirts." Some students are embarrassed when they remove their shirts because of their negative perception of their bodies. Teams should be selected in a manner which ensures that no one is left out or put in an embarrassing situation by being picked last, and attempts should be made to keep the teams even in ability.

If the teacher is to act as a significant sport role model, he or she must understand that physical education can be a frightening experience for the child with low motor ability, the obese child or the handicapped child and act accordingly. It is important that programs and approaches be devised to alleviate rather than add to these children's problems, particularly with reference to self perceptions.

Studies are needed which focus on the design and assessment of programs which are both enjoyable and beneficial for the students who are opting out.

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APPENDIX A

STUDENTS' QUESTIONNAIRE I

QUESTIONNAIRE I - S

Research is being done at the University of Ottawa to determine how grade eight students feel about physical education. Please answer every question as you feel. Responses will be anonymous and confidential with only the researchers at the University seeing it. Your full co-operation is really needed. Thanks for your help.

SEX: M___ F___

I am going to take phys. ed. in grade 9___

OR

I am not going to take phys. ed. in grade 9___

List some reasons why some kids aren't going to take phys. ed. next year:

List some reasons why some kids will take phys. ed. next year:

APPENDIX B

STUDENTS' QUESTIONNAIRE II

QUESTIONNAIRE II - S

AGE___ SEX___ WEIGHT___ HEIGHT___

Please check off one answer to each of the following questions as it applies to you.

1. I feel that I have a number of good qualities.
   1.___strongly agree 2.___agree 3.___disagree 4.___strongly disagree

2. I feel that I do not have much to be proud of.
   1.___strongly agree 2.___agree 3.___disagree 4.___strongly disagree

3. On the whole, I am satisfied with myself.
   1.___strongly agree 2.___agree 3.___disagree 4.___strongly disagree

4. At times I think I am no good at all.
   1.___strongly agree 2.___agree 3.___disagree 4.___strongly disagree

5. I feel that I'm a person worth, at least on an equal plane with others.
   1.___strongly agree 2.___agree 3.___disagree 4.___strongly disagree

6. I wish I could have more respect for myself.
   1.___strongly agree 2.___agree 3.___disagree 4.___strongly disagree

7. I am able to do things as well as most other people.
   1.___strongly agree 2.___agree 3.___disagree 4.___strongly disagree

8. I certainly feel useless at times.
   1.___strongly agree 2.___agree 3.___disagree 4.___strongly disagree

9. I take a positive attitude toward myself.
   1.___strongly agree 2.___agree 3.___disagree 4.___strongly disagree

10. All in all, I am inclined to feel that I am a failure.
    1.___strongly agree 2.___agree 3.___disagree 4.___strongly disagree

QUESTIONNAIRE II - S (cont'd)

11. I am good at gym___	OR	I am not very good at gym___
12. My mother thinks I am good at gym___	OR	my mother thinks I am not very good at gym___
13. My gym teacher thinks I am good at gym___	OR	my gym teacher thinks I am not very good at gym___
14. Other kids in my class think I am good at gym___	OR	other kids in my class think I am not very good at gym___
15. I have a good body___	OR	I do not have a very good body___
16. My mother thinks I have a good body___	OR	my mother thinks I do not have a good body___
17. Other kids think I have a good body___	OR	other kids think I do not have a good body___
18. My gym teacher thinks I have a good body___	OR	my gym teacher thinks I do not have a very good body___
19. I will take phys.ed. in grade 9___	OR	I will not take phys.ed. in grade 9___

APPENDIX C

TEACHERS' QUESTIONNAIRE I

QUESTIONNAIRE I - T

Research is being done at the University of Ottawa to determine why some grade 8 students have elected to enroll in grade 9 physical education while others have not. Your co-operation is needed to complete our studies. Responses will be anonymous and confidential. Thanks for your help.

1. List some reasons why you think some kids aren't going to take phys. ed. in grade nine.

1. List some reasons why you think some kids will take phys. ed. in grade nine.

APPENDIX D

INTERVIEW SCHEDULE

INTERVIEW

1. How did you like gym this year?
2. What did you like best about gym?
3. What did you like least about gym?
4. Is there anything else that bothered you about gym?
5. If you could do anything you wanted in gym to make it better, what would you change?
6. Are you taking gym next year? Yes___ No___
7. If no. Why do you think you aren't going to take it?
8. If you were better in gym, do you think you would take it? Yes___ No___
9. If yes. Why would that make a difference?
10. Was gym fun for you? Yes___ No___ Sometimes___
11. If no. Why wasn't it fun?
12. If sometimes. When wasn't it fun?
13. If no. If it were more fun, would you take it?
14. Why would that make a difference?
15. How could it be more fun?
16. Did you ever feel self conscious or embarrassed in gym? Yes___ No___ Sometimes___
17. If yes. When, what happened?
18. If sometimes. When?

APPENDIX E

INTERVIEW EXCERPTS

INTERVIEW EXCERPTS

The following case studies are composed of quotes taken from interviews with the grade 8 students. These students had decided not to take physical education as an optional subject in grade 9. These case studies are presented to provide further insight into the child's perspective.

CASE 1: Female, age 14

Q. How did you like gym this year?

A. I didn't like it.

Q. Are you taking gym next year?

A. No.

Q. Why do you think you aren't going to take it?

A. All through grade school I had to take it. Next year I'm so glad I don't have to take it any more. I don't like doing anything in it. I'd rather do something else with my time.

CASE 2: Female, age 13

Q. How did you like gym this year?

A. I didn't like it very much.

Q. Are you taking gym next year?

A. No.

Q. Why do you think you aren't going to take it?

A. I'm not good at it for one thing, it makes me all nervous and everything.

Q. Did you ever feel self conscious or embarrassed in gym?

A. Ya, whenever I do something wrong or something.

CASE 3: Female, age 13

Q. If you could do anything you wanted in gym to make it better, what would you change?

A. I don't know.... I think I'd try to get everybody to participate. Like some kids, they don't want to play sports and they don't want to do some things, so try and get them all interested, not have so much competition, like, this kid's better so she can play more time - things like that.

Q. Does competition bother some children?

A. Ya, they don't feel that they're as good as the other kids so the other kids always get picked for the team.

Q. Why aren't you taking gym next year?

A. I don't like the idea of having gym every day. I wouldn't want to have it every day.... Really because I just want to take some other subjects.

Q. Which ones?

A. In the Arts and Crafts. I don't like Art too much this year but it's better in high school, so I wanted to take it.

Q. If you were better in gym, do you think you would take it?

A. I don't know, I probably would.

Q. If we got rid of competition in gym would you take it?

A. Ya, I would.

CASE 4: Male, age 13

Q. Are you taking gym next year?

A. No.

Q. Why do you think you aren't going to take it?

A. Well, it's not as important as my other subjects and... uh, I'd rather take... uh, something in a session general.

CASE 5: Male, age 14

Q. How did you like gym this year?

A. I was pleased with the program and really enjoyed it.

Q. Are you taking gym next year?

A. No.

Q. Why do you think you aren't going to take it?

A. Well, I just decided not to take gym because, ah, I wanted to better my future and take a course that I'd find worth while to, like, better my future.

Q. If you were better in gym do you think you'd take it?

A. No, I don't think so.

CASE 6: Male, age 14

Q. How did you like gym this year?

A. It was all right, some things were too hard. Then it was all right all around.

Q. If you could do anything you wanted in gym to make it better, what would you change?

A. I think it's pretty good all around. We have a warmup and we do our - whatever class he's planned, so there's not much we could change.

Q. Are you taking gym next year?

A. No.

Q. Why do you think you aren't going to take it?

A. I canoe every night because I race with a club here in Ottawa and I canoe every night. I have to ride there and back and then I have papers. I find this gives me enough exercise. Sometimes I jog around the block.

Q. If you were better in gym, do you think you would take it?

A. No, I still don't think I would.

Q. Was gym fun for you?

A. Oh ya!

Q. Did you ever feel self conscious or embarrassed in gym?

A. No, not really unless I just couldn't do anything; like, we were in small groups, everybody had to help me get over the box horse.