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Athletic Classrooms: Attitudes Of Participants Toward The Developmental Value Of Athletics And The Evolution Of Interscholastic Sport In High Schools

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VITA

Michael Lynn Blackburn was born January 19, 1950, in Kokomo, Indiana, to Everett and Blanche Blackburn. He received his Bachelor of Science degree from Indiana State University, Terre Haute, Indiana in 1972. In 1976 he completed his Master of Arts degree from St. Frances College in Fort Wayne, Indiana.

His career began in 1972 as a U.S. History teacher and three sport coach at Caston Jr.-Sr. High School, Fulton, Indiana. In 1974, Mr. Blackburn accepted a position at Central Noble High School, Albion, Indiana, where he taught social studies, health, physical education and driver education while serving as head football coach. In the spring of 1977, Mr. Blackburn took a position with Northwestern High School, Kokomo, Indiana. While at Northwestern he began as a teacher and head football coach and became director of athletics during his first year at the school. He served as Director of Athletics for 25 years and Assistant Principal Responsible for Athletics for two additional years. He secured his principal's license in 2001 and earned his Ed.S. degree from Indiana State University in 2002 and subsequently the superintendent's licensure. Also in 2002, he was granted permission to participate in the Indiana State University, Wednesday Residency doctoral degree program in educational leadership, administration and foundations. In 2005 he left his many fulfilling years of service at Northwestern School Corporation and became the Associate Executive Director of the National Interscholastic Athletic Administrators Association located in Indianapolis, Indiana.

He has been happily married for thirty six years and is the father to three tremendous grown children and their spouses, as well as beautiful grandchildren.

ATHLETIC CLASSROOMS: ATTITUDES OF PARTICIPANTS
TOWARD THE DEVELOPMENTAL VALUE OF ATHLETICS AND THE
EVOLUTION OF INTERSCHOLASTIC SPORT IN HIGH SCHOOLS

A Dissertation

Presented to

The School of Graduate Studies

Department of Educational Leadership,

Administration and Foundations

Indiana State University

Terre Haute, Indiana

In Partial Fulfillment

of the Requirement for the Degree

Doctor of Philosophy

by

Michael Lynn Blackburn

May 2007

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Athletic Classrooms: Attitudes of Participants toward the Developmental Value
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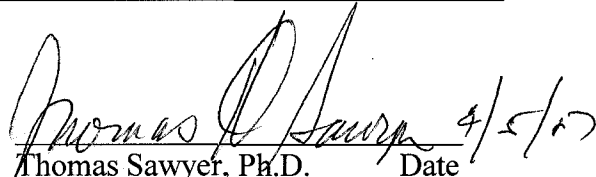
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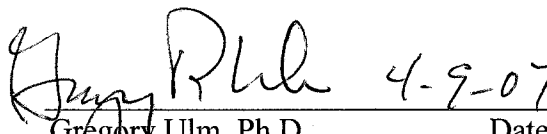
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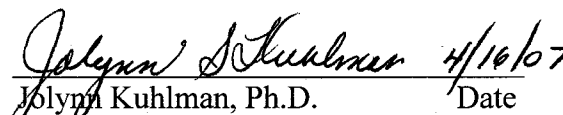
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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study was to determine the manner in which interscholastic athletics became a part of the extra-curricular offering of the schools and the political and social forces that impacted the implementation, as well as to provide the perceptions of athletic participants regarding their educational experience, personal character development and community impact.

The research questions that guided this study were: 1) Would the development of interscholastic athletics in high schools display the fostering of beneficial lifelong attributes among participants, contribute positively to the educational process and have a favorable impact on communities? 2) Would athletic participation help develop strong moral, social, and personal character traits among participants by serving as educational agents? and 3) Would there be displayed among athletic participants such positive attributes as school attendance, lower discipline rates, good study habits, and better grades that contribute to the educational mission?

This study examined how different generations of one family viewed the personal growth experience of participation in interscholastic athletics in terms of character attributes, moral reasoning and social development. The family members interviewed included grandfather, Dayton Merrell, son Ted Merrell and granddaughter Katie Merrell, with reference to the life experiences and written material associated with athletic participation of deceased great-grandfather, Russell Merrell. The four generations from

the birth of Russell to the current age of Katie covered 100 years and the entailing entry, growth and development of interscholastic athletics in secondary school offerings during that century.

In addition, the views of participants from three key eras of sport in the 20th century were researched. Subjects provided insight into the evolution of interscholastic athletics from the turn of the century to the mid 1930s, the period through the 1960s and on through the beginning of the 21st century.

Included among those who shared their insight were John Wooden, who provided a look at the early days of high school sports as a youth in Martinsville, Indiana, through to his record 10 Division I, NCAA national championships as a basketball coach. Coach Wooden was 96 years young at the time of this study and offered insight not only into his philosophy of how sport should positively affect the lives of participants, but also a panoramic view of the century of growth and affect on schools.

Mr. Smith served as the pseudonym for the subject who experienced an extremely successful playing career and shared the perspective of an African American athlete during the period of large growth of high school sports in the mid 1900s. He offered insight into the struggle to overcome segregation during this very prosperous time of interscholastic growth and popularity. This college player of the year at a major Midwest university was also a multiple year All Star in the National Basketball Association and played high school basketball at a historically strong Midwestern school. His high school was among the first segregated schools in the United States to win a state basketball championship.

And, Judi Warren provided a look at the struggle for female participation later in the century. Judi was a pioneer in girls' sports taking root and flourishing in the state of Indiana. She played on the Warsaw Tiger basketball team that won the first girl's state championship and was named the first "Miss Basketball" commemorating the finest basketball player on the Indiana All Star team. Judi Warren has been an educator for 26 years and served as a girls head varsity basketball coach for 14 years after her four years of college play.

The qualitative study of a number of individual findings showed common beliefs in regard to participation strengthening the development of positive personal character traits, enhancing the educational experiences and success, and favorably drawing community and the educational mission together.

Conclusions from the findings included: 1) Regardless of gender, race, generation or demographics study participants experienced benefit from participation in athletics through the development of social and personal characteristics. 2) Although sports entered schools under questionable societal agendas and political manipulations, the offering has evolved as a defining involvement in the education of youth through the influence, impact and direction of educators, administrators and governing associations. 3) The experiences of educationally based interscholastic athletic programs served to build a foundation on which participants formulated decisions related to moral integrity and strength of character. 4) Athletic programs developed loyalty toward the educational mission of the school and served as a rallying point for support of student efforts. As an agent of education, interscholastic athletics strengthened the social development of students and mission of school, while offering a view of the full purpose of education to

patrons. 5) The educational experience was enhanced for study participants through the self motivation to be in attendance, achieve in the classroom and conduct themselves appropriately. The strongest contributing factor for education was budgeting time wisely and subsequent development of proper study skills.

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I want to acknowledge the contribution and cooperation of the 2002-03, Wednesday Residence Cohort who are caring individuals and educators. Dr. Bradley Balch was of great encouragement and certainly thanks goes to Dr. Josh Powers and all of the professors in the Department of Educational Leadership, Administration, and Foundations that contributed so much through their instruction and direction and the College of Education who contributed so much teaching and help. The help of Sandy Shields and those in the ELAF office is appreciated as is the direction of Dr. Susan Powers in the College of Education, and all those in the School of Graduate Studies.

A note of thanks should also be given to Mr. Ryan Snoddy, Superintendent of Northwestern Schools, Principal Harold Seamon, the Northwestern Board of Education and school administrators for their support of my participation in the Wednesday Residency Program. Former and current department office administrative assistants Sheila Lamb and Diane Dabbs have been very important and my appreciation goes also

to supervisors and coaching staff for all of their support and extra effort that made it possible.

Lastly, I would like to thank the person that through their willingness to be a part made the qualitative study possible including Mr. John Wooden, Mr. Smith, Ms Judi Warren, Mr. Dayton Merrell, Mr. Ted Merrell and Miss Katie Merrell.

DEDICATION

I would like to express my sincere appreciation to Brenda, my wonderful wife, for her loving encouragement, fervent prayer and extended patience over the past few years. Her belief in me along with her confidence and sacrifice has contributed immensely to the realization of this goal. As well, my thanks to Ryan, Scott, and Amy.

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Chapter 1

INTRODUCTION

Often the perspectives of Americans have in great measure been molded by life experiences. Experiences affiliated with education in relation to encounters in the classroom, laboratory, social relationships, interscholastic athletics, and other extra-curricular activities shaped the view and perception of individuals. The role that sports held in education has been an important influencer of student-athletes. Whether a student, teacher, coach, parent, or principal, each person was influenced by the positive or negative impact of experiences that educational opportunity presented. Athletic administrators have affirmed to having witnessed the benefits that teenagers garnered from involvement in interscholastic athletics and other extra-curricular, as well as, co-curricular school activities. They have suggested that coaching was teaching, athletics were educational, and the fields, courts, courses, pools, and gymnasiums of the country were classrooms (Blackburn, 2000). Educators attest that student extra-curricular activity programs represented a very significant portion of the ongoing comprehensive secondary school (National Federation of State High School Association [NFHS], 1995).

Regarding the status of sport in secondary schools, Eitzen and Sage (1997) write that, "High school sports are central in U. S. schools" (p. 82). Did these activities support

the academic mission of the school? Were the activities educational in nature? These unknowns represented the questions for which an answer was sought through this qualitative study. By means of an interpretative case study the reason and purpose for sports in secondary schools was studied.

Interscholastic athletics were designed for all socio-economic groups, races, religions, abilities, genders, shapes, and sizes of students. Athletics and other extra-curricular involvements have proved to be a strong shaper of the student's will, work ethic, initiative, and motivation. Academics and extra-curricular activities have worked together to better the student. During the 2004-05 school year, there were 7,018,709 high school student athletic participants in the United States (NFHS, 2005). Information prepared by the National Interscholastic Athletic Administrators Association (NIAAA), the National Federation of State High School Associations (NFHS) and the Sporting Goods Manufacturers Association estimated that approximately 50% of the student body in American high schools participated in at least one activity (NFHS, 1995).

One example of blending academic excellence and athletic participation was personal experience that included witnessing an average of 80% of the graduates enrolled at a four-year university while another 10% attended junior college, technical or vocational school. In combination with this evidence of scholastic motivation was the admirable level of extra curricular activity involvement with nearly 91% of these students having participated in athletics at some time during their high school career while an average of 70% annually participated on one or more teams. The fall season of each school year produced approximately 60% of the student body having participated when the numbers from athletics and marching band were combined (Blackburn, 2004).

In order to accumulate percentages or participation levels across the nation, there must also have been schools where participation was low. Debate then surfaced regarding whether students in schools with lower participation rates would show subsequent increases, status quo, or decreases in scholastic achievement, attendance averages, discipline situations and drop out rates.

Statement of the Problem

The introduction of interscholastic athletics into the environment of the public high school was praised by educators as having been the single most important factor in the development of character among the youth of America. On the other hand, some argued that athletics in the nation's schools was a poisoning agent to education (Sage, 1970). According to Wiggins (1995), one thing was certain when he confirmed that interscholastic athletics posed a particular set of problems for educators.

The positive individual and group qualities potentially derived from participation in sport have been hailed as a match to the pioneering spirit of citizenry of the United States. Earlier philosophers and researchers have pondered the sporting phenomenon in our country, such as Boyle (1962) in an article entitled, *The Bizarre History of American Sport*. In order to define the growth of sport, Boyle turned to the thoughts of historian Paxson, who suggested that sports became the social safety valve that replaced the frontier. It could have been argued that the same persistence and overcoming of hardships displayed by settlers of this land who involved themselves in the earliest fierce work of taming the land eventually gave way to competitive endeavors. Actions including clearing land in order to grow crops, breaking the prairie, and felling the forests may have become in themselves a form of competitiveness. Self-preservation, exploring, and

moving westward along with forms of subsistence living through farming and hunting, were later expressed in sport through such work related competitive forms of play as barn-raising, fishing, log-rolling and rail splitting (Cozens & Stumpf, 1953). These work necessity activities were cut from the same mold as the type of character portrayed while participating in athletic competition. Supporters, educators and researchers of athletics, including authors such as Coleman (1961) and Coakley (1990), believed that the strengths of Americanization in the schools could be fostered by participation. They cited the potential for the development of citizenship, social qualities, moral character and dependability. Coakley contended that sport was integrally related to the dominant political and social structures that surrounded them. Even earlier, Coleman pointed out that democratization took place within the participation levels of athletics.

For some detractors, the argument of athletics in the nation's high schools could have been summed up with the catch phrase that athletics had become the "tail that wags the dog" in regard to education (Sage, 1970). In other words, athletics had influenced educational decisions and budgets. There also may have been those who felt that sports contributed little to education and served to only divert the time, energy, and attention of the student, staff and community away from the purpose of school. Mrozek (1983) wrote that sport became the religious ritual of the machine age and in practice displayed "sacrifice without purpose, performance without magic, obsolescence without compensation and value without meaning" (p. 14).

Purpose of the Study

In order to answer the problematic questions relevant to whether athletics were educational by nature and supported the academic mission of the school, it was necessary

to study how sports entered schools and the perspective of those involved as stake holders. The purpose of the study was four-fold: to provide a background of the historical implementation of interscholastic athletics, to review the political and social impact of interscholastic athletics as a part of the nation's secondary school setting, to provide a reflection of the perceptions and attitudes of subject's views regarding their athletic participation and to establish the value to the educational experience.

Research Questions

The following research questions were developed to guide this study:

1. Would the development of interscholastic athletics in high schools display the fostering of beneficial lifelong attributes among participants, contribute positively to the educational process and have a favorable impact on communities?
2. Would athletic participation help develop strong moral, social, and personal character traits among participants by serving as educational agents?
3. Would there be displayed among athletic participants such positive attributes of school attendance, lower discipline rates, good study habits, and better grades that contribute to the educational mission?

Grand Tour Question

How would those experiencing various involvements in high school interscholastic athletics describe their experiences in assisting them to meet their life educational mission and personal growth attributes as well as their view of the collective action of school and community?

Significance of the Study

A qualitative study of the purpose of interscholastic athletics in our nation's schools was of importance for several reasons. First, the topic of the entry of sports into the school offering has been one of debate for many years and an understanding of the political and social atmosphere in which this phenomenon evolved could help make for a stronger appreciation among those who raise the question. Utilization of written and personally shared information regarding drop out rates, discipline problems, attendance, study habits, and grades of student participants and non-participants would be of benefit to school leaders. Helping educators better understand the relationship of competitive sport with the educational mission of the school was a worthwhile contribution. The study assisted school leadership in better applying logic and worth to their programs while being able to evaluate the potential benefit of their offerings through a different lens than perhaps they have ever used before. Often, there existed occurrences when many communities tended to over embrace the fundamental expectation of winning by the teams that represented their local school. To better understand how participation by young people could benefit the student as they mature into adulthood the outcomes of the study, in turn, could make the parent and fan better able to justify the offering of sports in school. The life long lessons learned from participation would assist those with a vested interest to possess a much broader view of sport goodness and not simply the short term goal of winning. The study may have assisted a collective group of society to encourage proper behavior and adopt a philosophy of support through development of a better understanding of the educational nature of interscholastic athletic participation. A positive consequence of issuing knowledge regarding how extra-curricular activities

served to meet the educational mission of the school was the community member embracing the full compliment of school offerings. For patrons whose tax revenues supported such programs this was a reinforcing message. In addition, the prospective participant would benefit from the qualitative study by being made aware of the fostering of lifelong attributes that participation supported. The acceptance of responsibility, enhancing of work ethic, balancing time and strengthening leadership ability were worthwhile attributes for which the student-athlete could direct their endeavors. The strength of relationships, social skills, and personal character may have proved to display themselves in a positive light with a young person. And finally, to have a clearer understanding of how, and under what circumstances, interscholastic athletics entered and have evolved in our schools could only help all of us to better appreciate the purpose and role of extra-curricular activities in education. Only then would a community realize that it truly was stronger as a portion of society and benefit from the collectiveness of those who participated and not necessarily by the team that won.

Limitations

As with most studies, limitations were to be expected. Generalizations from the study were limited to the degree that:

1. The number included in the sample was limited to those who agreed to participate in the study and responded to the questions that were posed.
2. The researcher was dependent upon the voluntary cooperation, perspective and recall of subjects.

3. The study would describe the current view of certain characteristics of the subject's character development but would not establish a common foundation for equating character.

Delimitations

Delimitations of the study include:

1. The time frame established for the study was the 2004-05 and 2005-06 academic years.
2. An effort was made to include the view of participants from the varied backgrounds of rural and urban, male and female, various races, and schools of different size enrollment.
3. The case study involved cross-generation members from one family that participated at the high school level.
4. Those who participated in the generation case study originated from the same state and geographic region.
5. The researcher attempted to study different eras of the social and political school sports history of the state.

Organization of the Study

This document is divided into five chapters. Chapter 1 provides an introduction and identification of the problem to be investigated and included for the study a statement of the problem, the purpose of the study, research questions and definitions of related terms. Also, included is a grand tour question and segment on the significance of the study. The chapter further includes assumptions, limitations and delimitations. Chapter 2 presents a review of the related literature and the chapter is subdivided into an

introduction and historical research of the institution of interscholastic athletics evolving in the secondary school of America as well as research on the benefits or liabilities that was followed by a summary. Chapter 3 presents a description of the subjects interviewed and the collection procedure of sample data. Chapter 4 presents findings of the study. Chapter 5 presents a summary of the results, conclusion, and discussion of the implications of the findings.

Chapter 2

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

Two areas were the focus of this review of the literature. Initially, an examination of findings was conducted in order to provide background dealing with the historic implementation of interscholastic athletics into secondary schools. The circumstances surrounding the entry and the political, as well as social impact of athletics on schools of the nation were a primary thrust of the study. The review sought to examine the phenomenon of organized sports infiltration into the high school setting while it endeavored to gain a perspective of the atmosphere that prevailed at the time in terms of the leadership behavior of school administrators and economic conditions that existed. Interest resulted in the pursuit of what events opened the door to, and paved the way for, the arrival of interscholastic athletics on the school scene.

The review also provided reflections, perceptions and attitudes of subjects regarding their participation in athletics. This effort was to determine the role and potential value that participation played in their educational experience. Parallels between behaviors of student-athletes and the identification of effective attributes of participation were sought. The review helped define the potential positive educational characteristics

that might be garnered from participation in competitive sport and the climate that must be identified to most positively contribute to the school environment.

Perspectives of Participation

Our experiences while receiving our education have sharply influenced our view of school and all of its entities. Regardless of our current position or role in society, education has, in some way, influenced the outcome. While many attest to the benefits that extra-curricular involvement offers, the question remained as to whether sport belonged in the school setting. Interscholastic athletics were cheered by some as character builders while to others sport was simply a revealer of character (Thomas & Lewis, 1994). Others believed athletics assisted in serving as a deterrent to idleness, contrary to the feeling that they stole time from academic endeavors. The reader could have been led by some to feel that sport represented a unique competitive spirit in Americans and by others, that it was a scourge on our priorities as a country. Still another segment spoke of the potential of sport to be an agent of change (Coakley, 1990).

Historical Perspective

While over the years interscholastic athletics provided a major role in the experience of the high school student as well as the heritage of the school, they did not always hold prominence and position. The origins of the introduction of athletics and their acclimation into schools was a gradual process having its roots in the various cultures that merged into the societal pot that today makes up the United States. The process of athletics being a part of the American high school has been an experiment that mirrored the social, political, economic, and industrial growth and experiences of the nation. In addition, the entry was a process that proved to be a microcosm of American

education and society. In speaking of the relationship of sport in human history, Coakley (1990) stated that there was an integral relationship to the political and social structure dominant in each time period.

Youth have participated in some sort of sporting activity since the earliest settling of the country. The period of time from the arrival of European settlers who found Native Americans occupying the lands of this continent to the latter part of the nineteenth century was a significant time of struggle and acclamation during which America derived ideas from many cultures. Contests of early days were informal, based upon local customs, and the results not widely disseminated but remained in remembrance by the oral tradition (Riess, 1995). The gradual and complex blending of goals, emotions, and perspectives of many peoples has been debated and played out over this nearly 300-year span. It has been a time of a foundation being laid for the culture in which sport would prosper. A variety of countries, cultures, races and ethnic groups made important contributions during this period. All were influential regardless of whether their heritage represented the Native American, African, or European.

The last 25 years of the 19th century began a time brief in years but swift in cultural promotion and acceptance of play, recreation, physical education, sport, and athletic competition. Of this period, Mark Twain wrote while describing the baseball movement in the country, "...is the very symbol, the outward and visible expression of the drive and push and rush and struggle of the raging, tearing, booming 19th century" (as quoted in Sage, 1970, p. 45). This age of inventions and manufacturing was a boom to the sporting industry. The introduction of numerous organizations, clubs, publications, and associations during this quarter century all sponsored or in some way fostered

athletics (Boyle, 1962). These factors began to influence school administrators and infiltrate curriculum and facilities. Many Americans had become infatuated with sport and were participants, spectators, or promoters of the same. Some school teams came into existence as the result of student initiatives (Wiggins, 1995). By the concluding years of the century, high school administrators, especially from the East and Midwest, were well into having athletics either thrust upon them or they endeavored to prepare the groundwork for leading athletics into their schools and state.

The 20th century was a time of tremendous growth and controversy in high school athletics. Sports persevered in the country when the economy went from roaring upward to falling into despair (Reese, 1998). The field of athletics helped serve as a leader when the country began opening its eyes to racial, gender, and ethnic discrimination while it moved toward opportunity for all in the public school arena of access to competitive interscholastic sport in public schools.

Rationale for Sport

Character development was only a part of the rationale for the introduction of athletics into high schools while a primary purpose was to use sport to teach athletes to become better people (Brown, 2002). Stakeholders along the way included the students, teachers and administrators of the educational system who utilized sport as a proving ground for some special interest groups including politicians and business while addressing issues not limited to gender and racial equity.

The evolution of sports in schools followed a non-traditional road during which athletics infiltrated the educational system. It was uniquely American (Sage, 1970). The distinct political, social, and economic eras that ebbed and flowed throughout our

country's history strongly influenced the ideology of sport and the introduction to the public schools of not only Indiana but the nation.

During the earliest years of the country, from the colonies up to the 19th century, there was a constant battle over the appropriateness of play and recreation. In over three centuries of history, the acceptance of play moved very slowly. Competitive athletics became widely accepted as did physical education in schools that included sport, dance and other forms of physical activity. The battle centered over whether sport should be competitive or physical education (Vanderzwaag, 1972).

From the Colonies Forward to 1875

Recreation for the purpose of fun was suppressed and the earliest forms of recreation centered on the horse. Horse breeding, horse racing, equestrian, harness racing, and horse trotting made up a large part of how early settlers amused themselves. With so much work to be done in the settling of the country, as well as for personal survival, time spent in the pursuit of recreation was considered idle time. The period of American history leading up to 1875 saw citizens involved in various activities of sport that were often outlets of, or related to, their work or subsistence. In addition to horse related activities, the earliest leisure involvements included fishing and hunting in the readily accessible woods and streams of our primarily agrarian society (Riess, 1995). Sport for the masses in this period of early America consisted of such activities as ice skating, sledding, rowing, sleigh rides, and sailing (Betts, 1974).

Early Views of Play

The view that leisure time should not be spent in any activity other than family or work was displayed in the attitude held by some Philadelphia Quakers who helped impose local anti-sport laws. They believed that such activities were needless vain sports and pastimes (Mrozek, 1983). And certainly, such activities should not be participated in on Sunday. New York passed a state law in 1788 prohibiting traveling, working, shooting, fishing, playing, horse racing, hunting, sporting, or frequenting tippling houses on the Sabbath (Betts, 1974). Both Massachusetts and Connecticut banned amusement activities including dice, cards, and ninepin bowling (Dulles, 1965). The church took a hard line against such activity and generally considered recreation as evil and unnecessary.

The source of such thought was that gambling often was intricately associated with sport or gaming, as it was called. Gaming rooms and taverns often sponsored such activities as dancing, darts, and gambling at cards. Those who were considered “rabble” and “rowdies” were engaged in billiards and prize fighting. The social split among citizens led this element who might have been called “city loafers” or perhaps “town toughs” to be labeled as undesirables (Betts, 1974). Mired in the netherworld of violence, bloodletting, and theatrics were bull baiting and ratting and cockfighting that were considered just as revolting, a link on the chain below the primitive slugging contests of bloodied bare fisted boxing and prize fighting (Mrozek, 1983). Tavern keepers of the day furnished tables and cards and extended gambling credit as they promoted their livelihood by encouraging the patronage of customers who came to drink, talk, relax, eat, and participate in recreation. Some tavern keepers built cockpits and alleys while defying

or skirting the law. Benjamin Berry of Virginia retained local fist fighters for bouts against all comers (Wiggins, 1995). As historian Gorn pointed out, in its early days, sport intimated boisterousness defiance of social constraint and loutish behavior (Riess, 1995). In New England, any time-wasting idle involvement earned participants immediate punishment and names such as Common Coasters, unprofitable fowlers, or Tobacco takers (Dulles, 1965). Later, football would be called by some a criminality that created a social violence among the working class. While this 'football hooliganism' did not necessarily direct rage toward the institutions that exploited the laborer, the frustration was often directed at other working class men, supporters of other teams or other races. Some considered this activity gang combat and felt that the energy spent could have gone into positive social organization channels. Although it never threatened to become politically revolutionary, the violence was often deadly for those in the mayhem and promoted same-class suicidal violence rather than a common front (Burstyn, 1999).

The question of why religious groups such as the Puritans held such intense disapproval of games and amusement was perhaps answered with more than one response. There was a rightful sanctity of the Sabbath; but the dissent against the worldliness of the Anglican Catholic Church in England was surely a strong factor. While some of these early activities are still frowned on today, not all can be classified under the title of athletic endeavors. Religious reformers no doubt saw play as an evil impulse compared to spiritual values. In addition, the lower class of poorer, hardworking people resented the pleasure of the wealthier nobility in the mother country. As they struggled to improve their economic and social position, it was perhaps natural to rationalize feelings to condemn as sinful all amusements that they could not enjoy. Two centuries later, after

moving forward in class and socioeconomic status, these same people of reform, now middle class, found they had become the target of criticism by other groups (Dulles, 1965). The United States served as an arena for assimilating the athletic endeavors of all who flocked to the shores of this country (Parks, Zanger, & Quarterman, 1998).

While this seedy side of sport was often rejected by the public, among the aristocrats, outlets of recreation began to be manifested. For these wealthier and higher social status Americans, the popular activities became fox hunting, cricket, yachting, trotting, horse racing, rowing, and eventually, baseball (Betts, 1974). It was these “gentlemen” who turned toward a movement of organizing sport for enthusiasts.

Melting Pot of Sports

As sport became more accepted, it consisted of just as numerous varieties of games as there were racial and ethnic backgrounds combining their traditions of play. The early sport of America was as much a melting pot of athletic ideas from around the world as it was the people from countries forming the blend. The uniquely American phenomenon of sports (Sage, 1970) in schools had its roots in the various groups and periods of history as well as the people living during those periods. The British brought horse racing, cricket, and rowing. Many of the early English games came from the agrarian country side and often were associated with seasonal holiday festivals that included rowdy and violent feats of strength (Burstyn, 1999). In the area of Virginia many settlers sought to emulate English gentlemen in the sporting pastime of hunting with hawks and falcons (Parks et al., 1998). As the Irish immigrants settled during the potato famine of the late 1840s, prize fighting in the ring became more prominent. Many French were billiards experts. The American Indian influenced sport as well. A dynamic

example of what role sport played in the life of the Native American was a story of the Iroquois Indians who were known to play contests of lacrosse including up to one thousand warriors on a team while driving a ball down a field approaching ten miles long with racquet sticks. Games lasted as long as three days (Menke, 1977).

While the American Indian played games for competition, pride, and prowess, tribes outside what became the United States influenced American sport and were motivated by other beliefs. For Indian groups from areas south of the United States that influenced athletic endeavors such as field hockey, lacrosse, and shinny, the team games played were far more serious than the holidays celebrated by the Europeans in that sport often surrounded their tribal religious ritual or even sacrifice (Burstyn, 1999). Some were convinced that tug-of-war games had magical power to bring rain in arid zones; those in the coastal areas of Canada and Alaska played a form of hockey utilizing a section of whalebone from the animal's spine for the puck in order to assure a good whaling season. Wrestling bouts from Africa were used to strengthen crop growth while other spring games were thought to help fertility (Brasch, 1970). One of the early mainsprings of sport was the need of man to protect himself, his tribe, or his country. Running, jumping, subduing opponents, archery, and martial arts were necessary for self preservation and are the elements from which sport evolved. Development of courage and meeting the hazards of climate, animals, foes, or terrain were a few of the reasons for mankind to play, compete, excel, and dominate (Brasch). Sport assumed the early significance of a gift and had many roles from ritual, to fun, to exercise and health, to social lifestyle, to spectator, to occupation, to survival, to recreational leisure, to technological games, to

community prowess. Whether scoring, which is related to the Norse word for 'notch' on a stick (Brasch), means notching a hit, win, kill, shot, swing, or goal; it has always defined man's love for games.

Through such events as the Revolutionary War, Civil War, westward movement, and urban growth, each major event brought a unique set of competitions. For example, as a result of influence of the west, activities such as horseshoe pitching, wrestling, foot races, log cutting, and rail splitting became prominent. The South was often friendlier toward sports as compared to New Englanders who regarded games to be associated with corruption. In the South, horse racing, shooting contests, rail flinging, steamboat racing, and wrestling were accepted. Movement further west brought bull fights, buffalo hunts, and rodeo events. Whatever interests each geographic area created, sport was dynamically associated with the work, resources, and the environment of that part of the country. Many Americans, especially those who lived on farms or in villages and towns not located on the frontier, felt many of these events to be hardly recreation and, in many cases, to be cruel and wild (Betts, 1974).

Influences of Change

Following the Civil War, new influences on sport began to change the face of how the country participated and what the interests were, having been influenced by the events that soldiers played to occupy free time, while interrelating with persons from other parts of the nation. This post Civil War period also marked the largest acceleration of urban population in American history and impacted the rapid emergence of sport in the radial industrial cities. The small antebellum towns or 'walking cities' where residents could walk to their destinations gave way to a 15% growth in population reforming the

people's location in cities that radiated in waves from the downtown business district. Sports entrepreneurs saw this concentration of population to be a critical mass of potential sports enthusiasts and a ready market for their sales and promotions (Riess, 1995). In the country, county fairs helped move sport toward the school since students would be released from school for such contests as plowing matches and other competitive farming techniques (Peckman, 1978).

1875 to the Turn of the Century

The period of the quarter of a century from 1875 to 1900 experienced a swift rise in sport that paralleled the immense changes in the country and society during the time. Princeton had already played Rutgers in the first intercollegiate football game in 1869 introducing what would become a huge influence on schools (Vanderzwaag, 1972).

Interestingly, the golden age of invention had a mighty impact on the growth of athletics. Competing with the telegraph and newspaper were such inventions as the telephone, camera, and typewriter that all were important in the ability of the media to communicate and transfer results of contests and promote athletics on a state, regional, and national level. Sports weeklies also had an impact on the times while communication innovations impacted the speeding up of reporting and accessibility and also negatively impacted the growth of illegal gambling (Riess, 1995).

The invention of the electric light also had a great influence on the prospering of sport by eventually making events held at night in various venues a reality and replacing dull, flickering, and dangerous gas lamps with consistent illumination (Riess, 1995). Vulcanized rubber was an important finding for furthering the development of athletics through manufacturing elastic, resilient, and also inflatable balls used for many different

recreations. In addition, pneumatic tires prospered racing competition (Riess). Electrification and industrialization of America made for the growth of large corporations such as General Electric, General Motors, and Westinghouse as well as methods of distributing sporting good items through networks such as department stores (Burstyn, 1999). The earliest sporting equipment was handcrafted and this practice persisted through the first half of the 19th century (Wiggins, 1995). The A.G. Spalding & Brothers Company was organized during this time and fostered the provision of equipment for individuals and teams. Until this period, such gear as fishing tackle was primarily imported from overseas (Boyle, 1962). Sears, Roebuck catalogues offered over 80 pages of sporting goods while Macy's Department Store established the first sporting goods section (Riess).

Improved methods of transportation allowed teams and spectators more convenient and timelier travel to athletic functions (Betts, 1974). Railroads and trolley cars were fast, comfortable, and economical modes of transportation. They shortened the time of long-distance trips as well as access to venues within the city. Railroading also created interest in cycling, angling, and hunting by getting participants and outdoorsmen to distant sites and exclusive resorts with baggage in tow (Riess, 1995).

In addition to inventions, manufacturing, and travel, a number of what have become renowned sporting events were first conducted during this 25-year period. The game of baseball began to emerge as "the national pastime" as professional baseball was founded. The first Kentucky Derby was run, country clubs began to form, and the long standing rivalry began in college football between Harvard and Yale. Baseball, football, and boxing saw tremendous growth during the period of the early 20th century.

Of college football, William Baker told of the scope and deepened extension in our culture when he wrote:

Football became a national mania. The autumn game spread as a mode of mass entertainment for Americans east and west, north and south, rural and urban, rich and poor – for everyone near a college or university campus. Huge football stadiums, larger even than their baseball counterparts, sprang up across the nation. Football attendance doubled within the decade. Marching bands, majorettes and cheerleaders took the field as supporting casts for the athletes. College football in the Roaring Twenties became an autumn ritual, a fiercely competitive game wrapped in tinsel and bathed in fervent partisanship. A system of football scholarship was established. ‘It is at present a religion,’ *Harper’s* observed toward the end of the decade; ‘sometimes it seems to be almost our national religion.’ (Burstyn, 1999, p. 108)

This growth was in spite of an effort to ban football following 18 player deaths in 1905, the same year that the University of Michigan students cheered against an opponent named Eckersall, “Eckie, Eckie, Eckie, Break his little neckie” (Riess, 1995, p. 123). So, it was that this game of football, that may have had its earliest recorded form in the British Isles, made its mark. The first version of a football-like game from which such games as soccer, rugby, and American football derived was called ‘Dane’s Head’ and in the twelfth century involved kicking a skull used as the ball between towns that served as the goals (Burstyn, 1999).

New sports were invented, imported, or introduced to the country during this era. Sports including lawn tennis, polo, golf, trapshooting, auto racing, and ice hockey were

established. Roller skating became popular with the masses (Vanderzwaag, 1972). And, the new sports of basketball, volleyball, cycling, and gloved boxing were introduced to the public. Crystallized in the phenomenon of sport culture that exploded on the United States was something for everyone. Some evolved from old folk and aristocratic games, others from a movement including a variety of sports for the seasons of winter and summer, sports with racquets, sports with balls, and sports with bicycles (Burstyn, 1999). Each of these new games quickly increased the interest level of more Americans and promoted the school as an avenue for sponsoring and hosting team games. This same time period saw the beginning of a number of sponsoring agencies and supportive organizations formed including the Amateur Athletic Union (AAU), Big Ten Conference, the opening of Madison Square Garden in New York City, and the organization of the Young Men's Christian Association [YMCA] (Burstyn). The YMCA promoted the 'Muscular Christian' movement of Christian gentlemen adopting a philosophy of a strong mind and healthy body supporting a healthy spirit. This signaled a shift in the attitudes toward physical games among churches and attracted male parishioners (Riess, 1995). Each event fostered more interest at the local school and community level. Each opportunity to participate, watch, or make money from an athletic event developed a feeling that it could be accomplished in their respective locale and community. In addition, a number of clubs of association were created to oversee bowling, canoeing, horse shows, dog shows, archery, croquet, summer camps, skiing, and automobile shows (Boyle, 1962). These agencies oversaw the sport and served as a governing body. America became saturated with interest in sport as there were more and more chances to find an activity that fit the interest of each citizen.

Leading up to 1899, systematic gymnastics had been considered to be the form of exercise that yielded the most benefit from physical training. This was quickly changing in the military, schools, and colleges. School superintendent, George E. Johnson, made a plea for the use of games in the school instead of gymnastics in the book *Education by Sports and Games* (Cozens & Stumpf, 1953).

During this period of the late 1800s, one of the organizations at the forefront of the athletic movement was the National Guard. Many armories had been built and were very important centers for athletic activity in communities (Krug, 1969). A number of high schools held school sponsored activities at the armories. While the function was held at a separate venue, the activity was ultimately a school sponsored sporting event. The nineteenth century saw organized athletics defined as more than a simple diversion, but rather a potential means of achieving economic progress, national loyalty, and most importantly, the developer of admirable character traits (Coakley, 1990).

Entering the 20th Century

At the turn of the century, life in the United States was difficult. This time for the country in which sport was being introduced in schools was a somewhat trying period as displayed by the following facts and percentages. Only 6% of the people were high school graduates. Marijuana, heroin, and morphine were available over the counter at drugstores as guardians of health. Women washed their hair an average of once a month. The leading causes of death were influenza, pneumonia, tuberculosis, and diarrhea. The average wage was \$300.00 annually. The best paid occupation was a mechanical engineer at \$5000.00. Ninety-five percent of all births took place at homes. There were 8,000 cars and only 144 miles of paved roads. Fourteen percent of homes

had bathtubs and 8% had telephones. The average life expectancy was 47 years (Gray, 1980). There were over 200,000 high school students in the United States, primarily girls whose rate of graduation far surpassed that of boys (Riess, 1995).

In Indiana, the harshness of life coupled with the swiftly moving changes of American culture translated to problems in that many communities in the state were faced with tremendously quick and drastic sociological change, with which, they were unwilling or ill prepared to face. Many Hoosiers were not well educated and were experiencing school alterations through consolidation along with innovations in education (Reese, 1998). Agriculture dominated the educational calendar and much of the curriculum. The rapid growth of industry was forcing itself on a predominantly agricultural society. Life at the time was difficult and included a high infant mortality rate and numerous diseases. Many jobs were long hours and heavy labor, including child labor, and centered on not only farming but limestone quarrying, the steel industry, and mining coal. The discovery of natural gas and the manufacturing of the horseless carriage also soon became primary industries. Politically, various thoughts were being promoted including the pro union and socialist party of Eugene V. Debs that prospered during the first two decades of the 20th century along with the activity of the Ku Klux Klan [KKK] (Hoover, 1980). Most people were entrenched in their communities and seldom left to reside elsewhere. Through this era, the state and country faced, looming on the horizon, the economic boom of the 1920s, an economic depression, and two world wars.

In comparing functionalism in Indiana education as seen by the sociologist and historian in the first two decades of the 20th century, it gave one a snapshot of what drove the typical citizen and their views on community and school. By linking independent

attributes such as cohesion, stability, and cooperation, these components helped maintain a boundary for the functionalist society (Eitzen & Sage, 1997). While the historian saw the society to be structured in a traditional fashion with a community unity based upon values and ways, tradition, democratic function, and a bureaucratic order (Parsons, 1959), the ways of the sociologist better defined what most influenced Indiana's view of neighborhood. The terms that may have best defined Hoosiers at the turn of the century included emphasis on maintaining order through hierarchical advancement of society. Support of the status quo was reflected through reliance on norms, folkways, and mores.

A retrospect look at the historical difficulties faced by Indiana and the interwoven societal phenomenon that merged change, community pride, discrimination, a dominate race and religion, and harsh working conditions, required a variety of theories be implemented, either by accident, planning, or evolution of society. It is probable that much of what many remember as a golden age of Indiana high school sports was actually rooted in a period that saw a dominate homogeneous race and religion force its culture upon education that was further perpetuated by great interest in basketball which often defined the community. Aspects of Functionalism, Critical Theory, and Conflict Theory assisted in advancing the status quo, oppressing opposing views, promoting hegemony, and influencing through power (Mills, 1959). Ironically, it is these very same theories, along with Interpretive Theory, that applied within a different view of what society should have been, helped overcome secrecy, violence, intimidation, exclusion, overzealousness, and somewhat of a warped view of what a community should consist of. What the adults lived out trickled down to the school functions, classrooms, and activities. While the KKK, secret societies, economic growth, difficulties of war, poverty,

discrimination, and isolation did not form for the purpose of promoting basketball, looking back they collectively all impacted the view of high school sports in Indiana.

Introduction of Athletics to the High School

The introduction and implementation of athletics into high schools was an effort to mimic the sports opportunities originally organized by students at the college level. Sports were a diversion for college students that began with unorganized games and progressed to intramural activities, on to interclass competitions, and finally to challenging the students from another school to a contest. Actually, the first recorded sports contest between colleges was in 1852 when Yale and Harvard participated in a rowing race (Boyle, 1962). In many cases, the colleges initially sponsored the high school activities providing coaching, management, medical examinations, officiating, facilities, and finally recruitment of high school student athletes to college (Riess, 1995). The offering of athletics in high school was also influenced by sitting U.S. Presidents, industry, politicians, and sociologists, as well as school educators.

At the turn of the century, there were still misgivings regarding the assimilation of sport into the school. As a military leader and outdoorsman, President Theodore Roosevelt supported play in the school (Lewis, 1991). He preached the virtues of exercise and pronounced the benefits of the 'strenuous life' (Mrozek, 1983). During this period, even rifle-shooting became prominent as a school activity.

Ethnicity and race were major factors in the emerging American sporting experience. While many countries were represented in the makeup of U.S. athletic heritage, perhaps the Irish best fit the immigrant role of bringing a sporting legacy. Due to the process that aided these people in becoming Americanized; the immigrant from

eastern or southern Europe had a much different experience than African Americans who ventured into sports participation (Riess, 1995). Sports were considered a democratizing force in the larger cities where huge numbers of ethnic groups had settled in overcrowded conditions (Cozens & Stumpf, 1953). Sweat shops, saloons, tenement districts, and child labor were all well entrenched in the cities. As the urban areas found themselves faced with juvenile gangs, over-crowded slums, unemployment, discrimination, and idle time, they began to turn to recreation and sports to offer a solution to the problems that faced the city. After all, immigrants had brought with them the recreational customs of their country. The movement began with “sandlots” being prepared for children to play; thus, a common term developed in describing games played there such as sandlot baseball.

Parks, recreational piers, and schoolyards soon followed as a place set up for an alternative to gangs and delinquency. Playgrounds then were developed making way for the final step of structuring the sports, licensing sponsoring agencies, and regulating crowds in the school setting (Riess). In 1903, New York saw Luther Gulick establish after school athletic programs for immigrants. Working through the Playground Association of America, three years later, efforts were made to use recreational programs as a socializing agent for immigrant children by teaching American values including obedience, patriotism, teamwork, and citizenship (Parks et al., 1998).

A large number of school superintendents approved of competitive athletics in high school and desired to place the supervision of the boys’ sports in the hands of a regular teacher. Many wanted to be proactive in the implementation rather than following mandates if they waited. The first high school state athletic association was formed in New York in 1903 to oversee rules for the new and growing high school opportunities

(Betts, 1974). Many of the early operations and programs were supported by contributions from citizens. Some of the more prominent financiers included J.P. Morgan, Andrew Carnegie, and John D. Rockefeller (Cozens & Stumpf, 1953). The National Federation of State High School Association was begun in 1922 by representatives from eleven states that met to reach agreement on establishment of a governing body for the state associations and satellite groups such as officials, coaches, and administrators (NFHS, 1997). This move indicated the national scope of sports in high schools at the time. The National Federation organization was founded to adequately deal with eligibility rules, elimination of national championships, interstate competition regulations, rules effecting prospective athletes, and policy regarding equipment. Indiana's state association, the Indiana High School Athletic Association, was founded in 1903 (Indiana High School Athletic Association [IHSAA], 2004).

The looming war clouds of World War I provided a giant step for athletics to enter schools as most educators agreed that schools should contribute to keeping America mentally and physically prepared for the menace on the horizon and the challenges the nation faced (Wiggins, 1995). As World War I engulfed the United States, the importance of physical fitness was manifested. As young men swarmed to Army camps and were put through rigorous physical training for combat, there was concern about the physical condition of many soldiers as cited in 1917 by the Selective Service Act (Cozens & Stumpf, 1953).

The controversy over preparedness and the actual employment of athletics in the war effort strengthened the drive for physical education programs in the schools. The prominence of sports during this crisis period also reinforced the move to make sports the

centerpiece of the high school physical education curriculum. Finally, the intercamp 'championship' competition and mass athletics supported by the military resembled the distinction between varsity sports and sports conducted through physical education and intramural programs, as those activities developed in the two decades after the war (Wiggins, 1995).

Under fear of Congress requiring universal military training down into the elementary grades, many high schools implemented boxing, wrestling, swimming, and mass activities. The War Training Camps utilized during the period organized intramural sports and the masses of participation filtered down to college students and then into high schools. In addition, soldiers brought home sporting ideas from overseas (Cozens & Stumpf, 1953).

As a world war had developed interest in producing physically fit students, the Roaring 20s brought unprecedented growth in high school sport offerings. As spectator interest grew and the country's economy prospered, it set the stage for a boom in sports participation and support during the 1920s. The decade of the 1920s was called by many the Golden Age of Sport in America as it became perhaps the most prominent popular institution in the country. Perhaps evidence of this time was a record 104,000 fans converging on Chicago's Soldier Field to watch a 1927 heavyweight boxing arrangement between Gene Tunney and Jack Dempsey. Stadiums, gymnasiums, and athletic facilities were demanded by the public. In the 1920s, municipalities began building public stadiums for athletic contests, promotion of tourism, as well as their major league image among other cities. The Rose Bowl was built in 1922, followed by the Los Angeles Coliseum, and then the Baltimore Municipal Stadium the next year, with Soldier Field

being completed in 1924 (Riess, 1995). Then, just as quickly as sport zoomed in to the schools and local governments, the economic crash of 1929 brought on the Great Depression of the 1930s resulting in people out of work that subsequently created more individual free time. With budgets reduced, salaries cut, unemployment rampant, equipment curtailed, and lower attendance, schools began to adapt in an effort to cut costs with such ideas as 6-man football and the elimination of out-of-town trips. Interestingly, even during the difficult time of the depression, with people out of work, Boyle (1962) reported that government agencies, like the Work Progress Administration (WPA), built 10,000 gymnasiums, over 3,000 athletic fields, 805 swimming pools, and 250 golf courses nationally by 1938. Cozens and Stumpf (1953) reported that in the state of Michigan alone, 60 gymnasiums were under construction. By the end of the decade, one and a half billion federal dollars had been spent on such facilities. Taxpayers called for the wider use of the school plant and many school facilities gradually opened-up after regular school hours (Reese, 1998).

Moving Toward the Second World War

The years between WWI and II saw America move further toward an emphasis placed upon sports as a valuable preparation for conditioning of soldiers. Schools stressed combative and conditioning sports such as obstacle courses during World War II (Krug, 1969). Following the Second World War and into the 1950s, high school athletics entered yet a new period of growth. It was a “siss-boom-bah” period when schools abandoned some of its earliest traditions and worked to further make the school and its extra-curricular offerings a source of community cohesiveness (Reese, 1998). Richer were the school colors, fight songs, mascots, senior cords, and class rings. This was sometimes

called the 'golden age' (Talamini & Page, 1973) by some; however, it was not always so golden for all student groups that made up the school society. An example of this attitude may have existed in the state of Indiana and the historically predominant sport of boys' basketball. The question must be asked of Indiana high school basketball enthusiasts as to whether the golden years were really so golden? Considering the massive changes in industry and labor, the economic period of the 20s, the depression, and two World Wars, discrimination experienced by racial, ethnic, and religious groups, as well as women, could basketball possibly be the determiner which Hoosiers translated into this epitome of high school sport, school spirit, and community support? While investigating this era and endeavoring to utilize theory in order to explain a chronological chain of events and why they occurred as they did, it was necessary to not oversimplify the reality of one event affecting another. As sociologist Krause (1975) pointed out, while life may seem to be a series of snapshots, we must seek patterns and processes that unfold overtime.

The zealousness of communities related to identification with the school can be seen in the minutes of an August 5, 1948 meeting of the board of trustees of the newly formed Clay Ervin, Howard School Corporation, located in Howard County, Indiana. The agenda for the meeting included the election of officers, naming the school, selection of school colors, selecting the mascot, and completion of the annual corporation budget (Board of Directors of Northwest School Corporation, 1948). The decisions on what trademarks would identify the school and community seemed to be primary items to be dealt with relative to importance of the boards' leadership in fiscal areas.

The desegregation laws of the 1950s and a Civil Rights movement of the 1960s contributed to the black American teenager gaining the ability to participate on an

integrated public school athletic team. Until this time, the country had overtly discriminated against the black race and women as well as various religions and ethnic groups. And to a certain extent, this system of high school athletics catered only to a few physical specimens even among white males. 1972 brought Title IX which opened the opportunity for young women to participate in interscholastic athletics with all of the same privileges as male athletes in terms of coaching, offerings, budget, and facilities (Interscholastic Equity Committee, 1994). Those who had been oppressed, now by law, were able to begin the process of building on the same advantages of participation enjoyed by other groups.

While interscholastic athletics was primarily a phenomenon of the changing social, economic, and political era of America, it prevailed as a strong part of the institution of education. From its humble beginnings in our country, sport has gained acceptance as an important part of the school setting. Yet, it continued to struggle to serve as a model in the development of positive qualities of character, health and participation benefits.

The one constant was that Americans as a people enjoyed sport, whether it was in the school, at a county fair, in the college or professional ranks, conducted by clubs, or on the playground. An example of the response to this love affair was offered by Boyle (1962) who cited *The New York Times*, perhaps one of the most prominent newspapers in the country, having devoted more space to sport than it did to the combined subjects of art, books, education, television, and the theater.

The various stages in the American cycle of appearances and disappearances of historical periods greatly effected the introduction of athletics into schools. The rise and

fall of free lands to ending child labor, from the inter-city to the taming of cow country, the rumblings and tremblings within society, disaster followed by triumph, anarchists riots followed by race riots all have had impact on our society. In times of prosperity or calamity, America found new outlets. One of those outlets was athletics in the communities and schools of our state as well as our great nation.

Dealing with Athletics in the Public School

Compared to its humble beginnings, the plethora of sports opportunities gradually offered, the structure of games, and the organization of athletics in the interschool setting became quite an elaborate system. It truly was a unique American experience. In more recent history, athletics in the secondary school was designed and promoted as a source of alumni pride, school excitement, and community entertainment. High school athletics have been a part of a school's identity, a force for mobilizing the collective community for action, and a developer of subculture heroes within the school (Coleman, 1961). It was not always that way as the introductory years were based more upon increased leisure time, the need to address unrest among youth in certain locales of the country, avoidance of idleness (Dulles, 1965), and an increasing competitive social spirit.

Gutowski (1991) indicated that the development of the extra-curriculum was a process of conflict and compromise that involved students, teachers, principals, administrators and school boards. Following WW I and into the 1920s, an emphasis prevailed of instituting extracurricular activities into the classical school to which many administrators resisted such thought. School administrators preferred exercise programs over team sports because there was less expense involved, less time, and seemed kinder to the curriculum (Riess, 1995). Supporters used social and pedagogical ideas similar to

those used to support vocational, domestic science, manual arts and commercial education to prove their point. Principals began to soften when the promotion of citizenship (Reese, 1998) through the extra-curriculum became popular in order to use teacher-supervised activities such as debate, choir, clubs, sports, and other extra-curricular groups, to replace secret societies. Colleges influenced the influx of social clubs to the high school and students mimicked fraternities and sororities. Secret societies formed to preserve elements of life threatened by modern ideology of the upcoming Progressive Era (Graebner, 1987). Some believed such peer groups would fill the void of deteriorating family, church and community (Reese).

Cities in the state of Indiana boasted over 30 adult secret societies such as Masonic Order, Elks, Eagles, Knights of Columbus, Improved Order of Red Men, and the Grand Army of the Republic. Over 30 labor and civic clubs like Rotary, Kiwanis, Dynamo Club, Commercial Club, Professional Women's Club prospered in popularity. High school students developed secret social clubs with titles such as Holly Harvey and Kluxer Club and demanded a "freedom to choose". The Klan promoted itself as a respectable community group through the planning of activities for the recruitment of young people.

Activities were scheduled for the junior orders, for example, 12 Indiana cities sponsored Junior Klan basketball tournaments (Moore, 1991). Other groups worked to promote and form character-building clubs including Hi-Y, Letter Clubs and Friendship Club. In addition, patriotic clubs were formed emphasizing duty and service to country which often elected a sergeant of arms (Reese, 1998).

Nationally, fraternal orders that practiced secret rituals in often elaborate buildings proliferated enormously. Perhaps 20% to over 30% of adult men in the United States joined at least one of 70,000 such lodges. Harwood writing in a turn of the century *North American Review* estimated that fraternal lodges outnumbered churches in all major American cities (Burstyn, 1999).

During this period, a sense of solidarity formed through classes jointly selecting such areas as officers, colors, functions, mottos, songs, sweaters, jackets, flowers, wills, and yells (Reese, 1998). These interpretive theory activities resulted in interaction while giving the group meaning, a voice, providing symbolism and consensus, and the ability to coordinate and create common meaning in the class relationships.

Following Naismith's invention of the game of basketball in Springfield, Massachusetts, in 1891, the game spread into the nation's YMCA's and, from there, into the schools (Parks et al., 1998). The growth of the Young Men's Christian Association and the project of construction of the Muscular Christian signaled a shift in influence of sport (Burstyn, 1999). In high schools, songs were composed as were educational mottos of schools, yells were performed and yell leaders were chosen, and school mascots declared and outfitted. In Indiana, these identifiers were associated with the basketball program and season and thus, the people emulated them as representative of their community.

Over-Identification with Community Teams

Two commission reports found an over emphasis on basketball in Indiana schools in relation to education. The Carnegie Commission report found a deteriorating effect on education impacted by the rapid expansion of basketball. In his book, *Hoosier Schools*,

Reese (1998) utilized the application of Sherwood in his December, 1924 accounting of the document in the *Indiana Teacher*. Communities, he reported, tax themselves to build schools around basketball courts. In fact, one school literally lived up to this claim.

Miami School, located in the small town of Miami in Miami County, Indiana, physically built the school around the gym with all classrooms opening into the gymnasium which served as the focal point of the facility. Reese referred to the 1949 *School Study*

Commission Report which found that:

This overbalance (basketball emphasis) is evidenced by proportion of staff time devoted to direction, the building facilities...and by the community interest and concern for that activity. The result...is impoverished condition of other types of activities with respect to the availability of pupils...and the relative values of educative experiences as evidenced by the supporting public. (p. 129)

Indiana high school basketball held much influence in the economics of a school community. Many gymnasiums or “temples”, as they were often referred to, were built during the progressive era. Communities approved taxes to build gymnasiums often forgoing money for educational purposes. Hamilton (1993) compares this community competition of building larger gyms to the 19th century phenomenon of Indiana courthouse construction, in his book, *Indiana Temples*. He states that “county seats built grander and grander courthouses in town squares, in an effort to establish themselves as regional centers dominating the surrounding hinterland” (Reese 1998, p. 130).

Gymnasium seating sizes were often a competition in building projects to determine which communities would host the sectional basketball tournament. Seventeen out of the 20 largest high school gymnasiums in the country are in Indiana while 28 out of 36 with

seating capacities over 5,000 are in Indiana. New Castle High School currently boasts the largest high school gym in the world seating over 9,000. In more recent years, the school enrollment dropped below 1,000 and New Castle Chrysler is a class 3A size school out of the current four class system. In the book *Wooden*, Coach John Wooden describes growing up in Indiana in the 1920s and people in his home town of Martinsville being “nuts for basketball.” There was a sign posted outside of town indicating the population was 4,800; however, the high school gym seating capacity was 5,520 (Wooden & Jamison, 1997). *Ripley's Believe It or Not* sited that Martinsville, Indiana, had a red brick gym for basketball games that seated hundreds more than the town’s population that was common around the state (Wooden & Jamison, 2004).

Such practices of supporters giving cars to coaches, watches to players, and jobs to fathers in order to have them play for their school were legendary (Hoose, 1986). Reese (1998) quotes from a 1927, *Indiana Teacher*, that a coach’s average tenure at rural schools was two years which was better than their predecessor who averaged 1.3 years. Schools began to “co-opt” paid coaches into the teaching profession in order to gain control of these situations.

In the book, *They Call Me Coach*, John Wooden recalls the Paragon Bank being robbed during the first round of the sectional basketball tournament played on a Saturday morning. Virtually everyone in town was three miles away at the sectional played in Martinsville, and it is claimed that evidently included the town’s police officers as well (Wooden & Tobin, 1973). “I didn’t think so at the time, but in reflection maybe we had it out of proportion” (Wooden & Jamison, 1997, p. 34). Wooden explains that in looking

back, perhaps the support of small town Indiana for their high school basketball team was overzealous (Wooden & Jamison).

Because some rural areas and towns considered the closing of their school and losing the community team as a death sentence, some neighborhoods resisted consolidation with extreme action. To such an extent was Onward School, in Cass County, Indiana, where in 1950, patrons with shotguns barricaded themselves and 50 students in the school against 70 Indiana State Police officers in defiance of the state's intention to close their local school. *Life* magazine included a pictorial history of the vigilantly effort (Reese, 1998). Onward kept their team and their school for two more years; although, the school's accreditation was lost, leading to eventual consolidation into the southeastern school corporation. Cook (2004) indicated that 150 people kept a small school alive by using the best students as teachers while patrons kept a 24-hour vigil over their school house. Basketball enthusiasm became a central fixture of schools and provided an outlet for residents of communities to express a sense of belonging. Losing a school meant losing a team and losing a team meant losing identity.

This period seemed to coincide with the beliefs of structuralist social theorists who felt that individual actions were a product of pre-existing conditions. They argued that human actions derived from the surrounding social structures. This includes both material (historical, social system, economic) and symbolic (culture, hegemony, ideology). The attention on sport as a motivation and inspiration to society (Coakley, 1990) may have related to the focus of this period when athletics was an underlying pin and groups were slow to or would not relinquish the way of life known to the people living in various communities.

Golden Age or Tarnished Bigotry?

Critical theory used functional, conflict, and interpretive aspects and displayed a system that had the power to oppress and cater to the privileged. It may have possessed a hidden agenda that was not a part of the curriculum while potentially involving multiple stakeholders and perspectives. Related to sport, critical theory focused attention on athletics being created to express the interests of society (Coakley, 1990). Those of position created and perpetuated change (Mills, 1959). In the boom of high school sports, Indiana incurred many of these qualities while it contributed to Klan growth and segregation in public schools. Indiana was remarkably homogeneous in the 1920s with 95% of the population native born, 97% white, and 97% protestant (Blee, 1991). The period when high school basketball and hometown boosterism and rowdyism became established was also the period in which the KKK enjoyed tremendous growth (Riess, 1995). Parks were segregated, teams were segregated, black players were excluded from the YMCA, and clubs were for whites only. The KKK promoted anti-semitic, anti-catholic, racial segregation, and anti-foreign born in an effort to define what was “community” (Coughlan, 1949). Segregated black schools were excluded from participation in the Indiana High School Athletic Association [IHSAA] state tournament, as were Catholic schools, until this practice ended in 1941 (Reese, 1998). Beck (2003) wrote:

The spectre of white sheets and burning crosses held frightening sway over Indiana for much of the mid-1920s. KKK parades down North Meridian Street in front of Indianapolis Cathedral High School frequently ended in pitched battles

with baseball bats between white-robed Klansmen and the black-robed Brothers of Holy Cross, who taught at Cathedral, and their students. (p. 89)

Ironically, Cathedral High School won a national championship for Catholic schools in 1934 as they and other Catholic and African-American schools were not allowed to participate in the state tournament.

The focus of conflict theory as social process lead to instability, disharmony, and disruption (Eitzen & Sage, 1997). Related to the entry of athletics into the school, Coakley (1990) suggested that the conflict theory of sport become an opiate to people because it dulled their awareness of problems resulting in negative consequences. The KKK was dominant conflict theory as it was considered necessary to help society and “expand Functionalism”. The KKK sought power in human relations as well as economics. They used cultural discourse in communities as a tactic to de-legitimize another and destabilize or destroy traditional practices and politics. A form of cultural silence existed whereby KKK violence forced many black Americans to conform and give up efforts to construct their own culture. Some historians estimate that as many as a quarter of a million Indiana women or 32% of Indiana’s female population were members of this prominent organization during the 1920s. Male membership rates were likely higher (Reese, 1998). Lynching violence was a tactic of the KKK and its efforts to gain power through fear. It is estimated that 4,700 people were killed by this method in the U. S. between 1882 and 1968 and that three-fourths of those who died were black (Associated Press, 2006). The largest assembly of the KKK in U. S. history occurred in Kokomo, Indiana, in July, 1923, when in excess of 200,000 members attended a rally held there (Munsey, 2005).

A romanticized fervor for Indiana basketball developed cohesion of civic loyalty. “But was the impulse that drove so many residents of small towns in Indiana to join the KKK really so different from the impulse that made them yell “eat ‘em, beat ‘em, Bearcats!” (Reese, 1998, p. 141)? The appeal of the KKK propaganda that espoused moral renewal, unification of white Protestants, and a civic organizer, at the expense of minorities, was largely an appeal to community cohesion supposedly threatened by foreign influence. Perhaps both basketball and the KKK spoke to this need. Intense rivalry with the teams of neighboring towns was somewhat self defining and a form of bigotry through which the Klan sought to define community and the attractiveness of both were rooted in the same impulse to create a sense of inclusion precisely by exclusion of the other (Lynd & Lynd, 1929). For a community to rally behind a cause there must have been another side of opposition that helped to define the cause. High school basketball rivalries with schools in neighboring communities and towns, as well as the philosophy of the KKK spoke to that need (Reese, 1998). Perhaps without realizing it, the actions of the KKK, while of conflict by nature, also insured functionalism within the society that they knew. The white, protestant, agricultural society of this era was changing rapidly due to immigration, industrialization, and political change. Feinburg and Soltis (1985) pointed out that functionalists believed in order to understand a certain social practice that one must recognize the way in which it served to further the survival of the social system as a whole.

Historian Madison’s (1986) drawn conclusion is of benefit when determining whether this period of the “golden age”, as professed by many Indiana high school basketball enthusiasts, could be claimed legitimately. Madison stated:

For much of the 20th century the sport was largely the privilege only of the white boys. And the Indiana High School Athletic Association...did not allow the state's all-black high schools to join the association or participate in the state tournament. Nor were Catholic schools allowed to participate. (p. 162)

The contention was that this approximate 50-year period from the turn of the century to post World War II was a time glorified by the white, protestant, male of the era. The 'good old days' of our public Indiana high schools were no doubt remembered by Jews, women, blacks, and racial and ethnic minorities, with far less fond reminiscence than those involved in the early institution of extra curricular activities in the schools. Segregation actually continued in some Indiana schools even after the passage of *Brown v Board of Education* in 1950 (Reese, 1998), as portrayed by the all-segregated African-American Indianapolis High School, Crispus Attucks, that won the state basketball championship in 1955, 1956 and 1959. Even though the Indiana General Assembly passed a desegregation law in 1949 many black students followed the tradition required of them over the years and attended CAHS. With the basketball success of 'Attucks' some public schools began to point out that certain black students lived in that particular public school district and should be attending and participating at the historically white school (Dodds, 2005a). And still today the black citizenry of Indianapolis discuss the fact that the segregated team of state champions in 1955 was denied the customary celebration for all previous teams (Roberts, 1999). This school was the first segregated high school in the United States to win a state championship in any sport at the high school, college, or professional level. Crispus Attucks was the first school in the city of Indianapolis to win the 44-year old basketball tournament. And the following year they

became the first Indiana high school team to play an undefeated season including the state finals (Beck, 2003).

The extent to which segregation dominated the era of the early 20th century was displayed in schools that were built for the purpose of segregating blacks from whites around the nation. Price (2004) described the building of Lockefield Gardens in Indianapolis as ‘slum clearance’ that was hailed by some as one of the nation’s most successful public housing development. Others saw the project as a means of promoting the total segregation of African Americans. Nearly 400 houses were removed to make way for this first project of public housing in the city to include over 700 apartments on 24 acres (Dodds, 2005). The KKK had gained much political power in the three decades preceding and built the multi-level buildings in the 1930s that made up the neighborhood of Lockefield Gardens with Crispus Attucks High School at the very center of the community. The school and housing was built under a banner of separate but equal. Legend in the community held that when the school opened in 1927, the Klan held a parade that celebrated the segregation of white from black students. So, Crispus Attucks High School, which was intended to keep the down trodden black person within boundaries, became the pride of the black community of Indianapolis. Interestingly, campaigning on a ticket to support a building program the Klan gained control of the Indianapolis school board. During the 1920s this Klan board oversaw the building of three high schools including Crispus Attucks and Shortridge (Moore, 1991). Shortridge High School meant a great deal to the white community and later became synonymous with academic rigor and national attention (Price, 2004). This same school segregation was experienced in the Indiana cities of Evansville and Gary, as well. Crispus Attucks

High School had been built for the purpose of segregating the African American population within what later became Lockefield Gardens Public Housing Project. The Klan had openly financed campaigns of politicians and judges and Robertson (2003) told of the legend from the 1920s when the KKK celebrated with a parade when the school opened to express their support of the separation of black and white students.

Growth of Male Sport Popularity

The participation levels of boys' high school sports and the creation of the number of sport offerings themselves continued to grow during the post war era and through the 1960s. State associations increased the state tournament series offerings throughout this period to often include many of the non traditional athletic programs. Along with the higher rates of participation came increased fan interest and support. For example the highest attended Indiana state boys' basketball tournament including total attendance for all sectional, regional, semi-state, as well as state finals was in 1961-62. The combined attendance was 1,554,454 for that year (R. Craft, personal communication, August 31, 2006). The attendance declined gradually through the mid 1990s to a level that approached half that of 1962. The total tournament attendance in 1996-97 was 786,024 (IHSAA, 2004) or 50.6% of that during the golden era of growth. School consolidation was the educational way of the period from the late 1940s through the early 1970s. In Indiana, for example, the number of high schools in existence during the pre-consolidation period was over 800 compared to the decreasing effect of consolidation that resulted in fewer than 400 within a 25-year period. The 1972-73 *Indiana High School Athletic Association Directory* listed 372 high schools as members of the state association and entered in the end of season tournament (IHSAA, 1972).

Women and Sport

The invention, popularity, and growth of the bicycle that lead up to the 20th century was of tremendous importance in the American citizen becoming mobile, active, and acquiring further interest in physical activity. Not only was racing an outgrowth but it created participants as cyclists. Doctors hailed cycling as great exercise. For everyone that is except women. The women's rescue league warned that all lady cyclists would be invalids within a decade. But the bicycle proved to be a form of emancipation for women from a normally inactive and indoor life. Women ventured out on the street with skirts above their ankles and leggings that reached the knee (Betts, 1974). The bicycle gave women the liberty in dress not experienced before. They escaped to the countryside wearing less restrictive clothing, perhaps bloomers, and no corsets or floor length dresses. It was an early step in women gaining interest in physical fitness and participation, as well as a signal of a growing liberation from Victorian patterns of subservience (Riess, 1995). A few affluent women ventured into golf, tennis, curling, and bowling (Burstyn, 1999). At the turn of the century, attitudes were changing in regard to misconceptions of women participating in strenuous exercise (Coakley, 1990). Professional riding developed and indoor bicycling races was held as were sprint bicycle races.

The first decade of the 1900s saw the right of girls to participate in high school athletics gain momentum along with the national movement for the rights of women that was being debated and fought for during this period of American history. Girls began to first participate in those activities that were thought to be appropriate for ladies including hoop rolling, croquet, shuttlecock, and folk dancing. The general belief was that competitive rivalry and strenuous athletics impeded the social and physical development

of young women and was a hindrance to femininity (Burstyn, 1999). Women were taught in school that participation in athletics was not to be strenuous for ladies and the Indiana state association made efforts to dissolve girls' teams that were participating voluntarily around the state (Indiana Women's History Association [IWHA], 2003). Ladies became participants in early high school athletic teams such as basketball.

An interesting and rare example of women's involvement occurred at new Alsace High School in Indiana. In 1927, Elizabeth Dietz, at age 23 was hired and served for one season as head boys' basketball coach, principal, and teacher. This school, that had six boys attending, played its games at a local Catholic church chicken dinner hall that had a dirt floor until a concrete floor was added the year before this historic season (Schwomeyer, 1997).

It seems that about as quickly as women's athletics in high schools gained momentum it just as quickly disappeared. While ladies team sports in particular became popular in the early 1900s, successive catastrophic events including World War I and the depression may have been the key events that brought common closure to the issue until 1972 and the implementation of Title IX. As critical educational theory relates to the progression of women's rights, Weiler (1988) addressed the sex role stereotyping and the ways that women have been led into and away from certain curricular areas in education. She believes that we had to analyze ways in which women were molded and shaped during the experiences associated with schooling. In addition, she pointed out the power of gender, race, and class was made clear through interaction resulting in conflicting subjectivities.

The claim by science that man has developed further in the past 50 years than all previous years of mankind combined is, in small way, compared to the history of athletic opportunities for school age children. While many European countries promoted women participating in athletics, sport in America progressed at a slow, methodical, and often painful pace of events for ladies. The era of the past half century has seen a series of rapid and often controversial events transpire. While matters of racial and religious segregation within interscholastic athletics were played out through numerous events of confrontation during the period leading up to the mid twentieth century, the press for inclusion of females as competitive athletes became strong after girls' programs were begun but were often shelved in the first third of the 1900s. According to Park (1978), the concerted effort of the 1970s to draw attention to the lack of equality afforded girls in athletics was not the first time that the issue had become prominent. The Civil War impeded the progress of the Seneca Fall Convention held in 1848 which, among many women's rights, promoted women's health care as well as their physical abilities (Wiggins, 1995).

The increase in participation rates of girls in interscholastic athletics was the single most dramatic change in high school offerings in the last 30 years (Coakley, 1990). Ironically, the U.S. Senator that co-sponsored the bill shared that the writers did not think of sports when they introduced the Title IX bill but for the purpose of the educational rights of females. Sports in the schools then followed naturally as a right to seek non-discrimination for. The increase was due primarily to new opportunities for participation legislated through Title IX as well as the fitness movement in the United States. Title IX was a document of Federal law that in turn was a portion of the Educational Amendments

Act of July 23, 1972 (DeVries & Reeves, 2003). The law prohibited discrimination based on sex in educational programs and activities that received Federal funds for operation.

Title IX states:

No person in the United States shall, on the basis of sex, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any educational program or activity receiving federal financial assistance.

(Interscholastic Equity Committee, 1994, p. 9)

Implementation was the primary delay in many schools around the country. Court challenges for interpretation resulted in the forming of policy over the years following 1972. In 1974, while 50,000 men were on college athletic scholarships, only 50 women had received the same (IWHA, 2003). The act assured equity in the areas of budget, equipment, travel, facilities, athletic training, scheduling, coaches' salaries, promotion of girls' programs, and numbers of coaches for programs (Parks et al., 1998). Interpretive court rulings helped determine involvement in additional areas such as booster club support in equity matters, competitive opportunities for girls, and times of practices and contests (Reith, 1992).

Another factor that influenced the growth of ladies athletics was the promotion and media coverage given the programs and participants. While Title IX was responsible for much of the improvement in these areas, it was also noted that an improved level of skill among girls had also increased interest, support, and attendance at their contests. Beginning in the mid-1970s, a movement toward improved and maintained health and fitness through exercise was prevalent. During this fitness boom, both men and women became involved in physical activity that included competitive athletics. While the initial

emphasis was probably more directed at physical fitness, cardiovascular health, preventing disease, retaining youthful beauty, and developing strength and muscle definition, the impact has been more children participating in interscholastic sports. In 1972, there were less than 300,000 girls participating in high school athletics. Following legislation, by 2002 there were 2,700,000 girls participating in the nation's schools (IWHA, 2003).

Clothing has been influenced by sport styles inclusive of an athletic shoe phenomenon made up of hundreds of styles, brands and purposes that were developed and marketed (Coakley, 1990). One consequence of the extraordinary popularity of interscholastic athletics in the United States secondary schools was the growth of interest in sports of all levels (Eitzen & Sage, 1997). The problem that interscholastic athletics faced that continues on today was the competition for the attendance, support, and interest in their involvement and competitions. More collegiate opportunities, more sports offered at the high school level, youth sports, sports radio and television, and interest in professional sports was no doubt a contributory force in declining attendance experienced at many high school contests.

Preparation Tool

Many individuals considered the interscholastic athletic program as one of the best bargains in all of education. Interscholastic athletic programs usually needed 1% to 3% of the total school budget to supplement revenue (University Interscholastic League [UIL], 1998); yet, nationally such programs involved over 7 million participants, 25 – 75% of students directly, (NFHS, 2005) many other students indirectly, as well as their parents. Specifically, participation rose in 2005-06 over the previous year by 141,195

students amassing a total of 7,159,904 high school students nationally participated in interscholastic athletic programs (B. Howard, September 2006, personal communication). In Indiana, over 160,000 students participated annually (Colabro, 2003). *USA Today* reported in a December 28, 1993 article that nearly 7 in 10 Americans said high school sports taught students lessons about life that they could not learn in a classroom; 9 in 10 believed sports contributed to health and fitness (NFHS, 2002).

From an article entitled *Expenditures for Activities: The Impact on Achievement, Discipline, and Attitudes of High School Students* was included the philosophy of former U.S. Secretary of Education Bell. He observed, "Interscholastic activities programs are essential to the education of most youth, and therefore, are an integral part of the high school curriculum" (Chase, Jacobs, & Meredith, 1989, p. 37).

Added incentives for athletic participation were found in a report in the *American Journal of Preventive Medicine*. The report indicated that adolescents who participated in organized competitive sports were most likely to continue with physically active lifestyles in adulthood (American Association of Health, Physical Education, Recreation Dance [AAHPERD], 1997). A recent report from the U.S. Department of Education examined the status of people eight years after their high school graduation in 1992. The information indicated that those who participated in activity programs attained higher education levels, were more physically fit and acquired better jobs than those who did not participate. The years leading to older adolescence better equips the high school student through sport participation by broadening horizons, promoting physical development, improving social skills, teaching time management, building confidence, and providing an outlet for stress, while teaching commitment and decision-making (Sider &

Weinberger, 2002). In the DVD, *For the Sport of It! Female Athletics & Title IX*, it was related that the best teaching laboratory existed is sport. Female athletes displayed more confidence, self-esteem, and self motivation than non participants. And those ladies who participated in school related sports teams were less sexually active, experienced fewer unwanted pregnancies and lower illegal drug use. Finally, girls lowered their risk of involvement in the female triad that included breast cancer, heart disease, and osteoporosis as participants in athletics (IWHA, 2003).

An article from *Time* magazine related the practical side of children's involvement in sports indicated that they were less susceptible to the lure of drugs and gangs, while despite their potential excesses, helped manage the virtues of personal responsibility, teamwork, persistence, and the ability to win and lose with grace. In that same article, Goldstein, a clinical psychologist, indicated that participation in athletics forced young people to be more organized with their time (Ferguson et al., 1999). A further interesting note was the quality academic performance of students who participated in pro-social activities like volunteer and community service. As this study progressed, the belief that self-sustained activities were of benefit to participants was reinforced.

Historically, athletics in schools distinguished themselves in citizenship, safety, scholarship, and scope of the programs offered. Schools endeavored to put academics before athletics and required higher standards of behavior. The health of participants has been protected while determining limits on requirements of student participants (Roberts, 2000).

The slide series "Student Activities: An Integral Part of Education" was produced by the NFHS and National Interscholastic Athletic Administrators Association (NIAAA)

in 1995. In the presentation, Olsen, former professional football player and broadcaster reflected:

I'm sure that some of the most important growth and learning came from my involvement in high school sports and other activity programs. Learning about the importance of teamwork, discipline and determination, as well as learning to accept coaching and criticism and discovering ways to tap in on my unused reserves of mental and physical energy are all critical lessons that have served me well in later life. (NFHS & NIAAA, 2006, p. 20)

Young people learned, practiced, developed and demonstrated character traits through athletic participation including loyalty, patience, motivation, self-discipline, perseverance, a never quit attitude, and how to work hard (Blaser, 1985). Joseph (1985) believed that coaches should not have been judged on how many contests that they won. Rather he felt emphasis should have been put on the preparation to win along with contributions made to the concept of team preparation. In addition, he stressed the importance of taking part in a positive life experience and the enjoyment gained by participants as contributors to a common cause. Treasure (2006) found that a coach that created a culture that emphasized striving for personal improvement made the interscholastic experience an effective vehicle to master the development of positive values and morals.

A study described in the Citizenship through Sports/Fine Arts section of the *NFHS News* addressed participants' chance of involvement with tobacco and alcohol. It showed that student athletes were less likely to smoke, smoke heavily, drink alcohol or

drink more than once a week compared to non-athletes who were more active in the use of tobacco and alcohol (NFHS, 1998a).

Perhaps these programs where young people learned life-long lessons offered a premium rate of return in changed lives and identifying values. Participation in student activities led young people to acquire skills such as motivation, organization, planning and time management. Student activities offered young people a place to use and improve their abilities in a competitive environment. Students needed the relationships that were available through student activity programs with both their peers and adult leaders. Former Supreme Court Justice White believed that sports provided educational experiences that could not be duplicated in the regular classroom. He observed that athletic activity threw the student athlete upon resources to succeed in the face of a strong and immediate challenge. White stated, "Sports resemble life in capsule form. Participants quickly learn that their performance depends upon the development of strength, stamina, self-discipline and a sure and steady judgment" (NFHS, 1995, p. 19). Activities were an extension of the classroom and those who participated in extra-curricular activities demonstrated that they were leaders in the classroom (Logsdon, 2001).

Mason (1985), former President of the National Association of Interscholastic Athletics, articulated the proper relationship athletics should have with the educational program and the value that participation in athletics bears on the lives of student participants when he said:

It is my opinion that one of the greatest lessons we learn through sports is being required to do things we do not like to do and the discipline that goes along with

doing these distasteful things we do not like to do and the discipline that goes along with doing these distasteful things well. The carry over into real life situations is extremely meaningful and provides an added dimension into our personal and professional and live as we seek to be successful. The influence that athletics can make on the lives of the students...cannot be measured...are not fully realized until sometime later in life. (p. 16)

Retired Executive Director of the NFHS, Durbin, felt that fast cures were often sought for educational problems in the form of arbitrary grade point requirements. He believed that in addition to learning to read and write, youth must have been encouraged to develop leadership skills and experience success that was learned through teamwork in sport (Durbin, 1985). Teachers also believed that high school athletic programs were legitimate offerings for school systems and further felt that students derived educational values through their experiences in secondary interscholastic participation (Olson, 1993).

Carter (1997), Executive Director of the high school athletic association in Tennessee, commented on the importance of interscholastic participation in the development of students. He questioned with amazement hearing people tell educators that the greatest athletic experience they encountered was at the interscholastic level. Carter had believed that when educators told high school students to work hard in order to prepare for the next life experience, they believed it would be even greater at the next level. He summarized that responses of former students should have sent a strong message to all those that worked with interscholastic participants in this setting that the purpose of participation in high school was join and to be a part. The total education

process and lessons gained from participation was an end in itself for many who concluded their experience at that level.

Heath (1992), a professor of psychology at Haverford College, was the author of the book *Fulfilling Lives: Paths to Maturity and Success*. Heath conducted a study spanning 40 years and charted a wide range of adults. Heath's summaries involved some persuasive discoveries regarding key contributors to happiness and success. He said,

School grades and achievement test scores predict moderately well which students will do well in school the next year. They do not predict well which students of average or above average grades and test scores will succeed later in life.

Scholastically talented youngsters risk failing when adults if they do not develop the character strengths necessary to succeed. Extracurricular participation is a school's best predictor of an adult's success. (pp. 291-292)

These words are humbling and intriguing to professional and layman alike. To ponder this claim indicated perhaps it was not grades, tests, or academic awards that best predicted how well students would succeed in their adult years, but rather, student depth of genuine involvement in activity programs. Heath (1992) further stated:

The best predictor of creativity in mature life was a person's performance, during youth, in independent, self-sustained ventures. Those youngsters who had many hobbies, interests and jobs, or who were active in activity programs, were more likely to be successful in later life. (p. 297)

The *National Federation News* reported on a survey conducted by Indiana University in cooperation with the National Association of Secondary School Principals (NASSP) and the Lilly Endowment. Those surveyed included high school principals and

7,000 students in all 50 states. Results showed that 95% of the principals surveyed believed that participation in activities teaches valuable lessons to students that cannot be learned in a regular class routine. Equally important, 99% indicated that activities promote citizenship (Wisconsin Interscholastic Athletic Association [WIAA], 1996). A more recent survey by the NFHS displayed that students desired to have athletic programs in which to be a part. The trend appeared to be toward more participation which Executive Director, Kanaby, believed was good for students and their communities. It demonstrated that participation in athletics assisted students succeed in life (B. Howard, September 2006, personal communication). Former school psychologist, Fay, was quoted in an article by Simons (2002) as having said, "The research shows that kids who are involved in at least one extracurricular activity that gives them pleasure are more resilient, more likely to do well in school and less likely to get into trouble with the law" (p. 3D).

Kanaby (1997) in a video tape entitled, *Citizenship through Sports and Fine Arts*, shared another value of participation when he stated:

Sports and activities provide not only the opportunity to teach and learn respect for self and respect for others, they also place participants in a unique context – competition - that can further instill and hone values necessary for the development of respect for self and respect for others.

The American College Testing Service compared the value of factors predicting success after high school. Success was defined as self-satisfaction and participation in a variety of community activities. One yardstick used to predict such success was found to

be achievement in school activities. ACT scores were not found to be a strong predictor, nor were grades in high school or college (UIL, 1998).

In 1982, data was gathered as a follow-up of the same measures and information sources from a 1980 participant sample and compared for differences. Findings indicated that compared to non-participants, co-curricular participants put more time into completing homework, had higher scores on the standardized tests, and were much less likely to have a 2.0 or less GPA. In addition, those who earned more course credits tended to be more involved in co-curricular programs (NFHS, 1985). The Educational Testing Service and the College Board study of 4,815 college freshman showed that participation in activities is a much better indicator of overall college performance than other yardsticks (Becker, 1993).

The College Entrance Examination Board examined SAT scores and found that high scores did not necessarily indicate success in a chosen career. The study showed that the best indicator was a person's self-sustained independent ventures. Teenagers active in school related activities, hobbies, or jobs were more likely to be proficient in their chosen profession and make contributions to their community (UIL, 1998). In defining activities, the term referred not only to athletics but also band, choir, student government, debate, performing arts and clubs. Activities included athletics, extracurricular activities, and co-curricular activities. There were many ways for a student to become involved. And, the phrase "success as an adult" could be determined in a variety of ways.

According to the *Journal of School Health*, schools should have extended the benefit of extracurricular activities, including sports, to the greatest number of students possible because they provided those students with healthy physical activity and helped

develop behavioral skills and confidence (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, 1997).

Even outside of the United States, benefits were shown to be garnered through participation. In Canada, the Alberta Schools' Athletic Association (AASA) in conjunction with the Edmonton High School Athletic Association completed a survey to assess the potential impact that high school athletics had on the lives of students. The findings showed that student-athletes were less likely to smoke. ASAA Executive Director, Paton, indicated, "The results of this survey suggest that students who participate in school-based sport programs are good citizens and may be even better school citizens than their non-sport peers" (NFHS, 1998b, p. 18). School athletes demonstrated positive lifestyle behaviors such as less smoking and less drug use when compared to non-sport students (NFHS, 1998b). Another Canadian study reported in the *NASSP Bulletin* found support for athletes matching or exceeding non-athletes in comparison of mid-term and final grades along with disciplinary referrals (WIAA, 1996).

Remaining In School

Beginning with basic successes while in high school was a start to defining success. Becker (1993) wrote:

Throw in the overwhelming evidence that participation greatly enhances the student's chances to stay in school, avoid drugs, graduate, go on to college and be successful in future life....Aren't the things those programs give students exactly what schools are trying to accomplish. (p. 29)

An average of approximately 1,000,000 students dropped out of high school annually. This amounts to 12% of students leaving American schools (NFHS, 1995).

Another study showed the national average dropout rate to be 5.5% while 96% of those dropouts were not involved in athletic programs (NFHS & NIAAA, 2006). Obviously, programs were needed that encourage young people to remain in school. Athletics and other extra curricular programs could serve as educational antidotes for dropouts. Such activities helped motivate many students to remain in school and may have prompted students to improve study habits.

The Milwaukee Public Schools (2002) reviewed research that had led to a new public awareness campaign to promote participation in extra-curricular activities because of the solid evidence that students who were involved earned better grades, used concepts such as teamwork, and were more likely to finish school. Sports psychologist Burnett (2002) believed that the longer a child remained in sports, the better off they were in the areas of being less likely to get involved in problems, while being more likely to graduate from high school and do well there.

A report from the Kansas State High School Activities Association indicated that of the students that dropped out of school during a one-year period, only 6% were involved in athletic programs (NFHS, 1998b). In 1990, 45% of 24,399 high school sophomores questioned responded that they attend school because they were on a team (Jeziorski, 1994). Athletic participation was significantly related to lower dropout rates for some minority students according to a study by Melnick and Sabo (1992). The 2-year study of 3,686 minority high school youth found involvement was a resource that modestly improved them academically.

At least one athletic administrator in Pennsylvania believed that among freshman students, athletics and activities were effective in deterring potential freshman dropouts.

A study by The Education Pipeline shows 7% of freshman that entered high school dropped out by the sophomore year. The national average shared by McGriff (2006) showed 24% of students drop out of high school by their senior year. He felt that 9th grade students felt disconnected and often failed. Participation could enhance this rate as shown when he states:

Athletics builds academic habits. In many cases students' achievement on the field of competition can translate into victories in the classroom. Athletes' academic success may be attributed to better time management and motivation to be eligible for practice and competition. ...we can ill afford not to have comprehensive ninth grade athletic programs designed to nurture incoming freshman during the most critical time of their educational career. (p. 9)

Students who participated enjoyed higher levels of achievement in school work as shown by research. The freshman student should have been encouraged early to become a participant in sports and those who lead them should concentrate on guiding them through difficult stages.

An article from the National High School Athletic Coaches Association stated simply:

High School activities are good for all youngsters... keep them off the streets and under supervision... A student in school costs half as much as a youngster in prison... and stats show they will be better in their trade if they participate in high school activities. (NFHS, 1995, p. 3)

The NFHS (1996) reported in an independent study that 96% of dropouts in 14 school districts in 7 regions of the nation were not participating in activity programs. A

study in North Carolina displayed a dramatic difference in dropout rates with the mean dropout rate of athletes at just 0.7% while the corresponding percentage of non-athletes was 9.98%. Stated differently, for a three-year period the dropout rate for non-athletes ran more than twelve times higher than the rate for the athlete group (Whitley, 2003).

Juvenile Judge Railey stated the following in an article written for the *Colorado Springs Gazette*: "In athletics the kids are subjected to discipline....The experience of learning to work together, the discipline and learning....how to sit on the bench helps to keep kids out of trouble" (Blackburn, 1994, p. 8). According to Stanley and Sage (1997), athletics utilized surplus energy and furnished a diversion from undesirable behavior. Sport gave students something to think about and to utilize time while helping to keep them out of mischief. Because athletics affiliated with schools involved training rules that promoted good behavior and efforts to have the athlete serve as a positive example, the influence was usually positive to social and personal conduct.

The Need to Belong

Perhaps America's high rate of divorce that resulted in many broken families and dysfunctional relationships offered even more need for students to gain affiliation, friendships and security through membership on a team. According to Klesse (1994), "Adolescents learn emotional, social, and economic independence through socialization within their peer group, not in the academic classroom. Activity programs provided a healthy context for peer socialization" (p. 63).

In preparing the forward for the book *The Importance of School Sports in American Education and Socialization*, by Jeziorski (1994), Hesburgh (1994) wrote:

Co-curricular participation involves educational experiences which help to

counteract various negative influences of our contemporary society on youth:

- (a) instability, insecurity, and lack of direction among youth caused by divorce;
- (b) confusion about values fostered among youth by mixed messages emanating from the media as well as broken family relationships; and (c) the lure of gang involvement as a family proxy to satisfy many of the needs of youth that are otherwise not being met in many sectors of our nation today...we drastically need programs to promote committed relationships and cooperation. (p. vii)

Author Jerzierski (1994) stated,

These co-curricular activities also facilitate learning experiences that involve facing difficult individual and group challenges, learning to persevere and keep trying during difficult times, learning to overcome defeats, learning to strive for self-improvement yet sacrifice self-interests when needed, and learning to cooperate with teammates even when tensions develop between participants.

While many youth today seek security and affiliation in gang involvements, co-curricular programs offer alternative constructive ways for youth to experience hope and develop mutually supportive relationships with peers and mentors. (p. 5)

Thompson (2001) wrote on the issue regarding students who fail and the re-connection of those students with success in the classroom. For those students who often times did not feel to be a valued part of the school, she believed that programs such as athletics could provide a vehicle to engage the learner. Further, this Director of the Department of Student Activities for the Indiana Department of Education believed that athletic programs and student activities could instill confidence in the disengaged special needs child through the use of critical thinking skills and problem solving. To her, such

programs were an extension of the core-curriculum and helped students find a niche. Heck (2000), Indiana Association of School Principals Executive Director, wrote that “activities provided an avenue for students to improve areas of weakness and expression of individuality” (p. 1).

Education Week reported in 1999 on two studies by the Center for Research on Sport in Society at the University of Miami in Florida. Researchers concluded that even those students predisposed with behavior problems benefited from athletic participation which also had a positive effect on the students’ pro-social attitude toward school (WIAA, 1996).

The words of Gardner, former Commissioner of the IHSAA and current Chief Operations Officer of the NFHS, reflected the social, work ethic, and self discipline aspects and values of being a participant. Gardner stated during an interview that:

High school athletics provide student athletes with an opportunity in a structured setting to develop and refine skills in many areas. The physical development from rigorous training is positive. Student athletes through participation learn to work together with others. They learn to accept responsibility. High School athletics reflect, like society, that there are rules with consequences when those rules are not followed. High School athletics prepare young people to face the challenges of the future (Gardner, R., personal communication, January 19, 2000).

Whitehead (personal communication, March 1, 2005), Executive Director of the National Interscholastic Athletic Administrators Association remarked on the personal and social advantages of sport participation in schools:

High school and middle school athletic participation is about opportunities

available to everyone in the purest form of amateur athletic competition.

Participants are exposed to the values and ideals this nation was founded on including, but not limited to, respect for self, respect for others, responsibility, integrity, commitment and teamwork.

The benefits derived from high school sports including discipline, camaraderie, and teamwork were espoused by Swift (1992) as he believed that the programs were so valuable that professional teams should financially assist inner-city athletic programs. According to Treasure (2006):

The most widely held justification for organized sport in our nation's schools emphasizes the educational and character building benefits of participation. While lessons learned in math, science and English are important, the teachable moments and lessons learned on the playing fields, swimming pools, tracks, and gymnasiums of our schools in terms of discipline, delayed gratification, perseverance and team work are also vital to the overall development of each participating student. Clearly, athletics are part of the educational process and are a vehicle to promote learning. (p. 3)

As a psychologist, Burnett (2000) believed most kids with psychological problems dropped out of athletics early in their childhood and that this proved unfortunate. According to Burnett, children gained self confidence and self esteem through participation in sports and they were better off the longer they remain in sport. He supported research that showed the longer students stayed involved the more likely they were to refrain from discipline problems, did well academically and ultimately graduated.

Academic Achievement and Attendance

If determiners such as staying in school and out of trouble were basic minimal achievements of participation in interscholastic activities, indicators had to be explored that displayed yet another level of worth to students who participated and we must consider the following benefits that were brought forward by a series of authors. Participants had fewer discipline problems, better daily attendance, higher grade point averages, lower drop out rates, lower rates of alcohol and tobacco use during their seasons, and felt better about their school and the educational process (Roberts, 1993). In general, participation provided an overall means to better performance in the classroom curriculum. Educational research has demonstrated that there was a direct and positive effect on academic achievement and a quality school outcome when students participated in activities (Brown & Steinburg, 1991; Sweet, 1986). Warns (1996) believed that it was clearly shown by studies that those students who participated in school activities earned better grades, experienced fewer discipline problems, had better attendance rates, and were included in a lower dropout rate as a group compared to non-participants.

Randolph County schools of North Carolina reported in a study in the *National Federation News* that a strong correlation existed between participation in athletics for high school students and positives such as improved grades. Athletes averaged 7% higher attendance rate than the general school population. Athletes averaged three less absences per semester and 14% fewer discipline referrals. No athletes dropped out of school compared to 37% of the general student body (NFHS, 1996).

In New Mexico, participants in interscholastic athletics averaged a 2.8 grade point average, compared to 2.00 for non-participants in a 1992 study (WIAA, 1996). The Iowa

High School Athletic Association [IAHSAA] reported that students who did not participate in sports averaged 2.39 GPA while those who participated in one sport average 2.61 and those that were active in two sports averaged 2.82 (IAHSAA, 2006).

A study of nearly 22,000 students conducted by the University of Colorado for the Colorado High School Activities Association released in 1999 indicated that students participating in activities had significantly higher grade point averages than non-participants (NFHS, 2002). Data obtained from a 1997 study by McCarty revealed student participants in Colorado's Jefferson County high schools had an overall GPA of 3.093 on a scale of 4.0 while non-participants registered an average of 2.444. The states largest school district seemed to have matched academic success with success in sports with its 16 high school combining for 39 state championships in the decade of the 1990s (UIL, 1998).

In a study focusing on leadership, internal control, self-esteem, and participation in athletics, Snyder and Spreitzer (1992) found that there was a positive relationship between athletic participation and academic achievement at the high school level. In 1992, the average GPA of Michigan's Holland Christian High School for general students was 2.64 verses 2.89 for athletes. Students involved in two sports had a 3.26 GPA. This was according to Principal VanderArk (NIAAA, 1992). Also, in the state of Michigan, with 49% of the student body as participants, athletes had a 3.128 grade point average as compared to non-athletes that averaged 2.399 (NIAAA).

The South Bend Community Schools in Indiana found the grade point average of athletes in 1991 were superior to the grade point average of the general student population in each school. This was the case in every category: in season, out-of-season

and among minorities (Blackburn, 1994). An Indiana University study in 1983 showed the student involved in four or more activities averaged 3.05 GPA while low activity students averaged 2.54 (NFHS, 2002).

A study conducted in a San Antonio, Texas, investigation concluded that participation in more than one activity tended to result in the outcome of higher academic performance levels than non-participants (NFHS, 2002). A study by Broh (2002) suggested that participation in extracurricular activities was the most beneficial form of participation for student achievement.

A survey by the Women's Sports Foundation of 13,481 athletes from 1980 to 1986 found high school athletes had higher grades, lower dropout rates, and attended college more often than non-athletes (NFHS, 2002). Of the students recognized in the 1998, *USA Today* All-USA High School Academic Teams, 75% were involved in athletics, music, debate, and/or speech (NFHS, 1998a).

The North Dakota High School Activities Association reported that students who participated in activities averaged 3.32 GPA while non-participants averaged 2.48. Further, participants missed an average of 3.9 days of school while non-participants missed 10.8 days per year (NFHS, 1980).

Two comprehensive studies in North Carolina revealed differences between athletes and non-athletes. A study by Overton (2003) was conducted at Eastern Carolina University from 1993 to 1996 and involved 125,000 students at 131 high schools. His findings revealed that grade point averages of athletes were 17 to 23% higher than non-athletes depending on the subgroup. In addition, athletes scored higher on standardized tests, lower on discipline referrals, had a lower dropout rate and a higher graduation rate.

Another study by Whitley (2003) involved 44% of North Carolina's high schools in 1995. Whitley found similar results in the same categories as Overton with the addition of a better attendance rate that amounted to over one full week per year.

According to a study of 500 student athletes by the Minnesota State High School League, student athletes had a higher grade point average than the non-participating student and were absent from school less (IHSAA, 1984). Studies in both Iowa and Kansas showed similar tendencies (NIAAA, 1992). Jeziorski (1994) reported on the results of an analysis that:

Generally the favorable effects of sports participation motivated students to earn higher grades. For Hispanic and white females and white men, school sports participation had a significant positive correlation with higher grades. While statistical differences for Hispanic males and black females and males were not significant, the trends toward higher grade levels favored these three groups compared to non-sports participants. (p. 7)

The response to the question of students dropping out of activities in order to address the issue of creating more time for study was a viable one. According to Mannen (1995), athletic director at Rainier High School, Rainier, Oregon, students who had been involved in two sports in any given semester had consistently higher GPA's than those students who participated in just one sport during that semester. Mannen stated, "It would seem that dropping out of sports in order to raise one's grades may be a counter productive activity" (p. 21). Moreover, he felt that student-athletes had higher grade point averages than the student body as a whole, due to a variety of reasons. These reasons included:

1) the fact that many of the best students choose athletic involvement, 2) that athletes were required follow rules regarding academic eligibility, 3) student's good physical condition had a positive relationship with mental effectiveness, 4) many schools promoted academic excellence through incentive programs, 5) better attendance, 6) media attention, and 7) conference, league or state scholar-athlete standards and recognition. (p. 21)

A more recent study conducted by Mannen (1997) encompassed a 6-year period and three different high schools, showed athletes, as a group, had a 15 to 25% higher GPA than non athletes. Chevrette and Patranella (as cited in Honea, 1991) studied over 3,500 and found that students who participated in more than one activity tended to experience higher academic performance than other participants.

The March 1997 issue of *School Counselor* analyzed students involved in soccer indicating academic performance was enhanced during in-season participation (UIL, 1998). This lends credence to the philosophy that participation assisted students in budgeting study time.

Findings from a June 1995 study by the National Center for Education Statistics, *Extracurricular Participation and Student Engagement* revealed better attendance, fewer unexcused absences, and fewer skipped classes for participants compared to their non-participating classmates. Further, participants were three times likely to perform in the top quartile of composite math and reading assessment compared to those that did not participate in athletics (UIL, 1998).

Marks agreed that students seriously committed to more than one activity often were more energetic indicating the perspective that student ability was sufficient for

several roles and that individuals could be more energized as a result of these multiple involvements (Snyder & Spreitzer, 1992).

Galley (2000) reported that elementary school students in Michigan who participated in extracurricular activities also did better in high school in such areas as academic performance. An analysis of data from the National Educational Longitudinal Study showed that the most beneficial form of participation for student achievement was interscholastic sports participation (Broh, 2002).

An important factor in the academic success of athletes may well have been that athletes were in school, on average, more regularly than the student body as a whole. Student athletes were required to be in school in order to participate, were generally in school all day, every day, during their sport season(s). Regular class attendance should have translated into academic performance (Becker, 1993).

Value as a Contributor to Success

Perhaps success after high school is partially defined as inclusive of positive involvements and contributions to the community, church, and society. Also, additional attributes of success included the possessing of a sense of well-being and happiness, achievement in a profession, offering self-satisfaction and assistance to other people, as well as, self motivation, hard work, and conscientiousness. Likewise, added to this list are strengths including working well with others, having self-discipline (NFHS, 1980) in personal habits and lifestyle, communication skills, reliability, and leadership. High school athletic programs are the ideal classroom for teaching real-life skills of dedication, perseverance, goal setting and a positive attitude. Talamini and Page (1973) stressed the relationship between discipline and athletics as well as loyalty and individual sacrifice.

According to *School Sports and Education*, University of Chicago research suggested, by a 2 to 1 margin for males and 3 to 1 margin for females, that student athletes did better in school, did not drop out, and had a better chance to get through college than did non athletes. While taking a snapshot view of the high school athlete forwarded in to college, they further found that student athletes took more average and above courses, tended to focus more on long-term life accomplishments verses short-term goals, were more self-assured, had parents who were more involved with their educational process, while 92% of participants did not use drugs (NFHS, 1985).

Student Activities: An Integral Part of Education (NFHS, 1995) also reported on two case studies that indicated participation in activity programs related to higher career aspirations and had a positive effect on education, occupation, and income 15 years after high school. One study noted that it appeared to be especially true for students from lower socioeconomic backgrounds.

Fortune magazine in 1987 reported that 95% of male Fortune 500 executives participated in school athletics while 43% were National Honor Society members. Of these financially successful executives, 54% were involved in student government, 37% were in music and 18% were involved in high school publications (WIAA, 1996). A total of 80% of female *Fortune 500* executives participated in school athletics according to a University of Virginia study. "Athletics were also considered crucial for women's success" (Capozza, 2004, p. 115). An Oppenheimer Funds survey of over 400 highly successful women in the United States showed 82% played sports in college, high school, or junior high-middle school and they said that team activities helped them succeed in competitive work environments (Capozza).

Roberts (1993), the Executive Director of the Michigan High School Athletic Association (MHSAA), shared the following in an article in the *MHSAA Bulletin*:

So if we care about students' future success, we should do nothing to frustrate students' access to extracurricular participation. And only when we involve as many students as possible as meaningfully as possible in as many different activities as possible have we reached the full potential of our schools, and through them, tapped the full potential of our students. (p. 3)

According to the videotape "Funding Educational Athletics" by the MHSAA (n.d.), activities are education at its best:

If all parts of the curriculum required what the interscholastic athletic programs demand, no one would doubt that we have effective schools. If all parts of the curriculum required 90-120 minute classes every day the way we do in athletics, no one would wonder if we had effective schools. If all parts of the curriculum required one or two tests each week, open to the public, as interscholastic athletics demands, no one would wonder if we had effective schools. It would be obvious to everyone.

Recent case studies have indicated that participation in activity programs was directly related to higher career aspirations and further had a positive effect on educational goals, occupation, and worker income 15 years after high school. One study showed that this appeared to be especially true for those students from lower socioeconomic backgrounds (Holland & Andre, 1987; Marsh, 1988).

Cheryl Miller (NFHS, 1995) is a former professional women's basketball coach and standout collegiate interscholastic and collegiate player. Regarding her participation

she recalled, “What high school athletics taught me most was comradeship - learning to work with others toward a common goal. And the result of hard work, determination, sportsmanship, sacrifice and dedication is success” (p. 19).

Additional qualities often associated as benefits included such personal attributes as the development of poise, commitment, courage and focus on a task. Kilmeade (2004) referred to the value of athletic participation that may have impacted many during the tragic terrorist attacks of 9/11. Following the events of this unforgettable day the nation began learning about the passengers from Flight 93. While this plane was destined by the terrorist to crash into the White House or Capitol Hill, the plan was thwarted by passengers on board. Upon learning of the planned suicide mission, they took action against the hijackers. Led by Mark Bingham, Todd Beamer, Jeremy Glick and Tom Burnett, it appears that they stormed the cockpit scuttling the terrible mission. Kilmeade pointed out that as he learned about those four men from their loved ones, he found that the early involvement in sport had helped shape in part, each of them stating that “experience that must certainly have guided these heroes’ hands under those horrifying conditions” (p. 26).

According to Eckroth, (1989) activities assisted participants in areas of confidence, social skill dealing with adversity. Other positive impacts encompassed enthusiasm, loyalty, reliability, and toughness. Student athletes learned to accept judgment calls made by others that they encountered throughout their lives (Somers, 1989). Still other qualities were persistence, pride in effort, a willingness to prepare, and a strong work ethic as a foundation on which other areas of success were built (Sheehy, 2002).

All of this information, summary, research and conclusion were not the final word on the values of athletic participation. And it should not be interpreted to mean that running, jumping, lifting, catching, kicking, or throwing were more important than academics in our schools. Neither should this infer that participation was more important than family time, church involvement, or assisting those in need within our communities. However, the initiative, motivation, fun and challenges that those activities generated for young people were surely a classroom of learning to be considered, while critical to the core curriculum.

Formerly with the National Association of Secondary School Principals' Urban Services, Ruffin (MHSAA, n.d.), shared the following in support of school activities:

[They] represent the salvation of schools and maybe the nation. They promote academic achievement, equal access to opportunity regardless of race and class, cultural understanding, and self-esteem by giving youth a place to be loved, cared for and to belong, a place where they can make mistakes and still be accepted. This is what our schools need to save them. This is what our nation may need to save it. (p. S3)

Quoting Kanaby:

The educational purpose of high school athletics and fine arts programs must be about more than teaching a young person to hit a curve ball or throw a perfect spiral or play an instrument or even earn a scholarship. Our No. 1 core goal should be the propagation of good people for our country - good citizens who will contribute to the quality of life in America and the world. (NIAAA, 1998, p. 4)

In support of these thoughts, Colabro (2003) shared that the purpose of sport was not to create All Americans but rather to develop good Americans.

Joseph (1985) believed it to be obvious that academics and athletics were not conflicting but compatible. In the educational process they were actually complimentary to one another. He stated that, from the time of Plato and Socrates most noted and learned scholars and educators have been thoroughly convinced that athletics are an integral component to the educational process (p. 20). Plato, a Greek author and philosopher, once said “you can discover more about a person in an hour of play than in a year of conversation” (Treasure, 2006, p. 30). While not equal in importance to academics, athletics were important to the education of the whole student. They should be offered in competition to one another but in conjunction.

According to Lapchick (1996), the elimination of school sports programs would serve as one more blow at the chance for youth from lower socioeconomic backgrounds to break out of the cycle of low self-esteem. “Innumerable studies show the value of sport in its youthful participants is incontrovertible” (p. 8). He continued by saying that:

American high school student athletes, while still carrying the unrealistic beliefs that they can be the newest rising star, now clearly understand that playing sports is a vehicle that can deliver educational, social and life-skill benefits that will help them be productive members of society. Benefits accrue in significant disproportion to African American and female student athletes. Sports are a safety net for the 70% of African American student athletes who say that playing sports helps them to focus increased attention on work in the classroom and the survey shows team sports create bonds that cut across racial lines. (p. 8)

Ewing (1980) shared his conviction of the value of interscholastic athletics in the secondary school setting when he stated:

I remain firmly convinced that an expansion of “the other half of education” must be ONE of the measures used to better the lives of our young people, put more soul in our schools and restore our community pride in one of our most cherished institutions. (pp. 1-2)

Athletic programs were the “window of the school” as expressed by Jacobson (1983). He stated that; “... students who are able to take adversity and bounce back are those who are involved in student activities” (p. 4). His belief was that athletic programs existed for the purpose of assisting young people to mature in their quest for adulthood.

Sundvold (2006) expressed that through athletics adults should have been able to teach kids how to dream, be successful, be disciplined, work hard and to learn from failure. To do so was to hopefully provide a gift learning to give back. At the same time there was a challenge to make certain that students were measured by their participation and that simply winning didn't define who they were.

As Becker (1993) stated, “Too many people still see activity programs as frills, not recognizing that the values learned will directly connect to the student's success in school and future life” (p. 29). Some people saw athletics and activity programs as an extra to the curriculum. Many educational professionals felt we must recognize that the values learned through participation directly connected to the students' schooling and future. They believed that activity programs were crucial and non-expendable. They felt that supporting the athletes of today, as well as our musicians, debaters and performers, would be a step forward in building our leaders of tomorrow.

Alternate View

Some researchers feared the dangers of participation in athletics. In their book, *Lessons of the Locker Room*, Miracle and Rees (1994) generally agreed that involvement in extracurricular activity was positive; however, they felt the danger of potential benefits were overwhelmed when the attitude became one of winning at all costs. Often times aggression and irritability decreased self-control and created a negative atmosphere for learning.

In his book, *Adolescent Society*, Coleman (1961) took the theoretical position that students who put their energies into athletics were less likely to pursue academic success (Snyder & Spreitzer, 1992). A qualitative study by Parkerson (2001) showed that relatively few high school girls thought that their educational and career developments were directly effected by participation in extracurricular activities. The need for a scholarship and items for the college application were the most common reasons given by the high school girls for participation in extracurricular activities.

It was stated in a study documented in *Youth & Society* that compared male athletes and male non-athletes, little evidence was yielded to support the idea that sport was necessary for complete and adequate socialization or that involvement resulted in character building, moral development, a competitive team orientation, good citizenship, or valued personality traits (Spreitzer, 1994). Gerdy (2002) wrote that traditional athletics were no longer a boost to the welfare and academic integrity of the student but required reform in order to teach the proper cultural values and ensuring honesty, intelligence and civility over athletic prowess.

Some argued that sport simply mirrored society rather than influencing it and many felt that aside from what honor and integrity was found in sport, there was also some aspects that disregarded the ideals of fair play. Poor sportsmanship was a common product just as good sportsmanship was the goal, according to Eitzen (1998). Thomas and Lewis (1994) believed that sports simply revealed engrained character traits rather than building positive aspects within.

Research did not support the common acceptance of sport building character after examination of the impact of athletic participation. Nor did participation lead to significant outcomes in the education of participants. University of Idaho researchers found that after 40 years of study involving thousands of students from youth to Olympic level athletes, "...does not support the notion of sport as a character building activity...as it applies to sportsmanship behavior or moral-reasoning ability" (Treasure, 2006, p. 3). Coaches created a culture that promoted selfishness and dishonesty when winning was the primary emphasis that young people accepted and internalized. A study that examined the educational effects of interscholastic athletic participation by minority youth and any relation to extra-curricular involvement, grades, achievement test performance, and dropout rates was performed. Sports involvement was generally unrelated to grades and standardized test scores. The study further concluded that sport should only be considered one of a number of converging portions of the life of an American minority youth. To assign athletic participation more significance than other involvements, the authors felt ran the risk of oversimplifying the psychosocial process of participation in high school athletics (Melnick & Sabo, 1992).

The trouble that some of the millionaire professional athletes have found themselves in, the emphasis put on winning at the college level and certainly at the professional level, and the poor conduct and self-centered attitude of many professional athletes, did not lend itself well to promoting the benefit of participation in athletics by high school students in the current climate of our society.

Summary

The debate on whether athletics belonged in the educational setting is a debate that has raged throughout the years among schools, institutions of higher learning, churches, psychology, law enforcement, and social workers. Athletics in school have been exalted as a factor in winning wars, developing American character, training leaders, and passing budgets (Betts, 1974). Critics of sports in the school have viewed activities that divert attention, time, and energy away from the primary goals of education, as not worthwhile. Those debaters of the issue must attempt to answer the question of whether school would be lifeless without the outlet of sport and would students lack collective goals?

As the years have progressed, there is little question that history has shown a relative increase in participation, budgets, interest, and emphasis since the introduction of athletics into the school setting. In relation to the individual attributes of participation, supporters mention athletics as a developer of positive personal qualities within the athlete including less substance abuse, more self discipline, better time management, cooperation, honesty, reliability, and determination. Better attendance, higher grades, lower drop out rates, fewer discipline problems, and higher standardized test scores have been the claims of school administrators. Many benefits have been afforded to athletics in

the development of young people. While the research may not be totally conclusive as to whether the attributed good has outweighed the perceived negatives, certainly this historic overview displays the gradual acceptance and tremendous growth of athletics in our culture. The slow blending of culture and the subsequent sophistication of competitive sport has impacted the educational system, school community, administrators, boards of education, and students of our nation.

Throughout the nation's history of sport, there have been a variety of interested parties and impacting stakeholders, numerous and diverse resources, and ever changing modes of thought. The issue of sports in schools has also had many defining moments. As all of these changes have taken place, it is imperative that the educational leader create a new model with an understanding of what has brought us to where we are in our schools. It is paramount that the administrators possess a historical background in the implementation of sports into the schools, an understanding of the local view of sports as they relate to education, and a personal philosophy of what the student experience in extracurricular offerings should entail.

Chapter 3

RESEARCH METHODS

This chapter presents the methods and procedures that were used to obtain information for the study as well as the reasons for selection of an array of subjects as various sources. In order to answer the problematic questions relevant to whether athletics were educational by nature and supported the academic mission of the school, it was necessary to study how sports entered schools and the perspective of those involved as stake holders. The purpose of the study was four-fold: to provide a background of the historical implementation of interscholastic athletics, to review the political and social impact of interscholastic athletics as a part of the nation's secondary school setting, to provide a reflection of the perceptions and attitudes of subject's views regarding their athletic participation and to establish the value to the educational experience.

Interscholastic athletics have often been described as both beneficial and a hindering element in the atmosphere of our nation's high schools. While some said that athletics were one of the most important ingredients in successful schools, others pointed to athletics as a diversion to education. The belief that athletics were crucial was displayed by Heath (1992) who noted that participation in athletic programs was the school's best predictor of adult success while developing character strengths necessary

for later life. The literature contained substantial support for the importance of participation and achievement in school athletics as an assisting element in the development of personal self-satisfaction and vital community involvement.

This qualitative study employed different knowledge claims, strategies of inquiry, and methods of data collection while it relied on unique text and image data (Creswell, 2003). Collection methods for materials were open-ended and included interviews, questionnaires and document analysis. In addition, a variety of methods of communication were utilized that included email, interactive conversation, telephone calls, collaboration with administrative assistants, web site visits and written letters.

As a qualitative study, it was fundamental that the researcher made interpretation of the information after development of a description of the individuals studied and review of data through a personal reflective lens for themes, categories and conclusions. Social, political and historical circumstances assisted in providing a panoramic view of the introduction of sport to schools.

Sources of Data

For the purposes of this study, qualitative research was conducted that explored the entry of sport into the high schools nationally and within Indiana. Included was the evolution of interscholastic programs and the social and political atmosphere that influenced this phenomenon, much of which was researched in Chapter 2. To this was added a study of the beliefs of participants regarding the benefits of their involvement in athletics toward personal development and education. Subjects were selected based upon their heritage in interscholastic athletics as either a representative of a generation within a family of participants or having been involved during an influential historical, political,

social, or geographic period during the evolution of sports in schools. Methods of identifying participants included not only ideas that came from my dissertation committee members but also via involvement in discussion with both past and present staff members of the Indiana High School Athletic Association, National Interscholastic Athletic Administrators Association and the National Federation of State High School Associations. These organizations have been involved in the history, governance, leadership and sponsorship of high school athletics and names were contributed including individuals and families for this research that could offer views spanning generations, historical periods, gender, political eras, as well as social variances and upheavals. In addition, my educational experiences, athletic administration and various leadership roles blended well to this process of identifying subjects.

The researcher selected six individuals who offered a time span view, racial perspective, demographic balance and gender variance that helped to best identify and understand the role of interscholastic athletics within secondary schools. The selected participants offered insight through responses to questions into the interpretation of potential benefits of athletic involvement, personal growth through participation, as well as the context of the era in time during which they participated.

The characteristics of the subjects that were a part of the study were encompassed by efforts to seek responses from people diverse in age, generation, gender, historical era, and role as participants. Efforts were directed at studying views from relatives of three successive generations of one family as well as participants' views from the early, mid and late 20th century.

Three generations of a family were studied in order to garner a view of the student athlete who has grown to adulthood and reflects on the consistency of developmental benefits to participants. The family of participants represented a view of high school athletic experience over decades at the same high school in a rural setting. The generations were inclusive of both genders and served as a comparison of approximately 70 years. The youngest generation to participate was a recent high school graduate who had been involved in high school athletics.

To meet the criteria, a study was conducted of three generations of the Merrell family from Howard County, Indiana. The Merrell's also incorporated the athletic background of a fourth generation great-grandfather, Russell Merrell. Dayton Merrell, his son, Ted Merrell, and granddaughter, Katie Merrell, shared perspectives on benefits fostered, observed, experienced, celebrated and carried from one generation to the next. They were graduates and athletes at Northwestern High School from the mid 20th Century through the beginnings of the 21st Century. Together the four generations of Merrell family represented the period from approximately 1920 through 2005, or roughly, the same period seen by another subject of research, 96 year old John Wooden. In addition, the Merrell family lived in a rural setting, thus providing the full research with a variance from rural, to suburban, to urban viewpoint.

The period from the turn of the century through the 1930s was of interest because it shed light on the time span during which athletics entered schools. This second form of acquiring historical and reflective information included the study of perspective through survey and correspondence, along with written works of a few key individuals who represented a cross-generation involvement. A successful overture was made to include

John Wooden, long time men's basketball coach at UCLA. Since Coach Wooden's roots were in Indiana and he was trained and experienced as an educator, he was able to offer insight into the early periods of high school sport and shared from his beliefs that athletics had an educational foundation and purpose.

He was born in 1910 and participated in Indiana secondary school athletics during the 1920s which was a period of growth for interscholastic athletic programs in schools. He played on a state championship team at Martinsville High School. After starring at Purdue University, John Wooden taught English and coached at the high school level prior to moving to the collegiate coaching ranks at Indiana State Teachers College followed by UCLA. He is recognized as the most successful college basketball coach of all time amassing 10 NCAA championships. His almost century long view of high school athletics was of interest to the researcher as John Wooden possessed a perspective from the various views of a young fan, player, coach, instructor, recruiter, and now athletic statesman, speaker and philosopher. His background also offered insight into small town social life in Southern Indiana as well his later move and long life in the Los Angeles, California vicinity. He was able to compare the social and political changes up through the latter years of the 20th century when he ended his college coaching career yet remained a key figure in educating coaches and the youth who they influence. In addition, this time frame included the social dynamics of small communities and their identity with school teams within political climates that affected education. Subjects were sought out that could offer perspective on such potential impacting events and organizations such as World War I, secret societies including the KKK, the Labor and Populist Movement, the economic crash and depression and how these key eras in

societal history and change affected schools and communities in terms of isolationism, matters of race and the school's role in preparing potential soldiers and workers.

A second period of interest was that from the late 1930s through late 1960s. Research focused on bias experienced by ethnic, gender and racial groups in relation to the contrast of the so-called 'Golden Era' of sports. For identification purposes the researcher will use the pseudonym of "Mr. Smith" throughout the document to relate responses of the subject. Mr. Smith was the focus of this era as he was a star player on a Midwestern high school basketball team that was one of the early few all black segregated schools in the country to win a state basketball championship. Mr. Smith's insight was valuable as an African American in the era of great popularity and growth of the legend that was high school basketball in his state. Interestingly, the first generation of the family who I researched played against Smith's high school team. He was a multiple year college "Player of the Year" while a university student in the Midwest. He was also a leader on an Olympic champion team. From there he played many years of professional basketball while being named to the NBA All Star team on a number of occasions (Robinson, 1988). Mr. Smith offered the view of a minority as well as the urban school during this era of great popularity of high school sport. How high school sports evolved, flourished and grew during the strife of the World War II, the Korean War, Vietnam War and changing youth culture was investigated. How educators and administrators embraced, controlled or tolerated the growth of school athletics was of interest.

The period from the late 1970s to the turn of the century was of interest because this period served as an umbrella of time over such events as the impact of Title IX

implementation, rapidly changing expectations of parents, the influence of youth sports on school programs and the impact of the behavior and marketing of college programs and professional athletes and leagues. Offering insight into this period was Judi Warren who served as a pioneer of girls' sports in Indiana during the 1970s. After playing college basketball, she became an educator and has served in the classroom for the past 26 years. She also coached high school girls' varsity basketball for 14 years. Judi Warren was on the first girls' state basketball championship team in 1976 from Warsaw, Indiana. She not only was on the first all star team, but was named as the first "Miss Basketball" from the state. Her insight into the initial years of Title IX implementation, her perspective of the role of girls' athletics in the school and the inequalities of opportunities for girls was valuable for research. Her views also represent the demographic of the smaller industrial town and the social dynamics that locale offered. Her insight into the social struggle for the acceptance of women's sport was of strong benefit to the study.

The idea behind qualitative research was to purposefully select participants and materials that best assisted in understanding whether athletics should be a part of the school offering and if they were educationally based and supported the academic mission of the school. In light of the design, purposeful rather than random sampling was used that typically involved a smaller number of participants selected and studied (Creswell, 2003).

The individuals included in the research offered their perspective related to a particular historical background, personal involvement and individual experience. Subjects who met the sample needs became known professionally to the researcher through various forms of communication opportunities.

Data Collection Process

In regard to the generational study, the researcher met with the family members in the natural setting common to them in Kokomo, Indiana. “This will enable the researcher to develop a level of detail about the individual...and be highly involved in actual experiences of the participants” (Creswell, 2003, p. 182). Each of the three generations questioned were current residents of Indiana. In addition, to the interview each was asked to complete a questionnaire and a number of email and mail communications followed. The initial contact was made by phone and a number of communications were through Jean Merrell, wife of Ted, who assisted in organizing the family responses and communiqués.

With relation to John Wooden, who resides in Encino, California, the communication was by mail with introduction to my request via email. Using available written documents, most of which were books that he had co-authored, along with media presentations that included Wooden’s experiences and philosophies, the researcher endeavored to seek out key beliefs of the subject that related to the research questions. Communication with him involved his responses to a questionnaire and web-site writings that utilized a communications agent or personal secretary as the go-between. In addition, the researcher crafted questions that related to his writings and philosophies to the questions and sub-questions of this study. The researcher wanted to see if John Wooden’s thoughts were in unity with the words chosen to express the study impetus. In some cases the quotes of John Wooden from books and media told the story of the athletic benefits and in others the researcher used this written work as a source of questions and

comparison for interpreting. The researcher met personally with Wooden in Anaheim, California in December, 2006.

Mr. Smith's involvement included a meeting, his writings, mail, speaking by phone, email and communication through his administrative assistant. His business offices were housed in a major Midwest city. The experiences of Mr. Smith were important to the study because of his knowledge of what it was like to grow up, be educated and participate in interscholastic athletics as a minority during the growth in popularity of high school sports. Further his success as a high school and college student and athlete along with a successful professional sport career made him a subject able to explain what he had to overcome in order to make it to the next level. In addition, his role as a husband, father and businessman offered insight into a reflective look at the political and social manipulative areas that impacted his experience.

In an effort to better understand the strife of the African American struggle during the primary growth of interscholastic athletics the researcher also visited a museum dedicated to the history of Smith's once segregated high school. The museum was located at the site of the school which was segregated during six decades of the 20th century at which time excelled in both education and athletic successes. The school was named after an early black American Revolutionary patriot. While the original plan was to name the school after an early American President the patriot's name was selected when the black community protested because the president had been a former slave holder. The high school was changed to a middle school in the 1970s due to reorganization of the public school system. (Beck, 2003). Under a new plan the original building was again scheduled to become a magnet high school during the 2006-07 school year. Part of the reason for

the change as shared by the superintendent of schools was the importance of the school to the heritage of the African American community. The museum displayed the rich educational heritage of the school and the talented and contributing students that were educated there. The researcher also attended a town meeting which offered an open forum, celebration, and panel discussion on the anniversary of the school winning the state boys basketball championship. At that session held in the auditorium of the school were teammates, coaches, administrators, local media and opposing players from 'back in the day'. Current African American students were represented and they benefit today from the pioneering efforts of those who overcame segregation in order to reach this accomplishment. Those involved in the evening reinforced the message of while difficult, this period in the history of black citizenry was a time of pride, growth, and challenge for them personally, educationally, and socially. These two experiences were of considerable value to the researcher in understanding the era of segregation and how it affected the African American student's participation as well as the role that interscholastic athletics played in helping overcome segregation in schools.

Judi Warren was interviewed by planned visitation, questionnaire, mail and phone voice mail in addition to the exchange of electronic communication, in order to be analyzed for the study. She was a resident of the Indianapolis area and taught in the Carmel-Clay School Corporation.

As noted, the design followed procedure of multiple forms of data collection and interaction that included the study of written works, interviews and electronic communication. It was necessary to develop a certain level of rapport and credibility with the individuals participating in the study. The researcher felt that a level of sensitivity to

the participants' time and involvement developed through sincere active participation in delivering the requests and later, the questions of the study. A part of this collection included open-ended questioning, as well as document analysis. The researcher interpreted the final data while categorizing the findings into descriptions and themes and endeavored to draw conclusions about what was to be learned. As Creswell (2003) explains, "the researcher will filter the data through a personal lens that is situated in a specific sociopolitical and historical moment" (p. 182). The qualitative study was a comprehensive effort that offered a panoramic view of the historical periods being investigated. The researcher endeavored to triangulate the study of the family generations of Russell, Dayton, Ted and Katie Merrell, while comparing the experiences and perspectives of John Wooden, Mr. Smith, and Judi Warren to one another. As well, the views of all subjects included in the mix of questions were related to the represented eras, points of view and historical accounts.

The design was primarily interpretive; it was inclusive of some ethnographic research given that an intact family culture in a natural setting over time was investigated. This was done while endeavoring to obtain a holistic picture of the subjects as they emphasized their experiences. Small vignettes of study were involved in the human interest side of the research. The ultimate goal that was realized from the study was an understanding of events, roles, situations, and interaction suitable for comparing and contrasting. There may have been some critical theory utilized while evaluating the racial issues in the study. Historical research encompassed all of the areas of the study.

Interview Topics

Semi-structured interview questions were devised to explain contemporary issues such as those shown in Table 3.1. The letter to subjects (Appendix A), study questions (Appendix C), sub-questions (Appendix D), and grand tour question (Appendix E) appear in the appendixes.

Table 3.1

Interview Topics

Contemporary Issues	
Substance abuse	Citizenship
School attendance	Health habit and lifestyle
Academic performance	Time management
Discipline problems	Reliability
Involvement with law enforcement	Initiative
Self-discipline	Self-confidence and self-esteem
Loyalty	Integrity
Motivation	Affiliation, friendship, and security
Determination	Work ethic
Respect	Working with other, cooperation
Leadership	Focus on task
Perseverance	School drop out comparison
Dedication	Service and sacrifice

Summary

This chapter presented the methods and procedures that were utilized to conduct the study investigating the climate in which interscholastic athletics thrived in the high schools and whether participation served as a benefit or deterrent to the development of the participant. Chapter 4 presents the findings of the study. Chapter 5 includes the summary of those findings as well as discussion, implications, recommendations and conclusions drawn from the research.

Chapter 4

ANALYSIS AND FINDINGS

The purpose of the study was four-fold: 1) to provide a background of the historical implementation of interscholastic athletics, 2) to review the political and social impact of interscholastic athletics as a part of the nation's secondary school setting, 3) to provide a reflection of the perceptions and attitudes of subject's views regarding their athletic participation, and 4) to establish the value to the educational experience. The focus of this chapter is to report the findings accomplished through qualitative research into the beliefs of high school athletic participants related to the benefits that they experienced. This study did lend itself to explore how the entry of sport into high school offerings evolved, through social and political phenomena, into a plethora interscholastic programs. In addition, the research sought insight into the perceived benefits of participation and the affect on education. Individuals who could offer a time span view, racial perspective, and gender variance were approached as potential subjects in order to help best identify and understand the problem.

Part 1 of this study described the findings of the study that included three generations of one family and three key student-athletes from different eras of the 20th Century. This portion provided a span of longevity in evaluation of interscholastic

athletic participation and perspective and whether, or not, benefits were afforded the family members. The generational study that involved Dayton, Ted and Katie Merrell, allowed the researcher to meet and correspond with the family members in a series of communications and clarification.

Part 2 dealt with a reflective study of John Wooden and his observations of the early 20th century experience with interscholastic athletics and the role he felt interscholastic athletic endeavors contributed to education, communities, and the student's schooling. Communications with Wooden were by mail with introduction to the researcher's request via email.

Part 3 presented the view of a racial minority participant who represented the mid portion of the 1900s and the period of rapid growth and popularity of interscholastic sport. This view addressed areas including the rapid growth and societal impact of high school sport as well as the importance that social and political dynamics in America played during that particular time period. Mr. Smith's involvement was by writings, mail, meeting and electronic communication.

Part 4 was a study of a female participant, Judi Warren, and included observations from her experiences as player and coach during the late 20th century. This time period included women's entry into athletic competition and the then changing role of interscholastic sport. Correspondence with her was by email, telephone and mail.

Research questions designed to guide the study included:

1. Did the development of interscholastic athletics in high schools display the fostering of beneficial lifelong attributes among participants, contribute positively to education, and have a favorable impact on communities?

2. Did athletic participation help develop strong moral, social, and personal character traits among participants?
3. Was there displayed among athletic participants positive attributes of school attendance, lower discipline rates, good study habits, and higher grades?

A number of sub-questions were developed for each research question in order to reach the full, clear, and in depth responses necessary to provide a reflective evaluation. These questions are listed in Appendix E. Following the identification of potential sources of information and subjects for the study, the researcher sought the willingness of subjects to be involved. Overall, the design included the following basic procedures and purposes:

1. Three generations of the Merrell family, located in Indiana, were identified as subjects for interview purposes and a study done of their responses. Perception of participation benefits and experiences was collected during on-site structured interviews. Their ages at the time of the interviews were 69, 45, and 19 years of age.
2. Correspondence with 96 year old John Wooden gave reflection on the environment in which he participated during the early years of interscholastic athletics. In addition, Coach Wooden's view on the benefits of participation experienced by him as an athlete and witnessed by him as a coach were of benefit to the study.
3. The responses of a racial minority that possessed a perspective of the period of great growth in the interest of high school sport during the mid twentieth century was garnered from Mr. Smith who was age 69 at the time of the interview.

4. The changes in interscholastic athletics during the latter portions of the twentieth century were included by seeking answers from Judi Warren, a pioneer in high school athletics for women. At interview time, Ms. Warren was age 47.

The design followed a procedure of multiple methods that were interactive including study of written works, interviews, telephone, mail, visitations, and electronic communication. A part of this collection was interpretation of books and documents that were read and utilized to generate discussion and application to related research questions. These books and documents are listed in Appendix G. The researcher interpreted the findings when categorized into descriptions and themes. Further, endeavors were made to draw theoretic conclusions of what was to be learned. The qualitative study was an encompassing effort that offered an historical view of the period that was sought and brought out through the reflection of the subjects.

The design was inclusive of some ethnographic research as a family was sought out for questions dealing with a segment of time in their high school careers. Vignettes of study were involved in the human interest side of this research. A part of the study was to gain an understanding of events, roles, situations and beliefs that were then compared and contrasted. There may have been some critical theory utilized when reviewing the racial views encountered in the study. Historical research served as the umbrella for all of the areas incorporated in the study.

Merrell Family

Three individuals, Dayton, Ted and Katie, make-up generations of the Merrell family that were identified as a source to study in order to compare themes and patterns that represented their view of athletic participation including similarities and differences

that were reflected upon. They represent the granddaughter, father and grandfather figures. Questionnaires and interviews were conducted in order to gather insight to be used to identify the similarities and differences in how each one saw implemented change and what involved them in the athletic operation as they judged the positives and negatives of their personal participation.

The participating family members all attended the same high school and represented over a 50-year span of involvement in high school athletics. The period included time spent not only as an athlete but as a school patron, community member, fan, parent and grandparent. The grandfather, son, and granddaughter, who all participated in high school athletics at Northwestern High School, were interviewed as representatives of the views of those experiencing sports during different eras. The generations were inclusive of both male and female. The youngest generation to participate was a recent graduate of the school. In addition, the family supplied a number of athletic materials collected by the great-grandfather who had passed away not many months prior. Each showed much individual and diverse thought on questions, while at the same time showing similarities in their experience regardless the period of their team membership.

In response to question number one, “Did the development of interscholastic athletics in high schools display the fostering of beneficial lifelong attributes among participants, contribute positively to education, and have a favorable impact on communities,” Dayton Merrell shared that, “In his view and experiences of school, the educational system was not complete without athletic offerings and participation.” He based his response from the perspective of the historic small community of Indiana. He

felt similar beliefs were perhaps even stronger in rural communities that were often defined by the athletic teams in the respective school. This was perhaps more the case when compared to the more metropolitan school setting within a town or city where communities were often more diverse in culture, ethnicity and entertainment. Roberts (1993) professed that participants in his study felt better about their school and the entire educational process. Similarly in this study, Dayton Merrell further expressed that within the walls of schools, “value of athletics was defined among the students that attended and were a part of the school culture.” Through their sport opportunities and representation on teams, students developed a view of their school and community. As the individual personalities of students molded into one collective body of people, traditions developed. These were often times affected by athletic teams that represented this body of people through their competition with neighboring schools. A study by the Center for Research on Sport in Society located at the University of Miami in Florida concluded that athletic participation had a positive effect on students’ attitude toward school (WIAA, 1996). “There was a certain understanding of behavior that resulted,” explained Dayton Merrell. It was an expectation that as a student he worked hard in school, respected educators and behaved in a manner that reflected positively on one’s family, school and community.

During his era of interscholastic participation from the late 1940s up to and including his graduation in 1955, Dayton Merrell indicated that communities, as he put it, “went crazy over their high school basketball team.” And, in many cases, some became hysterical when schools began to discuss the potential for consolidation with neighboring schools. The foundation of the school’s roots in the community, the fact that this physical representation of the community and the traditions that made it theirs would potentially

be lost, caused much hand wringing and animated conversation. As many people saw it, consolidation took away the people's longstanding generations of historic identity with the local school.

Dayton Merrell spoke of the influence of sport on society even during the 1930's when his father played semi-professional basketball following graduation from Young America High School in Cass County, Indiana, in 1924. So important was basketball during this time that Russell Merrell, "would make more money playing one game of semi-professional basketball than an entire week of work at his regular job." He further felt that cooperation was a strong attribute of participants and a quality he has experienced as important in the work place and in interpersonal relationships throughout his life.

Dayton Merrell was a part of his school and community tradition. He not only attended a rural school but remained in the community involving himself in agriculture as a farmer and businessman. He and wife Janet raised three children who attended the same high school and successfully participated in athletics.

The oldest son, Ted Merrell, along with his brother became successful businessmen through their initiative to develop an independent business. He observed that "through personal observation, he could quickly evaluate who among his employees had been involved in high school athletics." He believed that such traits were often obvious because of the strength of character and personal will power displayed while the employee interacted and served. Ted Merrell pointed out his experiences as a member of the school corporation's Board of Directors, and the specific dilemma faced as the community progressed through a recent remonstrance challenge to a local building

project. He shared the feeling that the “we versus them” mentality of many of those who did not favor the project was fostered by people or their children, who had never experienced the benefit of participation in extra-curricular activities during their high school career, nor had their children. When compared to the supportive community members, he believed that the opponents were less schooled in vision, often did not communicate factual information, reacted to issues with emotion rather than fact and sometimes had difficulty maintaining their composure when expressing their thoughts or working in stressful situations. In a study by the U. S. Department of Education, Sider and Weinberger (2002) also spoke of developing social skills as a strength derived from participation. This was a part of the review of related literature portion of the dissertation. Involvement in interscholastic athletics benefited Ted Merrell as a board member, parent and forward thinker. He identified experiences faced in athletics that not only assisted him in his development as an adult but also helped him communicate positively and affectively with those who lacked understanding on board issues, employment items and being a responsible neighbor and friend. He was convinced that sport in American society became the area that allowed for individuals to express their aggressiveness, enthusiasm and desire to overcome in a unique setting of competitiveness. Competitive athletics between school communities answered the ancient “thrill of the kill”, as Ted Merrell put it, or replaced the historic involvement in survival, battle, self preservation and subsistence of man. This view was supported by Boyle (1962) who felt that sport was an off shoot of the same spirit that led Americans across the frontier, taming the land, breaking the prairie, felling forests and living subsistent.

The granddaughter, Katie Merrell, who is Ted's oldest child, agreed that schools sometimes defined themselves by the winning experiences of certain teams, while on the other hand, during her four years of high school during the early 2000s, a number of "students who did not participate in athletics had contributed to a change in the personality of the school." It was through a lack of involvement in school activities, low classroom effort and negative actions in the school and community that such students altered, somewhat, the ordinary positive atmosphere of the school. Over a period of time, the positive atmosphere prevailed and she attributed this to the discipline and good qualities learned in the classroom and in extra-curricular activities. Overall, these qualities permeated the student body and staff and assisted them in overcoming the opposing personal qualities and actions. All three of the Merrell family agreed, in positive tones, that athletics contributed an important message in the school and to the individual as they communicated appropriate behavior and expectations.

In response to question number two, "Did athletic participation help develop strong moral, social, and personal character traits among participants," Dayton Merrell focused on the belief that participation "helped him as well as other participants to accept authority which, in turn, benefited him at home, in the work place and in a democratic society." Further, he believed that he and his classmates became more self-disciplined as a result of the expectations and demands placed upon participants of interscholastic athletics. Hard work was a primary contributing factor to self-discipline and also gave one a competitive edge in other areas of later life. While revisiting similar circumstances the participant developed camaraderie with teammates and opponents. Certainly, this view is in agreement with information provided by the NFHS that cited Cheryl Miller's

belief that what she gained most from high school athletics was comradeship on which all other benefits were based (NFHS, 1995). Through the nurturing of a team concept in his athletic experiences, Dayton Merrell felt the promotion of give and take expectations assisted in his development. As he encountered teaching during the middle of the twentieth century in both practices and games, it promoted a new dimension in his life that “assisted him and other young people in efforts to resist and overcome self-centeredness.” Dayton Merrell pointed out that he experienced “sacrifice of personal desires and the need for recognition while gradually replacing these areas of self with those of helping others succeed, cooperation, and allowing teammates to receive equal or more glory.” He further mentioned that he considered self-centeredness to be somewhat of a character flaw for him as a youth and that athletic participation served as a stepping stone that helped him overcome it. “Sometimes,” he commented, “effort is necessary to overcome an interpretive false crisis in the young lives of student-athletes.” His belief demonstrated how personal characteristics in turn shaped a person’s place in society as well as it having potentially affected social interaction and societal contribution at the community and global levels. Cheryl Miller (NFHS, 1995) echoed this idea in her perception that a result of her personal growth as a high school athlete was not only hard work, but learning to sacrifice. Jeziorski (1994) spoke also of the sacrifice of self-interest when participating on a team and the balance needed in self discipline to give of one’s self while still improving personally as an athlete.

While there were many reasons that students joined athletic teams, Ted Merrell accentuated his observation that “personal character was enhanced and social demeanor heightened and improved as students interrelated with other team members.” Regularly,

this included those who may have had non-common backgrounds, expectations, or approached participation with a unique point of view. Respect for others was a large growth benefit that he sighted as athletics readily impacted positively. This occurred as interrelationships took place between teammates in competitive environments that required those who worked toward the same cause to gain an appreciation of the talents, strengths, weakness, imperfectness and personality of others. He suggested that, “such qualities were of considerable value to his business and those he employed, who at one time participated interscholastically, seemed to often have a head start on such valuable qualities.” In citing his business and employees, Ted Merrell commented that the participation experience often served as a motivation to overcome personal frailties of social interaction and seemed to help workers acclimate, to a certain extent, various types of all personalities. The use of personal experiences in participation was Katie Merrell’s method of responding to the question of moral strength, social discipline, and personal character. She cited the sport of tennis and the expectation that a level of honesty pervaded throughout competition. As participants were demanded to judge line calls of opponents, she stressed that, “sport participation had made her the most fair in judgment of calls that she could have possibly been.” In golf as well, her personal character and morality in terms of honesty was strengthened and reinforced. This strength in turn was observed by fellow teammates and competitive participants and was tested each day as she elected to play by the rules that affected ball lie, scoring accuracy, and the application of the rules of the game as she had been coached. She believed that sport and the behavior expected by all associated with the history of the game contributed to maintaining the proper character by participants. To have shaved strokes in golf or

reverse close line calls in tennis would have become an addiction in competitive situations as well as her social life. To choose to cheat would only have helped to muster traits contrary to the competitive side of one's character. In all, athletic competition taught her to work hard and do her best in all involvements.

The third question, "Was there displayed among athletic participants positive attributes of school attendance, lower discipline rates, good study habits, and higher grade?" garnered agreement between grandfather, son, and granddaughter. Katie Merrell thought that involvement in interscholastic athletics had benefited her greatly in the classroom by serving as a motivation to achieve scholastically. The expectation to perform well academically, be at school and behave properly while there had "influenced her desire to work hard in class." This view was supported by numerous studies that indicate students involved in athletics achieve better grades. To mention a few, studies in Wisconsin (Milwaukee Public Schools, 2002), North Carolina (NFHS, 1996; Overton, 2003), New Mexico (WIAA, 1996), Iowa (IAHSAA, 2006), Colorado (NFHS, 2002), Michigan (NIAAA, 1992), Indiana (NFHS, 2002), Texas, (WIAA, 1996), North Dakota (NFHS, 1980), Minnesota (IHSAA, 1984), Oregon (Mannen, 1995, 1997), and Kansas (NFHS, 1998b), all indicate higher grade point averages attained by athletic participants in comparison to non-participants.

Further, Katie Merrell stated that, "participation in athletics had benefited her while it served as a motivation to manage her time properly." Ironically, she felt that when she was the busiest, she managed time more efficiently. This observation and the realization of demands on her schedule, she shared, helped her best maximize the benefits available to her and to best equip her for success in a variety of stresses placed upon her

daily life. Even when not as fatigued during the out-of-season period, she evaluated that she did not organize time available as proficiently and that her grades were usually equal to or below her in-season time schedule. Ted Merrell also believed that the demands placed upon his time during athletic season helped him to review the time then available to him and assisted in meeting the necessary demands and requirements. He indicated that he knew there were students who remained in school because of their interest in extra-curricular activities. This view was shared with Jeziorski (1994) who indicated that a large number of students indicated in his study that they attend school because they were on a team. In the view of Dayton Merrell, he expressed his observation that as an athlete, he learned to believe in himself and others which resulted in classroom confidence and a holistic effect on his education. Ted Merrell concurred that time was managed more positively during athletic seasons as he “noticed less homework necessary during sports contest season and game nights.” He deducted that the school day as well as the time immediately after school was better utilized since “his grades were maintained or improved over the off season”, or non participatory time blocks during other grading periods. Support for this view came from Sider and Weinberger (2002), when they spoke of sport participation being a teacher of time management and decision making. Furthermore, Ferguson et al. (1999) indicated that participation in athletics forced students to be more organized with their time available.

While Dayton Merrell did not feel that athletics were necessarily a large influence on organizing study habits, or certainly not a “diamond,” as he referred to it, in seeking an answer for this area he did see a positive affect of athletics on the everyday classroom setting. As a two sport athlete, he maintained that, “the effect came in the form of

building confidence and, in turn, the translation of that mental state into efforts within the classroom. The building of confidence is also a strength that Sider and Weinberger (2002) pointed out that comes through participation. In addition to the use of the time available to the utmost, sport participation contributed to proper classroom achievement through the contribution of the development of persistence, work ethic, and dedication. Those traits then manifested themselves, he believed, in good attendance at school, conducting ones self appropriately and admirable study habits. Pride in classroom achievement was based at least somewhat upon him having been an athlete who represented his high school. He said that, “it became somewhat a case of success breeding success in terms of his athletic enjoyment” and contributed to a positive attitude about school on a daily basis.

John Wooden

It was an honor to seek responses from John Wooden in regard to historical and reflective information that spanned his early high school playing days to his many years of having coached basketball. This span of almost one century offered insight into the early years of sport as the offering entered the Indiana schools, through the years that he coached high school basketball and finished with ten NCAA national championships while at the University of California at Los Angeles (UCLA). During his vibrant years of retirement and good health, he was able to reflect on what athletics in school offered those who played for him, allowed him time to compare the more recent with the past, and to experience relationships with those who have matured and moved on though life’s stages. This review included John Wooden’s responses to written questions and

reflections and responses on his philosophies and teachings through written works, video, books and articles as they related to the topic of this study.

He was born in 1910 and was active as an interscholastic athlete. Coach Wooden offered insight into the early years of school and sports in Indiana. As a youth his basketball court consisted of a tomato basket nailed to the side of the hayloft in the barn and his basketball was made of old cotton socks and rags that his mother had sewn together (Monthieth, 2006). He entered Martinsville High School in 1924 which was just 12 years after the state crowned its first state champion team. The historic beginnings of the then infant tournament had all been conducted during his childhood.

The era was a time when Martinsville, with a population of approximately 5,000 people, had horse watering troughs on all four sides of the courthouse square. The high school gymnasium had more seating than the population of the town. In his book, *They Call Me Coach* (Wooden & Tobin, 1973), he discussed the robbing of a bank located in a small burg outside of Martinsville. It was claimed that the robbers were successful because all or most all the town and the entire police department were at the sectional games held in Martinsville that Saturday morning. In another book, *My Personal Best*, Wooden and Jamison (1997) described the Indiana high school state basketball finals in the 1920s of his youth as “being as wild as any NCAA March Madness in which he was ever involved.” Wooden described Hoosiers as having been ‘nutty about basketball’ (Wooden & Jamison, 2004).

Coach Wooden responded to question number one regarding, “Did the development of interscholastic athletics in high schools display the fostering of beneficial lifelong attributes among participants, contribute positively to education, and have a

favorable impact on communities?” He indicated that the atmosphere that surrounded athletics and the craziness that was often associated with specific sports “did add interest to the life of the school and community.” It depended, he added, on the “leadership of the individuals who lead the event, school, and team.” In addition, he felt that all individuals involved had to work to keep a proper perspective of the role of athletics in schools.

According to the sports philosopher in the book, *Wooden* (Wooden & Jamison, 1997), he stressed balance in basketball and life. He spoke again of perspective and not letting excessiveness interfere with behavior, emotions, home, and all facets of life. In *Coach Wooden’s Pyramid of Success* (Wooden & Carty, 2005), of which he provided a copy along with comment to the researcher, Wooden spoke of a number of qualities that were fundamental parts of the development of positive life lessons and attributes that in turn strongly influenced citizenry and school community. He shared such qualities as self-discipline, resourcefulness, having been adaptable to change, as well as the development of an initiative and an industrious work ethic. His integrity was exemplified well during the period of action as the basketball coach of Indiana State Teachers College in 1948 (Meyer, 2006). The coach confronted early racial bias and equity when he turned down a post season tournament invitation when the National Association of Intercollegiate Basketball asked him to leave behind a black player (Bisheff, 2004).

To question number two, “Did athletic participation help develop strong moral, social, and personal character traits among participants?” Wooden was known for his affirmative belief. I referred the coach to his pyramid as well as his book, *Coach Wooden: One on One* (Wooden & Carty, 2003). I reminded him of his strong reference to patience which served as a very important quality taught him by his father, and

emphasized in this book, and sought the significance of this virtue which appeared at the very peak and culmination of the *Coach Wooden's Pyramid of Success* (Wooden & Carty, 2005). Seeking his explanation of the role of patience as a necessary quality in interscholastic athletics, I asked Coach Wooden if he believed it influenced moral, social or personal character when coupled with participation. He shared that, “gentleness provided serenity and serenity, in turn gave emotional control” which was one of his primary teaching items that surrounded all athletics. Even in a more current times when society was more in tune with instantaneous gratification, a lack of patience, and taunting, the coach promoted the acquisition, development, and mastering of gentleness and patience as, “the strongest qualities of moral character to assist our social dilemma.” The specific building blocks of the pyramid that included cooperation, self-control, sincerity and poise assisted in the quality of patience which led to gentleness (Hill & Wooden, 2001; Wooden & Carty, 2005). While his brilliance was making the talent on his teams work as a unit he incorporated life’s experiences into these building blocks of teaching. Each block of the pyramid was selected and sometimes changed with meticulous care over many years (Johnson, 2006). Wooden broached the positive life outcomes afforded student athletes through participation that he had coached. In an era of self-promotion, he stressed that sports were teachers and gyms were classrooms for reaching students with issues and helped to mature them into healthy citizens of the school and community. Most teachers and coaches were capable of emphasizing such qualities to young people. The primary quality of leadership that he espoused as necessary was “listening” and he further shared that, “listening maintained discipline and served as a teacher.”

In reference to the third of three questions, “Is there displayed among athletic participants positive attributes of school attendance, lower discipline rates, good study habits, and higher grades?”, the researcher referred to additional publications for the coach to reference. Coach Wooden shared that, “one should never try to be better than someone else but rather to learn from them and never cease trying to be the best of which you were capable.” This was in response to a question that referred to the positive qualities encompassed by education with athletics as a part of its offerings. In order to make each day your masterpiece of which Coach Wooden often spoke as part of his seven point creed (Wooden & Jamison, 2005), he shared again the philosophy that we paint our own future and to always make the very best of it. Within this claim rested Wooden’s belief in the value of education and the commitment of each athlete to put education first and athletics second. He stressed attendance at classes, regular study hours, working for a quality grades and earning the respect of instructors. He believed in initiative, competitive greatness, ambition, honesty, reliability which were each a remnant leading to being a successful student-athlete.

Mr. Smith

The reunion was to take place on the anniversary of the once segregated all black high school’s winning of the state basketball championship at the location of the school that had reached the accomplishment. The researcher attended this community and media event and gained a true interest in the era, the growth of high school athletics, and the subsequent obstacles experienced by African Americans during this booming and flamboyant period. As a result interest in this scenario of race and sport was secured and the researcher desired to study this period and the sociological interaction that interlocked

with political influences while high school sports grew in popularity. One method of research included Mr. Smith as a part of the future dissertation since he had once been a standout player on a high school squad that experienced such circumstances. There was considerable interest in his insight into how minorities viewed the experience as athletic participants while in high school, if they believed the experience differed from what was portrayed by radio, television, print media, and later, the film industry. The view of the era known by many as the golden years of high school basketball was included in the time period experienced by Mr. Smith and was also of interest to the researcher in order to see the event through the lens of race in the mid 20th century. Contact was made by phone through his business offices. Mr. Smith became quite a successful figure with interests in a number of businesses located in the Midwest and beyond. In addition to meeting with me earlier, I sought contact via mail, phone, email and through his professional office staff.

In order for Mr. Smith to respond to the question, “Did the development of interscholastic athletics in high schools display the fostering of beneficial lifelong attributes among participants, contribute positively to education, and have a favorable impact on communities?”, it was necessary to gain a better understanding of the society, school, and community in which he prospered. The researcher sought from Mr. Smith an interpretation of what the “shot gun house” was that he continually referred to as his boyhood home. He explained that, “the house was covered in siding with no interior walls and there were so many holes in the siding that daylight could be seen shining from the outside in, thus the appearance that it had been hit by a shot gun spray.”

Information was shared and additional books read that gave a picture of the societal implications leading up to and during the era that Mr. Smith lived his high school career. Curfews existed for blacks only and handbills were circulated to white property owners that asked, “Do You Want a Nigger for a Neighbor” (Roberts, 1999, p. 25)? White robes and pointed hats could be purchased for six dollars in most towns and signs dotted the country side warning, Nigger Don’t Let the Sun Set on You Here (Robertson, 2003)! Mr. Smith remembered “whites only” signs at roller skating rinks, rest rooms, and restaurants; as well as frolic day for colored people at the amusement park. He spoke of having relieved himself behind the bus station as his family traveled north from the southern United States because they were not allowed to use the public rest rooms. Black children were told they were inferior, of bad character and lacked intelligence. Through the researcher’s affiliation with the Fellowship of Christian Athletes over a number of years there was a familiarity with the story of Prentice Gault, an African-American student-athlete in Oklahoma who experienced similar racial slights. In 1955 Gault starred in the annual high school all star game and was the first black football player that Coach Bud Wilkinson recruited to play for the Oklahoma University Sooners’. This pioneer endured numerous painful racial injustices on his way to academic All-American honors, selection as an all conference player, a career in the National Football League and an eventual Ph.D. (Crowley, 2006). The decade prior brought with it history when in 1947, Jackie Robertson had broken the racial barrier in major league baseball when he was signed to a contract by the Brooklyn Dodgers. Ironically, even with the glimmer of overcoming racism in American sport through Jackie Robinson’s efforts, upon visiting a major league ball park, black spectators could often be seen relegated to sit in a

segregated section to watch the game (Robjohns, 2005). In the case of Mr. Smith, who graduated from a Midwestern high school, it was interscholastic basketball that gave hope to this African-American child. Through all of his senses he took in observations of older African-American men that found an avenue of elevating from poverty, gaining recognition, and making it out of the ghetto. He saw black males finding and making life better through basketball, boxing, and baseball.

Mr. Smith grew up poor but, “did not know of being deprived of any needs.” Like Wooden, Smith’s first basketball was actually a rag ball made up of old socks and elastic rolled up and tied with string. An imaginary basket was used as the ball was shot on the side of a tree. His actual first real ball was one that his mother brought home after it had been discarded by a white family for which she cooked.

While Mr. Smith lived in the midst of segregation, he did not feel that he experienced the viciousness of racism because he “didn’t realize what specifically was happening outside his community.” He stayed in his neighborhood, “walked to school, went to church in his neighborhood, didn’t roam the streets, and socialized within the same neighborhood.” He described, “the south side of his city as white and off limits, while the east side was very tough and to be avoided. Blacks were not wanted downtown and he didn’t have money to spend there anyway”. Mr. Smith shared that the first time he ever ate at a downtown restaurant was as a senior in high school when his team was invited by a restaurateur a few days following their state championship victory. And while some African Americans lived on the north side, he didn’t have the transportation or money to get there. As a kid, Mr. Smith did not know department stores existed downtown or that there were parks outside his community. It was implied, whispered,

and made known that proprietors of shops, restaurants and businesses did not want blacks to visit. He indicated that this all black community of kids “did not think about race, but qualified it when he indicated that while bigotry was present in his life, he compared it to the inhalation of polluted air. As he breathed it in, he did not realize the emotional harm that it would do to him in his future.”

Mr. Smith shared that, “a majority of his school staff held doctorate degrees and while perhaps overqualified were there because they were not able to find jobs in schools for white students.” Sports were not a priority, but, he was expected to be at school on time and he also arrived at athletic practice in a timely fashion. The school community banded together and thrived in a wholesome and supportive atmosphere in spite of the poverty around them. “Because of the concentration of black students at one school, success was evident in all fields of education which included the best and brightest of the city,” he stated. Mr. Smith felt that not only did athletic expectations of conduct, but the general atmosphere of the school, contributed positively to seeking an education. Lifelong attributes such as self honor, pride, improving one’s self through education, and learning to be a productive citizen within a democracy were taught at his high school.

The research of literature regarding this era included a statement by Jacobson (1983) that athletic programs were the window of the school. This certainly could be said for the high school of Mr. Smith where success on fields and courts were an expression of the educational development going on in the school. As a student-athlete, Mr. Smith “did not think about being a brilliant student; but, competition was his motivation in school.” He believed that what made him grow the most was to travel outside his community and to meet new people with different thoughts regarding race than those he

had experienced in his home town. Mr. Smith said that, “he was honored to have attended the school and quipped that the worst thing that happened at his segregated high school was integration!”

The basketball teams played on the stage of the auditorium at Mr. Smith’s high school which seated 300 people and was small and inadequate for a school of this size enrollment. They suffered through home court officiating calls and crowd verbal racial abuses. He told the story of “an out of bounds call where the official whistled and yelled that the ball belonged to the white team. The segregated school team was dressed in white uniforms and reached for the ball. The official responded in a manner to indicate he meant the white skinned team.” White schools in the city refused to schedule them in basketball except for the Catholic schools that often times suffered similar prejudices at the hands of the prejudicial mentality. In the case of Smith, when the fan base for his team began to grow with the school’s success on the court, opposing schools began to desire the ticket money sales from which they were missing out. Gradually, home games were moved to a local college gym while the college coach assisted them with old shoes and equipment.”

The social context surrounding the Milan high school boys’ 1955 state basketball championship the year before provides meaning to the feelings of the day that may not be apparent on the surface as the story was told of the legend of this, one of the smallest enrollment school to have won the state tournament in Indiana during the mid 1900s. Milan star Bobby Plump told the *Indianapolis Star* that some whites slung racial slurs at black players whom his team played along the tournament trail (Cook, 2004).

The lasting impact of the high school interscholastic athletics to the student-athlete may have been expressed quite profoundly by Mr. Smith in the manner he answered one of the final questions posed to him at a reunion of his high school. Tradition in the high school state basketball tournament was for the winning team to be recognized by a ride on a fire engine around in the heart of the capital city followed by a celebration at this special downtown venue. However, his all black high school teammates were denied that opportunity as they were quickly stopped from going downtown and escorted to a park for a bon fire. The decision to alter the celebration was made by leadership of the public schools, city government, and law enforcement, sighting their fear of riots as the motivator. In response to a question regarding this topic so many years following the event, Mr. Smith showed how much his high school experience and coach meant to him. The question came from the audience at the reunion event; “do you think its time to take that trip around the heart of the city?” Before he could finish with the response, “They took my coach around and that was enough for me,” (Dodds, 2005b) his voice broke, eyes filled with tears, and for a few seconds, he worked to regain his composure. He was referring to the hearse that had carried his coach just a few years before from his funeral and commemoratively made a lap around the downtown fountains, memorials, and monument on its way to his final resting place at the cemetery. The response bore witness to the strength of his high school experience going back to age 18. For this distinguished college and professional athlete to feel so strongly about his high school team and coach spoke volumes about the experience of the then 68 year-old former high school all star and sports legend.

In response to the question, “Did athletic participation help develop strong moral, social, and personal character traits among participants?” Mr. Smith’s thoughts were similar to others interviewed regardless of the era. He felt that “sports built character as well as revealed it.” He learned that there was no other way but to persevere and grow up straight. Athletic participation and acquiring an education developed his knowledge that others depended on him and would not let them down. He realized that not everyone had the same abilities; however, he could gain something from the talents and work ethic of others. He desired to “know the rules of the land”, as he put it, and to “live simply.” Perhaps his life did not follow this simple route as he moved to stardom as a collegian and on to become a professional standout player.

“Was there displayed among athletic participants positive attributes of school attendance, lower discipline rates, good study habits and higher grades?” This third area of questioning also drew thoughts resembling other participants in the study yet separating somewhat. They were positive toward athletic participation in the school setting in that Mr. Smith believed that participation gave him personally, “a desire to study more,” and that success in basketball motivated his drive in the classroom. Management of time became important as more demands were placed upon him with fame from high school on up. He gradually gained a realization of what he needed to draw from school and sport, as each could benefit his future. His experience was that drop out rates were affected for the positive by athletics in his school. Through commitment, persistence, and competition, he was motivated in school. Lapchick (1996)

referred to benefits of participation for African American student athletes who indicated that athletics help to keep them focused on classroom work and further, created bonds among different races.

Judi Warren

Another source for the study was Judi Warren, a high school educator and former high school girls' basketball coach. Warren was the first Indiana "Miss Basketball" in 1976 and played on the first girls' team to win the Indiana state tournament. Her insight into the social struggle for the acceptance of ladies sport offered a new perspective of considerable benefit. There were additional benefits as this individual included in her responses to research questions and offered perspective to the historical background, personal involvement, individual experiences of how coaches worked with female athletes, how the media represented girls' sports and the level to which schools compared and supported the programs of males and females.

The initial question posed to Judi Warren was, "Do you believe that interscholastic athletics in high schools developed beneficial lifelong attributes among participants, contributed positively to the educational process, and have had a favorable impact on communities?" Judi responded that, "athletic opportunities reinforced participants to view their role as models for others." She said that from her view, both young and old watched the athlete's behavior and from this platform, they expected good things from the athlete's performance as well as that of the school and the community. Athletic opportunities also provided the participant 'satisfaction of having helped others.'" Many who would have taken seriously the chance to positively influence others found themselves in community projects sponsored by the school or program, or simply by the

nature of being an athlete, the initiative was provided to set an example. Judi shared that, “athletic participation also helped her to be more tolerant of the faults or weaknesses of others and accepting of those who had less ability or even material disadvantages which she often enjoyed as a child.” Some of Judi’s lessons in sport came as early as her middle school participation years and continued into high school. She shared that her coaches set an example by not running up the score on teams that were mismatched in ability to hers and in the infancy of girls’ athletics she indicated that there was “often much disparity in team talent” between Warsaw and its opponents. Her experiences as a player in the early days of girls’ athletics were quite positive and there were too many stories to mention as they related to community involvement, actions and support. Judi did cite the difficulty that she experienced personally upon entering college as she said, “she did not possess an understanding of how to handle the personal success that she experienced during her senior year of high school.” Her experience was the first time that it had happened and there was no format, no counseling or no precedent to assist her. Having been a member of the first state team championship in girls basketball and having been named the first Indiana “Miss Basketball” that recognized the outstanding player among seniors in the state for the year, she then found herself among other equally talented college athletes. It was new territory and females and those who influenced them had little experience in advising or dealing with the success as well as the psychology of working with female athletes. The expectations of others as one was placed on a pedestal made it difficult to be herself, get close to people and to be her own person.

The impact upon community as well as the community impact upon athletics was displayed best for Judi Warren as participant at Warsaw High School. She considered

herself fortunate to have lived in a community that was “advanced in their support of girls’ sports as well as in a school advanced in the offering of girls programs” for that time period. As a benefit from the boys’ programs success and the support thereof, the girls programs began in the fourth grade which was early as compared to most communities in the early days of girls’ athletics. Support of the early girls programs was evident throughout the season, not so much in attendance at regular season contests, but the development, respect and regular support by those who followed and appreciated the boys’ basketball team play. Judi observed that, “as her team began to win many games and advance through the tournament that the usual following of family and friends increased from 100 to 1,000 in the stands.” At the state tournament she was thrilled to play in front of 10,000 fans. “Upon returning to town after winning the initial state tournament the girls were greeted to cars lining the streets, honking horns and a packed gymnasium reception at 1:00 am.” Respect for the girls program resulted in equal practice times and facilities for the girls program in relation to the boys. This in the very early years of Title IX was a key achievement. The community was elevated to new levels of community pride, support for the school and its educational as well as athletic efforts.

“Did athletic participation help develop strong moral, social, and personal character traits among participants by serving as educational agents?” This was the second question asked of Judi Warren. She responded by recalling her “good fortune to grow up and participate in the family and school system that she did. In addition to the strong moral character of her parents, she admired her coaches as well. Her desire to be like them and perform on the basketball floor left her, even today, very thankful for their

character, role modeling and moral stance.” Judi Warren believed that the personal character traits of persistence, work ethic and commitment were stronger qualities in her days of participation in high school athletics. Support for this view came from Sheehy (2002) who listed persistence and strong work ethic as qualities built within participants. When she was playing athletes worked hard to improve and overcome those shortcomings that gave them problems. One was expected to remain loyal to team and teammates. She felt that athletes were trustworthy and made strong efforts to be good to their word. Judi Warren shared that, “society has made it too acceptable to give up on teammates, quit or to abandon a coach based upon excuses of playing time, lack of fun or blame placed upon the coach.” She was concerned about this shift in acceptance by our society and believed that it was also shown in facets of life that included giving up on co-workers, marriages and even life itself. The focus by society seems headed toward self and not others. Hesburgh (1994) had a similar concern when in his remarks he included participation and educational experiences an effort to counteract negative influences in society including insecurity, lack of direction and instability caused by broken family relationships. He believed that programs are needed to promote committed relationships and cooperation. Judi Warren felt that the attitude of the athlete in general “must shift back to a caring approach toward others and not letting friends, teammates or co-workers down. Athletes must have participated because of their love of the game and to forget what the individual athlete could have gained from participation.”

In reaction to question number three, “Do you feel that there is displayed among athletic participants such positive attributes as school attendance, lower discipline rates, good study habits, and higher grades that contribute to the educational mission?”, the

subject had strong reaction. While Judi Warren said she “never considered herself a great student, academics were always important to her. Part of her effort in having regular school attendance, good conduct and her hard work in pursuit of good grades was to please her parents, uphold a good reputation and to achieve personally.” Judi Warren conceded further that the continuance of “eligibility to participate in sports held strong influence over her classroom efforts.” One stumbling block for her study habits was the schedule of a female athlete who participated in the pioneer era of the 1970s. In this early period, the girls’ teams did not receive the quality prime time practice time periods or play dates. Most schools during this period continued with the tradition of boys teams scheduled access to the after school practice session time block and facilities. Judi Warren participated in either three or four sports each year of her high school career and, thus, she chose to not have an off season that would have allowed her to be focused exclusively on academic work.

The girls basketball team always practiced late even following the freshman boys basketball team practice. Periodic exceptions to this rule were when the freshman boys had a game and the girls practiced the second shift instead of the third. For Judi Warren and her teammates, this meant that practice during the week ended after 9:00 pm unless it was a Friday, and the boys had a varsity and junior varsity game which allowed the freshman boys to practice earlier after school. Often, the girls stayed after school, brought along a snack and studied in the school building during the boys’ practices and prior to the girls taking the floor. While these were not the best conditions for study, she admitted, there was a certain commitment to work hard and in this case good study habits included the commitment to do your best in somewhat adverse conditions. She

remembered that, “a late dinner and perhaps more study awaited her when she returned home each evening.”

In addition, the actual contest schedule worked against the female athlete because they experienced almost all games played on a weeknight, Monday through Thursday. The boys played on traditional weekends while Friday and Saturday were the big attendance nights bringing in the most revenue. It seemed that by Friday night, the work week was over, people were ready to wind down and the anticipation of the ball game during the really good seasons grew even larger as the match up with the next opponent was discussed around the water cooler, on the assembly line and on the local radio sports shows throughout the week. In a town the size of Warsaw and with the fan base the school enjoyed this was a tradition that was difficult to change. The result was “girls studying after school, on the bus ride to the game and in the bleachers during either the junior varsity game or varsity game” depending on which squad the student played. While not the best conditions for academic success existed, the effort exemplified by female athletes displayed a strong commitment to both academics and extra curricular activities. An American societal shift has taken place during the latter part of the 1900s that has seen women join the work force outside the home. This required balance of career and family has been influenced by those women who were the early trailblazers of girls’ athletics who did what was necessary to be a student-athlete. Results from a University of Virginia study printed in *Prevention* (Capozza, 2004) showed that athletics were considered crucial for women’s success as female executives. Activities assisted in success rates in competitive work environments for women. As Judi Warren pointed out, “with the new emphasis on girls’ athletics” of her day it was of utmost importance that

coaches and parents worked to make the classroom the priority as it became more difficult for girls to perform on and off the court. Her description of the efforts necessary in that era to carve out study time from a demanding schedule is supported by the NFHS (1985) when an article pointed out that participants put more time into completing homework.

This former Indiana Miss Basketball felt that coaches of girls' teams had great influence on attendance and school discipline of students that participated in their respective programs. "The coach had to hold the line against girls missing school or coming in late to school on a week day morning following a late return from a road game the night before." In addition, the coach could not condone sleeping in class or study hall and had to emphasize student first and athlete second. Judi Warren was so competitive that she said, "one reason she always made it to school the day after a game was to be able to practice." Remarkably, she indicated that she never missed a day of school during her four years of high school. She shared that probably some school days were attended that she "should have stayed home because of an illness, but it was important to be at school." Her philosophy on this issue followed her into her professional career in teaching and coaching.

On the issue of attendance, Judi Warren took a different mode of thought than the researcher intended; however, it was an interesting one. Rather than relating the topic to regularly being at school and remaining in school, the conversation moved to remaining in the child's own school. The debate over students transferring schools because of athletics was a major topic for her. She emphasized her philosophy that students should remain in the public or private school servicing their community. Judi Warren said that,

“parents should resist the trend to move for athletic reasons by standing up to students, coaches and influencers from other schools.” Family is important and should not be split, uprooted or transported in order to play a few years for a certain school, coach or community. “Parents should have been more concerned about paying for the college they attend than to have been concerned about gaining an athletic scholarship that may have culminated in the cost of family moves, athletic camps and AAU competition in efforts to be seen, meet the right people and to potentially develop into this caliber of athlete.” And parents who fabricate a marriage separation in order to live apart with the student in a different school district in order to qualify for athletic participation is a despicable example and a poor lesson learned by that child as well as others.

Coaches held the ability to assist in influencing character and discipline through access to playing time as well as other aspects for belonging to a team and development of the coach-player relationship. Judi Warren said she “behaved because it was an expectation of her parents and coaches.” She did “not want to disappoint either and knew that if something happened at school, she would be dealt with firmly again upon her arrival home.” She felt kids were given too much without working for it and she saw that effect later parenting and generations in the areas of respect and patience.

“I have no idea where my life would be right now had it not been for one day at the state finals and doors that opened and the opportunities that it allowed me,” Warren said. “You do feel like a pioneer seeing the opportunities that the girls now have.”

Summary of Findings

In summary, it appeared that some unification of opinion exists among the subjects as they responded to the questions or surveys. It seemed that regardless of

generation, gender, or race the respondents were generally in agreement in observations of their participation experiences and gains as they related to the maturity and development of the student. This common thread of positive experiences and considerable contributions to adult work, relationships and happiness were strong throughout the responses, perceptions and recollections. While the era in which the subject lived brought with it a different set of political and social circumstances with which to deal, it appeared that participation in interscholastic athletics and the developmental challenge that they offered the student were of considerable benefit.

Findings included collaboration in life attributes of work ethic, integrity, emotional maturity and good decision making that contributed to a lifestyle free of substances and negative activity. Agreement existed that interscholastic athletics assisted the educational mission as they created support and cohesiveness among students while encouraging proper behavior and the desire to remain in school. Further, findings related to community impact related that sport contributed to interest and support of the school and helped patrons define it as a place for learners. Interesting to the researcher was the use of the word “fervor” by both John Wooden and Mr. Smith when referring to what athletics created for education.

In areas of character findings it was felt that interscholastic athletic participation benefited through moral characteristics of honesty, ethical behavior and trustworthiness. Social character was developed one of the most mentioned qualities, cooperation, in addition to respect for others, tolerance, being adaptable, displaying good citizenship qualities and serving as a positive role model. Two subjects in the societal classification of “minorities”, Judi Warren and Mr. Smith, both emphasized persistence as a primary

part of personal development. Among other areas that displayed a sense of personal character were patience, leadership qualities, positive attitude, self-motivation, commitment and a general display of strength of character.

The acquisition of the ability to balance and manage available time was the most frequently mentioned finding related to being an educational agent. This most contributed to positive study habits in the minds of study participants. The findings from the subject responses also displayed a belief in attendance being enhanced, resulting higher grade averages and better behavior.

Qualities associated with interscholastic athletic participation as contributed by the subjects, Dayton Merrell, Ted Merrell, and Katie Merrell, were accumulated by the researcher and are shown in Table 4.1. Qualities associated with interscholastic athletic participation as contributed by the subjects John Wooden, Mr. Smith and Judi Warren were accumulated by the researcher and are shown in Table 4.2.

Table 4.1

Positive Qualities Cited by Merrell Family Associated with Participation

	Dayton Merrell	Ted Merrell	Katie Merrell
Life Attributes	Fairness Hard Work Citizenship Personal will Healthy lifestyle	Fair Ethical Commitment	Positive attitude Work hard Do your best
Educational Process	Meets goals Completes school	Better employee Contributes	
Community Impact	Wholesome Competitive Traditions	Competition Favorable impact	Defines community
Moral Characteristics	Character strength	Ethical Personal character	Integrity
Social Behavior	Substance free Cooperative Respect Listener Leadership Team concept Comaraderie	Cooperation Respect Respect authority	Cooperation
Personal Character	Commitment Discipline Persistence Loyal Manage Time Good Attitude Confidence	Drug free Motivated	Do what right
School Attendance	Attendance Low drop out rate	Important	Expectation
Discipline	Better disciplined	Personal Discipline	Better in class
Grades and Test scores	Study habits Higher grades Improvement	Manage time	Time management Study skills Better GPA

Table 4.2

Positive Qualities Cited by Wooden, Smith, and Warren Associated With Participation

Positive Qualities	John Wooden	Mr. Smith	Judi Warren
Life Attributes	Work ethic Balance Citizenship Balance Self-discipline Leadership Industriousness Initiative Ambition Reliability	Maturity Respect Will to work Hope for future Follow rules Live simple Pride	Respect Self-discipline Commitment Work ethic Commitment
Educational Process	Meets goals Gym is classroom	Strong education Profound experience Democracy at work	Opportunity
Community Impact	Community interest Sports are teachers for race relations	Wholesomeness Sports positive	Positive influence Love of the game
Moral Characteristics	Goodness Personal lifestyle Gentleness Faith Prayer Morally conditioned Competitive greatness Integrity Honesty	Character strengths Honor Integrity Inner dignity	Integrity Admired coaches Role model
Social Behavior	Cooperative Respect authority Leadership Listening Awareness Poise	Leadership Cooperation Tolerance Compete Citizenship	Cooperation Positive influence

Table 4.2 (continued)

Positive Qualities	John Wooden	Mr. Smith	Judi Warren
Personal Character	Persistence Commitment Self-confidence Loyalty Manage time Positive perspective Respect Adaptable Resourceful Never cease trying Patience Self-satisfaction Enthusiastic Self-control Sincere	Unselfish Perseverance Reliable Self-motivated	Positive attitude Patience Persistence Never quit Forgiving Accepting
School Attendance	Good attendance	On time Expectation Important	Priority Important
Discipline	Good behavior		Wanted to please parents/coaches
Grades and Test Scores	Good gpa High achievement Improvement	Positive experience Encouraged by wins Desire to excel Managing time	Sports motivated Time management

Chapter 5

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The purpose of this study was four-fold: 1) to provide a background of the historical implementation of interscholastic athletics, 2) to review the political and social impact of interscholastic athletics as a part of the nation's secondary school setting, 3) to provide a reflection of the perceptions and attitudes of subjects' views regarding their athletic participation, and 4) to establish the value to the educational experience. Chapter 5 provides a summary of conclusions based on the findings detailed in Chapter 4 and the researcher presents these conclusions as well as a discussion of recommendations as a result of the study.

The questions listed in Chapter 1 were administered to a variety of participants who agreed to participate in the study. The subjects were selected in order to study the historic view of the entrance, impact, growth and value of interscholastic athletics in the nation's high schools upon education and students. From the period of the initial entry years through the rapid multiplication of sports that accompanied the evolution of interscholastic athletics in schools, the study was done with interest in the fun and the strife that was a part of the athletic participation process. The participants involved were divided into two types of research tracks designed to study perceptions of the on-going

benefits to generations of individual members of a family and to study the social and political factors that influenced the evolution of sports as a school offering. These two groups included a family of three generations who as students had attended the same high school and were athletes and three key figures of the early, mid and later eras of the 1900s. There were 9 sub-question items to help guide the inquiry designed to dig deeper into experiences and provide clarity for the three, more broad primary questions. The sub-questions are shown in Appendix D. All of the aforementioned questions were devised under the umbrella of a grand tour question.

The following research questions were developed to guide this study:

1. Would the development of interscholastic athletics in high schools display the fostering of beneficial lifelong attributes among participants, contribute positively to the educational process and have a favorable impact on communities?
2. Would athletic participation help develop strong moral, social, and personal character traits among participants by serving as educational agents?
3. Would there be displayed among athletic participants such positive attributes of school attendance, lower discipline rates, good study habits, and better grades that contribute to the educational mission?

Grand Tour Question

How would those experiencing various involvements in high school interscholastic athletics describe their experiences in assisting them to meet their life educational mission and personal growth attributes, as well as their view of the collective action of school and community?

All questions were posed to subjects seeking their perspectives of vignettes of time in their lives, and in such a manner to foster the sharing of perspectives, strong or weak agreement and side scenarios. Such stories were usually subjects that related to their explanation or using an example. The method used to obtain common threads of information was based upon the researcher fostering discussion through questions, sub-questions, drawing more detail from previous responses and creation of a flow of responses that were encouraged through the development of a trusting atmosphere, comfortable inquiry and shared interaction.

Question 1 sought to determine whether the impact of participation in interscholastic athletics affected the maturation process of the individual's personal attributes and long term growth. In addition, the question sought response in regard to how the subject's educational experience was affected by their involvement in athletics and how communities supported and reacted to athletic programs sponsored by the local school. Question 2 addressed the strength of character attributes of participants. Personal characteristics surrounding interaction with others, integrity of actions and strength of character in dealing with of life's matters was the thrust. The third question was specifically geared toward addressing each subject's perspective of how participation in interscholastic athletic programs influenced, in a positive or negative way, their high school study habits, grades, behavior, test scores and attendance.

Research Question 1 asked if the development of interscholastic athletics in high schools fostered beneficial lifelong attributes among the participants, contributed positively to the educational process and had a favorable impact on the community. Based upon the responses common themes began to surface. The interviews and written

communication items found that all of the subjects' lives were influenced quite positively by their participation in athletic programs sponsored by their respective schools. Each indicated in some way that they were impacted to the degree that all of their youth and adult life was in some way benefited. It was also summarized that interscholastic athletic programs, when based upon the proper foundation and directed by caring educators, contributed to the educational well being of the student. When approached properly by the school and community athletic offerings, provided positive support for the individual student and adults, as well as the accumulative personality and cohesiveness of the student body and staff. Adult life situations cited by subjects that benefited from participation included numerous references to qualities of cooperation, balancing time, integrity, hard work, respect and persistence.

Research Question 2 asked if participants were assisted in the development of personal characteristics through involvement in interscholastic athletics. Further, within that character development, was strength in interpersonal relationships and becoming a contributor to community, family and country a factor? Moral development, social development and strong reasoning and subsequent decision making were highly regarded among subjects as qualities that their involvement fostered. Not only that, but subjects praised the influence and contributions of mentors encountered during the athletic experience. Subjects reasoned that athletic involvement contributed to their view of teamwork and taking on responsibility that later translated into their social fit, vocation and working with others in their place of employment. Further, professionalism, dedication and sacrifice were personal qualities of their life that sport involvement helped develop. The businessman interviewed spoke of the strength of character that he noticed

among his employees who had been athletes as their industriousness was displayed, as they interacted with fellow workers, and as they served the customer and company.

Research Question 3 asked if the educational responsibility of the student including regular attendance, good grades, quality study habits, proper personal conduct and following the rules were developed by the experience of participation in athletic programs at the interscholastic level. Key among subjects was that leaders of the programs portrayed caring, patience and motivation while living the daily life of a role model. It was a necessity that school athletic programs were built upon a code of education first. Among these sport participants the idea was upheld that such educational qualities as work ethic, justice, responsibility, taking pride in effort and study habits were positively influenced to a strong degree.

Discussion of Outcomes

Life Attributes, Education and Community

The first study conclusion is that although sport entered schools under questionable societal agendas and political manipulations the offering has evolved as a defining involvement in the education of youth through the influence, impact and direction of educators, administrators and governing agencies.

The second study conclusion is that athletic programs develop loyalty toward the educational mission of the school and are a rallying point for support of student efforts. As an agent of education interscholastic athletics strengthen the social development of students and offer a view of the purpose of education to patrons.

Reflections on Conclusions

The study of life standards and strong contributions to personal moral character as the outcome in a person's life that was influenced by sport participation was certainly a tall order on which to begin research. The search endeavored to provide insight into personal attitude, studiousness, integrity and general respect, and whether such qualities could be grown in a young person through their participation experience was of considerable interest to the researcher. According to the perspective of subjects and their written experiences, coupled with the findings of other researchers, there was affirmation toward personal developmental and strength of character categories. These characteristics included, but were not limited to, commitment, maintenance of a physically active lifestyle, strong decision making ability, persistence, determination, organizational skills, good judgment, initiative, cooperation, perseverance, dedication and learned leadership. Subjects, in some number, cited such qualities as having been enhanced by participation their school interscholastic athletic experience.

In telling of his father's involvement in school sports during his interview, Dayton Merrell shared that even during the time of his father's high school career during the 1920s, cooperation was a strong attribute of the participant. Ted Merrell also reinforced the strength of character and personal will when he spoke of his observance of his employees. He could evaluate who among them had been an athlete based upon people skills and their interaction with other workers. He further concluded that experiences faced in athletic encounters helped him as an individual develop and mature while also assisting his communication skills and ability.

In the case of Mr. Smith, the benefits that athletics may have offered in terms of his development of personal character had to be weighed in the context that he faced in society and the culture that existed during his developmental years of childhood. While the expectation of a young and maturing student and athlete was to grow in attributes such as respect, work ethic and leadership, everything around Mr. Smith's development as an African American during this period told him that compared to whites, he was not as capable, hard work would not provide him equal circumstances, and that he was confined to the environment and atmosphere that had been defined for him. As his life progressed and he became known for not only having been an accomplished basketball player but also a businessman, it was then that it became even more obvious what strength of character had developed through overcoming first the deficit of negative messages heard, observed and then absorbed.

The message received was that as a black person, he was not as good because blacks could only visit certain places during events and times when "colored people" were allowed to attend. He learned that he was not considered equal when he had to relieve himself behind a building in which signs on the restroom door read "whites only".

As a youngster, Mr. Smith digested the fact that he needed to understand his place in society and not aspire to use water fountains marked as for the use of white people only. It was insinuated that blacks were animals enclosed in a certain local community that expected to venture out beyond the metaphorical cage. As an African American, he and his friends came to know and understood the limits of physical boundaries that confined them from visiting certain areas of town or going into a restaurant. He knew fear due to the message of segregation and supremacy by force. The message that African

Americans were considered inferior in a laundry list of abilities was heard and related to areas of intelligence and initiative. For these reasons, it is even more remarkable that Mr. Smith overcame such oppressive depths that surrounded him and was able to reach over and above the boundaries to even higher levels of character development.

The favorite reference of the researcher displayed the feelings of uncertainty as the subject looked through youthful eyes toward the future as minorities were subjected to segregation. Mr. Smith described the feeling of hope in overcoming what he saw around him in the form of segregation and the hope of making it, of being more than he was told he could be, and being successful. Before he became a great basketball player in his high school years, it was watching other black players that instilled in him the feeling that he too could do what they did and that he would excel some day. In addition, as a boy he listened to the many accomplished black boxers of the day on the radio program "Friday Night Fights". In his frailness this gave Smith something to hang on to and what he described as a flicker, a glimmer of hope within himself. If these black athletes could gain this prestige, opportunity and respect, perhaps he could also. It was sport that gave him hope for his life as a young boy and it was sport that prospered him as great athlete, as a maturing young man and as a person dreaming of a better life for him and others.

Judi Warren explained participation as a motivation for students to consider their influence as role models and promoted individuals to develop positive attributes that would benefit their lives. This spotlight opportunity reinforced students to take seriously the opportunity to positively influence others through actions or projects. Tolerance was a key benefit that participation strengthened through competing with students from various

racial and ethnic backgrounds, plus the fact that general patience and respect were an offshoot of athletic involvement.

To that initiative could be added an investigation to determine if sport could be considered a viable part of the educational experience for a student. How did the athletic program instill into a student the qualities that were the mission of education? In the view of Dayton Merrell, the educational system was made complete with athletic programs and participation opportunities in place as a part of the school offering.

John Wooden indicated that he felt the atmosphere that surrounded interscholastic athletics added interest and life to the school and community, but that all needed to work together to keep a proper role for athletics in schools. And as he did in all facets of life through his pyramid of success, Wooden stressed balance in life and not letting excessiveness interfere with behavior. This included athletics and where the area fit in relation to family, faith, work and education.

Another goal of the study was to seek answers as to whether sport could contribute in a quality manner to the role of the school community in its effort to truly support students and school with sincere goodness, citizenship and properly channeled vigor. Katie Merrell spoke of this community banner waving when she agreed that often, even in more current times, communities and schools defined themselves by a team's ability to win contests. Judi Warren thought that her school atmosphere, educational process and positive community perspective of the school corporation benefited from the winning by athletic teams, specifically boys and girls' basketball success in the tournament trail.

Mr. Smith attended a high school which had been built for the purpose of keeping African American students separate from white children. The KKK gained enough political power to build a large multilevel apartment complex that was complete with its own school. And it was that effort to segregate that, in the researcher's assessment, ironically served as the catalyst for Smith acquiring a strong education. Many of the instructors were quality black teachers who, because of the segregation that they experienced, could not find work outside of an all black institution. This academic excellence was displayed at Gary Roosevelt, a black segregated high school where instructors with masters or doctorate degrees could not find work in other schools (Beck, 2003). The strength of the instructors was a large portion of the reason for the quality education offered. While sports were not high on the list of priorities by the school's instructors, for Mr. Smith, athletics were a big part of this education and contributed to his positive school experience and educational future.

The affect on the African American community was a positive association with the high school in the sense that a school created for "separate but equal" political claims became a vibrant place for the black community. In spite of the poverty, segregation and certainly experiencing its own societal problems, the community remained somewhat isolated and Mr. Smith said that even though racism and bigotry was around him, he did not realize the severity since it was happening outside of the community. The school was a source of bonding together and support for the black community and it thrived. Pride in the education and extra-curricular offerings led to many quality students that both stayed and strengthened the community while others departed, but, many offered bright contributors in many fields. The school and community worked together to promote

attributes of citizenship. Athletics, particularly basketball, also became a source of pride for the community.

As was discussed by Gutowski (1991), the introduction of extra-curricular activities into the school was initially a process of conflict and compromise that involved educators at every level. Over the years, schools had been called upon to help prepare young people for such areas as physically preparing them for military training during the world wars in addition to serve as the answer for curing of a number of crisis and societal ills. The early idea that schools could be a proving ground for conducting and overseeing athletic teams was just as foreign to educators as some of the many initiatives schools have been asked to take on leading up to the current era.

This phenomenon of athletics entering the school offering in the early 1900s was again faced in the late 1900s with Title IX and the revitalized resurgence of women's sports with new offerings and opportunities. There was resistance by education in general and administration specifically. Interestingly enough, the already established men's sports programs also resisted primarily as a result of concern over sharing budget dollars and facilities. There was also a developmental period for training coaches and filling the void of sports psychology in the arena of working with the female athlete.

After the turn of the century, the early 1900s saw competition begun in communities where non school sponsored teams played while utilizing the school and community name. From this era, the struggle to place sports in schools began and progressed to the point where the system outside the school had so many related problems develop that reflected on the school, infiltrated the school and influenced the school; administrators began to consider sponsorship within schools and leadership.

within states in order to help clean up the graft and utilize competition to teach citizenship. The struggle for teachers, administrators, boards of education, students and those who supported the student programs was whether sport resembled or in anyway met criteria that would suggest it could be a part of the school offering. As extra-curricular activities became popular as a portion of the school sponsored organized curriculum, a debate was waged over whether sport competition between schools should be a part of such an offering. After all, schools were involved in vocational and domestic education while being called on more and more to help prepare the student for the world outside the school walls.

Was not sport, some argued, a way of giving boys alternatives to troublesome activities, developing proper citizenship and taking control of a growing thorn in the side of school administrators? Colleges were influencing the promotion and growth of sport among high school age children and the political and social climate of the early 20th century were weighing heavily on education to involve it in interscholastic athletic programs. Social clubs and secret societies developed, racial issues abounded and many ingrown communities became steeped in the competition of beating another community and its representative school and mascot. This led to community politics weighing heavily in influencing players from other schools, or from no school at all, to play for a certain community. Others worked at swaying coaches or encouraging parents of good athletes to come to their locale and represent them. Wooden described 'Hoosiers' as having been nutty about basketball and the high school state finals that he played in during the 1920s as wild as any NCAA tournament in which he was involved. As Dayton Merrell's interview shared, some communities went crazy over high school basketball in

the mid twentieth century and often became hysterical. Faced with a crisis that drew the school and administrators toward it, secondary education took in as a resident the client of sport. Mr. Smith referenced the growth of sports at his all black high school by relating the fact that even though most public schools in the area of his school would not schedule them, when the crowd base advanced to the growth level that money was to be made by having his high school on the schedule, the mind set of city schools changed. Until then the program was forced to play private schools or schools outside the metropolitan area, but, the change serves as notice of the manner of support afforded the school by its community.

Whether righteous philosophy or strong arm politics, schools adopted sport in order to better control the aforementioned items and use this extra-curricular offering to develop good qualities in students. Under the banner of citizenship issues, sport joined the school offering and the programs grew in number of offerings and participants. This growth was not without many struggles which pertained to cultural prejudices, social rules, community fervor and segregation created by racism, religion, ethnicity and gender injustices. Even more these issues were hampered by local power struggles and fever pitch support which fired emotions to build better facilities than the neighboring community. Dayton Merrell supported this thought when he described small towns and communities being defined by the local basketball team. Sports facilities often took precedent over educational building needs. While the tug of war between educators and patrons continued on through the twentieth century the governing agencies and school leaders demanded that the interscholastic programs be built on the proper foundation of wholesomeness competition, sportsmanship, character development and amateurism. The

struggle continued on into the 21st century and even though maverick schools sometimes clouded the effort, the goal to support sports program founded on integrity and ethics, fairness for all, participation for many and playing by the rules showed it to prevail over the upheaval.

Educators defined the athletic program efforts in order to assure that school sponsored athletic programs taught life lessons and contributed to the educational process. Katie Merrell shared that according to her observations involvement in school activities contributed to the discipline and good qualities learned in the classroom. And Dayton Merrell commented that there was a certain expectation and understanding during his participation years that the student understood regarding behavior. They were to work hard in school, at home and in their sport, respect others and provide actions that reflected well on family, school and community.

Life lessons through teachable moments offered through participation has worked to assist the student to develop strong personal traits that carried them through adulthood. As communities were shown the proper behavior expectation and example in support of a school programs, the atmosphere began to change. Programs were immersed in rules that contributed to the overall good and wellbeing of the student's maturity and character growth. Not only were people influenced for the better but the participants themselves later became parents and community members who helped to foster what was right with school guided interscholastic athletic participation. John Wooden shared qualities garnered included self-discipline, being adaptable to change and resourcefulness which were all attributes to personal lifestyle. He also spoke of the need to be industrious, have strong work ethic and initiative.

As a youngster learning respect for authority benefited Dayton Merrell at home, work and within society, he believed that his experiences in athletics drew focus for him to these issues. He became self-disciplined through practice and hard work that provided a competitive edge. His stance was firm also on how circumstances of camaraderie with teammates as well as opposing players nurtured being able to master interpersonal relationships in life. Overall, these qualities permeated the student body and staff and assisted in the display of positive personal qualities and actions. He expressed that within the walls of school, the personality and value of that institution was defined by the students as they contributed to the school culture through learning, interaction and participation in activities. Through their sport opportunities and representation through teams, students developed a view of themselves and what their school and community should look like. As the individual personalities of students molded into one collective body of people, he felt traditions developed. Athletics served as a means of assisting the student to develop life attributes while realizing the experiences contribute to a lifelong effort.

Judi Warren shared the experiences she encountered during the pioneering era of girls sports as it related to community. The lack of support and disinterest of early teams gave way to molding the community into a close knit, positive and supportive agency. The first girls' basketball state championship in Indiana resulted in a new cohesiveness.

Moral, Social, and Personal Character

Conclusion three is that regardless of gender, race, generation, era or demographics students experience benefit from participation in interscholastic athletics in the form of development of social and personal character. Conclusion four is that the

experience of educationally based interscholastic athletic programs serve to build a foundation on which participants formulate decision making ability related to moral integrity and strength of character.

Determinate factors of how participation influenced personal character were quite subjective and the researcher believed it best evaluated by such a qualitative case study. Those who were a part of an interscholastic program were thrown into competitive situations where they learned critical lessons regarding how to deal with adversity, win and lose with grace and sacrifice for others' good. Subjects claimed they learned the importance of strengths including resiliency, respect for others, loyalty, honesty and giving. Ted Merrell shared that experiences faced in athletics not only assisted him in his development as an adult but also helped him communicate positively and affectively with employees and, in addition, he believed the experiences helped him to develop into a responsible parent, citizen and friend. He said that participation impacted him personally in matters of character growth and the ability to be involved in competitive situations with a unique point of view, that being an appreciation for the abilities, talents and weaknesses of others. Katie Merrell said that the same matters of integrity encountered in her personal athletic experiences helped her develop moral and personal strength of character. Honesty was strengthened, not challenged, and the need to play by life's rules was reinforced.

The researcher questioned John Wooden on an area of personal character that he spoke often of in various books. The quality was patience which appeared at the top of his *Pyramid of Success* (Wooden & Carty, 2005). His response was that gentleness provided serenity, and serenity, in turn, gave one emotional control. John Wooden's

promotion and seeming mastering of these strengths certainly provided the quality of patience which pointed to a vibrant moral character.

Even though the world outside of Mr. Smith's community was teaching the African American student that segregation was the norm, within the school was taught personal traits such as dedication, perseverance determination and persistence. Social attitudes ingrained in the attendee included qualities like loyalty, confidence, worth and sacrifice. And moral strengths such as honor, honesty, respect and integrity were learned. It seemed that while the world outside was shaking a fist of superiority, within the walls of the black school, particularly for Mr. Smith, his coach was instilling these strong qualities in his players. In his words, "Athletic participation taught him that there was no other way but to persevere."

In the area of moral, social and personal character development, Judi Warren suggested that it was not so much the specific quality that was taught or learned but, rather, the person who brought the message. It was the example of coaches as role models that set the scene for her future. The family atmosphere, the way opponents were treated, and the teaching of ethics along with fundamentals were influential. Her desire to positively represent her school and coaches along with her parents' expectations drove her to accept respect for others; striving to be a good role model in terms of hard work and commitment were always present. Loyalty was primary, persistence and a determined mind set important and being a player who was trusted by teammate and coach alike was paramount.

All subjects mentioned areas of integrity that served them best in their service as a teammate, competitor and team leader. Among the qualities listed in their box of tools

were included honesty, reliability and service to others. Important also were self motivation, self discipline and self confidence. These attributes were supported by the research of Heath (1992) who concluded that involvement extra-curricular activities were the best determiner of adult success. Social skills were developed as the participant experienced interaction, communication, self esteem, confidence and decision making which later in life contributed to such attributes as volunteering, community service and giving back. This finding is supported by the self evaluation of Dayton Merrell who had remarked that the sacrificial requirements demanded by participation in sports helped him resist attention to self and gave way to helping others succeed. His experiences of giving up some personal successes helped others to enjoy the activity, contribute and to feel a part of the family atmosphere. These experiences seemed to support well the thoughts of Hesburgh (1994) when he shared that in this day of divorce and students exposed to a number of areas in life that tended to dissolve their self worth, extra curricular activities helped young people to overcome instability, insecurity and a lack of direction in their lives. Both overcoming adversity and displaying integrity was displayed in the writing of Meyer (2006) where he described a situation in 1948 when John Wooden confronted racial bias by turning down a post season tournament invitation because the sponsoring agency stipulated that his single African-American player on the team at Indiana State Teachers College could not come to the tournament. Mr. Smith's parents divorced and his coaches helped keep him headed in the right direction and provided certain degrees of security, male role modeling and support. A side note that is somewhat related was that he felt leaving the Indianapolis area and meeting people in other geographic locations with different ideas in regard to acceptance and abilities was a great source of

enlightenment for him as a young man. Judi Warren observed that society gives up too easily in many of life's challenges and that athletic participation strengthened the commitment, stick-to-itiveness and perseverance. Sport encounters developed acceptance and respect and enhanced such qualities that could help later adults work through marriage problems, parenting challenges and on the job conflicts. Selfishness could be overcome was a theme by the older among the subjects.

The researcher possessed concern for the poor example set by a number of professional and college athletes that the high school and middle school student emulated. Poor role modeling displayed by popular athletes created a considerable challenge for those who worked in interscholastic athletics, displayed an exemplary character, and endeavored to teach and lead with honor. Constant media coverage, coupled with the high profile and negative actions of some athletes at the highest level, create hurdles relative to those students who thought such behavior to be acceptable because of what hero was involved. Mentors who influenced student athletes through a strong coach player respect and relationship sometimes evaluated their effort to be at a disadvantage. When some of the most physically talented athletes in a respective sport were involved in sexual misconduct, gambling, brandishing weapons, visiting low reputable locations, or when they cheated at their game through such actions as sneaking use of an illegal baseball bat, using a performance enhancing drug, or felony type physical attacks during contests; these have offered an even greater challenge to overcome for coaches and parents in their efforts to teach integrity issues and ethical behavior. The researcher believed that interscholastic athletics was one of the final bastions in American society where proper moral character and social interaction skills

were taught. Those who worked with students stood at the podium of influence when they continually found teachable moments when personal, moral and social character could be stressed. Those agencies that provide leadership, governing and professional development to interscholastic athletics do work to teach those who influence young people of America. Among those organizations are the National Federation of State High School Association and its state affiliates such as the Indiana High School Athletic Association, National Interscholastic Athletic Administrators Association and its state associations, and the National Association of Secondary School Principals and its state organizations. Such leadership and example is accomplished while leading drills, group work, conditioning, conducting classroom sessions or video review. Participation on a team built unity among athletes as they worked and relied on one another. The same could be said for all who worked in education and strived to reach out to communities of supporters as values of moral and social character and conduct were continually brought before them. Acceptable behavior which pertained to spectators was equally challenged by the actions and example of prominent professional athletes and some of the fans that supported them.

Attendance, Grades, Conduct, and Study Habits

The fifth conclusion is that the educational experience was enhanced for subjects through self motivation to be in attendance, achieve in the classroom and conduct themselves appropriately. The sixth conclusion is that the strongest contributing factor was budgeting time wisely and development of proper study skills.

John Wooden's philosophy of the value of education first and athletics second always bode well for the members of his teams. He stressed attendance at class, regular

study hours, respect for teachers and quality grades. One term that he used was “competitive greatness” which the researcher felt served as a strong way of expressing how academics and sport involvement should blend for a positive purpose. For the student-athlete, competitive greatness entailed integrity, ambition, honesty, initiative and the desire to excel.

During the investigative process, the researcher heard a number of times that, essentially, the more demands that were put upon one, the more they became involved and the more they gave of themselves, the better they managed their time. Student athletes completed homework more regularly and developed good study routines, learning skills and expected personal action outcomes when supportive relationships of instructors and mentors were available and experienced by the participant. During an off-season or a between season scenario when the subject came home immediately after school to television they believed they wasted valuable study time. Regardless of the generation and whether their era was television westerns, talk shows, situation comedies or cartoons; their study discipline lagged. Interesting was Mannen’s (1997) study in Colorado that showed multiple sport athletes performed better in the classroom and possessed more disciplined study habits. In fact, the author’s second study claimed that reduction of the number of seasons participated in was counter productive to the scholarship of students. Ted Merrell indicated that he personally knew of students who remained in school because of their interest in the extra-curricular offerings. He felt that he noticed that his daughter Katie managed available time better during athletic seasons. There was more conscientious effort to balance time when it was precious rather than

plentiful. Katie Merrell concurred that she managed time more efficiently when she was the busiest.

Participation was said to be an indicator of future college performance. In the case of Mr. Smith, sport was a catalyst that put him on the road to a college education and successful professional life following basketball. He felt that participation encouraged him to study more and his success in athletics motivated his classroom work. Managing study time became even more important for him as more and more accolades came his way creating more demand on his time. The structure demands of athletics assisted him in this area. Judi Warren experienced strong attendance, conduct and grades partially do to the influence of a great desire to play and participate. Eligibility was important and the only way to maintain that was through classroom work. Girls overcame practices and contests being scheduled during late weeknight hours by developing disciplined study habits on buses and in the bleachers. While not the most favorable environment, it displayed the students' commitment to study and prepare. School attendance was regularly strong during the season overcoming many late night arrivals from away games which often meant for a short night of sleep, but demanded being at school the next morning in order to fulfill academic requirements.

Multiple studies, particularly by agents and stakeholders affiliated with schools in states belonging to the National Federation, professed the fact that participants had higher standardized test scores, fewer discipline problems, better study habits, better attendance and higher grade point achievement. One such supportive study involved North Carolina students that found superior grade point averages, higher test scores, minimal school discipline rates, fewer numbers of dropouts and further, graduation rates were higher for

those who participated in school sponsored athletic programs (Overton, 2003). The three year study was substantial as it involved 125,000 students at over 130 North Carolina high schools.

The benefit to special groups of students in the educational process was professed by Thompson (2001) who indicated that athletic programs served as an extension of curriculum that assisted special needs students to reconnect with the classroom. The student was assisted in efforts to engage as a learner through challenges of critical thinking and problem solving encountered in participation. Lapchick (1996) believed that sports participation helped African American students to focus on academics. Participation reduced the number of dropouts among minorities and heightened graduation rates according to Jeziorski (1994). Dayton Merrell's perception was that the classroom setting and athletic participation worked hand in hand to build confidence and subsequent achievement. Katie Merrell believed that involvement in interscholastic athletics had significant benefit for her to achieve scholastically.

The summations of the perspectives the subjects related support the philosophy expressed by Kanaby and Reader (2006) regarding the purpose and benefit of participation. He stated that "high school sports seek to develop the entire student, providing attributes that are equally useful in the gymnasium, the classroom and the world" (p. 2). Students learned to prioritize and accept responsibility while learning concepts of being accountable, work ethic and discipline which were skills that helped students succeed in the classroom and beyond. Kanaby and Reader continued:

Students identify with their high school teams, which represent their schools and their communities. Communities rally around them...there is an ongoing

expectation of good sportsmanship and positive character. Educationally based athletics...support the holistic educational experiences and life lessons high school athletics provide students. High school athletics stand alone as the last bastion of amateur athletic purity. (p. 2)

Recommendations for Further Study

The following recommendations are made for further research:

1. Further research should be conducted to examine even more racially and culturally diverse populations of participants.
2. The case study could be done among more geographically diverse subjects to determine if the findings are similar.
3. Research should be conducted to determine the strength of the message received by students from high profile athletes who might display poor behavior in contrast to the interscholastic teacher who works to impact athletes' moral and social development in an affirmative manner.

According to a survey conducted by NFHS (2006), a record number of students participated in interscholastic athletic programs last year. Over 7.1 million high school students in the 50 states and Washington, DC, participated marking the ninth consecutive year of record participation (NFHS, 2005). The course that interscholastic athletics have taken in terms of interest and impact warrants further study of the topic benefits to all segments of the nation's youth.

While this study included people residing in three different states all of the subjects had roots in the state of Indiana. Additional studies should include more geographically and culturally diverse populations in order to further determine the affect

of interscholastic athletic programs on the education experience of the student and mission of the school. How individual participation influenced the personal development, maturation and character would be a topic of further investigation. Interesting also would be the influence on supporters and what impact community personnel had where interscholastic sport was played.

Children today are bombarded with athletic messages, advertising, trends and marketing in a variety of ways and from an array of sources. Sport is the subject of newspapers, magazines, television, talk radio, satellite radio, web sites, iPod downloads and many other forms of communication dedicated to sport in the world. Research to determine the strength and influence of the message upon the conduct, behavior, purchasing habits and emulating of notable athletes would be of interest. Comparison could be related to those service oriented people who work in the field with interscholastic athletes and how strive for the proper socialization of the athletic community and moral character determined.

Summary of Study

As stated in Chapter 1, sport has traditionally been a powerful influencer of the development of individual perspective as well as a form of expression for participants. For the participant, interscholastic athletics conjure up thoughts of heroism, a thrill of foreseen victory, a rush from risk, determination to meet trials and the challenge of strategy. While these individual and short term draws to participation take form, there is a deeper long term impact from participation.

The findings from this study suggest that the historic entry of athletics into the secondary school scene was a struggle between interscholastic educators and those who

would have sport become a part of the local community school offering. Whether in rural area, small towns or large cities, the schools were influenced by community, university and societal pressures. The upheavals of social change, regional biases, cultural stigma and political maneuvering pushed, pulled, twisted and formed the shape and culture of athletics in schools. Evidence from the study displayed the positive impact of educators, coaches and educational leaders on young athletes' development as conscientious, dedicated and honorable citizens. Through their continual effort to administrate programs, mentor and teach, they have endeavored to cause the experience of athletic participation to mirror the educational mission and benefit the development of students. The educators who served as the eventual molders and shapers of what American school athletic programs were to look like experienced impacting waves of judicial, social, political and economic influences. Mandates inclusive of racial and gender equality have been good as they woke the people to an eventual awareness of where society was weak in its support of equal rights. Some pressures leveled against and experienced by educators served only to display a selfish, uneducated and mob type of demand.

In summary the study indicated that educationally based school interscholastic athletic programs assisted participants as a whole in schooling, positive character development and responsibility. Perceptions of participants spoke true to the fact that the sport experience was influential in educational experience of the student. Communities were affected as they benefited those who they supported and, in addition, the collective body of community members was exposed to the continual message of positive supportive behavior and the true philosophy of interscholastic programs to include participation first and winning second. The perceptions of participants concluded that

those who participated had better grades, high attendance rates, fewer school dropouts, better study habits, higher test scores and fewer discipline involvement than those who did not make themselves a part of activities. As stated in the literature review in Chapter 2 and findings of Chapter 4, Roberts (2000) and Wooden (Johnson, 2006) agreed that athletics were teaching agents and athletic facilities were classrooms.

Through this study was offered the provision of an in-depth look at the background of the historical implementation of interscholastic athletics in the schools of our country. The research brought forth a number of the political and social situations and movements that impacted interscholastic athletics as a part of the nation's secondary school setting. One result studied was how the interscholastic athletic program affected the personal, social and moral development of participants. It provided a reflection of the attitudes of participating subjects' athletic participation including value to the educational experience and affiliated successes. Included in the outcomes was participating student's affiliation with expectations of education as the fostering agent for learning.

Included among the goals of our efforts in conducting athletic programs should be to educate those who professionally lead interscholastic athletic programs, influence young people for personal growth, develop a wholesome atmosphere through the avenue of interscholastic athletics and serve as a resource to administrator, coach, parent and community member. All must work together to create harmony among all aspects of the school athletic offering conducive to the mission of education.

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APPENDIXES

APPENDIX A

Letter to Participants

October 18, 2006

(Name)
(Street Address)
(City, State Zip Code)

Dear

As a doctoral student at Indiana State University I am writing to seek your assistance in serving as a participant in a research study. My dissertation is a study of the entry and growth of athletics in the secondary school offering and the subsequent perceptions of participants regarding the impact on their character development an educational experience.

I am seeking your input as a participant in order to achieve a view of the role of sport from different generations, political and social environments, as well as racial, ethnic, and gender variations. Your experiences, views, stories and philosophies are of importance to the study. I do hope you will assist with this effort.

While fully realizing the value of your time, I vow to make the experience as non time consuming and non intrusive as possible. We can communicate by what means you prefer. If geography allows we could share via a personal interview, or by email, mail, or telephone. My information will be garnered in a question-answer format.

I appreciate your consideration of my request to participate in this study and want you to realize your importance in formulating varied and reliable responses. Thank you for reviewing the enclosed Consent to Participate in Research form which will offer you a clear picture of your involvement.

Assuming you will be a part of the study, please sign the form and return to me in the enclosed self-addressed and pre-stamped envelope.

Respectfully,
Michael L. Blackburn

APPENDIX B

Consent to Participate in Research

Participant's Attitudes toward Developmental Value Of Interscholastic Athletics

You are invited to participate in a research study conducted by Mike Blackburn, who is a doctoral student from the Department of Educational Leadership, Administration and Foundations at Indiana State University. Dr. Robert L. Boyd is his dissertation committee chair and faculty sponsor for this project. The study is being conducted for Mr. Blackburn's doctoral dissertation.

You have been asked to participate in this study because of your extensive experiences as a leader, participant and facilitator of interscholastic athletics and an influencer of student athletes.

PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

The purpose of this study is to provide a qualitative look at the historical implementation and growth of athletic programs into the secondary school offering, and the political and social provisions that drove this phenomenon. In addition, a reflection of attitudes of participants regarding the potential benefits to their educational experience will be a part of the study.

PROCEDURES

As a participant in this study you will be asked a series of questions regarding your perspective, observations, writings and/or views related to your background in interscholastic athletic experiences.

The form of communication may be determined by geographic distances and the dialogue may be verbal, via email, or by letter. You will be called upon only one time and your style of response is left entirely up to your discretion.

POTENTIAL RISKS AND DISCOMFORTS

Because of the professional manner that your information will be presented we believe that any occurrence of inconvenience to you is very unlikely. Should there be inconvenience we expect that any risk or discomfort to be minimal.

POTENTIAL BENEFITS TO SUBJECTS AND/OR TO SOCIETY

While it is probably unlikely that you will directly benefit through your participation in this study the research should help educators, athletic administrators, coaches, parents, and other stakeholders associated with interscholastic athletics to better understand the role of sports in secondary schools and the potential long term benefits to student athletes.

PAYMENT FOR PARTICIPATION

There is no cost for you to participate. Also, you will not receive any payment or other compensation for participation in the study.

CONFIDENTIALITY

Information that you share will be written in a positive manner and will draw together your observations and responses. Your reflective thoughts and perceptions will be utilized in association with your name. In connection with the study we know that you will be pleased with the manner in which your involvement and the information obtained and identified with you will be blended appropriately into the narrative research. The research results of the dissertation could potentially be referenced for educational purposes, research or publication.

Any of your responses that are in hard copy form, whether letter or questionnaire responses, will be secured in the possession of the researcher's file. Email communication or documents sent electronically will be saved on a flash drive and stored in the same file. Notes from phone conversations or scripts from an interview will be secured in the same manner. As is required for all research the materials will be kept for three years following its completion.

Should you have any mail or electronic communication from our interaction that you consider confidential in nature we would advise you as a subject of the study to store, discard or delete as you see fit.

PARTICIPATION

Your participation in this study is appreciated and voluntary. You can decline a response to any question and you have the purgative to Should you have any questions after reading this information please feel free to ask for clarification regarding any item.

IDENTIFICATION OF INVESTIGATORS

If you have any questions or concerns about the research, please feel free to contact:

Mr. Mike Blackburn
 Student Investigator
 National Interscholastic Athletic
 Administrators Association
 P.O. Box 690
 Indianapolis, IN 46206
 317-822-5756
 mblackburn@niaaa.org

Dr. Robert L. Boyd
 Associate Professor
 Department of Educational
 Leadership, Administration
 and Foundations
 Indiana State University
 Terre Haute, IN 47809
 812-237-3804
 rboyd3@indstate.edu

RIGHTS OF RESEARCH SUBJECTS

If you have any questions about your rights as a research subject, you may contact the Indiana State University Institutional Review Board (IRB) by mail at 114 Erickson Hall, Terre Haute, IN 47809, by phone at (812) 237-8217, or e-mail the IRB at irb@indstate.edu. You will be given the opportunity to discuss any questions about your rights as a research subject with a member of the IRB. The IRB is an independent committee composed of members of the University community, as well as lay members of the community not connected with ISU. The IRB has reviewed and approved this study.

I understand the procedures described above. My questions have been answered to my satisfaction, and I agree to participate in this study. I have been given a copy of this form.

Printed Name of Subject

Signature of Subject

Date

APPENDIX C

Research Questions

1. Would the development of interscholastic athletics in high schools display the fostering of beneficial lifelong attributes among participants, contribute positively to the educational process and have a favorable impact on communities?
2. Would athletic participation help develop strong moral, social, and personal character traits among participants by serving as educational agents?
3. Would there be displayed among athletic participants such positive attributes of school attendance, lower discipline rates, good study habits, and better grades that contribute to the educational mission?

APPENDIX D

Sub-Questions

Question 1

- a. Does a relationship exist between participation and personal characteristic traits of work ethic, commitment, persistence?
- b. Do you believe there is a correlation between social character and athletic participation in areas such as citizenship, self-discipline and staying free of illegal substances?
- c. Are there any positive or negative, personal or community, experiences or observations that relate to athletic participation?
- d. Would you describe the social and political climate of the community toward athletics in the school district and era in which you participated one that led to your experience being a positive one?

Question 2

- a. In your opinion is there a correlation between moral character traits and your athletic experience?
- b. Does participation contribute to helping one develop a concept of cooperation, loyalty and respect?
- c. Did your years of participation contribute to your acceptance of authority and developing self confidence?
- d. Do you feel participation positively affected your leadership ability, attentiveness and listening skills?

Question 3

- a. Do you feel you have experienced benefit in your academic efforts as result of participation in terms of grade point average or academic improvement?
- b. Do you remember the time and energy demands of participation affecting your study habits and time management in a positive manner?
- c. Is there a relationship between participation and staying in school, school attendance and incidences of discipline?
- d. Should interscholastic athletics to be a part of the educational offering that help meet the goals of education?

APPENDIX E

Grand Tour Question

How would those experiencing various involvements in high school interscholastic athletics describe their experiences in assisting them to meet their life educational mission and personal growth attributes, as well as their view of the collective action of school and community?

APPENDIX F

List of Documents

Included in Appendix G is the list of books and materials that were written or co authored by the subjects, along with biographies or autobiographies utilized to develop questions that related to the study items.

Title	Author
<i>Be Quick – But Don't Hurry!</i>	Andrew Hill & John Wooden
<i>Coach Wooden: One On One</i>	John Wooden & Jay Carty
<i>Coach Wooden's Pyramid of Success Playbook</i>	John Wooden & Jay Carty
<i>John Wooden: An American Treasure</i>	Steve Bisheff
<i>My Personal Best</i>	John Wooden & Steve Jamison
<i>They Call Me Coach</i>	John Wooden & Jack Tobin
<i>Wooden</i>	John Wooden & Steve Jamison
<i>Wooden On Leadership</i>	John Wooden & Steve Jamison

APPENDIX G

Question and Answer - Brief Response Dialogue with Coach John Wooden

1. Coach Wooden, in many of our speeches and written materials you refer to the benefits that athletic participation afforded you and the positive life outcomes of athletes that you have coached. You state that 'sports are teachers' (page 129 of *Wooden*) and 'The Gym is a Classroom' (page 132 of *Wooden*). There is much emphasis today on self promotion; do you feel that sport still provides lessons in the same qualities? Yes No
Comments, if any: _____

2. Coach, you speak often of making each day your masterpiece which is part of your father's seven-point creed. Day 9 of *Coach Wooden: One on One* and chapter 2 of *They Call Me Coach*, among others of your books, display this creed. What encouragement would you give educators, administrators and coaches today who endeavor to guide student-athletes to give each day their very best effort. They are confronted with students trying to deal with challenges around them and in some case to emulate the actions of a few negative high profile athletes?

3. On page 22 of your book *My Personal Best*, you say, "This will be hard to believe, but in the 1920s the Indiana State High School Championship – and the games leading up to it – was as wild as any NCAA March Madness Final Four I've ever been involved with....Hoosiers were nutty about basketball." In your thinking did this atmosphere add or detract from education of the day.
 Yes, it added interest to life of school and community
 No, was a deterrent to learning
Any additional comments on community during your high school playing days?

4. On page 112 of your book, *Wooden*, I am hearing you say that leadership can be learned and that it is not necessarily an innate ability. You mention learning the fundamentals of leadership. Later on in *Wooden*, page 122, you share that you must utilize strengths of teaching and motivating to lead. In addition, you share your belief that "many who don't think of themselves as leaders have the potential to become such if they understand the fundamentals_of getting individuals to work