

ATTITUDES OF ELEMENTARY AND SECONDARY
TEACHERS IN KANSAS TOWARD STRIKES

by 6408

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Chapter I

INTRODUCTION

Strikes by teachers in various sections of the United States have increased tremendously in the past few years. According to the NEA Reporter, "The decade of the 60's saw 320 strikes, more than three-fourths of which occurred during the last two years. Only one to five strikes were listed for each of the first four years of the decade."¹ To further show the number of strikes that have taken place in the past few years, another article states this: "The number of strikes first rose spectacularly during the 1967-68 school year when 114 occurred (there were 34 in 1966-67), and the following two years showed a continued increase to 180 in 1969-70."²

Objectives

Since teacher strikes have been so prominent in the last few years, this study will investigate the attitudes of Kansas elementary and secondary teachers toward strikes. The Research Division of the National Education Association conducted teacher opinion polls in 1965, 1967, 1968, and 1970, asking a national sample of public school classroom teachers whether or not teachers should strike. The following graph shows the results of those polls.

¹NEA Reporter, February 27, 1970, p. 4, cols. 2-3.

²"Teacher Strikes, 1960-61 to 1969-70," NEA Research Bulletin, Vol. XLVIII (October, 1970), p. 69.

Do you believe public-school teachers should ever strike?¹

	<u>1965</u>	<u>1967</u>	<u>1968</u>	<u>1969</u>	<u>1970</u>
Yes, teachers should strike the same as employees in other occupations . . .	3.3%	4.4%	8.8%	5.9%	10.0%
Yes, but only under extreme conditions and after all other means have failed	50.0	54.4	59.4	56.1	63.0
No, teachers should never strike	37.8	33.7	22.8	30.4	20.8
Undecided	8.9	7.5	9.0	7.7	6.2
	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

It was found in 1965 and 1967 that the percentage of teachers opposed to strikes varied according to different geographic sections of the United States. However, in the 1968 polling it was found that there was no significant difference geographically in the percentage of teachers opposed to striking.²

According to the results from 1965 to 1970, there is an increase in teacher acceptance of strikes. As one article states, "The total percentage of teachers who approved of strikes under some or any circumstances in 1970 was 73 percent, an increase of nearly 20 percentage points since the first poll was taken."³

From these findings, it would seem that Kansas teachers would have an attitude similar to those in other states. However, this study limited its investigation to the attitudes of Kansas classroom teachers to these three variables: (1) urban and rural unified school districts, (2) the teaching level, and (3) the sex of the teacher.

¹ "Teacher Strikes, 1960-61 to 1969-70," p. 72.

² "Should Teachers Strike?" Today's Education, Vol. LVII (September, 1968), pp. 85-86.

³ "Teacher Strikes, 1960-61 to 1969-70," p. 72.