Selection of the Sample.

As already explained in Chapter II we randomly selected three districts from amongst which we were to choose the 20 PTA's for our study. These districts are Patiala, Ludhiana and Kapurthala. Of these districts Ludhiana has the largest number of High and Higher Secondary Schools (Male 97, Female 31); Patiala comes next (Male 61, Female 23) and Kapurthala has the minimum (Male 31, Female 11). The total number of High and Higher Secondary Schools in these three districts is about 1/5 of the total number of such schools in the State.

The PTA's from these districts were so selected that almost all types of schools — Urban, Rural, Boys' and Girls', Co-educational, Government and Private were included in the sample. The nature of PTA — its standing, general reputation, achievements and potentialities — was also kept in mind while deciding the sample.

The District Education Officer of each district was approached, requested and taken into confidence for the purpose of conducting this aspect of the study. With their guidance and cooperation we were able to select a representative sample and also get the case history schedule.
filled in by the Secretaries of the PTA in different schools.

Appendix E gives a complete list of the schools selected for the present investigation. Below we give district-wise details of the institutions forming the sample.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Patiala</th>
<th>Ludhiana</th>
<th>Kapurthala</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Urban</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Government Boys'</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Government Girls'</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Private Boys'</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Private Girls'</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Private Co-educational</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Rural</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Government Boys'</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Government Girls'</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Government Co-educational</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>8</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>4 = 20</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Preparation of the Case-History Schedule.

The following literature was specially consulted for preparing the main tool of investigation i.e. the Case History Schedule.
i) 'Parents and Children' — the bi-lingual quarterly journal published by the Parent-Teacher Association of India.


iii) Monthly Newsletters published by the Parent-Teacher Association of India.

iv) Literature on the subject produced by the National Council of Educational Research and Training, New Delhi.

The other materials consulted were foreign publications specially those produced in the USA and in the UK. Interviews were also held with Principals, Teachers and Parents who in one way or another were associated with the working of Parent-Teacher Associations. The hints gathered during the conversation on the subject with the persons interviewed were duly incorporated in the schedule.

The case history schedule thus prepared was tried on two PTA's as a trial. The shortcomings noted in the schedule were removed and a few suggestions regarding the inclusion of items on the structural aspect of the PTA's were implemented.

The schedule finally prepared (Appendix C) aimed to evaluate both the structural and functional aspects of the working of PTA's. Effort was made to make it
comprehensive and to the point.

There is no marked division of the structural and functional part of the schedule but the information sought in items 1 to 26 concerns the structural aspect while that in items 27 to 67 relates to the functional aspect.

The structural part includes questions about the standing of the PTA's, membership rules, membership fee, collection and maintenance of accounts, the formation of the executive committees and general body etc., while the functional part aims at knowing real working of the association. Items are so framed as to find out the participation of teachers and parents in the PTA's meetings, their willingness to attend them and the general atmosphere at the PTA's meetings. Information has also been sought about the general activities of PTA's, the role of All India Parent Teacher Association, special achievements of the association, problems faced by them and finally their valuable suggestions for improving the working of PTA's in the State in general and that of their own PTA in particular.

The data collected through the instrument are discussed below:

Standing of the PTA's.

The PTA movement in the Punjab as seen in the
previous chapter is not very old. In fact it is quite a recent phenomenon. It was only in 1965 when the Director of Public Instruction, Panjab issued directions to all the Circle Education Officers and District Education Officers in this connection that the movement got a big fillip.

Case History studies of the sample schools corroborate it.

But for one school — the New High School, Ludhiana — the case of which is entirely different from others, all the rest studied here came into existence during the 1960's. The boom period for the growth of PTA's in Panjab seems to be from 1966 to 1969. From the data we see that 60 per cent of the schools formed their PTA's during this period. Two PTA's belong to early 1960, while the 20 per cent of the sample has a standing of about two years.

As for the New High School, Ludhiana, it may be mentioned in brief that it is a co-educational school run on public school lines. It is the only school in the State which is entirely a parent-body ma shov. From a small beginning made by a parent Mrs. Hem Raj, a retired Headmistress, in her own residence in the year 1938 it has now developed into a very big institution, having assets worth about a million. The school is also unique in the
sense that it receives no grant-in-aid from the Government.

True, that parents in other parts of the State may not be so affluent as the parents of this institution but the short history of three decades and a half of this institution does serve as an example as to what parents could achieve once they felt involved in a project and once they resolved to do something. The potentialities of the so called 'poor' parents are also immense; it is only a question of utilizing them.

One thing encouraging to find in connection with the history of each PTA's is that none has reported any break since the time of its inception.

Membership.

The number of members reported by the PTA's varies considerably from one institution to another. This is not only owing to the differences in the size of student population, but also to the different practices which they follow in this regard.

Whereas in the majority of schools (60 %) it is obligatory for parents to be the members of the PTA's in their schools the rest of the institutions have kept it a voluntary affair. And somewhat similar conditions are found.
in the case of membership for teachers. In 65 per cent of the institutions they are obliged to be the members of the PTA's while in others it is not so.

The total number of members reported by the PTA's ranges from 15 to 1500.

In 70 per cent of the institutions, it is seen that the membership for both parents and teachers is obligatory, whereas in the remaining either the parents alone or the teachers alone fall under this category. It was in the case of two PTA's however that the condition of obligatory membership did not apply to any.

Membership fee and Donations

As for membership fee, here again the practices vary. Even in the government institutions, it seems that they do not follow a set pattern. Three government institutions out of the whole sample are charging Rs. 1/- per year as membership fee while others do not charge anything. Similar is the condition in private institutions included in the sample. With the exception of two institutions none makes any charges as monthly subscription. In one Government Co-educational school 25 paise per month is the subscription fee while in the case of an
other (New High School, Ludhiana) the charges are Rs.1/- per student per month. Forty per cent of the institutions report that they do not have any membership fee for the PTA.

Teachers do not pay anything yearly or monthly anywhere.

Item No. 14 was to elicit the information regarding sources of income other than the fee or subscription. With the exception of three institutions, all report 'nil'. These three institutions report that they accept donations for the purpose.

Those institutions which charge membership fee usually collect it along with fee collection. Obviously these institutions do not have any separate person to maintain a PTA's account. The Clerk/Accountant/Cashier does the job.

The institution which collect the donation for the PTA have entrusted the job of maintaining the accounts to some teacher of the school.

Two rural PTA's report that they need not maintain the accounts; all collections are made on the spot 'whenever any necessity arises and the same is spent accordingly and immediately'. A private urban school deposits all the money
in the Bank and the Secretary of the PTA operates the account.

Executive Committee.

90 per cent of the PTA's have the Executive Committee although the structure differs from institution to institution. The minimum number of the members of the Executive Committee found in the sample of PTA's is five while the maximum is 21. With the exception of two institutions where PTA's were founded only recently, the committees have three main offices: (1) President/Chairman; (2) Vice-President/Vice-Chairman; (3) Secretary.

Besides fifty per cent of the PTA's have the office of the Secretary, sixty per cent that of the Treasurer/Cashier and thirty per cent that of an auditor. One PTA of the sample has got the office of a Patron as well.

The practice of election and nomination of the various office bearers of the Executive Committee also varies from institution to institution. The most commonly followed pattern is that President and Vice-President are elected from amongst the parents while the Secretary is usually elected from the amongst the teachers.

In 85 per cent of the institutions the tenure for the members of the PTA and office bearers of the Executive
Committee is one year. It is only in the case of the parent-body institution that it is of three years. A rural school of District Kapurthala reports that the tenure is only of six months.

Meetings.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Once a year</td>
<td>60%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Twice a year</td>
<td>15%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thrice a year</td>
<td>15%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Six times a year</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The frequency of the meetings of the executive committees also differs from institution to institution. The number ranges from once to twelve times year. Three or four meetings a year seems to be the common practice although two PTA’s report that they conduct the meetings whenever necessary.

Two methods are generally employed to invite the parents for the meetings. Fifty per cent invite them through letters, 40 per cent through children while 10 percent make use of both the means. In the case of one, the services of the school peon are utilized.

Participation by Parents and Teachers in PTA’s meeting

Items No. 29 to 32 related to the extent of participation of parents and teachers in PTA’s meeting.
Only thirty percent cases are such where parents' participation has been reported to be normal. Seventy percent of the Teacher Secretaries feel that the participation is either poor or very poor. In the case of one institution the response was poor in the beginning but was "O.K." afterwards.

The average percentage of attendance of parents in the general meetings is 20 percent, while it is 75 percent in the case of teachers. 40 percent of the PTA's have only 10 percent attendance of parents in the Executive Committees meetings whereas the attendance of teachers in these very meetings is reported to be between 90 to 100 percent.

On the whole the responses reveal that teachers' participation is much more as compared to that of parents'. Teachers' participation has been reported to be either 'active' or 'very active'. The word 'poor' which has been found to be quite frequent in case of parents does not even figure here.

It may be that the Secretary teacher had some favourable bias towards his/her colleagues. We have tried to examine it by interviewing parents and educational administrators. We come to the general conclusion that the participation of parents in PTA's meetings, either of the
general body or of the executive committee, is much below that usually shown by teachers. The reasons for such a state of affairs are varied and complex and we have tried to analyse them elsewhere.

Two items, item No. 35 and 36, aimed to know as to how far parents and teachers were punctual in attending the meetings. As for the general body meeting 50 percent of the Secretaries assess that teachers are more punctual than the parents while 40 percent of the subjects say that both teachers and parents are punctual. In one PTA it is reported that none is punctual.

Similar is the position regarding the meeting of the executive committee with the only difference that nobody has ticked the option 'none' in that case.

Attending a meeting is one thing and attending it with a mind and heart is another. We wanted to know, therefore the extent of willingness on the part of participants in attending the meetings.

In 80 percent of the PTA's, they said that only some parents attended the meeting willingly. Two institutions report that almost all the parents attend the meeting willingly. Of the remaining two one shows total absence of willingness on the part of any parent.
while in one case they have to persuade the parents for coming to the meetings.

The corresponding position with regard to teachers is again in their favour. 75 percent of PTA's report that majority of the teachers attend the meeting willingly. Only three respondents say that almost all teachers attend the meetings willingly while in the case of one none is reported to be willing.

Responses to item No. 38 i.e. 'What is the general atmosphere at PTA's meeting?' are quite revealing. While 40 percent of the schools say that atmosphere at the meeting is cordial and understanding, 50 percent confess that it is all a fault-finding affair. The atmosphere is however tolerable in one institution. The author got sufficient proof of the truth in this assessment when he attended a few PTA's meetings in some schools. Both the parties tried to shift the blame to the institution. In some meetings the atmosphere was full of tension just because of the fact that the Principal of the institution remained all tense throughout the meeting. To give an instance of the meeting observed by the author, a parent in that meeting requested the Principal to let the members know as to what measures the school had taken to improve the hand-writing of children as was decided in the last
meeting. To this the tense Principal reacted by saying that a notice to this effect had duly been issued by the office and the teachers had noted it. "This was the maximum the Principal could do in this connection", so said the Principal. Here is a clear case of the fault finding atmosphere and of passing on the buck to the other party.

**Utilization of PTA Funds.**

For expenditure out of PTA funds eighteen items were suggested by the author in the case history schedule and the schools were asked to tick those items which were applicable in the case of their own PTA. Additional space was also provided where the subjects could give any other item which was not included in the list.

Tabulating all the ticked items and arranging them in order of frequency, we get the following picture:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Repair of School Building</td>
<td>60%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Repair of School furniture</td>
<td>50%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Construction of School Building</td>
<td>40%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Beautification of the Campus</td>
<td>40%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Helping the poor students</td>
<td>35%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Giving stipend to brilliant students</td>
<td>30%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Buying furniture for the school</td>
<td>25%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Arranging picnics and educational trips</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Giving prizes to school children: 20%
Giving refreshment to children: 10%
Installation of a telephone: 10%

The additional items reported by a few institutions are in a way covered by the items given above. Still they are reproduced below for specific information.

Construction of a Cycle shed.
Prizes to good players.
Creation of Centre for the Board Examination.
Installation of Tube well.
Construction of a boundary wall.

One institution has claimed that it spent the PTA funds on all the eighteen items suggested in the schedule.

Item No. 44 was to enquire any other means in which parent-teacher associations (collectively or through individual members) helped or served the institution. No special means have been mentioned by the institutions under this item. Only a few institutions report that the PTA's serve the institution by maintaining better discipline, providing better accommodation to students, giving special attention to cleanliness and arranging special classes for weak students. A rural
institution from the Kapurthala District reports that its PTA has served the institution by levelling many grounds and ploughing many fields of the institution.

As to the measures school adopts to actively associate the parents in running the school programme five institutions have reported 'nil' while others mention below:

1) Arranging Book Exhibition.
2) Arranging cultural shows.
3) Inviting parents to school function.
4) Sending progress reports of children to parents.
5) Sending invitations for discussion over a cup of tea and writing letters.

One of the 20 PTA's report that parents do not associate with the school in spite of all efforts.

Responses to item No. 46 in which the schools were asked to indicate the school committee on which parents were represented are nil, in 90 percent of the cases. Only two institutions report that parents are represented on the co-curricular activity committee and on the discipline and school function committee.

Are the Parents Invited to the Functions of School?

To this question the answer is 'Yes' in all the twenty cases under study.
As to the special functions arranged for parents there is again a 'Yes' throughout. In this very connection, it is reported that in 80 percent of the institutions, PTA's invite dignitaries, educationists and social reformers to the school. As for the inviting of parents to talk to students or teachers or to both on a topic/field of their interest/specialization only 30 percent of the PTA's say that they do so. Others either have not thought of such a programme or have not cared to implement it. The institutions who have invited parents for giving a talk in the school were asked to list the titles of the talks given by the parents during the current calendar year. Some of the titles of the talks given by parents as reported by those institutions are reproduced below:

1) My School Days.
2) Effective Study Habits.
3) Discipline.
4) How can PTA's improve schools?
5) Students the Treasure of the Nation.
6) Right Canalisation of the Students' talent.
7) Patriotism.
8) Dignity of Labour.
9) Education for Man Making.
10) Importance of Manual work in Education.

One school arranged a lecture on Shahid Kartar Singh Sarabha by a parent. The lecture is specially
significant in the sense that the name of the school and the village goes after the name of this Great Martyr who sacrificed his life in the freedom struggle of the country during the year 1914-15.

Are Parents involved in Classroom Teaching?

The answer in all cases is 'No'.

Parent and Teacher Education.

On the question of parent and teacher education, majority of the PTA's do not arrange any special talks, seminars, discussions etc., for the purpose. Only three institutions say that they do so but the details given by them show that they have not understood the question properly. Under the list of talks, seminars etc., arranged by them for parent and teacher education they report such things as Guru Nanak Declamation Contest, Parent Day, Poetic Recitation etc.

Suggestions Given by PTA's.

Two items, item No. 56 and 57 related to this aspect. Item No. 56 wanted the subjects to give information as to what suggestion had the PTA given to the school or to the Department for improving any aspect of the school programme. Following are the suggestions reported by
different PTA's.

1) School uniform.
2) Uniform for teachers.
3) Improving general atmosphere of the school.
4) Free classes for intelligent students.
5) Free uniform and books to poor students.
6) Making the school centre of Board Examination.
7) Improving the progress card.
8) Providing more rooms in the school.
9) Supply of Text books in the market.
10) Proper pupil-teacher ratio.
11) Examination reform.

Only in the case of four institutions the PTA's are not reported to have made any suggestions.

As to the reactions of the authorities towards the suggestions given by the PTA's the responses have been as below:

i) Favourable 20%
ii) Unfavourable 10%
iii) Some times favourable, some times unfavourable 15%
iv) Indifferent 40%

The rest of the institutions have been silent on the issue.
Do the parents invite teachers to their homes?

But for two institutions the answer is 'No'.

Do the Teachers invite parents to their homes?

Here again two PTA's say 'Yes', seventeen say 'No', while in the case of one the response is sometimes.

Publication by the PTA's.

The response in this connection is again very discouraging. 85 percent of the cases have said 'No' to it, while 15 percent have given the name of the school magazine as a PTA's publication.

Affiliation to the Parent Teacher Association of India.

One fourth of the total number of cases under study state that they have got themselves affiliated to the All India Body. When asked about the advantage of this affiliation they say that they are able to get some professional advice and that they are able to establish links with other schools in the country. 75 percent of the PTA's in the sample have not gone in for such an affiliation.

Special Achievements.

Under this item either there is a nil report or
there is a repetition of what has already been reported under the items of expenditure of the PTA funds. A few institutions claim to have improved their results as a result of the formation of PTA's. One institution has written with pride that their special achievement is that they are able to invite S. Swaran Singh, Foreign Minister, \[\text{Mah. IDN Sahi, Adviser to the Governor of Punjab, Deputy}\]
Commissioner, Kapurthala, S.D.M. and District Education Officer of Kapurthala for talks to students and teachers. Obviously the school under reference belongs to district Kapurthala.

Problems faced by PTA's.

With the exception of one, all the institutions included in the sample have listed one problem or another as a response to item No. 66 which aimed to elicit problems that PTA's were facing. Although the problems given by them are many in number, a close look at all of them makes it clear that most of them mean the same thing. All the schools have complained of lack of interest on the part of parents in making the PTA programme successful. Some of the other problems given by the schools are (1) thin attendance at the meetings, (2) lack of finances, (3) fault finding behaviour of the participants in PTA meetings, (4) illiterate parents, (5) indifferent parents,
and selfish interests of the people of the school. The problem given by one institution is that parents are too busy on the fields and so they find themselves helpless to take part in the working of PTA's. A mention is also made of politics in general and local politics in particular. In the case of one institution it is complained that there is much of politics in education and it retards the smooth functioning of the programmes of the PTA's.

Suggestions for Improvement.

The last item in the Case History Schedule was regarding the improvement in the working of parent-teacher association in our State in general and that of an individual PTA in particular. The subjects were requested to give some suggestions with regard to both.

The responses reveal that the subjects did not try to make much distinction between the two types of suggestions — one for general improvement and the other for the improvement of a particular association. They however, listed the following suggestions:

1) It should be obligatory for every parent to attend at least one meeting of the PTA.
2) PTA's should be given more publicity.
3) Every school must be required to form a PTA.
4) Measures should be taken to make parents more interested in the working of schools.

5) More attention should be given to Physical education as this is the need of the day.

6) Adult Education programme should be interesting.

7) Special post should be created to look after the routine work of the PTA.

8) Special attention should be paid to parent education.

9) Teacher should be given some free time to establish effective contacts with students and parents.

10) Parents should be given some responsibilities concerning the school programme.

11) The Government must give more support and help to make the PTA movement in the State really effective.

To validate the data which laid the blame for poor functioning of PTA's at the door of parents mostly and which attributed the lack of parent-teacher cooperation to the apathy and a general sense of disinterestedness manifested by parents the investigator interviewed key personnel essentially associated in the working of the Parent Teacher Associations in schools i.e. heads of
institutions, teachers, parents and officers of the 
Education Department (N = 20 in all). The General 
Secretary of the All India PTA who had been in constant 
touch in the PTA movement in States, was also interviewed 
in a bid to know his objective and detached view of PTA 
work in Punjab. All the persons interviewed were requested 
the to express their true reaction to the working of PTA's 
in secondary schools.

Head of institutions and officers of the 
Education Department mostly supported the observations 
collected through the case history, though some more 
points were also given. Whereas the major hindrance 
as expressed by the schools, on the case history schedule, 
in the way of efficient working of Parent-Teacher 
Associations was the lack of cooperation from parents, 
during the interview both heads and education officers 
confessed that teachers too were responsible to a 
considerable extent for the poor and inadequate functioning 
of the Parent-Teacher Associations. They complained that 
many a time they found teachers shirking their work and 
responsibility in the matter of planning and executing 
the programmes of the PTA's. They conceded the teachers' 
argument that they were over-worked and that they were 
left with no time to devoted to PTA's. But what mattered 
was the teachers' non-cooperative and indifferent attitude
towards this very important agency of Parent Teacher Cooperation. Officers of the Education Department, especially the District Education Officers, seemed to have a grudge against themselves rather than any other person in this regard. The District Education Officers expressed that in spite of their earnest wish to do something positive and solid for the cause of Parent Teacher Cooperation they could not manage to do much because they were too occupied in their office work and related duties to devote sufficient time to it. A District Education Officer remarked, "We are more enquiry officers than District Education Officers." They as well as Officers of the Directorate were however fully conscious and convinced of the importance of Parent Teacher Cooperation as one of the important means conducive to effective education.

The headmasters on the whole were quite emphatic in saying that the success of parent teacher contact programme, and for that matter, the success of any programme of school depended on the head of the institution himself. If the head was sincere, competent and tactful everything went on all right. The headmaster/principals fully realised that the parent teacher associations could do much more than what was being done at present. They felt that the PTA's at present were doing no more than raising
some funds for the school or looking to the physical aspects of the school building. It was all good but in their opinion the PTA's must look to other aspects of education as well.

The headmasters during the interview expressed their dis-satisfaction with parents. They told that parents usually offered suggestions which were unsound. They would talk of changes in time-table, in procedures for admission and in the teaching methods — changes which were not feasible. Some parents usually demanded over-time teaching for their children and wanted teachers to meet all kinds of demands which was unfair. It was also voiced by some heads that parents many a time used all means, fair or foul, for the benefit of their children. A headmistress of a rural school was of the view that if more opportunities were provided for parent-teacher contact it would lead to unnecessary interference in the smooth working of the schools.

In spite of all this, the heads of institutions, on the whole, seemed to be happy with the achievements they had been able to make in their schools with the help of parent-teacher cooperation. They gave many examples of such achievement and proudly narrated many incidents of their school where parents had done a lot to solve the
VISTING THE SCHOOL RUN BY PARENTS.

State Educational Survey Officer and the investigator
the Headmaster.

Parents are Welcome!

Going round the Campus.
knotty problems of the institution. The Principal of the school run by the parent-body (New High School, Civil Lines, Ludhiana) had nothing to say against the parents; on the other hand, he was all praise for the enlightened and affluent parents of the children of his school. At the time of the author's visit to his school he expressed time and again that the parent body of his institution never interfered in his work and that parents always had shown helpful attitude towards the institution. In his opinion it was always the Circle Education Officers and the District Education Officers and the inefficient teacher who were mainly responsible for creating problems in the school. According to him the main trouble was that the teachers were not sincere to their work and that the Principals were not above board.

As for the reaction of teachers, it was not very different from the one already known through the case history schedule. They criticised both the management and parents. They mostly complained of the lack of inspiring leadership in the matter of parent-teacher cooperation. As for the importance of taking parents into confidence and working in close cooperation with them for the real education of the child, they seemed to be all convinced.
It is the reaction of parents which brings to our notice the other side of the picture. These reactions provide some insight into the problem. Some of the sentences spoken by parents can really serve as eye-openers for the organisers of the PTA's in our schools. Below are reproduced some of the typical expressions made by parents. It may be added that the parents interviewed had been at a time important office bearers of the PTA.

- Teachers and Principals never like criticism.

We do not suggest many things which come to our mind for the simple reason that our wards may not be put to any difficulty or harassment. Whenever we offer any suggestion it is taken as a criticism and it is only a matter of convenience and policy that we decide to remain silent.

- Parent-Teacher Associations are usually concerned with raising of funds only.

- It is really very sad to see that the school authorities are in the habit of putting the blame on us parents for all the ills of their institution.

- It is a pity that the parents are never acquainted with the policies and real working of school.
— My impression is that concept of Parent Teacher Cooperation is neither clear to parents nor to teachers. Generally the tendency of teachers is to seek the cooperation of parents in matters un-educational, in matters which have nothing to do with the welfare of students. To give you an instance a number of meetings of the PTA's of the school where my children were studying were devoted to the discussion of thinking of the ways and means of constructing a hall and also for running after some VIP to inaugurate that hall. A number of PTA meetings were held simply to decide as to which VIP should be called to inaugurate the hall. We parents have been giving concrete and good suggestions to the school, but not a single has been discussed. We suggested to the school to arrange mini extension lectures by capable parents but the suggestion was never attended to. In fact teachers to my mind have not cultivated any dynamism in their thinking. I am very sorry to say that during the past years that I have been closely associated with the PTA of my school as office bearer and on the executive committee, in no meeting has any issue about the education of the children been raised.

And to quote one more parent —

In the first few meetings of the PTA I attended, I got the impression that any critical suggestion
was not favoured, if not resented. The teachers were all the time concerned with improving amenities in the school. There was less consideration for improving education, personal attention, arrangement for games, health and character building. The parents who persisted in their suggestion for improvement or were vocal in pointing out drawbacks in school management or in schooling were dubbed as un-charitable critics.

I have a feeling that the parent teacher association did very little in improving schooling and standards. It only provided very occasionally, not frequently, an opportunity to the parents to attend the school and see teachers express their problems. As their problems generally related to government offices, the officers and well-to-do parents, who could be resourceful and who could be instrumental in getting things done were more welcome in parent-teacher association. The rest of the parents were expected to be silent back-benchers, proverbially un-critical, mute, conniving and accepting things as they came.

I think Parent Teacher Association movement has been the brain-wave of a utopian official-introducing something new and fresh - extending his field of activity, expending more of States' peoples' money and piling up of reports of the movement in the offices for statistical value only.
Even without formal association, parents and teachers are always welcome to meet and discuss their problems. Parents do go to school whenever there is a problem.

Schools, for better education, require only dedicated teachers and the only problem is that there is dearth of such teachers. Political and administrative meddling is scaring and demoralising even the few dedicated teachers we may have. Alas! in our country all decisions are political, neither practical nor rational, and not at all natural. And with these meddling, we have made education also a mess and a muddle and already lost a quarter of a century for good education and breeding of boys. This generation gap is already asserting itself in steep fall of educational standards and gross indiscipline around.

Such is the story of parent-teacher cooperation as revealed in the interview. The mud-slinging on each other by the various organs of PTA's as shown above tends at times to show contradictory views, but the picture so built reflects the enthusiasm and excitement as well as yearning to do their bit, that parents as well as teachers seem to possess.